

Addendum to Agenda Item No.14 - Finance Monitoring Report January 2021/22

1. Background

- 1.1 Finance Monitoring Reports (FMRs) are produced monthly by all services and the overall position for the Council is reported through the Integrated Finance Monitoring Report (IFMR) to Strategy and Resources (S&R) committee. S&R committee are responsible for decision making on items across the Council including the use of reserves and approval of debt write offs.
- 1.2 As part of the IFMR for January, S&R committee will be asked to approve the following actions which are linked to Adults and Health budgets:
 - The write off of two Adult Social Care debts totalling £56.9k;
 - The transfer of up to £830k to earmarked reserves for investment in the development of the Adult Social Care and Health workforce across Cambridgeshire;
 - Delegation to the s151 Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy and Resources committee, on funding for the continuation of hospital discharge capacity into 2022/23; and
 - The use of £307k of Public Reserves to support additional work on Health Checks in 2022/23 as set out in the main report for endorsement by Adults and Health committee.

2. Debt Write-Offs

- 2.1 There are two debts of over £25,000 relating to the estates of service users in receipt of council arranged adult social care who have died and where we believe there is no prospect of recovering debts. Debt A is £29k in total, and Debt B £28k.
- 2.2 In the case of Debt A, which was accrued between 2016 and 2019, invoices from CCC went partly unpaid by a service-user's spouse, who was managing their financial affairs. We were unable to secure a deferred payment agreement on the service-user's house as that required the spouse's consent as a joint-owner. Upon the service-user's death, due to that joint-ownership the house did not form part of the estate from which this debt could be paid, and the estate does not have sufficient funds from other sources.
- 2.3 In the case of Debt B, a debt built up for a service-user who lacked capacity. In these cases, CCC applies to the Court of Protection for a deputyship, which takes an increasingly long time to get agreed; at the point of a deputyship being awarded assessed client contributions can be paid against the debt. Unfortunately, in this case, the service-user died before the deputyship was

awarded. We are unable to trace next of kin for the service-user, despite extensive effort involving Pathfinder Legal Services and a tracing agent. We are therefore unable to make a claim against the service-user's estate without extensive further work to identify next of kin which is likely to be uneconomic.

- 2.4 It should be emphasised that debt write offs are used exceptionally, and social care contributions are collected successfully from thousands of clients and their estates each month.

3. Development of the Adult Social Care and Health workforce across Cambridgeshire

- 3.1 We are currently seeing significant pressures on the Adult Social Care workforce in Cambridgeshire. These include widespread staffing issues driving cost pressures including increased hourly rates, higher recruitment costs, retention incentives, increased agency use, increased training costs and increased staff sickness costs. Staff health and wellbeing is challenged, leading many staff to leave the sector which is contributing to the difficulties faced by providers.
- 3.2 Further detail was provided in the paper to this Committee in January 2022 which set out the case for market pressure payments to be funded from the Workforce Development Fund grant funding for 2021/22, with budget implications for 2022/23 built into the Business Plan.
[Adult Market Pressure Payments](#)
- 3.3 The position in Cambridgeshire is reflected across the eastern region, and similar issues are being seen by our health partners. The £1.6m of government funding received in the form of the Workforce Development Grant ends on 31st March 2022, however, pressures within the system will remain. We have been allocated £1.6m of funding for 2022/23 for the work required by the reforms of Adult Social Care due to come into effect in 2023, and some of this funding could be used to support the cost of care. However, we have also been in discussion with regional Local Authority and Health partners with regard to addressing workforce issues in a joined-up way across the system.
- 3.4 Strategy and Resources Committee will be asked to approve the transfer to earmarked reserves of up to £830k to fund workforce development for the Adult Social Care and Health workforce at Integrated Care System and county wide level, working alongside regional Local Authority and Health partners. This reflects external funding contributions received but not yet spent.

4. Discharge to Assess

- 4.1 We are continuing to see hospital discharge pressures across the system. National funding for care following hospital discharges comes to an end on

31st March, however, significant discharge pressures remain. We are in discussion with local Health partners over funding to continue to sustain discharge capacity into 2022/23. Due to the ongoing nature of those discussions, S&R will be asked to delegate to the s151 officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy and Resources committee, a decision around funding for this scheme into 2022/23.

Additional Recommendation:

- iii) note the decisions Strategy and Resources Committee will be asked to approve that relate to budgets within the remit of the Adults and Health Committee.