



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT SOCIAL SERVICES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY CABINET BOARD

11th October 2022

Report of the Head of Adult Services – A. Thomas

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

DISTRIBUTION OF WELSH GOVERNMENT GRANT TO SUPPORT DOMICILIARY CARE SERVICES

Purpose of the Report

To request:

- Delegated authority for the Head of Adult Services to allocate funding provided by a specified Welsh Government (“WG”) grant to commissioned domiciliary care providers (“Providers”), in order to support their workforce with increased fuel costs.
- Delegated authority for the Head of Adult Services to utilise funding from this grant to purchase electric cars, electric charge points and electric charge point installation for the pooled use of the Council’s Community Wellbeing Team (CWT),

Executive Summary:

At the beginning of the 2022/23 financial year, WG made available a £10 million grant to help grow capacity within the domiciliary care sector.

WG have requested that Local Authorities distribute this grant on their behalf. Neath Port Talbot Council (“the Council”) has received £450,000 of the available funding to allocate across Neath Port Talbot.

In order to distribute this grant in line with WG requirements, the Head of Adult Services is requesting delegated authority for the allocation of this grant to Providers in order to support their workforce with the rising costs of fuel.

The Head of Adult Services is also requesting delegated authority to use the available grant for the purposes of purchasing and operating a fleet of electric cars for the pooled use of the CWT.

Background

It is acknowledged that across Wales, domiciliary care providers are facing challenges in recruiting sufficient numbers of staff to meet the current demand for domiciliary care.

To support the sector, Welsh Government has allocated £10 million across Wales, of which the share for Neath Port Talbot is £450,000. This money is to enable Providers to purchase driving lessons for staff that do not drive, electric fleet vehicles for the use of domiciliary care workers and to help the domiciliary care workforce with rising mileage costs.

Meetings between Officers from the Common Commissioning Unit (CCU) and Providers to discuss issues within the market frequently take place. Whilst costs of driving lessons and access to electric cars are not seen as a significant area of concern for the local market, Providers have been unanimous in their concern of how rising fuel costs are impacting on their workforce.

Providers explained that their workforce were refusing overtime and seeking alternative professions due to the impact of rising fuel costs, which was then impacting on their operational viability. In response to

these concerns, Officers from the CCU undertook an exercise to understand the current mileage rates paid by Providers to their staff and the cost to the Council if they allocated additional funding to Providers so that their workforce could receive an increase in their mileage rates. An increase to 45p a mile was agreed as the ideal rate, as this is the maximum HMRC approved rate for the first 10,000 miles undertaken for business purposes in the tax year.

From this work, it was established that the cost to the Council would be £20,000 per month, which equates to £240,000 per annum. Due to the significant pressures facing the Council both in terms of demand for new packages of domiciliary care and in existing packages of care being terminated by Providers due to staff leaving their posts, it was agreed to support Providers in increasing their mileage rates to 45p from 1st April 2022. In order to claim this money, providers have to submit monthly mileage reports in order to evidence the total number of miles undertaken to deliver care. As part of their first submission, Providers also had to submit evidence of their mileage payments to staff as at 1st January 2022.

It is proposed that the remaining £210,000 of the available grant is used to purchase a fleet of electric cars, along with the necessary purchase and installation of electric charging points, for the pooled use of the Councils CWT. This proposal will support the Council in meeting its biodiversity obligations, as it will reduce the workforce's reliance on petrol and diesel cars.

The purchase of the required electric cars, electric charging points and installation of electric charging points will be managed by the Environment Directorate in line with their framework for such items. A follow-up report will be presented to members on completion of this procurement for information purposes.

Financial Impacts

This grant will have a positive impact on the Directorate's budget, as

it will enable:

- The Council to offer additional funding totalling £240,000 to Providers, so that they can support their workforce with rising mileage costs without negatively impacting on the Directorate's base budget.
- CWT to purchase electric fleet cars for the use of their workforce at a total cost of £210,000, without negatively impacting on the Directorate's capital budget. The ongoing operating costs will be absorbed into the Directorate's budget and should be more cost effective than traditional cars and offer a cheaper alternative to staff mileage claims.

Integrated Impact Assessment

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment, attached at Appendix 1, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below:

- The grants use is for a purpose specified by Welsh Government (WG) and is being distributed by Neath Port Talbot Council (NPTC) on behalf of WG. The allocation of this funding does not result in funding being redirected from other areas.
- Positive impact on people with a protected characteristic of age and sex.
- No impact on people with other protected characteristics.
- No impact on Welsh Language opportunities.
- Neutral impact on biodiversity.
- Supports the five ways of working.

Valleys Communities Impacts

Domiciliary Care services operate across Neath Port Talbot. Although this grant is not directly aimed at supporting valley communities, it may have an indirect positive impact by enabling more domiciliary care workers to be able to travel to these further to reach locations, thereby increasing service capacity in these areas.

Workforce Impacts

The electric fleet cars will be made available to members of CWT, as such this proposal will have a positive workforce impact as it will enable staff to access pooled cars for the undertaking of their duties.

Legal Impacts

The Welsh Government grant monies will be subject to terms and conditions which must be complied with by the Council and the domiciliary care providers as the recipients of the monies.

The purchase of the electric cars, charge points and charge point installation will need to be compliant with both the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and also the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. This process will be undertaken by the Environment Directorate in line with their scheme of delegations.

Risk Management Impacts

Risks with not undertaking the proposal

- If delegated authority is not provided for the allocation of funding to Providers to support an increase to their mileage rates, then the additional cost incurred by the Council to support Providers will need to be met from the Directorates base budget. In addition, it is anticipated that there would be a significant amount of the grant unallocated as the demand for monies to purchase driving lessons and electric fleet cars will be low.

- If delegated authority is not provided to fund the purchase electric cars, this will present a missed opportunity for the Council to move towards more environmentally friendly and cost-effective ways of operating services.

Risks with undertaking the proposal

- No further risk management impacts other than those already highlighted in the report.

Consultation

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

Having had due regard to the integrated impact assessment it is recommended that:

- The Head of Adult Services receives delegated authority to allocate £240,000 of funding provided through the Welsh Government grant in order to support commissioned domiciliary care providers to increase mileage rates for their workforce.
- The Head of Adult Services receives delegated authority to utilise £210,000 of the available Welsh Government grant for the purchase of electric cars, electric charge points and electric charge point installation for the pooled use of the Councils Community Wellbeing Team.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

So that the Council is able to distribute the available grant in a way that best supports the domiciliary care market.

Implementation of Decision

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in

period.

Appendices

Appendix 1: First Stage Impact Assessment

List of Background Papers

None

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