

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME
RECORD OF DECISION**

TO BE UPLOADED TO THE INTERNET BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Date: 19.09.2024	Ref No:
Responsible Officer: Matthew Logan, Strategic Lead Integrated Commissioning	
Type of Decision (please refer to MO Guidance): Non-key <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/>	
Freedom of Information Status: <i>(can the report go in the public domain)</i> Yes	
Title/Subject matter- Adult Social Care Independent Sector Workforce Support Programme	
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?	Yes
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]	Yes

Summary:

In November 2022 the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) 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 improving market sustainability.

The government considered 3 target areas of improvement that would underpin these objectives. 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.

In 23/24, utilising external expertise from Unique Training Solutions (UTS), Bury Providers, Bury Commissioning Team and our Bury System Workforce Transformation Lead, we co-designed and developed a suite of innovative, collaborative workforce solutions to support our care providers to address their workforce challenges. This was a pilot scheme badged as the Adult Social Care Workforce Support Programme. The Council used a portion of its MSIF allocation to fund this support programme.

For 24/25 the Council has been allocated a total of £3,573,110 of Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) and alongside fee uplifts this will enable us to expand the pilot scheme. We have identified workforce capacity and retention and reducing adult social care waiting times as areas we will look to target with the funding available.

This report requests approval to expend an additional £381,600 of MSIF to extend the Adult Social Care Workforce Support Programme.

UTS will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement in respect of the funding to be awarded to them.

This will then enable us to move to the next stage. That is to develop a service specification and full tender package to commission an Adult Social Care Workforce Support Programme in Bury.

Approval to go out to tender will be sought via Cabinet and the appropriate procurement route will be followed.

Background:

The current support programme looking to be extended is made up of 3 main functions:

1) Centralised Permanent Recruitment Function

A central recruitment team was established that providers could share all open, care and support vacancies with. The team advertised, screened and signposted relevant candidates into providers ready to interview.

The team averaged approximately 30 open vacancies a month spanning a wide range of positions, skill types and shift requirements.

The recruitment team worked to clear performance indicators that ensured candidates meet expectations, attended interviews and are processed to job offerings.

The key achievements by the team in the last 12 months were;

- Permanent employment offers for over 75 people.
- 1 in 2 people that have interviewed for open vacancies have secured an offer.
- 84% have accepted the offer and started employment.
- 30% of applicants offered have been new to the social care sector.
- 70% of people offered, already have over 2 years' experience in sector.
- All offers of employment have been within a 5-mile radius of Bury.

2) BURY FLEX: A Centralised Shared Workforce Function

Our partner UTS built and piloted a shared workforce initiative that allowed providers in Bury access to a "ready to work" bank of flexible workers.

The criteria for the Flex Workforce was for applicants to have 9 months or more UK experience in a care and support position and be fully compliant with UK, Right to Work legislation and CQC Regulation 19: Fit and better persons employment.

The Flex Recruitment Team would process all applications, compliance and training requirements. Once a worker was "ready to work" UTS would facilitate the introduction into contractual casual employment, directly to each provider. Each provider was then responsible for payroll and working time directive requirements.

The Bury Flex workforce;

- Flex's to meet the needs of care skills and skills provision required by providers.
- Flex's to fill the utilisation gaps caused by sickness, holidays and winter pressures.
- Flex's to match the needs of the workforce.

Feedback from many smaller providers was that they did not have the ability to add supernumerary employees to an already stretched financial commitments and this service "levels up" access to additional staffing needs.

Flex enabled employees of the care sector to build "portfolio careers" and facilitated the ability to work across a diverse range of services, enhancing skills and sharing knowledge and capability with others. Flex was and is about ensuring employees remain working in sector or have the social care sector as a secondary employment opportunity.

The Flex team also run consistent wellbeing and performance checks to ensure both worker and provider are receiving the best service possible.

During the initial pilot phase Bury Flex was able to offer over 900 extra hours into sector and each worker currently offers an average of 18 additional hours per week.

3) Care Development Programme

- a) The "Bury Workforce Strategy Grow Programme" has UTS working alongside Bury College, Health and Social Care educational departments to streamline the transitioning of Health and Social Care students into Burys' Social Care providers for both course aligned, work experience placements and the opportunity to gain paid employment placements.
- b) UTS alongside, the BICP Workforce Transformation Lead has supported the development of a central access point for workforce resources. This vital central access allows everyone in the Health and Social Care in Bury to access information that can support workforce sustainability including Equality Diversity and Inclusion and Wellbeing resources . It also provides a destination to promote workforce training and development, funded initiatives such as Bury Flex and the central recruitment support.
- c) Alongside the Commissioning Team, and as part of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework, UTS are developing a Registered Manger Leadership Development Programme. The work by the Commissioning Team, including through Quality Assurance Reviews, has identified the lack of development opportunities and succession planning for those staff newly into Registered Manager roles is posing a risk to quality of services in Bury. A free development programme will be offered to those suitable to ensure they have the skills to prepare them for a managerial role.

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.

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
Total	£381,600

Decision made by:	Signature:	Date:
Executive Director – Health and Adult Care		24/09/24
Chief Executive		01/10/24

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.