

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL
DECISION**



DECISION OF: S151 OFFICER

**WITH ADVICE FROM: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND DIRECTOR OF
ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

DIRECTORATE: PEOPLE

DECISION NO: 001

(2020/21 ASC: COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund)

SUBJECT:

COVID-19 Emergency – Care Market Sustainability: Temporary fee uplifts for Adult Social Care providers

KEY DECISION:

Yes

REASON:

The increase is considered urgent in appropriately responding to the COVID-19 crisis, ensuring capacity and supporting the sustainability of the social care market.

BACKGROUND:

The immediate impact of the current crisis for care providers is both complex and significant, and in the absence of nationally mandated support, ASC Departments are required to consider local responses in line with findings and advice from a recent LGA/ADASS review that highlighted an increase in care market costs during March and early April of c.10%. Care providers are understandably anxious about the additional costs that they are incurring to ensure safe and effective delivery of their services. The financial strategies emerging from recent ADASS discussions with authorities have typically suggested between 5% and 10% uplifts for providers.

While all authorities in the South West region were initially opposed to the straight 10% uplift highlighted in the recent LGA/ADASS letter, the feedback in the ADASS Finance Leads meeting (14 April 2020) indicates that a large number are proposing the 10% uplift option (refer Appendix A – schedule of responses in South West Region Finance meeting).

It is understood from discussions with neighbouring authorities that North Somerset Council are considering a flat rate increase of £100 per week on all care home placements and an increase of £1 per hour on all domiciliary care packages. South

Gloucestershire Council are considering adopting a temporary 10% fee uplift for all commissioned Adult Social Care services (except block contracts) and a case by case evidenced approach for services that do not involve personal care e.g. day services. The CCG position is unknown at this point.

DECISION:

To implement a temporary increase to adult care provider fees as follows for an initial period of six weeks from 6 April 2020 to 17 May.

- A flat rate increase of £100 per week on all care home placements currently contracted by Bristol City Council
- An increase of £1 per hour on all domiciliary care including Extra Care, Reablement and Supported Living; and the equivalent percentage increase for Direct Payments
- Pay a month in advance to ease cash flow for the providers
- Pay domiciliary care providers a fixed sum per period during the emergency based on 90% of Commissioned hours (110% for Extra Care Housing Providers)
- Commence from 6 April 2020 and continue for 6 weeks to 17 May 2020
- The payment to be paid as a temporary Exceptional Special Need to distinguish this and does not constitute a formal increase in relation to the individual care package.

A further paper will be presented to CLB setting out findings from the review of the first six weeks, and making a proposal for an extension of the arrangements for a further period of up to seven weeks, as required.

This proposal for the first six weeks represents the equivalent of an overall increase of 7.69% with a weekly cost of £226,475, or c.£1.359m over a six-week period.

REASONS:

This proposal reflects guidance provided by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care (ADASS), and recognises the significant additional costs being incurred by care providers during the COVID-19 crisis.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

The following were considered.

- To 'do nothing and review on a case by case' basis was considered and discounted given the scale of the pandemic, Government policy and the LGA/ADASS guidance was very clear about the emerging pressures, indicating that the care market will not be able to sustain its back office and administrative processes in face of COVID-19.
- A simple 10% increase was considered, but a differentiated approach to reflect the different costs being sustained by different providers was felt to be more appropriate.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

These increases lead to additional costs in the region of £226,475 per week, or c.£1.359m for a six week period.

The increases will be funded from the COVID-19 government response grant paid to the Council at the beginning of April. However, it is worth noting that additional costs and loss of income for the period of the emergency are likely to far exceed this initial allocation from government.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a duty to support the care market and ensure capacity and sustainability.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

CONSULTATION

Discussions have taken place with care providers.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The main risk, as described above, relates to affordability, given the value of the initial grant made available to the Council by central government.

The Council also commissions packages of care on behalf of the CCG and they will need to agree any increases to those prices.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes / No

The proposals are likely to have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics in that they should help support and maintain capacity in the care market.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

None, other than those already highlighted

APPENDICES

Appendix A: South West Region: Local Authority proposed funding support for Providers

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Letter from LGA / ADASS

This decision is being taken under the urgency/emergency powers provided in the Council's Constitution and scheme of delegation.

The Head of Paid Service and / or Section 151 Officer can take emergency action on behalf of the Council on any matter in cases of urgency or emergency, wherever possible in consultation with the Mayor or Deputy Mayor for Finance, Governance and Performance and subject to a full report as soon as possible afterwards to the relevant forum explaining the decision, the reasons for it and why the decision was treated as a matter of urgency.

SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER:

Title: S151 Officer and / or Head of Paid Service

Signed:.....

Date:

Consultees:

Title: Deputy Mayor for Finance, Governance and Performance

Signed:

Date:

WHERE APPLICABLE ONLY

Title: Cabinet Member for

Date:

Signed:

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed:to follow.....

Title: ...Director of Adult Social Care.....

Date:

Appendix A: South West Region: Local Authority proposed funding support for Providers

Authority	Approach	Uplift Proposed
North Somerset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Homes: Flat £100 per Service User Resident per week • Domiciliary: increase of £1 per Hour 	8.75%
Cornwall	In discussion – targeting actual increased costs	?
BCP		10%
Dorset		10%
Somerset		10%
Swindon		10%
Gloucestershire	Two options – 10% or North Somerset	10%
Torbay	18% on home care, rest on a case by case basis	10%
Wiltshire	Case by Case	10%
Plymouth		5%