

Appendix 2b: Grant Claims and other audit work

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 September and December 2018, 72 PBR claims were presented for audit prior to submission to the MHCLG.

Claims continue to be reviewed and challenged at 'Outcome Surgeries' established by the Early Help and Family Support team. These aim to 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 claims to confirm appropriate evidence has been provided.

Of the 72 claims presented, the Team Manager reviewed 12. Internal Audit randomly selected 11 claims for review, which included four checked by the Team Manager. For all but one claim, suitable evidence was available to support:

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

One claim submitted under the significant and sustained progress outcome was withdrawn as evidence was not available to demonstrate that concerns over the suitability of home tutoring arrangements within the family had been addressed. The team have kept the case open and will monitor progress in this area.

This is the only case that has been withdrawn since July 2017. This 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.

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Better Queensway Benefits Management

Objective

To provide support and independent challenge in the development of benefits management controls designed to help ensure the project can demonstrate achievement of its expected benefits.

The need for this bespoke piece of work was identified in previous internal audit reports examining overall project assurance arrangements.

Conclusion

This work resulted in Internal Audit supporting the project in the development of a draft benefits profile template, which now contains fields to capture key information in relation to the project's planned benefits. The template was discussed at the Better Queensway Project Board on the 31 October 2018.

Once a development partner is selected, further work is required, for the project team to:

- review and agree this draft benefits profile template
- develop the proposed baselines and targets and ensure they are appropriate
- agree nominated benefit owners
- update this document to include any other potential benefits identified by the development partner
- consider and update this document to include potential dis-benefits¹ and how the project plans to minimise any impact, and
- monitor and manage the realisation of planned benefits as the project progresses.

¹ A dis-benefit is an actual consequence of a project which is perceived to be negative by one or more stakeholders e.g. the potential loss of revenue to existing businesses.