

Report of Deputy Director, Integrated Commissioning, Adults and Health

Report to Director of Adults and Health

Date: 25th March 2020

Subject: Allocation of £150k funding to the Time for Carers Scheme in 2020/2021 and award of a grant to Carers Leeds for a period of 12 months to deliver the scheme

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

Main issues

- 'Time for Carers' is a well-established, successful and popular scheme which primarily provides carers with a small grant of up to £250 in order that they can take a short break from caring.
- Allocating £150k in 2020/2021 will maintain the funding level of the last 2 years, which has included non-recurrent iBCF. This will enable a minimum of 500 carers to have a short break from caring and up to 20 carer groups to provide opportunities for mutual support as well as for carers to have a break
- 'Time for Carers' is a tried and trusted way of introducing new and previously unknown carers to the range of services available through Carers Leeds which can in turn prevent and reduce dependency on statutory health and social care services

Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- Short breaks for carers support the Best Council Plan priority on Health and Wellbeing and Leeds' Best City Ambition of a Strong Economy and a Compassionate City, by contributing towards how the council will meet the needs of carers.
- Short breaks for carers also support the Council's Breakthrough projects, notably 'making Leeds the best city to grow old in' and 'reducing health inequalities'.

Resource Implications

- The identified budget in 2020/2021 is £150k and is within the adult carer's budget

Recommendations

- This report recommends that the Director of Adults and Health:
 - Allocate £150k to the Time for Carers Grant Scheme in 2020/2021.
 - Approve the award of a grant to Carers Leeds with a value of £150k from 1st April 2020 for 12 months.
 - Notes the Head of Commissioning (Integration) will be responsible for implementing this decision.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek authority from the Director of Adults and Health to allocate £150k to the Time for Carers Grant Scheme in 2020/2021 and to award a grant to Carers Leeds for a period of 12 months from 1st April 2020.

2. Background information

- 2.1 'Time for Carers' is a well-established, successful and popular scheme which primarily provides carers with a small grant of up to £250 in order that they can take a short break from caring.
- 2.2 The scheme has been administered by Carers Leeds since its inception (over 10 years ago) to the present day. Carers submit an application form to Carers Leeds which includes a description of what the grant would be spent on and how it would benefit the carer.
- 2.3 Each application must be supported by a statement from a health or care professional to confirm the applicant is a carer. Carers Leeds organise a monthly panel who appraise and award grants. Priority is given to carers who have not received a grant in the previous three years.
- 2.4 Prior to 2016/2017, funding of £150,000 was split equally between Leeds City Council and NHS Leeds CCG's, each contributing £75,000 pa. However, in 2016/2017 & 2017/2018, the CCG's did not provide a funding contribution meaning that the number of unpaid carers benefiting from the scheme significantly reduced.
- 2.5 In each of 2018/2019 and 2019/2020, £75,000 funding has been made available via the IBCF.
- 2.6 In 2018/2019 and 2019/2020, a small amount of the total funding available has been used to provide financial support for Carers Groups which provide opportunities for mutual support as well as for carers to have a break. In each of the two years, approximately 20 groups have benefitted from this.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 It is widely recognised that having a break from caring provides positive outcomes for carers and supports them to continue caring which can prevent and reduce dependency on statutory health and social care services, for example GP appointments, hospital admissions and admissions to residential and nursing care.
- 3.2 The 'Time for Carers' grant is an effective way of reaching high numbers of carers, including those previously unknown, and providing them with a break which they themselves choose based on their own individual circumstances.
- 3.3 Carers can apply for a grant irrespective of whether they and/or the person they care for meet the eligibility criteria for care and support as laid out in Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations 2014.
- 3.4 The Time for Carers Grant is a key contributor to the objectives in the co-produced Leeds Carers Partnership Strategy which is currently being reviewed and will be re-launched in 2020, specifically "to increase the number of carers having a break from caring".
- 3.5 Allocating £150k in 2020/2021 will maintain the funding level of the last 2 years, which has included non-recurrent IBCF. This will enable a minimum of 500 carers

to have a short break from caring and up to 20 carer groups to provide opportunities for mutual support as well as for carers to have a break

- 3.6 Carers Leeds are a key third sector partner and have a contract with Leeds City Council to deliver information, advice and support services for adult and parent carers until 31st March 2024 with options to extend the contract up to a further two years. Administration of the Time for Carers Grant Scheme is included in the specification for this service. The specification reads *“The service will provide administration of the Time for Carers Grant which can provide a cash sum for a carer to promote their own health and wellbeing. The amount of funding available, the maximum grant award and grant criteria will be agreed each year with the lead commissioning manager for carers”*.
- 3.7 The Time for Carers application process invites carers to request additional support from Carers Leeds, for example contact from a Carer Support Worker, information about support groups, receive a quarterly newsletter. Around 50% of grant recipients go on to receive further support from Carers Leeds which in turn can also reduce demand on statutory health and care services.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Engagement with carers was undertaken in relation to the development of the three tier approach to short breaks.
- 4.1.2 Feedback from carers who have received a Time for Carers Grant is overwhelmingly positive, for example:

We had a very good rest and it recharged us. Feeling a lot better than when we went.”

“The freedom to be able to go out and meet friends and family.”

“The grant gave me a chance to have a holiday where I pushed my mum into Mablethorpe. We both sat quiet, winding down on the promenade. It gave me as a carer a chance to relax, breathe in the sea air and look at different surroundings. It gave me a lift and taught me to relax more. At home it’s harder to do with much more pressures.”

“I am grateful for the monetary help towards a holiday – a break I badly needed as a carer.”

“I was able to have time to myself to swim and unwind. This break has been the first in around 10 years. An absolutely amazing scheme that enables you to have the time and money for you without feeling too guilty. Most of my own money is spent on who I care for.”

“The grant allowed me to enjoy my time away visiting my family and paying my share towards eating out with family and friends. I had an amazing time winding down and relieving the stress levels. It’s a valuable service for sure.”

“Five days away gave me a much need respite, during a period when we were adjusting to our change in health. Modelling supplies will aid future at home diversion from ongoing stressful situations.”

“My iPad makes life such much easier – access to Hotmail and Facebook support groups, online shopping and information. Really helpful, especially as iPads are so expensive.”
(carer who used the grant to help purchase an iPad to keep in touch with friends/support)

“For a week I was clear of cleaning, washing, cooking, etc. and the stay has re-energised me for the continued full-time caring of my very ill wife.”

- 4.1.3 Carers Leeds state that *“The Time for Carers funding makes a huge difference to the lives of carers across Leeds. By carers applying for this funding to help them get*

a break from their caring responsibilities, we are able to welcome and engage the carer into our service. So, not only does the funding benefit carers wellbeing it is also a very useful 'door opener' for carers to get to know about Carers Leeds and the scope of the services and support we offer”.

- 4.1.4 This work will be reported to the Leeds Carers Partnership which has strong representation from carers, voluntary and community sector organisations and statutory sector partners.
- 4.1.5 The Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adults has been briefed on the contents of this report.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening Tool has been completed and is appended to this report.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 Short breaks for carers support the Best Council Plan priority on Health and Wellbeing and Leeds' Best City Ambition of a Strong Economy and a Compassionate City, by contributing towards how the council will meet the needs of carers. They also contribute to delivering the vision of the Health and Well-being Strategy including such key elements as:
 - An age friendly city where people age well
 - Strong, engaged and well connected communities
 - Maximise the benefits from information and technology
 - Promote mental and physical equality
 - The best care, in the right place and the right time
- 4.3.2 Short breaks for carers also support the Council's Breakthrough projects, notably 'making Leeds the best city to grow old in' and 'reducing health inequalities'.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.3 At Full Council on 27 March 2019, Leeds City Council passed a motion declaring a Climate Emergency. In addition, the Leeds Climate Commission have proposed a series of science based carbon reduction targets for the city so that Leeds can play its part in keeping global average surface temperatures to no more than 1.5°C. A 'City Conversation' is planned for the summer of 2019, to raise awareness, review and refine the options and to start to build public, business and political support for transformative action.
- 4.3.4 Leeds City Council and Carers Leeds will work together to identify opportunities to reduce carbon emissions and will encourage the use of public transport where possible to access short breaks.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 Carers help to maintain the health and wellbeing of the person they care for, support that person's independence and enable them to stay in their own homes for longer. Research undertaken by the University of Leeds estimates the cost of replacing unpaid care with paid care to be around £1.4billion per year in Leeds. Short breaks for carers which promote their wellbeing and enables them to continue

caring therefore makes economic sense as it helps to manage demand on health and care services.

- 4.4.2 The identified budget in 2020/2021 is £150k. Funding is within the adult carer's budget and is available through a realignment of the adult carers budget.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 The decision highlighted in this report will be taken by the Director of Adults and Health in line with the officer delegation scheme as detailed in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.
- 4.5.2 The decision will be classed as a Significant Operational Decision and will be required to be signed-off by the Director of Adults and Health.
- 4.5.3 The decision will be published to ensure transparency and accountability in relation to decision making within the authority.
- 4.5.4 There are no grounds for treating the contents of this report as confidential under the Council's Access to Information rules.
- 4.5.5 As the Council would be entering into a grant arrangement with Carers Leeds who wish to operate the "Time for Carers Grant" the Council will have no contractual control over enforcement of the terms. The only sanction available with grant payments is for the Council to claw-back grant monies unspent.
- 4.5.6 There is a risk of challenge that a grant payment is not a grant. Legally there is some confusion about when a grant can and cannot be used as there is a fine line between a grant (which is not caught by the procurement rules) and a contract for services (which is caught by the procurement rules). The preamble to EU Procurement Directive 2014/24/EU makes it clear at paragraph (4) that "the mere financing, in particular through grants, of an activity, which is frequently linked to the obligation to reimburse the amounts received where they are not used for the purposes intended, does not usually fall within the scope of the public procurement rules".
- 4.5.7 As such, unconditional grants are unlikely to meet the definition of a contract set out in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015). However, where grants are used with strict qualification criteria and an obligation to pay back money if certain targets are not reached, the position is less straightforward and it is possible that an arrangement referred to as a grant could actually meet the definition of a contract set out in the PCR 2015 and, if it does, the PCR 2015 may apply. It is therefore extremely important to ensure that, if providing grants, the process followed does not fall within the definition of a "public contract" as set out in PCR 2015 which states –"contracts for pecuniary interest concluded in writing between one or more economic operators and one or more contracting authorities and having as their object the execution of works, the supply of products or the provision of services"
- 4.5.8 Grants may be in breach of state aid but it is unlikely that the grant payments proposed will fall foul of the state aid rules.
- 4.5.9 Funding from which any grant payment is made must be designated as "grant" money. If the Council wish to make a grant, the money must be in the "grant" block. If it is not, it can normally be moved from other blocks in the Council budget into the grant block.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 Carers are required to submit receipts to Carers Leeds to confirm that the grant has been spent in accordance with the application.
- 4.6.2 Carers Leeds maintain records of applications received and grants awarded and submit quarterly reports to Leeds City Council.
- 4.6.3 Funding will be transferred to Carers Leeds in advance on a quarterly basis. Historically there have always been more applications than funding available. However, any unspent funding will either be recovered or carried over to the following year.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The Time for Carers Scheme is a tried and trusted way of supporting carers to have a short break and of introducing new and previously unknown carers to the range of services available through Carers Leeds.
- 5.2 Allocating £150k in 2020/2021 will maintain the funding level of the last 2 years, which has included non-recurrent iBCF. This will enable a minimum of 500 carers to have a short break from caring and up to 20 carer groups to provide opportunities for mutual support as well as for carers to have a break.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 This report recommends that the Director of Adults and Health:
 - Allocate £150k to the Time for Carers Grant Scheme in 2020/2021.
 - Approve the award of a grant to Carers Leeds with a value of £150k from 1st April 2020 for 12 months.
 - Notes the Head of Commissioning (Integration) will be responsible for implementing this decision.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.