

## Equality Impact Assessment

Reference: EQIA318690854

Submitted: 22 March 2021 22:06 PM

### Executive summary

**Title of policy or decision:** Residential and Nursing Care Home Funding from April 2021

**Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):** The CMA and this Equality Impact Assessment relate to the proposed funding of up to £7.1m from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to secure residential and nursing care capacity for older people from 1 April 2021, when the 12-month arrangements currently in place end. This funding will help to ensure timely access to high quality, resilient, care home provision across Essex.

The procurement approach will be in two phases through call offs from the IRN Framework. The IRN Framework was established in June 2019 to source care in a residential setting for older people and adults with non-complex mental health needs, with or without nursing care.

The two phases are:

Phase one (1 April 2021 to 31 July 2021):

To purchase block contracts for residential and nursing care beds through a call off process from the IRN Framework as well as homes with a nomination agreement, who are:

- rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and
- have a void threshold of greater than 25%, on 18 March 2021.

This four-month interim approach will target support at care homes with the highest quality and who are experiencing high levels of voids, helping to ensure sustainability and resilience.

Phase two (1 August 2021 to 31 March 2022):

Carry out a mini-competition as part of the annual IRN Framework review process for an initial four month period with the provision to extend for a further four months. It is anticipated that up to 250 beds will be block purchased in order to support our ambitions to achieve good quality, stable supply consistently across the county.

As well as funding to be deployed to support care homes at risk of immediate closure as well as the retention and support of the care workforce.

**What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?:** Help people get the best start and age well

**Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help people get the best start and age well:** Enable more vulnerable adults to live independent of social care

**Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?:** a change to an existing policy, practice or project

**Please provide a link to the document / website / resource to which this EqIA relates:** CMA Paper: Residential and Nursing Care Home Funding from April 2021

**Please upload any documents which relate to this EqIA, for example decision documents:** CMA Paper: Residential and Nursing Care Home Funding from April 2021

## Assessing the equality impact

**Use this section to record how you have assessed any potential impact on the communities likely to be affected by the policy (or decision):** The global outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) has significantly affected the health and care sector generally. The older people residential and nursing care home market specifically has been impacted by loss of residents, fewer placements, staff shortages and financial fragility.

The Council has a duty under section 5 of the Care Act 2014 to promote the efficient and effective operation of a market in services for meeting care and support needs with a view to ensuring that any person in its area wishing to access services in the market:

- has a variety of providers to choose from
- has a variety of high quality services to choose from

The proposed £7.1m funding and procurement approach will help to enable this sustainable market, to promote choice and control for individuals and their families. The required funding has been set through the analysis of a number of different data sources available to the Council. The funding will be targeted towards care home providers that are of a higher quality, which supports the aspiration that where residential or nursing care is required it should be 'good' or 'outstanding' provision. The opportunity for a block contract is an incentive for high quality care home providers to join or remain on the IRN Framework and work closely with the Council to support arising system pressures. As well as securing funding to manage fragility in the market, to help manage any unplanned market exits and to support the retention of care home staff.

The proposed funding and procurement approach is intended to maintain stability in the residential and nursing care market during 2021/22 whilst wider market shaping activity is carried out. Due to the immense Covid-19 pressures faced over the last 12 months, this wider market shaping activity, including in-depth engagement with providers, older people, future older people and their families has not been able to be progressed. It is hoped that during 2021 this engagement work can be taken forward and will inform recommendations for the residential and nursing care approach for 2022/23.

### Does or will the policy or decision affect:

**Service users:** Yes

**Employees:** No

**The wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities:** No

**Which geographical areas of Essex does or will the policy or decision affect?:** All Essex

**Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?:** Yes

**Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?:** No

**Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies?:** No

**Is the new or revised policy linked to a digital service (website, system or application)?:** No

## Description of impact

**Description of Impact.** If there is an impact on a specific protected group tick box, otherwise leave blank. You will be given the opportunity to rate identified impacts as positive, negative or neutral on the next page: Age, Disability - mental health issues, Disability - physical impairment, Disability - sensory impairment

**I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics:** I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics

# Age

**Nature of impact:** Positive

**Please provide more details about the nature of impact:** The proposed funding will help to ensure timely access to high quality, resilient, care home provision across Essex.

**Extent of impact:** Medium

**Please provide more details about the extent of impact:** By maintaining the market for placements we are ensuring that the older people of Essex are getting a choice of placements with the aspiration that these are in good or outstanding homes.

## Disability - mental health issues

**Nature of impact:** Positive

**Please provide more details about the nature of impact:** The proposed funding will help to ensure timely access to high quality, resilient, care home provision across Essex.

**Extent of impact:** Medium

**Please provide more details about the extent of impact:** By maintaining the market for placements we are ensuring that Essex residents are getting a choice of placement with the aspiration that these are in good or outstanding homes.

## Disability - physical impairment

**Nature of impact:** Positive

**Please provide more details about the nature of impact:** The proposed funding will help to ensure timely access to high quality, resilient, care home provision across Essex.

**Extent of impact:** Medium

**Please provide more details about the extent of impact:** By maintaining the market for placements we are ensuring that Essex residents are getting a choice of placement with the aspiration that these are in good or outstanding homes.

## Disability - sensory impairment

**Nature of impact:** Positive

**Please provide more details about the nature of impact:** The proposed funding will help to ensure timely access to high quality, resilient, care home provision across Essex.

**Extent of impact:** Medium

**Please provide more details about the extent of impact:** By maintaining the market for placements we are ensuring that Essex residents are getting a choice of placement with the aspiration that these are in good or outstanding homes.

## Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

**Does your EqIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?:** No

## Details of person completing the form

**I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance:** I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance

**Date EqIA completed:** 22/03/2021

**Name of person completing the EqIA:** Jo Grainger

**Email address of person completing the EqIA:** Jo.Grainger@essex.gov.uk

**Your function:** Adult Social Care

**Your service area:** Adults Commissioning

**Your team:** Older People Commissioning Team

**Are you submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team?:** No

**Email address of Head of Service:** Matthew.barnett@essex.gov.uk