

North Somerset Council

Report to the Adult Services and Housing Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 03/11/2022

Subject of Report: Cap on Care Costs

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Abby Murphy

Key Decision: No

Reason:

Report for information only

Recommendations

The Panel is asked to consider this information as an update of where we are with preparing for the cap on care costs as part of the Adult Social Care Reforms

1. Summary of Report

This report is a summary of activity undertaken and planned for North Somerset Council to be ready for the Care Reform / Cap on Care Costs in October 2023

2. Policy

The council's Performance Management Framework includes a requirement for quarterly reporting of our transformational projects so that members and officers can monitor progress against our key plans and objectives and take appropriate action where progress is below target or needs additional focus.

3. Details

What does the Cap on Care Costs mean for North Somerset Residents?

- From October 2023 a Care Cap will be set at £86,000 as the maximum amount a person will pay for their care. This excludes daily living costs (£200 per week) the cap will rise in line with inflation
- Costs that count towards the Care Cap will be based on:
 - For those financially supported by the LA – what the LA charges the person to meet their eligible care and support needs
 - For self-funders what the cost to the LA would be of meeting their eligible care needs if the support were commissioned by the LA
- This will mean we need to develop and maintain a Care Account so that people can see how they are progressing towards the Care Cap
- This also means that Self-Funders will have an automatic right to ask the LA to commission care on their behalf
- In addition, the means testing threshold will be increased from £23,250 to £100,000

What does this look like in real terms?

In a word - **Increases**:

An increase in the number of people requiring Care Assessments, Financial Assessments, Care Reviews and Brokerage and potentially carers that we've not heard from before.

Early figures estimate this increase could be as much as 50%

This will also increase the number of contacts to our services, DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards), safeguarding concerns and potentially complaints.

Added into this we will have new responsibilities to meter care and produce Care Account Statements for people.

Trailblazers

The Government are working with 6 trailblazing Local Authorities who are starting the Care Reform work early they are:

- Wolverhampton
- Cheshire East
- North Yorkshire
- Blackpool
- Newham
- Oxfordshire

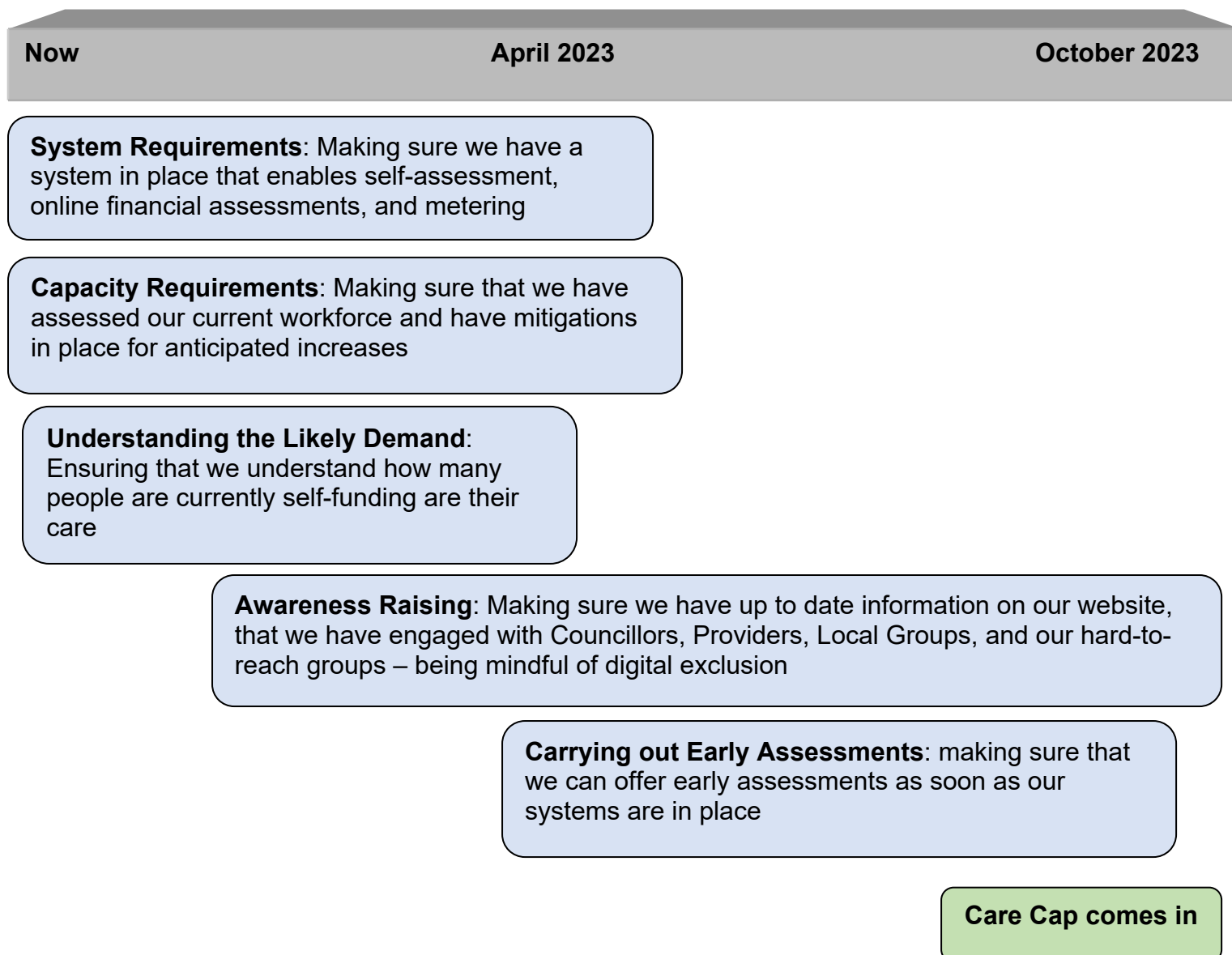
The table below is taken from the DHSC wording from advise given by trailblazers and we have ranked our current progress.

Key Eight Things Trailblazers Think Local Authorities Can Be Doing Now	NSC progress
Read the guidance and then read it again! Undertake a full gap analysis to understand what activity you will need to undertake to be compliant with the new legislation.	85%
Make sure all service heads have read the guidance and understand the changes	90%
Create programme structure & governance including Comms, Finance, Heads of Service, PSW, Commissioning, Brokerage, Financial Assessment Team, Data and Reporting and System Development.	90%
Understand any local variation in the impact of reforms (e.g. local cap, demographics, number of care homes, number of self-funders, number of home owners, digitally enabled).	20%
Crunch the numbers. How many people are likely to hit the cap in their lifetime? How will you manage these messages?	15%
Seek opportunities for join up. New operating model? Strength Based Assessment? Covid legacy? Trusted Assessor model? Community Relationships?	15%
Plan your early assessment approach.	5%
Think about when you are going to train staff and the delivery vehicle for this. What else will be happening during this time? i.e. other reforms, winter pressures."	10%

What have we done so far?

- Set up a working group to focus on Care Cap which is made up of Heads of Service, Principal SW, Finance, Brokerage, Operations, Commissioning, Business Intelligence, and links to Liberata and Agilisys
- Recruited a Care Cap Implementation Programme Manager
- Engaged with Agilisys to provide direction in terms of systems and our current supplier of our adult's case management system Liquid Logic
- Become active members of the SW ADASS Care Reforms group / SW ASDSS Reforms Data
- Set up regular meetings with the Care Cap leads for BNSSG so that we can pool our ideas, look for ways of joint working and network
- Attended briefings held by DHSC to listen to the latest advice and hear from Trailblazers
- Attended sessions from various alternative suppliers who have self-assessment solutions for self funders, to ensure we procure the best solution possible.
- Established a work plan and project overview site for internal communications and project oversight
- Produced our project initiation document, risk register and terms of reference.
- Begun work on a communications plan
- Began early engagements with service leads that will develop into a workforce plan
- Begun a review of current procedures to look at ways in which we can best prepare for the reforms
- Begun work on a full gap analysis of the reforms to identify all areas which need to be covered, what mitigations we will need and who will be responsible.

General Project Plan Timeline Overview



Current anticipated risks and mitigations plan

Potential Risks	Current RAG	Mitigation/dependencies
Systems: identifying a suitable solution	Amber/Red	Engagement with supplies, Advise from Agilisys, recommendations from SWADASS
Systems: timescales to purchase and implement solution	Amber/Red	Suppliers are aware of tight time scales, making sure we identify our desired spec
Capacity: recruiting a workforce to meet increased demands	Amber/Red	Establish a working group to focus purely on workforce requirements
Awareness Raising: Hard to reach groups / non digital	Amber	Involvement from NSC Coms to produce a solid communications plan and build on existing relationships with partner agencies
Understanding Demand: making sure we are resourced to the right level	Amber	Feeds into work force plan. Accurate data modelling which is being undertaken to check Newton modelling
Carrying out early assessments: ensuring we have the ability and resource to do this	Amber	Dependent on successful procurement and implementation of systems and good workforce planning.

4. Consultation

This report has been completed in full consultation with the project sponsor and Director, Members briefing sessions, and engagement with this Select Committee will continue as these reforms are progressed. Provider engagement will take place with Care Association and via Provider Forums. A communication action plan is being developed as service users, families and carers are key stakeholders.

5. Financial Implications

There will be financial implications from the following areas:

- Workforce to meet the increased demand across areas of adult social care such as, front door services, social workers and care workers, DoLS, Safeguarding, Brokerage / Commissioning and Court of Protection.
- Workforce in Corporate Services to meet increased demand, financial assessment officers, finance, Business Intelligence, customer services (complaints), HR for recruitment
- Increase demand for Agilisys for systems upgrades and implementation, and potentially Care Connect
- Procurement of systems to meet the requirements of Care Cap, Self-Assessment, and metering none of which we have at present, although upgrades to our current Adult Care Management System will allow this (at cost).

The government has indicated national funding targeted at this reform and is consulting on how the different elements of the funding will be distributed. Initial research of the likely costs of this reform suggests a significant shortfall at a national level. North Somerset has a far higher proportion of self funders, an above average house ownership level for those above 65 years of age, and in a regional context a lower than average care home fee level, all red flags for potential above average costs.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

N/A at this stage of the preparation

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

N/A – Although pursuing more self-serve and less reliance on paper where possible will have a small environmental benefit.

8. Risk Management

Please see above, risk management is considered by the project board on an ongoing basis

9. Equality Implications

Yes – in draft

The specific equality impact assessment for this programme is currently in draft and due for consideration by the Project Board at the next meeting.

The equality objectives (part of the Corporate Performance Management Framework) are regularly monitored and are reported to the Corporate Management Team and the Council's Equality Scheme Implementation Group.

10. Corporate Implications

It is important that we consider the scope and cost of these reforms to the Council as the programme progresses

11. Options Considered

N/A

Author:

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Appendices:

N/A

Background Papers:

N/A - Although all DHSC briefings, recordings of updates from DHSC are available on request.