

## **1.0 SUMMARY**

At the June, Bute and Cowal Area Committee, there was a discussion regarding Care Inspectorate grades, in particular one provider Mears Care Ltd who are currently scoring grades of 3 across all inspection categories. Following this discussion Adult Care were requested to provide detail that they were satisfied the provider was providing service at an appropriate standard.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Area Committee are asked to note the content of this report.

## **3.0 DETAIL**

Mears Care Ltd has been a provider of care at home services in Argyll and Bute since July 2009. From this time until October 2012 the provider's performance was good and they maintained grades of 4's in all categories. Following a Care Inspectorate inspection in Oct 2012 their grade for the Quality of Care and Support category fell to a 2. They did not receive a 2 in any other category. However, the scoring system records the lowest score across a range of themes within each category. Around this time the organisation acquired the business of another local care provider following an administration process. It has subsequently been acknowledged that their focus on this event had a detrimental effect on their existing Cowal services.

Date	Quality of Care and Support	Quality of Staffing	Quality of Management & Leadership
20 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2013	3	3	3
19 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2012	2	3	3
4 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2010	4	4	4

Due to the above, this provider's contract risk rating was raised in October 2012 and additional monitoring activity arranged. Adult Services alongside the Procurement and Commissioning Team followed their normal process when a risk level is raised and worked in partnership with the provider to map out improvements and develop an action plan.

Mears Care Ltd currently provides 380 hours per week in Cowal. In the period since their last inspection 20/11/13 we have received and investigated a total of 4 service concerns. Taking account of their activity level, this reflects positively on the quality of services provided.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The reason for the reduction in grades is understood. The provider has made significant improvements that are reflected in the Care Inspectorate's inspection of November 2013. It is important to acknowledge that the public is made aware of all registered care services grades and are able to make an informed choice as to which organisation to use to when they require a care service.

The Council will continue to work with the provider to ensure the improvement trend is sustained. This is a function of the contract and supplier management process and a precursor to formal punitive action.

Current contractual terms and conditions provide a measured range of sanctions, appropriate to the scale of any perceived failings.

It is important to acknowledge the role of the Care Inspectorate, as the statutory regulator, when considering the application of these sanctions.

Mutual respect and maintaining a commitment to work in partnership, to deliver quality services, is an inherent feature of the contractual relationship, between the Council and commissioned service providers.

## **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Policy-Consistent with Argyll and Bute's contract and supplier management process

5.2 Financial - None

5.3 Legal - None

5.4 HR - None

5.5 Equalities - None

5.6 Risk - None

5.7 Customer Service - None

### **Executive Director of Customer Services**

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