

Cambridgeshire County Council Record of Decision

Decision taken by an officer of the Council

Title of decision	Allocation of the Workforce Capacity Fund in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic
Date decision taken	10 th February 2021
Decision maker	Chief Executive <i>(ordinarily it would be Adults Committee)</i>

Details of decision taken

A decision has been made to allocate the Workforce Capacity Fund, equating to £1,162,028, to cover the following areas:

- **Costs associated with additional internal capacity required to support Discharge to Assess, 7 day working and other requirements stipulated by central government in response to the pandemic**
- **Expansion of capacity to deliver support to local carers**
- **Expansion of capacity to deliver support focused on resilience and wellbeing to frontline workers delivering care within the domiciliary care, extra care, supported living settings as well as housing relating support**
- **A recruitment campaign focusing on Personal Assistants and identification of Hidden Carers**
- **To passport funding to independent sector providers of care homes, domiciliary care, supported living and extra care on a per bed/service user basis for use in line with grant conditions.**

A Workforce Capacity Fund has been awarded to Cambridgeshire to enable the Council to rapidly expand on existing capacity both internally and within the independent sector market. The fund amounts to £1,162,028 and will be paid through a Section 31 ring fenced grant exclusively for actions which enable the Council to deliver measures to supplement and strengthen adult social care staff capacity to ensure that safe and continuous care is achieved to deliver the following outcomes:

- maintain care provision and continuity of care for recipients where pressing workforce shortages may put this at risk
- support providers to restrict staff movement in all but exceptional circumstances, which is critical for managing the risk of outbreaks and infection in care homes
- support safe and timely hospital discharges to a range of care environments, including domiciliary care, to prevent or address delays as a result of workforce shortages
- enable care providers to care for new service users where the need arises

The funding comes with a number of conditions which must be adhered to. This includes:

- It must only be used for the specific additional COVID-19 measures that deliver additional staff capacity, beyond the measures the local authority is currently budgeting for. This could include a range of activities such as expansion of staffing banks, local recruitment initiatives, redeployment, new training costs and incentives for staff to complete additional hours.
- The grant must not be used for fee uplifts, expenditure already incurred or activities for which the local authority has earmarked or allocated expenditure or for activities which do not support the primary purpose of the Workforce Capacity Fund which is to deliver additional staffing capacity. This means the grant cannot be used on non-staffing capacity expenditure – for example, isolation pay.
- Local authorities can choose to pass some or all of their funding to care providers within the local authority's geographical area to deliver measures that increase staffing capacity within the organisation.

The recommended allocation of the grant detailed below has been developed following engagement from stakeholders across internal teams, local providers and care associations. It has accounted for the following:

- Additional capacity generated and funded internally within the local authority to support management of demand and pressures associated with the pandemic.
- The need to support informal carers with the ongoing challenges caused by the pandemic, particularly young carers. Recent research carried out within the voluntary sector indicated an increase in loneliness, isolation and numbers of informal carers struggling to cope. Expansion of capacity has therefore been incorporated where this is achievable within the parameters of the grant conditions.
- Personal assistants provide another form of community capacity critical in supporting the sector through this period. However, there are a comparatively low number of personal assistants within this area and

increasing this would enable a more flexible and outcomes focused offer which also adds to local available support capacity. The fund will therefore be used to support expansion of capacity in this area and the wider sector through a campaign. The benefits of this will stretch across the market as the need to increase recruitment continues and the positive impact of this could continue beyond the period of the fund.

- The ongoing pressures being managed by independent sector providers across the market from care homes to domiciliary care. A significant proportion of this fund will therefore be transferred to the market on a per service user/bed basis.

Description	Cost
Recruitment Campaign targeted at increasing personal assistants.	£175,000
Investment in Care Home Support Team – to provide practice support for providers to support sustainable, quality provision of care.	£52,000
Additional capacity in social care provision, including occupational therapy, technology enabled care (TEC), LD Young Adults Team and Mental health amps team.	£126,000
Increased TEC capacity	£17,100
Expansion of the Listening Ear Service to provide face to face support to young adult carers	£11,092
Formal carer wellbeing – additional online sessions to support emotional wellbeing and mental health of social care workforce	£3,570
Passport to Market – support to care homes to manage the additional staffing costs associated with infection, prevention control and outbreak management	£777,266
Total	£1,162,028

The grant will be paid in two instalments with the first being made in early February 2021 and the second in March 2021. To ensure adherence to state aid regulations, as well as conditions of the grant funding, all providers will be required to review and disclose any state aid implications and confirm adherence to the grant conditions prior to the award of allocated funds.

Reasons for taking decision

The conditions of this grant stipulate that any funding must be spent between January and March 2021 which does not give officers time to take the key decision through Adults Committee in line with usual process. Failure to utilise funding within the timescales set would result in the Council missing the opportunity to address costs associated with ongoing management of the pandemic both internally and within the independent sector market.

Options considered

This decision would ordinarily be taken by Adults Committee. As there will not be a virtual meeting of Adults Committee until 18th March 2020, it is important that the Chief Executive takes this decision.

The Chief Executive has consulted and obtained the approval of all the Group Leaders.

Details of any conflict of interests declared

None

Details of any disclosable pecuniary interest or non-statutory disclosable interest declared

None

Signature of decision maker (if appropriate)



Chief Executive