

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME  
RECORD OF DECISION**

**TO BE UPLOADED TO THE INTERNET BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

<b>Date:</b> 26/10/2023	<b>Ref No:</b> 2187
<b>Responsible Officer:</b> Matthew Logan, Strategic Lead Integrated Commissioning	
<b>Type of Decision (please refer to MO Guidance):</b>	
Key	<input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Freedom of Information Status:</b> <i>(can the report go in the public domain)</i> Yes	
<b>Title/Subject matter:</b> Market Sustainability Funder - Adult Social Care Independent Sector Workforce Support Programme	
<b>Budget/Strategy/Policy/Compliance:</b>	
(i) Is the decision within an Approved Budget?	Yes
(ii) Is the decision in conflict with the council's policies, strategies or relevant service plans?	No
(iii) Does the decision amend existing or raise new policy issues?	No
(iv) Is the decision significant and/or does it meet the £100,000 threshold for recording?	Yes
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b> [Does this decision change policy, procedure or working practice or negatively impact on a group of people? <b>If yes</b> – complete EIA and summarise issues identified and recommendations – forward EIA to Corporate HR]	Yes

## Summary:

In November 2022 the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund was announced as part of the autumn statement. The primary purpose of the fund was to support Local Authorities to make improvements to adult social care services in their area, with specific focus on building capacity and improvement market sustainability.

The government considered 3 target areas of improvement that would underpin the objective of building capacity and improving market sustainability. These were:

- Increasing fee rates paid to adult social care providers.
- Increasing adult social care workforce capacity and retention
- Reducing adult social care waiting times

Of those 3 target areas, local authorities could choose one, two or all three to focus on and each were linked to specific metrics that the Department of Health and Social Care would use to monitor performance.

The Council utilised MSIF for its fee uplifts for 23/24 but in July 2023, the government provided a further £365 million of ringfenced funding in the form of Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) Workforce Fund.<sup>1</sup>

Once again, local authorities could use the funding for the three target areas above.

The Council has been allocated a total of £3.154m of Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) and Workforce Fund alongside fee uplifts, identified workforce capacity and retention and reducing adult social care waiting times as areas they will look to target with the funding available.

This report requests approval to spend £381,600 of MSIF on commissioning an Adult Social Care Workforce Support Programme, developed, and co-designed alongside our independent sector care provider partners. This will look to tackle the substantial workforce challenges our providers are having, while transforming how they manage the attraction, management, recruitment, and retention of staff in Bury going forward.

Training Portal and central resource hub	£21,600.00
Flexible workforce	£120,000.00
UTS	£120,000.00
Care Improvement	£120,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£381,600</b>

External expertise and our Bury System Workforce Transformation Lead have co-designed and developed innovative collaborative workforce solutions to support our care providers to address their workforce challenges.

These innovative solutions include for example establishing a shared flexible workforce for our providers to enable a person-centred approach to filling shifts to respond to market demands and reducing reliance on agency (reducing costs/improving quality of workforce) and developing a Registered Managers and Aspiring Managers Development programme in partnership with our providers to drive improvements across the sector as identified within the Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework.

The holistic approach taken to tackle the workforce challenges in this proposal will enable the sector to have the best possible opportunity to improve recruitment/retention levels, reduce absence levels and agency spend and drive the quality improvements across the sector. This improvement will support our providers in providing the best possible support to our Bury population.

Implementation of this plan will be managed through our multi-agency workforce board and is a key pillar in the delivery of our multi-agency workforce strategy.

**Wards affected:** All

**Consultations:** The Commissioning Team, alongside colleagues from Bury Integrated Delivery Collaborative carried out an engagement session with Bury Adult Social Care Providers. Together we designed the proposals in this paper.

**Scrutiny & Review Committee Interest:** Not applicable

**Options considered:**

Additional actions were suggested as part of engagement with the provider sector, but all agreed on the above priorities. Additional work/level of delivery against these ambitions in the above areas may be carried out in year 2 subject to further funding if required.

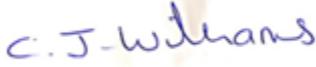
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/market-sustainability-and-improvement-fund-workforce-fund/market-sustainability-and-improvement-fund-workforce-fund-policy-statement>

**Decision**

Approval is requested for the Council to utilise the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund Workforce Fund to commission Unique Training Solutions to support the delivery of the following in response to priority asks from provider partners:

Training Portal and central resource hub	£21,600.00
Flexible workforce	£120,000.00
UTS	£120,000.00
Care Improvement	£120,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£381,600</b>

<b>Decision made by:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Executive Director – Health and Adult Care		10 January 2024
Section 151 Officer		15 February 2024
<b>Members Consulted [see note 1 below]</b>		
Cabinet Member		29 February 2024
Lead Member	NA	
Opposition Spokesperson	NA	

## Notes

1. Where, in accordance with the requirements of the Officer Delegation Scheme, a Chief Officer consults with the appropriate Cabinet Member they must sign the form so as to confirm that they have been consulted and that they agree with the proposed action. The signature of the Opposition Spokesperson should be obtained if required, to confirm that he/she has been consulted. Please refer to the MO Guidance.
2. **This form must not be used for urgent decisions.**
3. Where there is any doubt, Corporate Directors should err on the side of caution and seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 In November 2022 the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund was announced as part of the autumn statement<sup>2</sup>. The primary purpose of the fund was to support Local Authorities to make improvements to adult social care services in their area, with specific focus on building capacity and improving market sustainability.
- 1.2 The government considers that 3 target areas of improvement underpin the objective of building capacity and improving market sustainability. These are:
  - Increasing fee rates paid to adult social care providers.
  - Increasing adult social care workforce capacity and retention
  - Reducing adult social care waiting times
- 1.3 Of those 3 target areas, local authorities can choose one, two or all three to focus on and each are linked to specific metrics that the Department of Health and Social Care will use to monitor performance.
- 1.4 The Council utilised MSIF for its fee uplifts for 23/24.
- 1.5 In July 2023, the government provided a further £365 million of ringfenced funding in the form of Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) Workforce Fund<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.6 Once again, local authorities could use the funding to:

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/market-sustainability-and-improvement-fund-2023-to-2024/market-sustainability-and-improvement-fund-2023-to-2024>

<sup>3</sup> [Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund - Workforce Fund: policy statement - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policy-statements/market-sustainability-and-improvement-fund-workforce-fund-policy-statement)

- Increasing fee rates paid to adult social care providers.
  - Increasing adult social care workforce capacity and retention
  - Reducing adult social care waiting times
- 1.7 The Council has been allocated a total of £3.154m of Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) and Workforce Fund identifying workforce capacity and retention and reducing adult social care waiting times as areas they will look to target with the funding available alongside fee uplifts.

## 2. Context

- 2.1 The Bury Health and Care System is working collaboratively to address its health and care workforce challenges. All health and care providers (including our Independent Providers) across the Bury system have been engaged with to understand their workforce strategies/plan. This involved identifying key workforce priorities, strengths, gaps for learning and opportunities for collaborative solutions to address workforce challenges over the next two years. This data has informed the development of our Bury Locality Workforce Strategy including its priorities/plans for the next 2 years.
- 2.2 The Bury Locality Workforce Strategy aligns to the GM People and Culture Workforce Strategy covering the 5 priority areas as below:
- **Workforce Integration:** We continue to improve the way we work together across health and care to achieve our shared goals.
  - **Good Employment:** We look after our people and use our influence to improve employment standards for others as par of our commitment to addressing broader health inequalities.
  - **Workforce wellbeing:** We provide the support and space for our people to maintain good health and wellbeing and make sure help is on hand when its needed.
  - **Addressing inequalities:** We are committed to having a workforce that represents the communities we serve at every level and where our people are treated fairly and with respect.
  - **Growing and developing our workforce:** we support our people to develop and are always finding news ways to plan, grow and retain our workforce for the future together.
- 2.3 Our Independent Providers acknowledge they do not have the workforce expertise/capacity to address their growing workforce challenges which then impacts on the availability/flow of our health and care provision across Bury.
- 2.4 Given the workforce expertise and capacity required to support the scale of the sector we are proposing to continue our partnership with Unique

Training Solutions (UTS) given the existing strong partnership relationships built with our providers. This dedicated support will focus in the main on the above priority 5 area of growing/developing the workforce area (with the addressing inequalities theme thread through these solutions). To support addressing the other priority areas, additional workforce support has been identified to ensure this covers the remaining areas of the Bury locality workforce strategy.

- 2.5 The commission of UTS to fulfil these activities will be done via a Procurement Exemption. Discussions are currently ongoing with the Corporate Procurement team with an Exemption soon to be agreed as it comes within both paragraph 8.5.2 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Regulation 32 (2) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

### **3. Collaborative Solutions to Address Workforce Challenges**

- 3.1 To ensure best use of the MSIF monies and that any future work we do adopts a collaborative approach across the health and social care workforce in Bury, we facilitated a provider event at Bury Townhall. All providers across the Independent sector and Adult Social Care council services were invited to attend.
- 3.2 The purpose of the event was to hear their views, to understand their challenges and to codesign and agree what the solutions should be. There was good representation across the range of our providers with 29 attending representing 24 separate independent providers in Bury.
- 3.3 There was a strong appetite for collaborative working, with the providers wanting to work in this way but not understanding how to.
- 3.4 The care providers told us their current key hiring challenges are:
  - All services across Bury hiring from the same catchment of candidates.
  - Managers and senior staff members dedicating endless hours to the recruitment process, taking them away from other priorities.
  - Those who apply who are not truly looking for work and the time is taken to sift these out.
  - Turn up rates to interviews are low.
  - Turning around the negative perception of working across adult care and attracting people to the roles.
  - Working around the desired shift patterns of candidates
  - Childcare considerations of candidates
  - Time to turn around DBS and referencing and losing candidates in the process as it takes too long.

- Not having someone who is dedicated, or the right person dedicated, to the recruitment processes.
- Validating prior training so new starters do not have to repeat prior learning.
- Attracting people who are looking to commence a career in health/care.
- Demonstrating career pathways and progression routes.
- Retaining staff
- Spiralling agency costs
- Time to step back as leaders to analyse what is working and what needs to be improved to inform workforce strategy planning.

3.5 The top 3 priorities providers said they would like to see implemented to help them overcome these challenges are:

3.6 **Attraction: Attracting more people into the sector**

- Providers want to be able to attract more people to work in the sector from diverse age groups with an increased flow of candidates also accepting positions.
- Centralised and co-ordinated attraction and promotion of job opportunities.
- They want to align employment to the demands from the job centres.
- They want to consider branding for provider workforces that are true to life and informative. Outlining real life fundamentals of the work carried out in Care and Support positions whilst promoting the great meaningful and valuable work we do that makes a difference to people's lives.

3.7 **Process: Improving provider wide process and better access to support to recruitment and retention initiatives**

- Providers have expressed interest to collaborate further on removing people who are unmotivated to work from the recruitment process.
- Centralised data and more efficient recruitment processing platforms.
- Support with understanding advertising platforms and content that attracts the right hires.
- Improve overall recruitment processes and time to hire with a noticeable reduction in time spent in recruitment processes with hiring managers.
- Initiatives to reduce all provider services "fishing from the same pond" of applicants.
- They want access to a flexible, centralised workforce provision to support reduction and reliance on agency spend.

3.8 **Retention: Providers want access to initiative and support that will keep people working in their services sector for longer period and retaining them in clear "career pathways"**

- Providers want support in how they build career paths and employee initiatives that encourage development.
- Providers want to understand what career paths work for the diversity of people in the workforce.
- Providers would like additional support with the transitional change in workforce patterns and forward planning.
- Providers want to understand and access better initiatives around reward and retention.
- Providers want to have access to centralised benefits and initiatives that can support their workforces. Specifically, leadership training, “blue light” benefits and other wellbeing or development programmes that are funded sector or nationwide.

3.9 As a part of the wider requirement for data around hiring and retention challenges, providers were asked to complete a short data questionnaire.

3.10 The insights from the data reinforce the above workforce challenges discussed at the event and in addition highlighted:

- That the core direct hiring challenges within the providers are for Care and Support Workers.
- Providers are uncertain of agency costs but agree that many have a high usage of agency workers to fill shifts.

3.11 The outcome of this event and what the providers would hope to see in terms of solutions to workforce recruitment and retention, triangulates with what we see as next steps and aligns to the 5 key priorities within the GM strategy.

#### **4. Proposal**

4.1 This report requests approval to spend £381,600 of MSIF Workforce Fund on commissioning an Adult Social Care Workforce Support Programme, developed, and co-designed alongside our provider partners. This will look to tackle the substantial workforce challenges our providers are having, while transforming how they manage the attraction, management, recruitment, and retention of staff in Bury going forward.

4.2 The monies will be used for the following:

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Flexible workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a shared Bury flexible care workforce to support capacity issues across the PVI sector.</li> </ul>	<b>£120,000</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers struggling with long term recruitment and retention of staff can utilise the bank to fill/cover vacancies and ensure sufficient capacity remains in the system to care and support vulnerable residents.</li> <li>• Recruit, assess, train, and ensure compliant with pre-employment checks including DBS a bank of flexible workers that can fill part time/full time/temp cover requirements across providers (initial pilot with 5 providers to set up platform, train, and support providers with requirements)</li> <li>• Plan developed in partnership with providers to utilise Lantum system deployed by Vaccination Hubs during the pandemic; ensuring every shift is filled with a competent, supported, and flexible team member as required by the provider.</li> <li>• Ensures we meet our Care Act duties by supporting providers to have capacity to meet the needs of people of Bury.</li> <li>• Can act as contingency in response to provider failure. We have had several providers who have had acute issues with staffing capacity and/or poor CQC ratings. This is a backup when staffing numbers are insufficient.</li> <li>• Meets the criteria of MSIF Workforce Fund and easily reportable.</li> <li>• Reduces reliance/provides an alternative to staffing agencies with increasing costs, it will improve quality of workforce through assurance of training competencies and improves flexibility of workforce across providers to retain a flexible workforce that understands working in providers in Bury and therefore people in the services who are being supported.</li> <li>• Attractive to our current/future workforce market whose key criteria is now flexibility increasing diversity in our workforce including people looking to enter employment, people who are wanting to flexibly retire or return to part time or who can only work part time for either health or carer responsibilities.</li> </ul>	
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<p>Staff Development Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bespoke Registered Managers and Aspiring Managers Development Programme</li> <li>• Focus on what it takes to be an outstanding Registered Manager including system leadership and collaborative approaches.</li> <li>• Will cover areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Managers Role</li> <li>▪ Principles and Values</li> <li>▪ Safeguarding</li> <li>▪ Understanding Budgets</li> <li>▪ Personalisation</li> <li>▪ Leading Teams</li> <li>▪ Equality and Diversity</li> <li>▪ Performance Management</li> <li>▪ Using Technology</li> <li>▪ Supervision and Appraisal</li> <li>▪ Evidencing Compliance</li> <li>▪ Continuing Management Development</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Available to all Registered Managers and Providers but targeted at those identified through the Quality Assurance process who would benefit from this programme.</li> </ul>	<p><b>£120,000</b></p>
<p>Recruitment Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordinated recruitment support to provider/Council vacancies prioritising care workers</li> <li>• Central point of contact for all candidates to be supported in a strengths-based approach to understand current strengths, skills, and aspirations to enable identification of the potential suitable opportunities for candidates.</li> <li>• Candidates to be signposted to open vacancies to ensure “best fit” into providers, which reduces a candidates need to register and apply for multiple vacancies. Service provides guided choice to applicants which increases interest into the sector.</li> <li>• Candidates are advised and supported through the application to onboarding process, increasing job offers to offer accepted ratios.</li> <li>• Candidates are pre-screened for suitability prior to interview to reduce time spent with care and management staff in service.</li> <li>• Significantly reduces the cost of hiring.</li> <li>• With the Workable (applicant tracking system) we can “pool” talent in a system that</li> </ul>	<p><b>£120,000</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talent attraction is automatically linked to social media and paid advertising platforms that raise the awareness of care and support opportunities across Bury.</li> <li>• Centralised recruitment team able to gather insight and data around provider recruitment processes and employment offerings and support change and improvement as necessary.</li> <li>• Reduces reliance on agency fees if permanent, contract positions are in post.</li> <li>• Provides collective data and insight into local recruitment and retention issues and allows collective response to support providers as opposed to 1 one 1 response and support.</li> </ul>	
Training Portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training portal build will enable all providers workforce to access online training and development programmes available and supported by Bury system partners including Strength based Training and Oliver McGowan. This platform can be further developed to include a range of mandatory and essential skills development programmes. Ensuring quality and consistency of training provision across providers and for our Bury workforce.</li> <li>• In addition, a resource centre will be built to hold best practice tools, templates, policies, other resources to enable providers to access quality expertise/supportive resources in line with the Locality Workforce Strategy Goals e.g., wellbeing toolkits, EDI strategy/toolkits. Mentoring and support networks will be available to providers looking to undertake the Good Employment Charter from system partners who have achieved the standard/working towards this.</li> <li>• This aspires to raise employment practice and experience for us bury workforce which aims to improve retention, staff satisfaction, productivity and reduce sickness levels.</li> </ul>	<b>£21,600</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£381,600</b>

## 5. Decision

- 5.1 Approval is requested for the Council to utilise the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund Workforce Fund to commission UTS to provide the following in response to priority asks from provider partners :

Training Portal and central resource hub	£21,600.00
Flexible workforce	£120,000.00
UTS	£120,000.00
Care Improvement	£120,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£381,600</b>

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**Links with the Corporate Priorities:** *Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.*

## **6. Corporate Priorities**

- 6.1 The commission of an Adult Social Care Workforce Programme will support Bury providers to recruit and retain Bury staff, spending the Bury pound in Bury and providing greater capacity to meet the needs of people in Bury.
- 6.2 Whilst the underlying ambitions of the programme are inherently aligned with the Let's Do it Strategy, they are particularly relevant in the following areas:
- 6.3 Local neighbourhoods: The programme reflects this aspect by ensuring that recruitment is neighbourhood focussed and that promotions of opportunities occur at neighbourhood level recognising the individual requirements of each.
- 6.4 Enterprise: Whilst the programme will ensure that the opportunities within Bury are focussed on the needs of the population, this aspect is particularly relevant to the all-age skills strategy. The programme incorporates engaging with schools, colleges/universities (degree level courses are available in Bury's two sixth forms) enabling those who live in Bury to understand the opportunities available post traditional educational establishments. Similarly, the emphasis on social media platforms increases opportunities for engagement with a wider population and increases the opportunity to drive further the inclusion ambitions.
- 6.5 Together: The programme enables the full engagement of several health/social care organisations, the wider Bury population community

and can be bespoke to the specific requirements of any given neighborhood. The programme not only responds to the needs of social care provider but promotes further opportunities to enhance the joined-up nature of the health and social care workforce.

- 6.6 Strength based and inclusive: the rich and plentiful data that will be produced will enable accurate analysis of workforce intelligence and satisfy obligations under the Inclusion agenda. In addition, the strength-based concept is imbedded from the first part of the recruitment process, increasing the candidate's awareness of the concept prior to their applying it within their future working environment. The resource development center will also link to the system training portal which will enable the provider workforce to access and undertake the system strength-based training awareness level programme.