

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 31 JANUARY 2022

Question 1

From Mr P Skelton, Head of Finance, Services for Independent Living
To: cabinet member, health and adult wellbeing

On Page 340 of the Public Reports pack for the meeting you state that the council's rate per hour for supported living services will reduce to align "to our West Midlands peers."

- Could you please explain the rationale for this decision?
- Has this decision taken account of the 6.6% increase in the national living wage for 2022/23?
- Could you please confirm whether you are looking to reduce the hourly rate for any other adult services, such as homecare?

You state that you will work with providers to ensure ongoing sustainability. Could you please explain how you will do this and how you will help providers to remain sustainable. Have you engaged with current providers to discuss this proposal?

Response

- *Could you please explain the rationale for this decision?*

The contracting arrangements for Supported Living have not been recently tendered and during a procurement exercise in 2021 it became apparent that the current contractual and commissioning arrangements can be improved for the benefit of tenants, providers and the Council. During 2021/22 the Council undertook a regional review of rates and commissioning arrangements for supported living services. The delivery of this Strategy and tender will be progressed via extensive market engagement in a similar format to the successful tender of Homecare in 2021.

- *Has this decision taken account of the 6.6% increase in the national living wage for 2022/23?*

Yes, we have and will continue to consider the drivers for all aspects of the costs of delivering supported living services when constructing the new model in collaboration with providers.

- *Could you please confirm whether you are looking to reduce the hourly rate for any other adult services, such as homecare?*

Following extensive market engagement Homecare was retendered in 2021 and new rates were published as part of that tender exercise. The new framework for homecare commenced in November 2021 and there no plans to reduce the rates of homecare or other adult services.

The delivery of this Strategy and tender will be progressed via extensive market engagement in a similar format to the successful tender of Homecare in 2021. Sustainability, quality, outcomes and value for money will all be considered as key elements of this market engagement and the resulting tender.

Supplementary question

In your response to my initial question you state that a tender exercise will take place for supported living. Could you tell me what the timeline for the tender is likely to be and could you please confirm that there will be a full consultation exercise, including users and providers, before the tender process starts.

Response

The cabinet member health and adult wellbeing confirmed there would be full consultation, including users and providers and that officers were already having conversations with those groups.

The acting director for adults and communities explained that the tender documents were due to be issued in September 2022 but that might be subject to change depending on the outcome of the extensive consultation and engagement planned with providers and users.