

Financial Controls Review

Assistant Director response/update for Audit Committee on 27 January 2015

(a) Potential overpayments to providers

This is no longer possible given we now have zero tolerance.

The extranet project set up for providers to verify the work they have undertaken and drawdown payment will be completed by the end of March, again avoiding overpayment or at the least giving us the power to recover monies at a later date.

(b) Whether the Council is suffering a financial loss as a result of unassessed clients in respect to financial assessments

The financial assessment process is automatically triggered via a CareFirst Desk Top activity for every contact assessment that is completed. The time frame during which clients can return their financial declaration is now more rigorously monitored and letters are sent to advise that, because of non return of the form, full cost invoices will be raised until such time the financial assessment has been completed. In the event that the subsequent assessment results in a lower charge then the case is retrospectively reassessed. Following the Phase 1 restructure we are working on improving the turn round time for processing financial assessments.

(c) Unbilled income – from clients in respect to their assessed contribution

To address the problem of unbilled income the report (linked to contracts on Care First but not on Abacus) provided by the Accountancy team is to be used as a standing item in supervision in order that the cases 'owned' by individual Financial Case Management Officers can be reviewed and the reason for non-assessment established.

There is limited confidence that the revised processes established since September 2014 are operating effectively as we still have double entry processes into Abacus and CareFirst when a care package contract is put in place. Discussions continue around the issue of double entry including system interfaces. A review of processes to identify 'touching points' that could be leading to double entry will feed into the team functions in the pending phase 2 restructure

With phase 2 of the new T&W website this includes a new payment service, similar to Amazon, which will allow customers to create an account, securely register their debit/credit card and pay for a number of council services in a single transaction. It would be prudent to include client contributions in this set up so that when they pay for their Council Tax, for example, they can pay for social care services at the same time.