

## **TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**Audit Committee – 26 March 2013**

### **Update on Abacus Internal Audit Report and Implementation of Recommendations– Report of Assistant Director Care & Support**

#### **1. Purpose**

To provide an update on progress in respect of the Amber audit report on Abacus.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That members note the additional actions taken to address the recommendations and progress made**
- 2.2 That members receive update on progress to their September meeting following implementation of the upgrade in July**

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Abacus is a system for calculating the value of payments due to providers of social care services and provides a personal budget support process for service users. It also calculates the contribution which service users make to the cost of their care packages and links these processes together. In carrying out these functions it has to interface with two other key council systems – Carefirst – the client record system for adult social care and Agresso – the council's financial management system.
- 3.2 The council had been utilising Abacus to calculate service users contributions for a number of years when the introduction of personal budgets for service users required the implementation of a system which would enable both the payment of providers and the linking of that information directly back to individual service users as well as contracts.
- 3.3 Following a tendering process Abacus was selected to provide this functionality. The purchase and implementation of Abacus coincided with the implementation of the Council's then new financial management system Abacus.
- 3.4 The original Abacus audit was carried out in September 2011 with follow ups in July and December 2012. The report was originally classified as amber. At the audit follow ups it was identified that insufficient progress was being made in addressing the recommendations.
- 3.5 The significant delays in progressing the recommendations were due to a number of factors :
  - the new system was implemented at the same time as the major service restructurings took place: people left and reallocation of responsibilities lead to slower implementation than planned

- the system has also been implemented during a remodelling of adult social care delivery which meant that new processes were being developed during the period of implementation
  - the interfaces with the two other key systems mentioned above meant as well as being very dependent on progress with Agresso implementation it also required significant input from other service areas of the council as a consequence. These service areas were also undergoing significant change and development so the resources to meet the projects needs were not always available.
- 3.6 The system is overdue for an upgrade to version 162. Due to the reasons identified above the upgrade has been delayed. The upgrade will significantly address the current operating issues and associated recommendations within the audit report.

#### **4 Update on Actions Taken and Progress Made**

4.1 In order to resolve the issues identified above and ensure progress the following actions have been taken:

- establishment of a Strategic Steering Group, in addition to the existing operational group, which includes representation from all the relevant service areas of the council, including ICT, Revenues and Finance as well as Care and Support. The Assistant Directors for Care and Support and Customer and People Services also attend to ensure that the strategic coordination and direction required to move forward on implementation are now in place
- a detailed project plan has been drawn up for the upgrade to version 162 of the system. The upgrade will require significant testing and input from various teams within the council and the project timelines have also taken into account the year end processes and Easter holidays. The upgrade will be completed by the beginning of July and it is therefore suggested that a further update is provided to the next committee meeting following this which would be in September.

4.2 Whilst the report currently remains at amber further progress has been made in addressing the recommendations and this is detailed in the table below:

Date	Implemented	In Progress	Not Implemented	Superseded	Total
December 2012	6	6	7	1	20
March 2013	7	10	2	1	20

It is anticipated that following implementation of the upgrade all the recommendations will be fully implemented.

#### **5 Previous Minutes**

29 January 2013