

# Record of decision taken under delegated powers by a council officer



Title:	Surrey County Council Response to Covid: Age UK Surrey information and advice service
Divisions Affected:	All divisions
Key Decision:	Yes
Reason Key:	Affects two or more Divisions
Decision taken under delegation by virtue of:	<b>Cabinet decision 31 March 2020 Min ref: 41/20</b>

## Summary

Age UK Surrey provides a countywide information and advice service for people aged 50+ and carers across Surrey and is a commissioned service by Adult Social Care and the six local joint commissioning groups – annual funding of £81.5k is paid to Age UK. This service provides support and advice in relation to housing, help at home, local support and benefits advice. The main mode of operations is via telephone from a team based at the Guildford office complemented by face-to-face visits at the office and some home visits for people who are housebound or particularly frail.

Adult Social Care regularly signposts people to the Age UK Surrey information and advice service. It is an important part of the broader support people can access in the community linked to strengths-based practice.

In response to COVID-19 Age UK Surrey has moved this service to be operated virtually. In order to do this and enable staff to work at home and conduct video and telephone calls with residents in a consistent way Age UK purchased laptops and mobile phones for their staff. The total cost incurred was £18.9k. As some services have stopped or had to be adapted, the organisation has introduced a new emergency shopping service and Check in and Chat service to help the local response and support the most vulnerable people. The new SCC Community Helpline is diverting residents to these services.

Age UK Surrey has requested that SCC reimburses them for the costs for purchase of laptops and mobile phones which is a significant change in business process. With reduced opportunities for fundraising due to COVID-19, Age UK Surrey does not have other means to pay for these costs.

**Decision made**Decision made:

It was AGREED that:

ASC would make a one off payment of £18.9k to Age UK Surrey to reimburse the charity for costs incurred due to purchase of laptops and mobile phones to enable virtual operation of their information and advice service to people aged 50+ and carers across Surrey during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The payment will be outside of the normal payments made to Age UK for the information & advice service and the intention is for this payment to be funded out the COVID-19 funding SCC is receiving from government.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure residents can continue to access the information and advice service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Decision taken by:	Simon White – Executive Director for ASC Sinead Mooney – Cabinet Member for Adults
Decision taken on:	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2020
To be implemented on:	Payment to be made following CLT and Cabinet confirmation of this decision. This is due to take place on 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2020.

**Alternative options considered**

The alternative is to not reimburse Age UK Surrey for the additional costs and leave the charity to try to find alternative means for funding them. This could put the continued delivery of the information and advice service at risk.

**Summary of any financial implications**

The cost to SCC will be £18.9k.  
This will cost will be met out of the COVID-19 funding SCC is receiving from central government, not ASC's base budget.

**Declarations of conflicts of interest**

None

**Consultation/Process Followed**

Decision taken in consultation with the lead commissioner for the Age UK Surrey information and advice service, the Assistant Director for Commissioning &

Transformation, the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and the Cabinet Members for Adults.

The Adults Leadership Team reviewed the request made by Age UK Surrey at their meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020 and recommended that it is approved and paid.

**Background Documents**

Exempt:

Cabinet report 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020 setting out the council's response to Covid-19.
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