

DEPARTMENT Corporate Services	AUDIT REVIEW Deputyships (2023/24)	FINAL REPORT ISSUED 27 December 2023
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BACKGROUND

A Deputy is appointed by the Court of Protection to manage the property and affairs of another person, who lacks the mental capacity to manage them themselves. A Deputy can only act under a court order from the Court of Protection.

Upon completion of a Deputyship appointment, the client’s finances are managed by the Corporate Services Department with the Director of Corporate Services as the Deputy. As Deputy, the Director of Corporate Services has numerous responsibilities including a duty to look after the client’s assets, open a receivership account, claim all benefits due to the client and make sure that all income is collected, and all bills are paid on time.

SCOPE

The purpose of the Audit was to assess the extent to which there are adequate procedures and controls in place within the Corporate Services Department to appropriately fulfil the Deputyship responsibility, ensuring the Office of Public Guardian’s ‘Deputyship Standards’ are adhered to.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The audit findings and recommendations are detailed in the attached Action Plan. A summary of these recommendations by priority is outlined below:

Priority	3*	2*	1*	Total
Number of Recommendations	0	0	1	1

ASSURANCE RATING

The post review assurance level for systems relating to Deputyships is categorised as: **HIGH.**

Internal Audit review – Deputyships (2023/24)

Action Plan

Ref	Summary of Issue Identified	Recommendation	Priority Level	Planned Action · Responsible Officer(s) Target Date	Updated Position
1	<p>Document Storage</p> <p>Client files are currently stored in an open cupboard within the Corporate Services office; whilst entry to both the building and corridor is by key card only, given the sensitive nature of information contained within the files, it would be prudent to maintain the files in a locked receptacle, accessible only to authorised officers.</p>	<p>Client files should be maintained in a locked receptacle, accessible only to authorised officers, to maintain confidentiality. Files should also be stored securely to limit the risk of damage to key documents (e.g., fire-safe receptacle).</p>	*	<p>Available lockable cabinets have been identified within the offices of Parc Dewi Sant. As furniture is moved down to County Hall from this site as teams relocate, the Deputyship team within the corporate accountancy section will substitute the current cupboards for the more secure lockable cabinets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <p>Gareth Davies Finance Manager - Corporate</p> <p>29 February 2024</p>	<p>The lockable storage units have been identified for use and are due to be available imminently.</p> <p>In the meantime, Deputyship files and documents continue to be maintained in a secure office.</p>