

7th January 2013**Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR JOINT COMMISSIONING,
QUALITY AND BUSINESS CHANGE****ADULT CARE FINANCIAL SERVICES – BEDS IMPLEMENTATION
RESOURCE****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval to establish one temporary Finance Assistant post within Adult Care Financial Services (ACFS) team for a period of six months commencing February 2013.

Information and Advice

2. ACFS make payments to independent sector care home providers in accordance with the terms and conditions of their contract with Nottinghamshire County Council. A new IT system is being developed to enable streamlining of the payment process (BEDS) and also to gather information on vacant beds and the numbers of self-funders in individual homes.
3. 'BEDS' is a new web-based computer system which provides Nottinghamshire County Council with up-to-date information about care home occupancy and vacancies for emergency planning purposes. It also records care homes admitting residents who are self-funding and enables a referral to be made on behalf of the resident to Paying for Care to facilitate the provision of independent financial advice for self-funders. It is expected that with appropriate financial advice and support provided to self-funders when they move into care homes they will be able to help protect their assets for their families and the likelihood of them requiring Local Authority funding for their care in the future will also be reduced and the financial burden to the Local Authority reduced. When fully implemented BEDS will also provide an electronic process for care homes communicating with ACFS about resident admissions, discharges, deaths and provides an electronic portal for care homes and ACFS to manage the payment process.
4. The system is currently available to the 168 Quality Banded Nottinghamshire Older Persons homes and needs to be rolled out to a further 500 care homes. The additional care homes are Younger Adults homes in the county of Nottinghamshire, care homes within the City of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire County Council's remaining local authority run homes, care homes outside of Nottinghamshire with which we contract and fund residents and Shared Lives carers and Short Breaks units.

5. The post is required to assist with the roll out of the system to these providers and to provide administrative support until an electronic solution to feed data from the current financial system, Abacus, to BEDS is implemented. It is anticipated that an electronic solution will be ready for testing in early 2013. It will, however, not be fully implemented until April 2013 and therefore this post is required to continue to carry out the manual reconciliation of the two systems and the manual maintenance of the data within the BEDS system.
6. The post holder will also create and update training material, liaise with existing care home users to resolve queries and provide training assistance, gather and compile details required to set up users accounts for new users at the homes and participate in launch events set up for the additional care homes. Once the electronic system is implemented the post holder will assist with the roll out of BEDS to all care homes.
7. The position has been filled by a temporary member staff which was agreed by the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection, initially for three months. It is anticipated that this post will be needed for a further 6 months from 1st February 2013.

Other Options Considered

8. Serious consideration has been given to covering this work within existing resources. Over the past 12 months, whilst reviewing the structure and making significant savings, the workload within ACFS has increased because of the Fairer Contribution to Care policy and the introduction of Personal Budgets. This has necessitated dual running of two charging policies whilst existing service users are moved onto a personal budget. Changing to the Fairer Contributions Policy has also resulted in increased enquiries from service users and carers that require investigation and detailed responses. This means that it is not possible to carry out the work required for BEDS within existing resources.
9. The implementation and management of the BEDS system sits within the Residential Assessments team within ACFS who manage all payments to care homes and financial assessments for residents and casework associated with work under the mental capacity act and complex property-related work.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. The post will assist all care providers to transfer to the BEDS system which will provide information on self-funders, vacant beds and streamline the payment process.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

12. The cost of a Grade 3 Finance Assistant post for 6 months will be £9,730 including on costs. The funding has been agreed from departmental reserves.

Human Resources Implications

13. The Human Resources implications have been considered and appointment to the post will be within the Corporate Recruitment process.
14. The temporary Finance Assistant post was initially established for 3 months at the discretion of the Corporate Director as part of his delegated authority as outlined in the Employment Procedure Rules (part 6, page 105, paragraph 26 of the Constitution).
15. The Trade Unions have been consulted and would prefer that the position was permanent.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is RECOMMENDED that:

- (a) 1 fte (37 hours) temporary Finance Assistant, Grade 3, scp 14-18 (£15,725 - £17,161 pro rata per annum) be extended for a further 6 months from the 1st February 2013 to 31st July 2013 and based in the Adult Care Financial Services team at County Hall.

CAROLINE BARIA

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Constitutional Comments (LMC 18/12/2012)

16. The Adult Social Care and Health Committee has delegated authority to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (TMR 29/11/2012)

17. The temporary position will be funded from departmental reserves.

Background Papers

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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