

Record of decision taken under delegated powers by a council officer



Title:	Surrey County Council Response to Covid: providing support to service providers
Divisions Affected:	All divisions
Key Decision:	Yes
Reason Key:	Affects two or more Divisions
Decision taken under delegation by virtue of:	Cabinet decision 31 March 2020 Min ref: 41/20

Summary

Adult Social Care providers that the Council commissions care services from are facing additional financial pressures due to the COVID-19 (C19) pandemic.

SCC moved quickly to develop a support offer to give confidence to the sector. This support offer was communicated to ASC providers on 27th March and 8th April 2020. In summary this support offer included:

- payments on account to support providers with cash flow challenges.
- consideration of making payments at pre C19 levels where providers have had to close services due to C19 (subject to other support available to providers).
- the ability for providers to increase support for specific individuals during the C19 lock down by up to 15% without prior agreement by SCC.
- a process for providers to submit claims with evidence of additional costs incurred due to C19 for SCC to review and decide whether to pay.

A number of things have happened since this offer was communicated:

- Guidance was issued by the LGA and ADASS about how ASC providers should be supported in relation to C19. This guidance estimated that providers would typically incur additional cost pressures of around 10% due to C19.
- The government published an Adult Social Care Action Plan. This stated that local authorities should use the C19 grant funding they are receiving from government to support provider cash flow and meet new costs arising from C19.
- SCC has learned more about the support offers being put in place by other local authorities for ASC providers. The majority of authorities SCC has spoken to, including a number of county councils in the South, are committing to some form of additional payments to providers.
- The Surrey Care Association and individual ASC providers have made representations that the support offer communicated by SCC is deficient as it does not provide any financial certainty for providers in relation to coverage for additional C19 costs.

In response to these emerging issues, SCC has decided to revise the C19 support offer to ASC providers as follows:

1. Make goodwill grant payments to all ASC providers for the period April – June 2020 equivalent to 10% of the value care packages open with each provider at the end of March 2020. This will be paid as single lump amounts for the whole period.
2. Agree to make premium payments to help incentivise home care providers to take new packages following hospital discharge equivalent to 10% of the value of care delivered for new packages following hospital discharge in the period 23rd March 2020 – 28th June 2020.
3. Amend the 15% tolerance for increases to care packages without ASC approval to only apply to home care packages in light of the 10% goodwill grant payments
4. Keep all other aspects of the support offer already communicated the same.

Decision made

Decision made:

It was AGREED that:

The C19 support offer previously communicated to ASC providers would be amended as set out in Summary section above.

Reasons for Decision:

To sustain Surrey's ASC market during the C19 crisis, taking into account national guidance and action being taken by other local authorities in the region.

Decision taken by:	Simon White – Executive Director for ASC Sinead Mooney – Cabinet Member for Adults Leigh Whitehouse – Executive Director for Resources Mel Few – Cabinet Member for Finance
Decision taken on:	23 rd April 2020
To be implemented on:	A letter confirming the revised support offer will be sent to all ASC providers by 24 th April. SCC will then endeavour to process the goodwill grant payments within the following two weeks.

Alternative options considered

The alternative is to retain the support offer as previously communicated to ASC providers.

Following national guidance and representations made by the Surrey Care Association and a number of individual providers, it was felt that keeping the offer as originally communicated would no longer be suitable to sufficiently support Surrey's ASC market during the C19 crisis.

Summary of any financial implications

The goodwill grant payments to ASC providers for directly commissioned care packages for the period April – June 2020 will cost just under £9m. These goodwill grant payments will be paid up front in a single lump sum amount and will be funded out of the £25.2m C19 grant that SCC has already received from government.

It is expected that some payments may also be required in relation to care packages that providers offer to individuals who ASC pays Direct Payments to, and also potentially for some of the broader support services that ASC commissions beyond specific care packages to meet people's assessed eligible needs. It is estimated that this could cost between a further £0.5 - £1m on top of the £9m of payments made in relation to directly commissioned care packages.

Declarations of conflicts of interest

None

Consultation/Process Followed

Decision taken in consultation with Cabinet Members for Adults and Finance, the Executive Directors for Adult Social Care and Resources, and also based on discussions with the Surrey Care Association and ASC providers.

Background Documents

Exempt:

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