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Ref: 19:2020

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WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

RECORD OF OFFICER EXECUTIVE DECISION

Item	Outcome
Dates of Decisions	29 July 2020 3 August 2020 6 August 2020
Decision Maker	Paula Furnival - Strategic Director for People
Brief Description of Decision	The temporary funding arrangements and support for Adult Social Care Providers, to support them during the COVID-19 outbreak have been reviewed. a) Further to the decision made on 20 April 2020 to contract with a homecare agency on a block contract basis. The block contract will deliver 450 hours of homecare per week in Wyre Forest, Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Bromsgrove for a duration of up to 6 months (initial contract length of 4 months, with an option to extend by a further 2 months for either all or a geographical part of the contract). On review it was agreed on 3 August 2020 that this contract will cease at the initial contract end date of 16 August 2020 (Appendix 1 – Original ROED). b) Further to the decision on 17 March 2020 to continue to make payments to providers of domiciliary care, supported living and extra care, for the duration of the Covid-19 outbreak, even in cases where services cannot be delivered. On review it was agreed on 3 August 2020 that these payments will cease on 3 August 2020. (Appendix 2 – Original ROED) c) Further to the decision on 17 March 2020 to continue to make payments to providers of day services, for the duration of the Covid-19 outbreak, even in cases where services cannot be delivered. On review it was agreed on 6 August that these payments will cease on 10 August 2020. (Appendix 2 – Original ROED) d) Further to the decision on 1 April 2020 to make additional payments to providers for Covid-19 related cost pressures. These payments took the form of an additional temporary percentage increase to providers, from the beginning of April, with the temporary nature of the increase to be reviewed in line with the developing COVID-19 situation. On review it was agreed on 3 August that these payments will cease from 3 August 2020 for domiciliary care, extra care and supported living 1-1, and from 22 August 2020 for residential and

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	nursing care, shared lives and supported living weekly support. (Appendix 2 - Original ROED) e) Further to the Executive Officer Decision on 19 March, to purchase care over and above a person's agreed care and support plan, on review a decision was made on 3 August that this approach will stop from 3 August 2020 (Appendix 3 – Original ROED). It is recognised that some providers will be incurring additional COVID-19 related costs over and above the costs already reimbursed, but this is also likely to vary considerably from provider to provider. The process already in place for considerations of additional reimbursements for providers, on a case by case basis will remain for those providers who apply to the council for further financial assistance. Providers who approach the council will be asked to submit details of the further additional costs which they are incurring. These applications will be reviewed by the Head of Finance and Strategic Director for People, on a case by case basis and payments made where costs are deemed reasonable and directly related to COVID-19. The provider will be expected to be explicit in identifying what they are claiming for e.g. additional costs of PPE, staffing etc which is in excess of the additional amount they have received as an increased fee or which cannot be funded from any other grants or support that the provider is receiving. The amount reimbursed will also take into account other factors such as the percentage of total business that the council has with the provider. The claim for additional costs is conditional on this being on an 'open-book' basis and evidence (such as payroll, invoices, management accounts) may be requested and audited at a later date. Any payments made which are found subsequently to either not meet the criteria or not be substantiated will be set-off by Worcestershire County Council from future payments in accordance with the conditions of providers' contracts. Where these additional payments relate to clients who have been discharged from hospital or are made to prevent hospital admission, funding will be claimed via the CCG, otherwise the payments will be funded by the additional grant being allocated to local authorities. These temporary measures will continue to be reviewed in line with Government guidance and consideration of ongoing local impact of COVID-19.

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Reason(s) For Decision	This decision has been made with consideration to: • Completion and continuation of testing of staff and residents in all care homes • The significant sustained reduction in the number of newly confirmed cases within Worcestershire • Over 60% of care homes in Worcestershire remaining COVID-19 negative during the pandemic • The Council's financial gap when comparing actual and forecast spend, due to COVID-19 with Government and CCG COVID-19 grant allocations • Ensuring individual providers are still able to approach the Council to recoup extraordinary COVID-19 related spend, as outlined above. These revised measures have been taken in order to continue to contribute towards the resilience of the health and social care system, where required, in Worcestershire and prevent provider failure to ensure there continues to be sufficient good quality supply of services in Worcestershire in order that the Council's duties under the Care Act can continue to be met now and moving forwards.
Alternative Options Considered and Rejected	The option to continue to pay payments at the rate and level outlined above was rejected due to the risk of sustainable financial viability of the Authority.
Any Conflict of Interest declared by a consulted Cabinet Member/ any dispensation granted	N/a