

REPORT TO: Health Policy & Performance Board
DATE: 27th June 2023
REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director, Adults
PORTFOLIO: Adult Social Care
SUBJECT: Halton Care Workers - Petition
WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To present the Board with details of a recent petition received by the Council from Halton Care Workers and associated response.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board:

i) Note the contents of the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 At the Health PPB on 29th November 2022, the Board received a public question in respect to payment of the Foundation Living Wage to all care workers across Halton, following receipt of the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund.

The Board's response was as follows:-

'The function of the Health Policy and Performance Board is scrutiny; it is not a decision making body, so it is not permitted to commit to any budget spend.'

3.2 Subsequent to this, in February 2023, Halton Borough Council received a petition from Halton Care Workers demanding a pay rise, focused on three areas, as follows:-

- For Halton Council to require the Foundation Living Wage as a minimum starting salary for all directly employed and commissioned care and support workers;
- Halton Council to work with care workers to deliver the Foundation Living Wage as a minimum starting salary for all of Halton's care and support workers; and
- Call on members of the public to hold local councillors to account and stand with care workers in their campaign for a pay rise.

3.3 Following receipt of the petition, Councillor Mike Wharton, Leader of the Council, responded, as follows:-

'As an Authority, we do recognise that the care workers in Halton continue to do a fantastic job in supporting our most vulnerable residents. We do appreciate this and want to support you as much as we can, during this extremely challenging time.

As such we will continue to lobby the government to provide us with the funding needed to pay the foundation living wage. Unfortunately unless we receive additional long term funding we will continue to find this a difficult area to address in full.

Every year we review what we pay our commissioned services, taking into account cost of living increases, national living wage and other essential costs.

One example of this is the national living wage increase next year, which equates to an additional cost to us of 9.7%, whilst welcomed, central government do not provide the additional funding of £1.8million to support us to pay for this.

In your email you raise a really important issue on how available funding can be used to pay for an increase in care workers pay. This funding is only available for a one off short period of time, and therefore cannot be committed to provide long term increases in pay for staff. We have utilised some of this short term funding to pay one off additional pay to some staff, as agreed with their employers.

The winter fund, again is only available until the end of March. The government determine what this can be spent on, which is to provide additional care to people leaving hospital. Unfortunately, we cannot commit this money to long term pay increases for staff.

The underspend you are referring to as reported to the HPPB, is similar to the issue raised above and is only available for a short period of time, this will not be available next year. This underspend is in a small but significant part of the pooled budget with colleagues in health. As a one off these will need to be considered to support other areas of the Adult Social Care and health budgets for care provision that are projected to overspend.

As an Authority we offer our support to your campaign. We will continue to request central government to provide the much needed additional funding for adult social care.'

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

N/A

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

N/A

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

This report relates specifically to the delivery of health outcomes in Halton.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

N/A

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

N/A

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None associated with this report.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None associated with this report.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 This report is for information only, therefore there are no environmental or climate implications as a result of this report.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document	Place of Inspection
Health PPB – Agenda and Minutes from the meeting held on 29 th November 2022	https://councillors.halton.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=429&MId=8731&Ver=4