

Best Value Introduction

Audit Scotland describes Best Value as “ensuring that there is good governance and effective management of resources, with a focus on improvement, to deliver the best possible outcomes for the public.” The duty of Best Value applies to all public bodies in Scotland. It is a statutory duty for local authorities, such as councils.

In 2016 a revised framework for the auditing of Best Value was approved by the Accounts Commission. A key element of the framework is the publication of a Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) for the council at least once during a five-year period. It is informed by the Annual Audit Report, other statutory reports and Audit Scotland reports including the Local Government Overview series (performance, finance) published annually.

The BVAR will be considered by the Commission, in public, and action may be required of the council. The fieldwork for the BVAR for Aberdeenshire Council will take place between February and April 2019.

The fieldwork for the development of the BVAR includes:

- Interviews with councillors, senior officers and partner organisations;
- Observation of council, committee and board meetings;
- Review of documents and performance data and;
- Focus groups with councillors, officers and community groups.

Each council’s BVAR incorporates an analysis of the Best Value characteristics aligned to the themes of:

- Vision and strategic direction;
- Performance;
- Use of resources;
- Partnership working;
- Improvement and transformation

Case Study Criteria

As part of our preparation for our Best Value Assurance Report we will be compiling a narrative to show the council's transformation since the last Best Value Audit. In order to do this, the Best Value Key Officer group will be sourcing case studies from all services. To ensure that the case study stays relevant to Best Value's key themes, the below criteria has been set out:

- Please ensure that a relevant link with BV criteria is demonstrated throughout
- Where relevant, please complete each section of the template as fully as possible
- Each section must contain narrative along with relevant links of evidence
- Each case study should show a consistent and clear link to at least one of the council's [11 priorities](#) (point 6).

Case Study Template

Shifting the balance of inhouse homecare

How does this link with the criteria of Best Value?

This work involved changing the focus for the HSCP's internal homecare service to ensure better use of staffing and financial resources and to encourage increased capacity from the independent providers operating in the area.

How does this link to our priorities?

This links with the priority to 'support the delivery of the health and social care strategic plan'.

What research was undertaken to ensure best practice?

What was the background to the case story?

In 2018, a project began in North and Central Aberdeenshire to refocus the internal homecare provision to concentrate on four key areas or 'pillars':

1. Enablement – six week intensive intervention.
2. Rapid Response - providing a 24 hour responder service for planned and unplanned need (ARCH).
3. Complex cases, end of life and palliative care.
4. Hard to reach, remote and rural areas.

The aim of this change in focus for the internal homecare service was to ensure better use of staffing and financial resources and to encourage increased capacity from the independent providers operating in the area by offering more substantial packages of work.

What activity was undertaken?

As described above, inhouse homecare provision was shifted so that it was focussed on the 'four pillars' and external providers managed the other aspects of care at home service provision.

How did this contribute to improved outcomes?

The change in proportion of internal and external homecare provision from January 2018 to January 2019 is shown below.

| | January 2018 | | January 2019 | | Difference | |
|---------------|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|------------|----------|
| | In house | External | In house | External | In house | External |
| Peterhead | 49.89% | 50.11% | 44.59% | 55.41% | -5.3% | +5.3% |
| Inverurie | 28.15% | 71.85% | 22.82% | 77.18% | -5.33% | +5.33% |
| Aberdeenshire | 41.56% | 58.44% | 36.2% | 63.8% | -5.36% | +5.36% |

How did this assist in delivering value for money?

The overarching aim was to increase capacity within the inhouse homecare team so that more clients could access the 'enablement pathway'. Enablement is a time limited, intensive intervention that aims to reduce or remove the need for ongoing homecare support by increasing a service user's independence through restoring their skills to carry out activities of daily life.

As described above, by increasing the number of service users being referred onto the enablement pathway, we would expect to see a reduction in the provision of ongoing care at home provision by private providers, as the ability to live independently has been restored.

This assists in delivering value for money as the focus on rehabilitation and enablement reduces dependence on HSCP services on an ongoing basis.

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| What did we learn? |
| The project helped develop closer working relationships to support both commissioners and providers to better understand what is needed from the care at home market. Moving and it is hoped this may help the service to be better placed to cope with the increased demands of an ageing population. |

*****Please attach any supporting documents/evidence relevant to the case study*****