



Blue Badge Scheme

City of York Council

Internal Audit Report 2016/17

Business Unit: Customer & Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Assistant Director, Customers and Employees
Service Manager: Head of Business Support
Date Issued: 24 July 2017
Status: Final
Reference: 11760/002

	P1	P2	P3
Actions	0	0	1
Overall Audit Opinion	High Assurance		

Summary and Overall Conclusions

Introduction

The Blue Badge Scheme was introduced to help disabled people with severe mobility problems to access goods and services by allowing them to park close to their destination either as a driver or as a passenger. Parking for Blue Badge users may also be at a reduced cost or free of charge.

It is a national scheme, although local authorities are responsible for much of the administration of the scheme, including processing applications. In 2015-16 the council received approximately 3000 Blue Badge applications.

Objectives and Scope of the Audit

The purpose of this audit was to provide assurance to management that procedures and controls within the system will ensure that:

- Procedures are in line with good practice guidance
- Payments for Blue Badges are appropriately managed
- Applications are processed and authorised correctly within the required timescales
- Blue Badges are subject to an appropriate renewals process

Key Findings

The authority has in place procedures to process new applications, renewals and payments as well as monitoring any issues that may be occurring. Procedures within the authority are based on national good practice guidance. During the course of the audit the service implemented a formal appeals process for rejected applications and reduced the duplication in the recording of applications when the council changed from Frameworki to Mosaic for Adult Social Care cases.

The finding in the report relates to the contract for further assessments.

Overall Conclusions

It was found that the arrangements for managing risk were very good. An effective control environment appears to be in operation. Our overall opinion of the controls within the system at the time of the audit was that they provided **High Assurance**.

1 Contract for further assessments

Issue/Control Weakness

There is no contract in place for additional assessments

Risk

The authority may not be able to address issues if they occur

Findings

There is no current contract in place for the further assessments undertaken by the NHS where the application cannot be fully assessed in house by council staff.

The service are working with the council's procurement department to ensure that the contract is correctly procured and put in place.

Agreed Action 1.1

The service is currently working with Procurement to finalise an agreement with a provider for the service. This has been done through a framework City of York Council have in place with another local authority.

Priority

3

Responsible Officer

Business Support
Operations Manager

Timescale

1st Sept 2017

Audit Opinions and Priorities for Actions

Audit Opinions

Audit work is based on sampling transactions to test the operation of systems. It cannot guarantee the elimination of fraud or error. Our opinion is based on the risks we identify at the time of the audit.

Our overall audit opinion is based on 5 grades of opinion, as set out below.

Opinion	Assessment of internal control
High Assurance	Overall, very good management of risk. An effective control environment appears to be in operation.
Substantial Assurance	Overall, good management of risk with few weaknesses identified. An effective control environment is in operation but there is scope for further improvement in the areas identified.
Reasonable Assurance	Overall, satisfactory management of risk with a number of weaknesses identified. An acceptable control environment is in operation but there are a number of improvements that could be made.
Limited Assurance	Overall, poor management of risk with significant control weaknesses in key areas and major improvements required before an effective control environment will be in operation.
No Assurance	Overall, there is a fundamental failure in control and risks are not being effectively managed. A number of key areas require substantial improvement to protect the system from error and abuse.

Priorities for Actions

Priority 1	A fundamental system weakness, which presents unacceptable risk to the system objectives and requires urgent attention by management.
Priority 2	A significant system weakness, whose impact or frequency presents risks to the system objectives, which needs to be addressed by management.
Priority 3	The system objectives are not exposed to significant risk, but the issue merits attention by management.

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