

COUNCIL – 17 SEPTEMBER 2020

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – RULE 46 (WAIVING CALL-IN) PROVISIONS COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – RULE 29 (SPECIAL URGENCY)

I wish to report that the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) gave her consent, under Rule 46 (Waiving Call-In) and Rule 29 (Special Urgency) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution. The report was in relation to Care Homes Additional Funding and it was urgent and not subject to call-in on the basis that the decision could not be reasonably deferred because the Council was required to submit a planning return to Central Government by 29 May 2020, which detailed the current activities and forward plans it had in place to support the care home market in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and also pay the additional funding to care homes as soon as possible in order to support them in light of the increased financial pressures they are currently experiencing.

CABINET – 28 MAY 2020

8. The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Adult Social Care and Health outlining proposals on providing additional funding to the Sefton care home market in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the proposals outlined in section 5.1 of the report be implemented in order to provide additional financial support to care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (2) future decisions on any further additional funding to be provided to care homes be delegated to the Executive Director - Adult Social Care and Health and the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and the Cabinet Member - Health and Wellbeing;
- (3) the Executive Director - Adult Social Care and Health and the Director of Public Health be requested to continue to gather information from care homes on the financial pressures they are experiencing in order to assess the sufficiency of additional funding provided to date;
- (4) further reports be submitted to Cabinet and the Health and Wellbeing board in order to provide updates on the financial support being provided to care homes and to report the impact of COVID-19 on the Sefton care home market;

- (5) it be noted that the proposal was a Key Decision but had not been included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions. Consequently, the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) had been consulted under Rule 27 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution, to the decision being made by Cabinet as a matter of urgency on the basis that it was impracticable to defer the decision until the commencement of the next Forward Plan because the Council is required to submit a planning return to Central Government by 29 May 2020, which details the current activities and forward plans it has in place to support the care home market in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is also a need to put in place further additional financial support payments to care homes as soon as possible due to the increased financial pressures they are currently experiencing;
- (6) it be noted that the proposal was a Key Decision but had not been included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions. Consequently, the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) had given their consent under Rule 29 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution for these decisions to be treated as urgent on the basis that they cannot be reasonable deferred because the Council is required to submit a planning return to Central Government by 29th May 2020, which details the current activities and forward plans it has in place to support the care home market in light of the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- (7) it be noted that the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) had given their consent under Rule 46 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules for these decisions to be treated as urgent and not subject to "call in" on the basis that they cannot be reasonably deferred because the Council is required to submit a planning return to Central Government by 29th May 2020, which details the current activities and forward plans it has in place to support the care home market in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and also pay the additional funding to care homes as soon as possible in order to support them in light of the increased financial pressures they are currently experiencing.

Reasons for Decision:

To continue to support the Sefton care home market during the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure that ongoing work takes place to assess the financial impact on care homes.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The following options were considered and rejected:

- (1) Not providing further additional funding – this option was considered and rejected as the Council is required to ensure that additional

funding allocated to it from Central Government is used to support care homes, who are experiencing additional financial pressures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is also a requirement to ensure that additional funding also reflects the impact on all types of care home placements, not simply those commissioned by the Council.

- (2) Providing additional funding via other mechanisms such as arbitrary one-off payments – this option was considered and rejected as there is a need to ensure that any additional funding provided is based on a sound understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on the Sefton care home market and that further analysis will need to take place via the submission of templates from care homes detailing the cost pressures they are experiencing, in order to ascertain whether funding provided to date is sufficient.