

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 10th December 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Education & Social Care

SUBJECT: Proposal to increase payment rate for Halton's Adult Placement Carers and approve minor changes to the Placement Scheme

WARDS(S) Borough-Wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present Executive Board with details of a proposal to increase the payments made to Halton's Adult Placement Service Day Carers. The report covers the rationale for the requested increase in payment and the requested change to the name of the service.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- i) The contents of the report and appendices be noted; and
- ii) The requested payment increase, change of service name, advert for carers and minor changes to the scheme are approved.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 **Background Information**

Halton Council's Adult Placement Service, provides care for people who have been assessed as requiring support due to age, illness or disability. Adult placement offers adults an alternative and highly flexible form of accommodation and/or care or support using the Adult Placement Carer's home as a resource. The care is provided by individuals, couples or families in the local community.

- 3.2 Individuals and their Adult Placement Carers enjoy shared activities and life experiences to enable people to live an ordinary life in the community. The carers provide a unique role, which goes beyond task-based support. They open their homes, their families and their lives to people who require support. The Halton service has used Adult Placement Carers for almost 20 years. In 2019 Halton's Adult Placement Carers were awarded regional winners of the Great British Care Awards for Dementia Care.

3.3 The arrangements for Adult Placement Carers and individuals are now set up and supported by “Shared Lives Schemes” which are arranged and monitored by either a local authority or private providers and are regulated by CQC. Some local authorities use their schemes for both long term residential placements and day care services whereas some only provide day care services. The Halton Scheme currently provides day care services and short breaks.

The model and funding formula used to establish Halton’s scheme for Adult Placement Carers was based on national guidance and model recommended by Shared Lives Plus **(Please see Appendix 1)**.

3.4 **HBC Current Adult Placement Service**

The Adult Placement Service is funded through the Adult Social Care Community Care Budget, The fee/payment made to Day Carers by the Adult Placement team makes was set at £33.60 to care for one individual which has remained the same, since 2011.

The service continues to support adults with learning disabilities but is now also supporting older people, people living with dementia and people with mental health conditions. At the time of writing the report there are 37 adults being cared for by 10 Carers. Many of the adults are elderly, some being cared for have dementia and 11 have a learning disability.

3.5 **Value for Money**

Evidence has consistently shown that Adult Placement arrangements are financially beneficial for local authorities saving significant amounts in comparison to the costs for day care services or residential services

The current annual cost difference of using the Adult Placement Service for the 37 adults compared to Day Services or Residential Care are as follows :

- Adult Placement Costs- £100,578 (£33.60 per day for adults)
- Day Services Costs - £126,586 (£50 per day for elderly adults)
- Day Services Costs - £240,515 (£88 per day for adults with LD)
- Residential Costs - £1,015,872 (£528 per person per week over 52 weeks).

3.6 Adult Placement Carers are self-employed and are not guaranteed any work through the service. They only receive payments when they are providing support to a person. The fact that the Adult Placement carers have not had an increase in their fees-payments since 2011 has negatively impacted on existing carers and recruitment.

It is difficult to compare the role of these carers to workers in other community adult social care sectors, as the work the support they provide is very flexible and fluid rather than task and time based work such as Day Carers supporting people in their own homes.

3.7 2019 Adult Placement Audit Report

The Adult Placement Service was audited with the subsequent report published in October 2019. The report noted as a key audit finding that “*the Adult Placement Service provides a good, cost effective alternative to traditional care. However, the service is currently underutilised due to low carer numbers. Carer numbers have declined in recent years resulting in fewer adult placement sessions being delivered. There are a number of factors that have contributed to this position, however a review of the carer payment rates and better promotion of the scheme may help to address the situation*”.

The Audit report recommended:

- “Utilising unit cost information and other local authority benchmarking findings to review carer payment rates”.
- “Developing benchmarking with other local authorities to understand the impact of carer rates”.
- “Raising awareness of the service”.

3.8 Actions from the Audit Report

As the Adult Placement Service is dependent on a pool of registered carers to operate (as well as the availability of suitable accommodation), Halton has attempted to increase the numbers of carers over the years and has recently attempted to raise awareness of the service by undertaking a substantial marketing campaign early in 2020, details of which are included in **Appendix 1**

3.9 HBC Review and Comparison with other Local Authorities

In order to review and evaluate unit costs it was important to compare like for like services .Only Halton and Warrington Councils provide Shared Lives day services in the local area so other local authorities who provided day services were identified so direct comparisons for benchmarking payments could be made. The direct comparison used was:

Caring for 1 person in Band 1 for 6 hrs per day for 5 days per week

Current Band 1 payment for 6 hrs	Band 1 converted Hourly Rate	Other Costs	Mileage
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See Appendix 3 for full comparison

3.10 Results of Benchmarking

The benchmarking exercise found that Halton’s payments made to shared lives day carers were the lowest out of the Local Authorities providing shared lives day care. (See Appendix 2)

Proposed Increase in fee payment

3.11 Based on the review, the following increases are therefore proposed for the three current day carer fee payments:

- Increase the fee for 1 person in a 6 hr placement from the current £33.60 to £40. This would equate to a new hourly rate of £ 6.67 which is an increase of 19.1%
The 19.1% increase would then be applied to the current placement fees for caring daily for 2 and 3 people as follows:
- The 6hr placement for 2 people would increase the fee from the current £56.10 to £67
- The 6hr placement fee for 3 people would increase the fee from the current £67.20 to £80.

3.12 **Annual Increase in Budget**

Appendix 3, Table 1 shows the additional costs if the proposed 19.1% increase is applied. There is no proposal to increase the respite, meetings and cancellation costs which are all similar with other local authorities. This would be an annual cost increase of £14,501. Taking into account both the payment increase minor changes, the annual increase would be £15,000. This would be funded from the Community Care Budget

3.13 There have also been increased running costs for the service itself since 2011, with additional public liability insurance costs for carers paid for by the service plus provision of equipment to support Carers with Service Users, It is therefore proposed to request an increase to the budget for the commissioning the service.

Currently the budget allocated for the running of the Adult Placement Service equates to HBC paying £27.47 (on average) per person per day. This calculation has been used to recommend the budget increase for HBC to pay £30 per person per day. This would mean a further annual increase to the budget of £23,871. This amount would also be funded from the ASC Community Care Budget. This will mean a total budget increase for both payments to carers and costs for running the service of £38,871. (**See Appendix 3**)

This increase would also help mitigate additional fees and resources that would be expected with successful recruitment over the next 12 months.

3.14 **Change of Service Name and Advertising**

For many years the Halton Adult Placement Service has often been referred to as Shared Lives and the Carers as Shared Lives Carers. Most Local Authorities have Shared Lives Services and the name has been adopted as it reflects the personal care and individual service provided. It is therefore requested to change of name of the Service from Adult Placement to Shared

Lives Service. This will ensure continuity and consistency for the service, through its future marketing, policies and procedures.

It is also proposed that a permanent job vacancy for Shared Lives Carers role should be added to the Halton Job vacancy page. This will highlight the role of Shared Lives Carers to people looking for work or additional income.

4.0 **Conclusion**

4.1 The Shared Lives Carers have not received a fee payment increase for over 10 years. With the current demand for day care placements for adults with dementia living at home high as well as the use of Direct Payments .The proposed increase should aid recruitment in to Shared Lives with the requested fee pitched closer to today's cost of living and should help move more day placements to Shared Lives Carers and prevent more admissions to care homes, helping keep more people at home.

4.2 The Service is also looking to develop further in to an alternative service for supported living and day sitting services. The increase in payments should therefore be seen as a method of investing to save. The hope is that the requested increase in conjunction with placing a new permanent job vacancy on the Halton Council Job vacancy pages will increase recruitment by 20-25 % over the next 12 months

5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Current social care policy puts great emphasis on community-based, personalised services that are designed to give people more choice and control over their care and support. Shared Lives Carers Schemes fundamentally endorse community-based personalised services

6.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The additional budget implications would therefore be :
- An annual increase for the new fees paid to Shared Lives Carers plus mileage of £15,000.
 - An annual increase in the commissioned budget allocated for the running of the service of £23,871.

This would therefore increase the total annual costs for the Service by **£38,871 per annum**, which is still considerably less than the alternative of Day Care or Residential services. The budget and financial calculations within this report have been checked by the Resources Team and the costs will be added to the annual fee rates report so they can be monitored.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

A Membership organisation which provides advice and guidance for establishing Shared Lives services, of which HBC is a member.

7.1 Children & Young People in Halton

A competitive shared Lives Model creates opportunities to recruit new Shared Lives carers from foster carers who are looking to move on to supporting a child(ren) as they transition in to adult social services.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

A competitive Shared Lives Model creates opportunities to recruit new Shared Lives carers from people who have been made redundant, or are looking to work from home or looking for ways to supplement income.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

None identified at this time

7.4 A Safer Halton

None identified at this time

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified at this time

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 Failing to support independent living imposes burdens on public services and unnecessary social and economic opportunity costs on individuals. By adopting and increasing a Shared Lives approach, there are longer-term benefits to be had through prevention and early intervention, through supporting different approaches to service delivery, and through lessening the predicted impacts of rising social care costs in Halton.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was completed for the introduction of the Shared Lives Scheme. No Negative issues were identified

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act