

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME
RECORD OF DECISION**

TO BE UPLOADED TO THE INTERNET BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Date: 28.5.24	Ref No: 2230
Responsible Officer: Sue Massel - Assistant Director Adult Social Care	
Type of Decision (please refer to MO Guidance):	
Key	Non-Key
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Freedom of Information Status: <i>(can the report go in the public domain)</i> Not Exempt	
Title/Subject matter:	
Market Sustainability and Impact Fund - waiting list priority 2	
Budget/Strategy/Policy/Compliance:	
(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?	No
Equality Impact Assessment [Does this decision change policy, procedure or working practice or negatively impact on a group of people? If yes – complete EIA and summarise issues identified and recommendations – forward EIA to Corporate HR]	No

Summary:

The Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund was announced at the autumn statement in November 2022. The primary purpose of the fund is to support local authorities to make tangible improvements to adult social care services in their area, in particular to build capacity and improve market sustainability.

The ambition of the Care Act 2014 is for local authorities to influence and drive the pace of change for their whole market, leading to a sustainable and diverse range of care and support providers, continuously improving quality and choice and delivering better, innovative and cost-effective outcomes that promote the wellbeing of people who draw on care and support.

The government considers that 3 vital target areas of improvement underpin the overarching objective of building capacity and improving market sustainability. These are:

- increasing fee rates paid to adult social care providers in local areas
- increasing adult social care workforce capacity and retention
- reducing adult social care waiting times

This paper is an addendum to the previous paper that created 8 additional posts and following submission of business cases and improvement plans from all services areas across the department seeks to establish one additional post to ensure the required improvement can be delivered.

Wards affected: N/A**Consultations:** N/A**Scrutiny & Review Committee Interest:** n/a**Options considered:****Decision** *[with reasons]*

Utilise the Market Sustainability Fund to address the vital targets set by government to reduce adult social care waiting times by:

Create 1 x Grade 12 Full time equivalent Experienced Social Worker Post

Decision made by:	Signature:	Date:
Executive Director – Health and Adult Care		17 June 2024
Section 151 Officer		18 June 2024
Director of People and Inclusion		25.06.2024
Members Consulted [see note 1 below]		
Cabinet Member		11 July 2024
Lead Member - HR		25.06.2024
Opposition Spokesperson		

Notes

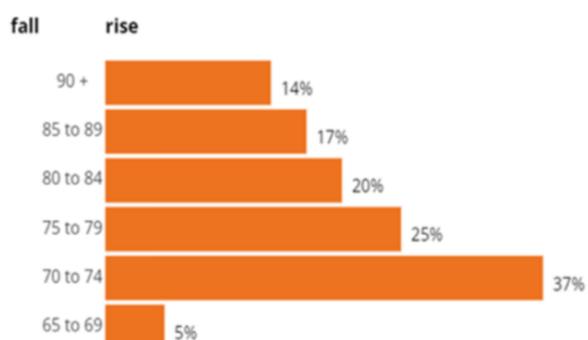
1. Where, in accordance with the requirements of the Officer Delegation Scheme, a Chief Officer consults with the appropriate Cabinet Member they must sign the form so as to confirm that they have been consulted and that they agree with the proposed action. The signature of the Opposition Spokesperson 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. Bury Adult Social Care is committed to improving the support it offers to people with eligible needs under the Care Act and holds responsibility for delivering assessment and intervention to those aged over 18 for Bury Council.

- 1.2. Over the past 12 months an ambitious improvement and transformation programme aligned to the borough's Let's Do It strategy which is delivering improved outcomes to our users of adult social care. We are commissioning more Local Services, being Enterprising in our commissioning, working Together with our partners and service users and ensuring we embed a Strengths based approach across all of our assessment and support planning.
- 1.3. Whilst this has improved services to those in receipt of adult social care we have been unable to address the challenge of having insufficient social work workforce to address the growing demand resulting from demographic pressures in our borough which has resulted in people waiting longer for assessments that we would like.

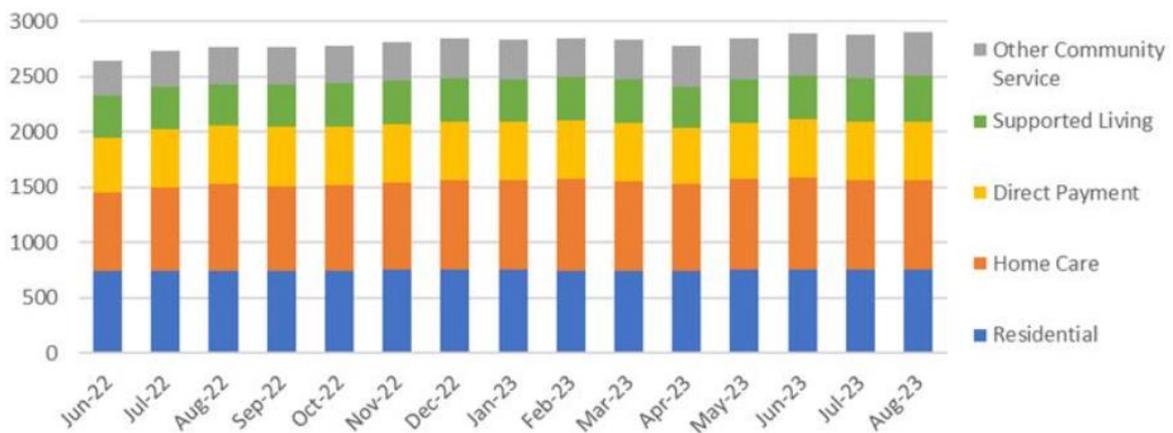
Population change (%) by age group in Bury, 2011 to 2021



- 1.4. This exceptional rise in population figures of older adults has resulted in an increase in the number of people waiting for an annual review and also increased waiting times to see a social worker for an assessment under the Care Act since the end of the pandemic.
- 1.5. Our first paper Market Sustainability Fund waiting list priority 1 sees a plan agreed to address outstanding reviews and this second paper, Market Sustainability Fund waiting list priority 2 saw us bring forward a plan to address people waiting for assessment with the creation of 8 additional posts which will be sited across Adult Social Care teams. It has been recognised that the creation of a further additional social work post would reduce awaiting allocation times in the neighbourhood teams in a more equitable way (ensuring all neighbourhood teams receive additional staffing capacity).
- 1.6. We monitor people waiting for allocation in our community teams. The chart below clearly shows ongoing rises in the number waiting since the pandemic where we have seen demand for services increase by 18%, a rise not matched by our capacity to service all this extra demand. As a result we currently have 104 people waiting for assessment across our social work teams.



1.7. The following table demonstrates the rise for our support in just one year alone at 18% of over 400 people, each one of which would have needed an assessment under the Care Act and subsequent reviews



1.8. There is no mandated target for the time between contacting the department and waiting to be allocated or have the assessment completed. Historically a target of 28 days exists and this is considered best practice. The average waiting in Bury is 30 days and whilst this appears to be the average in Greater Manchester when considered alongside 171 people waiting still shows room for improvement.



2. Proposal

2.1. Following the cancellation of the governments proposed adult social care reforms relating to charging the Council has received a grant called the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) from the Department of Health and Social Care. The Council can choose one or more of 3 priorities laid out by the DHSC to use the grant to address 3 vital targets;

- increasing fee rates paid to adult social care providers in local areas
- increasing adult social care workforce capacity and retention

- reducing adult social care waiting times
- 2.2. The Council has already invested a large amount of MSIF into increasing fee uplifts for 23/24 and 8 additional social worker posts to reduce waiting lists.
 - 2.3. The department has now reviewed business plans and improvement trajectories from all the social work teams across the department and in order to deliver the required improvement and to ensure waiting lists drop there is a requirement to increase this from 8 posts to 9.
 - 2.4. This proposal sees 1 additional social worker post created.
 - 2.5. Using the grant in this way meets the MSIF criteria of supporting adult social care workforce and addressing risks associated from delays in allocating cases for assessment. The primary objective will be to ensure that citizens of Bury receive a timely assessment of need and outcome-based support plans where eligible for provision of services under the Care Act is evidenced.

3. Financial Requirements

Post	Cost (£)
Create 1 x Experienced Social Worker (Note 1)	53,954
Total Investment	53,954

Note 1 : At the time of writing the 2024/25 pay award has not been confirmed, therefore, the cost excludes any 2024/25 Pay Award.

- 3.1. This investment is fully funded by the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund and is no additional cost to the council's general fund or Bury council taxpayers.
- 3.2. As part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle, Finance and Budget holders within the Adult Social Care Operational team will track the expenditure linked to the new posts ensuring that all expenditure aligns to the funding provided. Any financial risks/pressures identified will be highlighted to the Director of Adult Social Services as part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle whereby an action plan will be deployed to mitigate any financial risks/ pressures.
- 3.3. This grant and its associated policy is for 2 years, however the DHSC indicate it will continue. This poses risk of unfunded expense should the grant not continue. In the unlikely case of this funding ending then the department will carry out the necessary changes to remove this cost pressure which will see these posts removed.

4. Human Resources

- 4.1. The Social Work post will be established within the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams. The role is grade 12 and an existing and evaluated job description will be used.
- 4.2. The posts will be managed within existing management establishment and will be distributed across the social work teams and disability services.
- 4.3. The posts will be subject to the council's recruitment processes.
- 4.4. To ensure that the proposed positions can attract the most suitable candidates, it is recommended that the new posts are permanent rather than fixed term, as fixed term contracts may deter applications from external candidates who may currently be in permanent employment.
- 4.5. In the unlikely event the grant funding should end after 2 years this new post will be removed and the workforce absorbed into the existing services as vacant posts become available. In the extremely unlikely event the financial risk cannot be mitigated by a department with workforce of over 400 and turnover rate of 12% changes to the establishment will be made to mitigate this which may involve redundancy. Any associated costs in the very unlikely event of this occurring will be fully managed within the department.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1. Create 1.0 Grade 12 Full time equivalent Experienced Social Worker Posts