



**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF SERVICE DELIVERY**

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**to  
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
28 MAY 2019**

**PILOT COUNTYWIDE HANDYPERSON SERVICE**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide Members with an overview of the Pilot Countywide Handyman Service and seek approval for funding the membership through the Better Care Fund.
- 1.2 To note that whilst Members have asked Officers to look at the development of a local scheme it would seem sensible at this time to be part of the pilot scheme as this may deliver the outcome desired by Members. Officers will review and report on the project and if necessary a separate scheme could still be looked at should the countywide scheme not prove to be effective within the Maldon District.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) Members to note the report and detailed information contained in **APPENDIX A**,
- (ii) Members to approve membership to join the scheme for a 1-year pilot period.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 Throughout Essex it has become clear there is a distinct gap in service provision relating to small works that would help vulnerable people return home from hospital without avoidable delay and promote independence at home.
- 3.2 Maldon District Council residents are no exception to this and as it supports an ageing population it is becoming more essential that access to a 'handyman service' to bridge this gap is essential.
- 3.3 Delays to a person being discharged home from hospital are costly to all partner services, particularly when the works that are required are low cost and low risk, e.g. general safety checks, installation of a key safe, working light bulbs, moving furniture to allow for equipment provision and use
- 3.4 Essex County Council have been facilitating a Handyman Service Working Group which is made up of representation from District and Borough Councils, Essex County Council Occupational Therapy and Essex County Council Commissioning Team of which Maldon District Council attends. It is a Task and Finish group established by the Essex Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG).

- 3.5 The handyperson scheme will carry out works to facilitate safe discharge into an environment in which the individual can receive care safely, not merely removing risks that may cause harm. This may include (but is not limited to) the removal of tripping hazards, works/repairs to doors, thresholds and windows, repairs to lighting, supplying and fixing handrails, the provision of temporary ramps and the provision and fitting of a Key Safe.
- 3.6 The handyperson would have the option to call on additional support if the activities involved the movement of furniture.
- 3.7 The various options for the scope and delivery of the Handyperson Service have been explored which are detailed in **APPENDIX A**.
- 3.8 Essex County Council are proposing to run a pilot scheme for 1 year. The cost of the overall scheme is £139,462. This cost would enable 2 full-time persons and 2 vans including on costs (salary, management, recruitment & retention and insurance.) to serve those Districts and Boroughs who sign up to the scheme. Presently there are 8 authorities who wish to join the scheme at a cost of £15,500. per authority.
- 3.9 A full detailed scope of works with timescales including user access is yet to be drawn up but at this stage will enable officers to negotiate the best terms for Maldon District Council.
- 3.10 The full cost of the scheme will be met by the Better Care Fund which is specifically a programme spanning across NHS and local government. The Fund seeks to join-up health and care services so that people can manage their own health and wellbeing and live independently in the community for as long as possible.
- 3.11 The proposal is to run the scheme on a pilot basis for 1 year. This will enable officers to monitor its use and ease of access for the Council quarterly over this period. The monitoring process will allow a better-informed decision whether the scheme is cost beneficial for the Council should there be an appetite to extend the scheme on a permanent basis going forward.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 It is clear there is a need in the district for a Handyperson Service available to focus on minor works that fall outside the DFG and other funded services. Currently the delays in the discharge of patients from hospital to home and temporary placements are creating significant costs to partner organisations and impacting on the health and wellbeing of those residents affected. The Handyperson service is being provided on a 1-year pilot basis and will be monitored quarterly for its performance and value. The County scheme will enable the Council to access handyperson resource at a fraction of the cost if it were to operate its own service independently or to access the same level of recourse in isolation.

## 5. IMPACT ON IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 The scheme will have a positive impact on our strategic theme of ‘Working with communities and partners to support our health and wellbeing priorities: obesity, mental health, social isolation and loneliness, and older people’s health’.
- 5.2 The handy person scheme will enable minor works to be completed swiftly so that people can come home safely from hospital into their own home environment avoiding the stress of lengthy delays whilst taking up much needed NHS resource.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The scheme will have a positive impact on customers, in particular those vulnerable through ill health or old age. Being able to come home from hospital without delay and feel safe in a home environment will benefit the wellbeing of those affected.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – The Council is committed to providing equal opportunities with no discrimination. There are no identifiable impacts only positive for those supported by the scheme.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – There is a risk that the bigger authorities will take priority use of the resource however, officers will monitor this regularly to ensure the resource is distributed fairly and that the Council has the same opportunities as others
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial and human)** – The financial implication is £15,500 for a 1-year contract. The cost will be committed through the Better Care Fund and has no impact on Council budget. There will be limited resource required by officers to monitor the scheme however, the benefits will far outweigh the cost.
- (v) **Impact on the Environment** – None

Background Papers: None

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