

Appendix 2: Other Audits and Grant Claims

Objective

To confirm that grant allocations for 2017/18 received from the Department of Transport and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have been spent in accordance with the relevant scheme's terms and conditions.

Disabled Facilities Capital Grant Determination (DFG)

Purpose of funding

To support those in non-council properties with required adaptations to their homes based on their medical needs. Types of works undertaken include installations of:

- level access showers
- ramped access to properties
- stair lifts or through-floor lifts.

Conclusion

It was confirmed that spend was compliant in that:

- it fell within the definition of "capital" for accounting purposes
- grant monies had been transferred into the local Better Care Fund pooled budget, under Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006.

In addition, work was undertaken to verify that all cases were supported by:

- an assessment of need and recommendation of adaptation works required, undertaken by an Occupational Therapist
- suitable means testing to ensure eligibility to the DFG scheme, where required
- a signed agreement from surveyors and clients that works had been completed as per the plans, and to a suitable standard.

Opinion: Unqualified

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Highways Maintenance Challenge Fund

Purpose of funding

Funding was provided to assist with:

- the borough wide LED street lighting upgrade
- highway flood reduction and resilience.

Conclusion

It was confirmed that spend was compliant in that:

- it fell within the definition of "capital" for accounting purposes
- work undertaken related to the replacement of streetlights in the borough
- work undertaken related to highway flood reduction and resilience in the borough.

Opinion: Unqualified

Local Transport Capital Block Fund

Purpose of funding

To assist in delivering transport improvement schemes, which can include:

- road markings and re-surfacing
- upgrades to traffic signal junctions, zebra and puffin crossings
- underground utility detection, topographical, CCTV and HDS surveys in preparation for works contained in the 2017/18 programme
- upgrades to electronic bus information screens
- pothole repairs.

Conclusion

It was confirmed that spend was compliant in that it fell within the definition of "capital" for accounting purposes.

Some issues were identified that did not impact on the ability to confirm the grant expenditure, but required attention from the service area.

Evidence that works had been completed, such as records of site visits or photos showing works done, were not always available. Work was undertaken by engineers to re-visit works and verify that they had been completed in line with the invoices paid. Work is ongoing to move all record keeping onto Symology¹.

Opinion: Unqualified

¹ Symology is the Council's Highways Asset Management system

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Troubled Families Programme, Payments by Results Scheme Grant

Objective

To assess compliance with the terms and conditions of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Financial Framework for making Payment by Result (PBR) claims under the Expanded Troubled Families Programme (Phase 2).

Background

The Financial Framework requires that Internal Audit verifies a 10% representative sample of PBR claims before they are made to ensure there is supporting evidence to confirm families:

- met the required criteria to be considered for entry to the expanded Troubled Families Programme
- have achieved either continuous employment or significant and sustained progress as defined by the Council's agreed Outcomes Plan.

Larger sample sizes may be required for smaller claims in order to ensure the audit is meaningful.

Conclusion

Between April and August 2018, 79 PBR claims were presented for audit prior to submission to the MHCLG.

Claims continue to be reviewed at 'Outcome Surgeries' established by the Early Help and Family Support team. These ensure the criteria of the Council's Troubled Families Outcome Plan have been met and can be evidenced. Additionally, the Team Manager reviews a minimum of 10% of cases to confirm appropriate evidence for the claim has been provided.

Of the 79 cases, the Team Manager reviewed 19 cases. 11 claims were randomly selected by Internal Audit for review, which included four cases checked by the Team Manager. For all cases, suitable evidence was available to support:

- entry into the programme
- a claim for either significant and sustained progress, or continuous / subsequent employment.

The audit work undertaken demonstrates that both the 'Outcome Surgeries' and the Team Manager's quality assurance checks are working effectively to ensure sufficient evidence is available to support required troubled family outcomes and the PBR claims made.

Opinion: Unqualified

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Management Response to Quality Assurance Audits – Interim Management Report

Objective

To assess whether Senior Management's revised arrangements for ensuring prompt action is taken to address the improvements required where a children's social care file is assessed as 'inadequate', are operating effectively to minimise the risk to children.

Summary

The review found that the stages within the process for improving cases identified as inadequate were well designed, and when fully embedded should improve cases previously found to be inadequate in a timely way.

Support has been given to improve the monitoring around the process to ensure it is consistently followed, and deviations from it are identified at the earliest opportunity. The effectiveness of these arrangements will be reviewed later in the year.