

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2019/2020 REPORT NO. **239**

**MEETING TITLE AND DATE/
DECISION OF:**

REPORT OF:
Executive Director of
People

Contact officer and telephone
number:
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Agenda – Part:1

Item: 8

**Subject: Commissioning (Brokerage)
Follow Up Audit Report 2019/20**
Wards: All
Key Decision No:

**Cabinet Member consulted:Alev
Cazimoglu**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Commissioning (Brokerage) audit was undertaken as part of the 2018/19 Audit Plan. The 2018/19 Audit Plan was approved by the Audit & Risk Management Committee on 7th March 2018.

The audit report was issued in March 2019 and Reasonable Assurance was considered the appropriate assurance opinion.

The report was identified as being of special interest and the Audit & Risk Management Committee reviewed this report on 3rd October 2019. It was requested that a further follow up review was completed. Terms of reference were issued and the review completed in December 2019. All initial findings have now been implemented/remediated and closed as a result.

The full audit report is included as Appendix A.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

To note the contents of the Commissioning (Brokerage) December 2019 review.

3. BACKGROUND

The Commissioning (Brokerage) Audit was part of the 2018/19 audit plan agreed by ARMC on 7th March 2018.

Reasonable Assurance was found to be an appropriate opinion with one medium risk and two risk findings being identified.

The scope of the review covered the process for matching service users to care providers within the CareFirst system used by the Council. This included ensuring appropriate documentation was on file, submitting tender documentation with brief anonymised details of the required care package, matching the service user with a care provider and informing them on a timely basis. We also reviewed the Service's governance arrangements, management and knowledge of the market and the process for processing care provider invoices.

The audit report was considered to be of special interest to the Audit Committee and a report was reviewed by that committee on the 3rd October 2019. A follow up review was requested to provide further assurance and this was completed in December 2019.

The objective of this follow up was to review the processes, procedures and controls that have been implemented to address the risks identified during the 2018/19 Commissioning (Brokerage) Internal Audit review.

The approach was to understand and evaluate the processes and controls now in place to address the finding and risks identified during the 2018/19 audit, through discussions with key personnel, review of systems documentation and by undertaking walkthrough tests.

Status of Prior Findings

1. Selection of Care Providers – This finding is closed as this has been remediated. Policy documents have been updated in line with agreed actions, however require further updating is required to ensure only one requirement is documented when selecting a care provider. Following the testing of 20 cases in the CareFirst system, we found exceptions, where documentation was either missing or had not been appropriately updated. However, this related to one individual only, who has since left the team.

2. Policy Documentation – This finding has been implemented and is therefore closed. An overarching policy document that sets out the purpose and objective of the Service has been developed and approved by the Director of Health and Adult Social Care.

3. Documentation on CareFirst System – This finding has been implemented and is therefore closed. The need to document justification is

now regularly communicated to the brokerage officers as evidenced in team meetings.

It was also requested at the Audit Committee on the 3rd October that the following actions be taken and reported back to the committee.

- To show the actual process being used to ensure that it is fair and reasonable. **This was reviewed by the auditors and the process found to be fair, transparent and reasonable.**
- To show value for money and that the service is delivering for vulnerable people and that ASC involvement has made a material difference to the quality of the Brokerage Service. **Enfield pays a flat rate across all of its providers and the allocation of packages to those providers is dependent on their responsiveness to referrals, their ability to meet needs as well as service users choice. The transfer of the service to HASC was done to ensure that accountability for spending resources on vulnerable people and assessing the level of resources required to meet eligible needs sat in the same department. Specifically, within service development, gaps in provision are identified and actions taken to address these, for example within specialist areas such as learning disabilities and mental health where additional brokerage capacity has been provided and stronger links to the quality improvement team created, acknowledging that value for money, transparency are vital considerations but that the quality of services is of paramount importance.**

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not applicable

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

This was previously identified as a report of special interest to the Audit Committee with a request to complete a review following the Audit Committee meeting on the 3rd October 2019. The follow up review has found that all findings previously identified have been addressed with appropriate remedial actions completed.

6. COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

Not applicable

6.2 Legal Implications

Not applicable

6.3 Property Implications

Not applicable

7. KEY RISKS

The key risks identified in the Commissioning (Brokerage) 2018/19 audit report have been reviewed and in the auditors' view, addressed.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES – CREATING A LIFETIME OF OPPORTUNITIES IN ENFIELD

8.1 Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods

Not applicable

8.2 Sustain strong and healthy communities

The brokerage service supports people with illness and disabilities to access the support they need to continue to live independently in the community

8.3 Build our local economy to create a thriving place

The brokerage service ensures that people with illness and disability and supported appropriately by local, regulated providers of care who provide employment and development opportunities for local people.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

10. PERFORMANCE AND DATA IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

12. HR IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

13. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

A thriving domiciliary care market with appropriately trained and supported staff is critical to meeting the needs of people with illness or

disability, supporting them to live as independently as possible within their own homes.

Background Papers

Appendix A – Commissioning follow up review report