Request for executive level decision on spend to ensure care providers are paid accurately and on-time

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Note for Spend Control Panel

All of the spend outlined in this paper was agreed and authorised by Jacqueline Harris-Baker, Guy van Dichele and Lisa Taylor on 9/12/2020.

Background

The Liquid Logic case management system, along with the ContrOCC financial system (from now on referred to as LAS/C), went live for adult social care in September 2020, on time and well under budget. The system is working well but is still in an 'early life support' phase with tweaks and reconfigurations necessary in response to being used in a live environment.

As a result of the S114 announcement, two agency workers within CDS, who were working on training and onboarding of teams with LAS/C were let go and payments to Albany Beck/BetterGov, our implementation partner, stopped.

This has had a major impact on the ability of the Placements team to use LAS/C effectively to get payments to providers and manage the financial aspect of the service.

The team is now in crisis and urgent intervention is needed to resolve the situation.

The issue

Since the end of September 2020 we have been attempting to catch up with the work from the systems downtime. Whilst we are dealing with this we are still in the middle of covid-19 and we are receiving double the amount of work that we normally would.

On average we receive about 1000 pieces of work per month to action. Some of these are very minor changes to LAS/CONTROCC but some of these need work end to end (SW to payments team).

We have struggled with the following:-

- End to end processes not fully imbedded within all teams.
- Some end to end processes not working correctly
- Issues with the end to end where cases are not going through to CONTROCC and teams are unaware of why not going through.
- No expertise to resolve issues quickly enough and to catch up on backlog of work.
- Coding issues where we think is being coded correctly but not going through

The main issue is the expertise. I have made staff available to clear the backlog and they have been working evenings/weekends to do this but can't catch up quick enough and/or its stuck somewhere within the system that we are unable to resolve.

The risks are:-

- Not paying providers. Some suppliers are threatening to stop provision. Emails received from several supporting living providers and home care providers
- Unable to carry out financial assessments as clients not on system to start work.
- Scheme 1 and Scheme 2 NHS claims not accurate and will be subject to challenge. This is circa £1.4m per month
- Income lost as clients who would contribute not being charged for.

The ask

To resolve the situation, the following three actions are recommended:

1. To re-engage Albany Beck/BetterGov to support the LAS/C rollout in terms of early life support and completing work currently left unfinished.

   Cost - £80,000.

   Additional note – we have run up against CCB limits on spending under the contract with have with Albany Beck/BetterGov. We would require permission to spend further with them, as we do not have time for procurement, nor for onboarding new suppliers.

2. To purchase additional days of support with ContrOCC to fully configure our system to ensure it meets the needs of the Council and its providers.

   Cost - £22,000.

3. To re-engage two agency workers, who know the Croydon LAS/C setup, to work with the Adults Placement & Brokerage.

   Cost - £20,000 to end of January 2020. £13,000 per month following that if needed.

   To re-second a member of staff from Adult Social Care to help reduce the backlog, until end March 2021.

   Cost – £10,200

   To re-second an accountant from Finance to the project team until end March 2021.

   Cost - £22,000

   To retain a secondee (who's secondment runs to end March 2021 but we were considering ending early) to help reduce the backlog, until end March 2021.

   Cost - £12,000

Source of funds

The LAS/C implementation had a large capital budget assigned to it. Work is ongoing on other workstreams, however we currently forecast the whole programme to come in around £1.5m under budget.

The costs identified in this paper therefore can be covered by this existing capital budget.