
Cabinet

12 March 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Adult Services - Councillor L Bigham

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Adults and Housing

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title: Accelerating Reform Fund

Is this a key decision?

No - although the proposals affect more than two electoral wards, the impact is not expected to be significant.

Executive summary:

The Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF) is a grant program available from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to accelerate the process of reform of adult social care in England. The sum of £42.6m has been made available nationally, with a minimum £25m earmarked for support to informal carers.

Monies are to be spent on projects that meet at least one of twelve priorities outlined by DHSC. Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care System has been awarded the sum of £779,604.

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for ARF were based on Integrated Care System footprints and Coventry City Council is accepting the grant on behalf of both Coventry City Council and Warwickshire County Council and will disburse the grant as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in line with receipt of grant monies from DHSC in March and October 2024.

Coventry and Warwickshire councils have identified six projects for funding.

The Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix 1 to the report) outlines the responsibilities of the Council and DHSC in the administration of the grant including requirements to disburse allocations to Warwickshire County Council.

There is a requirement for mid and end point grant reports to DHSC and for co-operation with evaluation partners.

The Council's Constitution requires Cabinet approval prior to signature of a grant agreement where such grant is over £500,000 and up to £2,500,000. Where time does not allow this to happen, approval can be sought by the relevant Director following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Chair with a requirement to then report retrospectively to Cabinet. As time was not available to gain approval of Cabinet in advance of signature, approval was gained by the Director of Adults and Housing, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities and the Chair of the Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board. This report therefore acts as the retrospective report for the grant received and also seeks delegated authority to enter into further grants and/ or procurement exercise/s (and resulting contract/s) necessary in order to discharge the Council's obligations.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

- 1) Note the approval of the acceptance of the grant of £779, 600 from the Department of Health and Social Care (already received via the constitutional mechanism set out in the Executive Summary above).
- 2) Delegate authority to the Director of Adults and Housing to enter into the necessary grant agreement/s (including the grant to Warwickshire County Council for their element of the grant as described in the Executive Summary) and/ or procurement exercise/s (and resulting contract/s) to deliver upon the requirements of the grant funding.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 – Memorandum of Understanding

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

None

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel, or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Accelerating Reform Fund

1. Context (or background)

1.1. The Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF) is a grant program available from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to accelerate the process of reform of adult social care in England. The sum of £42.6m has been made available nationally, with a minimum £25m earmarked for support to informal carers. Expressions of Interest (EOIs) were invited based on Integrated Care System geography, and EOIs had to be led by local authorities. Coventry has led the EOI for the Coventry and Warwickshire footprint which was submitted by the given deadline of 12th January 2024. EOIs were permitted to contain between one and six projects, at least one of which must be directly related to informal carers. Our local bid covered six projects, four of which are intended to support carers and service users with one focussed solely on carers and the remaining project supporting service users. Four projects benefit both Coventry and Warwickshire with the remaining two currently being Warwickshire only projects.

1.2. Projects must deliver against one or more of twelve key priority areas i.e.

- Priority 1: community-based care models such as shared living arrangements
- Priority 2: supporting people to have greater control over their care options, such as by using digital tools to self-direct support or communicate needs and preferences.
- Priority 3: investment in local area networks or communities to support prevention and promote wellbeing, enabling people to age well in their communities.
- Priority 4 (focusses on unpaid carers): ways to support unpaid carers to have breaks which are tailored to their needs.
- Priority 5: digital tools to support workforce recruitment and retention, for example through referral schemes.
- Priority 6: develop and expand the impact of local volunteer-supported pathways for people drawing on care and support.
- Priority 7 (focusses on unpaid carers): ways to conduct effective carer's assessments with a focus on measuring outcomes and collaboration.
- Priority 8 (focusses on unpaid carers): services that reach out to, and involve, unpaid carers through the discharge process.
- Priority 9: digital workforce development and market shaping tools with capability to map, strengthen and grow local workforce capacity relative to system demand.
- Priority 10: social prescribing to connect people with information, advice, activities, and services in the community.
- Priority 11 (focusses on unpaid carers): ways to better identify unpaid carers in local areas.
- Priority 12 (focusses on unpaid carers): ways to encourage people to recognise themselves as carers and promote access to carer services.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal.

2.1. Option 1 (Recommended Option)

Whilst the funding will be received in two tranches one in March 2024 and the second payment in October 2024 the Accelerating Reform Fund will be deployed over the 2 years 2024/25 and 2025/26 which has been agreed by DHSC and will support the Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care System (ICS).

The ICS partnership led by the City Council has agreed the following projects which were embodied into the EOI approved by DHSC in February 2024.

Project	Target Group	Authority	2024/25 cost 000's	2025/26 cost £000's	Total Cost 000's
Early Identification and Support	Carers	CCC	67.50	60.00	127.50
		WCC	67.50	60.00	127.50
Respite Care	Service users and Carers	CCC	67.00	62.00	129.00
		WCC		62.00	62.00
Market Shaping and Capacity	Service Users	CCC	25.00	25.00	50.00
		WCC	25.00	25.00	50.00
Shared Lives	Service users and Carers	CCC	6.50	6.50	13.00
		WCC	6.50	6.50	13.00
Personalised Phone APP with and professional support	Service users and Carers	WCC only	85.68		85.68
Hospital carers support service	Service users and Carers	WCC only	100.00		100.00
Subtotal CCC		CCC	166.00	153.50	319.50
Subtotal WCC		WCC	284.68	153.50	438.18
Project Management & Contingency			21.92		21.92
Grand total			472.60	307.00	779.60

A brief description of each project follows.

2.1.2 **Early Identification and Support for informal carers:** This project aims to improve early identification and intervention for informal carers, reduce carer burnout and enhance support infrastructure; scale up services provided through Carers Trust Heart of England through AI automation and support tools and improve access to and utilisation of local place-based services. The project is designed to meet the following key objects as set out by DHSC.

7 - Effective carer's assessments focusing on outcomes and collaboration.

8 - Inclusive services involving unpaid carers in the discharge process.

10 - Social prescribing to link individuals to community resources

11 - Improved identification of unpaid carers in communities.

12- Encouraging self-identification among carers and promoting service access.

2.1.3 **Enhancing Respite stays for family carers and their loved ones:** this would offer carers opportunities to access free overnight stays or activities to allow carers time to themselves or have a break from the caring role. This may include afternoon teas, overnight hotel stays, spa treatments and meals out, donated free of charge by local businesses. This initiative would meet the following priorities:

Priority 4 (focusses on unpaid carers): ways to support unpaid carers to have breaks which are tailored to their needs.

Priority 12 (focusses on unpaid carers): ways to encourage people to recognise themselves as carers and promote access to carer services.

2.1.4 **Market Shaping and Capacity.** This project would be a digitally led artificial intelligence (AI) innovation for market shaping that map and predicts future patterns in demand for care and support, and helps to generate new capacity, connecting and growing diverse community provision to meet projected demand. The initiative would expand choice and control by helping to grow, diversify and map local community capacity and by allowing people to find and stitch together various sources of support and opportunities around their unique needs and goals.

2.1.5 **Shared Lives:** This is an already established service across Coventry and Warwickshire, currently rated by the Care Quality Commission as 'Outstanding.' The scheme offers adults the opportunity to live with approved carers in ordinary family homes, experiencing all the joys and sometimes difficulties of family life and be an active member of the local community. Shared Lives is a key alternative to residential or supported living placements, offering increased outcomes for individuals at a comparatively lower cost for the local authority. Shared Lives also offers respite opportunities for individuals supported by unpaid carers in the community. The project would deploy ARF resources to help ensure a new stream of Shared Lives carers can be onboarded to both replace carers who are retiring and supplement numbers including those from communities that are currently under-represented so that more people can benefit from support in a homely environment and in a cost-effective way. This project would particularly align to DHSC outcomes of:

Priority 1: community-based care models such as shared living arrangements

Priority 4: (focusses on unpaid carers); ways to support unpaid carers to have breaks which are tailored to their needs.

Priority 5: digital tools to support workforce recruitment and retention, for example, through referral schemes.

2.1.6 **Personalised App and Professional Support: Warwickshire Only** A personalised phone app that combines the use of technology and live professional support to enable people to access help whenever and wherever they need it. The app can help with making decisions, remembering, or planning for events, or developing personalised strategies to manage anxiety or access to the local community independently. For example, the app users can use the traffic lights system to record how they feel:

Green – I am ok.

Amber – Things are a bit difficult, but I do not need help.

Red – Things are difficult, and I need help.

If individuals press the red traffic light, or press amber three times, the app provider contact them to follow up. The app is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year including the 24/7 Responder Service linked to the traffic lights system.

- 2.1.7 **Hospital Carers Support Service: Warwickshire Only.** Hospital Carers Support Service is a new service to offer, the unpaid carer and family, additional support in coping with an admission into hospital and subsequent discharge. This service looks to address concerns arising from the possible increase in caring responsibilities for the carer following the discharge to home of the person that they look after. The service will aim to provide support for the carer due to an admission to hospital that would result in a new caring role, significantly increased level of caring or a meaningful change in how caring can be delivered.
- 2.1.8 **Memorandum of Understanding:** As lead authority, the City Council has entered into a memorandum of understanding that confirmed the final allocation of funding and set out expectations of how the Coventry and Warwickshire consortium will work with DHSC whose expectations include mid and end grant reporting reports by the City Council and cooperation with an evaluation partner to be appointed by DHSC and also the Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) who DHSC have selected as a support partner.
- 2.1.9 Funding will be paid to the City Council in two instalments, March, and October 2024 with disbursement to Warwickshire County Council for their elements of the funding paid shortly afterwards.

2.2 Option 2

Withdraw interest in receiving the Grant. This is not recommended as it would disadvantage service users and carers in Coventry and Warwickshire who would not benefit from the additional monies.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1. Due to the short timescales for pulling together the EOI, time has not permitted extensive engagement with service users/informal carers, however, involvement will commence prior to implementation and significant engagement of family carers has already informed the carers plans of both Coventry and Warwickshire. For the City Council this plan was endorsed by Cabinet Member for Adults on 4th December 2023. The proposed service solutions have themselves been developed through extensive consultation with service users and carers in the areas in which they were developed.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision.

- 4.1. Should Cabinet endorse the recommendation within this report, implementation would be phased over the two fiscal years 2024/25 and 2025/26 with provider selection commencing in April 2024. Monitoring and sustainability planning will be undertaken via

Adult Social Care Management Teams in Coventry and Warwickshire, via Coventry's and Warwickshire's Adult Joint Commissioning Group /Group and through each project's own management arrangements.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1. Financial Implications

ARF brings a total of £779,600 to the ICS footprint made up of £319,500 for Coventry City Council schemes, £438,180 for Warwickshire County Council schemes as well as project management and contingency resources of £21,920 with Coventry City Council acting as lead authority.

5.2. Legal Implications

Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence and as such the Council has the power to receive grant funding and enter into a grant agreement.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has determined under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 that a Grant should be paid to Coventry City Council for the fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25.

The Council will ensure that where it requires third party organisations to perform delivery of the grant obligations the Council will identify such organisations by either running a transparent grant application process/s and/ or procurement exercise/s in compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022, the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Prior to entering into the grant agreement with the Department of Health and Social Care to accept the grant Legal Services provided advice on the terms of the grant. Prior to entering into further grant agreement/s and/ or contract/s in order for the Council to discharge its obligations under the grant Legal Services will review and provide the necessary advice on the relevant terms and conditions.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/one-coventry-plan>

The deployment of Accelerating Reform Fund monies will support One Coventry priorities particularly in relation to improving outcomes and tackling inequality in particular by supporting informal carers through the various initiatives outlined and by bolstering voluntary sector provision to help support service users, informal carers and support a healthy community and voluntary sector. It is anticipated that this additional funding will assist in supporting the financial sustainability of the Council though drawing down monies from Central Government to support adult Social Care Reform.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

The main risk to this programme of work is sustainability beyond the lifetime of the funding. Mitigation of this risk will be managed through having clear expectations on providers around the requirement to demonstrate a clear “invest to save” case or to seek ongoing funding through non-Council means. The Council’s representative will meet with a DHSC representative on a quarterly basis as per the Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix 1) to review progress and address any issues that might arise.

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

There are no direct impacts on the Council’s human resources or other assets.

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

There is no specific requirement for an EIA associated with this activity, however, there are expected to be positive equality impacts which will be considered and evidenced within each project.

6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

There are not expected to be any noteworthy impacts on environment/climate change, carbon footprint.

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

The projects funded through ARF have been developed in partnership with Warwickshire County Council and Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board both of which will benefit from the outcomes for their citizens/patients. The Council’s main commissioned voluntary sector provider for informal carers – Carer’s Trust Heart of England – will benefit through being enabled to enhance their offer to carers through working with carers identification and support platform.

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