



ANGUS HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD AUDIT COMMITTEE – 7 DECEMBER 2022

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – SUSTAINABILITY OF PRIMARY CARE (AN05/22)

REPORT BY ALEXANDER BERRY, CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

ABSTRACT

To update Audit Committee members on the output of the Internal Audit report regarding Sustainability of Primary Care.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Integration Joint Board Audit Committee:-

- (i) Acknowledges the issuing of a draft of the Sustainability of Primary Care Internal Audit Report.
- (ii) Notes that a copy of the finalised report will be shared with Audit Committee members between meetings and then discussed formally at the April 2022 IJB Audit Committee.

2. BACKGROUND

The 2021/22 Internal Audit plan included a review of the Sustainability of Primary Care. The draft output of this Internal Audit has been in circulation for some time and a near-final version is expected to emerge in December 2022. This draft is shared for noting at this stage as it is still subject to finalisation.

3. CURRENT POSITION

This audit was jointly commissioned by Angus IJB, Perth & Kinross IJB and NHS Tayside and reviewed strategic risks relating to Sustainability of Primary Care Services.

The first draft report was issued in May 2022 and has been widely circulated to NHS Tayside and IJB colleagues for comment. Draft management responses are now included in this version.

As a jointly commissioned report, this draft has recently been shared with NHS Tayside's Audit Committee. The covering report to their Audit report noted the following (abbreviated and adapted to reflect Angus content).

This report is a complex, multifaceted report covering many disparate areas which itself reflects the complexity of the nature of Primary Care Services and its associated risk factors. It is important therefore, that the response has ownership from all key parties and that it fully addresses the issues raised in the report. A meeting was held with representatives from all bodies to consider the report and the wider issues raised and a draft response has been prepared. However, it has not yet been possible to discuss the response and achieve sign-up from all partners and therefore the report is presented as a draft final.

Consultation is currently underway and the final report will be circulated once complete. Any significant amendments to this report and the action plan will be reported to the January 2023 NHS Tayside Audit and Risk Committee and thereafter shared with Angus IJB Audit Committee.

Each of the four Tayside partner organisations is managing a strategic Primary Care risk covering broadly the same areas. While each organisation will have a different perspective on this risk and accordingly each is formulated slightly differently, there is a requirement to ensure consistency and eliminate duplication of effort in the management of the risk.

This audit reviewed and provided constructive commentary on the adequacy of risk and performance management mechanisms. Management have already acknowledged the need for an overhaul of the strategic risk and Internal Auditors will provide overt assurance on the fully reviewed and updated risk as part of a future internal audit.

As the challenges with delivery of Primary Care services crystallise, a structured, proactive and strategic approach is needed to ensure effective management of this complex and important area. The complexity of the risk requires a holistic and coordinated approach to ensure effective and efficient management of the risk, including buy-in from all relevant partner bodies and, crucially, support from enabling functions such as Estates.

The audit identified several areas of good practice and a number of areas for improvement. Internal audit recommended that their findings should form the basis of a project plan aimed at improved risk management in this area, to be progressed in partnership through a joint Project Group with appropriate membership from the four organisations.

This draft report does indicate that only limited assurance can be derived from the current control mechanisms. Resolution of the Action Points will, it is to be anticipated, increase assurance levels.

It is important to remember that many governance systems, including those in Primary Care, were stretched by the demands of COVID-19. In addition, the interface with NHS Tayside regarding issues such as property does create challenges. Looking forward, it is anticipated that resources will be more able to be applied to address improvement work, risks and governance issues than has been the case since March 2020.

4. PROPOSALS

The Audit Committee are asked to note this report. However, a finalised version of the report will be shared with members in due course (expected to be January 2023).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Observations and recommendations in the report are intended to improve the management of the risks associated with Primary Care. While there are no direct financial implications of this report, the output will influence the management of c£70m of resources in General Practice alone across Tayside. Angus IJB and other IJB's already feel the financial impact of the sustainability issues in Primary Care through the impact of having to manage 2C Practices within Angus and Tayside.

6. RISK

Risks were inherent prior to the Internal Audit and the responses to the Action Points should improve risk management.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS – REPORT DISTRIBUTION

Reflecting previous discussions, assignment covering reports now set out the intended distribution of final Internal Audit reports. This does not affect the Audit Committee feedback.

Internal Audit Report Distribution – AN05/22 Sustainability of Primary Care

Distributed to	Purpose	By Whom
Angus Council Audit Leads	For information	Chief Finance Officer
Angus HSCP Executive Management Team	For consideration and supporting the development of improvement plan.	Primary Care Manager
Angus Primary Care Oversight Group	For consideration and supporting the development of improvement plan.	Primary Care Manager

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Draft Internal Audit Report AN05/22 – Sustainability of Primary Care