MINUTES OF THE Cabinet Member Signing HELD ON Tuesday, 20th October, 2026, 4.30 - 4.40 pm

PRESENT:

Cabinet Member: Councillor Tehseen Khan

ALSO ATTENDING:

Chris Liasi – Committee and Governance Officer, Rebecca Cribb - Head of Commissioning& Quality Assurance

7. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Cabinet Member referred to the notice of filming at meetings and this information was noted.

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

10. URGENT BUSINESS

There were none.

11. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / QUESTIONS

There were none.

12. APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE AND FINAL PAYMENT TO ACCORA LIMITED REPORT

It was reported that Cabinet Member approval was sought to vary the contract with Accora Ltd, regularise expenditure exceeding the previously approved aggregate value of £499,999, and approve payment of the final validated accrued liability of £169,817.59 owed to Accora for the provision of short-term community equipment services. Members noted that Accora had been commissioned at short notice following the collapse of NRS Healthcare in August 2025 to ensure continuity of statutory community equipment provision while longer-term arrangements were established.

Due to the high volume of equipment delivered during this interim period, expenditure exceeded the original approved ceiling, resulting in a total payment value of £663,178.94, which was £163,179.94 above the original Director's Award. It was noted that Accora's support had helped maintain service continuity and minimise disruption for residents. Approval was therefore sought to regularise the final aggregate expenditure and settle the outstanding liability, with no further service delivery or contractual commitment proposed

DECLARATIONS FOR THIS ITEM:

NONE

RESOLVED

The Cabinet Member for Adults and Health:

1. Approved the variation of contract with Accora Ltd as permitted under CSOs 18.03.3 and 2.01(d)

a) The regularisation of total aggregate expenditure under the short-term Accora arrangement up to £663,178.94, being £163,179.94 above the previously approved maximum value of £499,999.
b) Payment to Accora Limited of the final validated outstanding accrued liability of £163,179.94.
c) That the payment is treated as the settlement of an accrued liability for services already delivered and accepted by the Council, and not as approval for any new service provision or further contractual commitment.

Reasons for decision

1. The proposed decision is required because Accora Limited provided short-term community equipment services in response to an urgent service continuity need and, following completion of the invoice reconciliation, a final validated outstanding liability of £163,179.94 remains payable. As payment would take the aggregate value of the arrangement above £499,999, Cabinet approval is required to regularise the expenditure and authorise settlement of the balance.
2. The service was commissioned in exceptional circumstances. The previous delegated authority report explains that the community equipment service is a critical all-age statutory service, supporting hospital discharge, preventing hospital admission, and enabling residents with care and support needs to remain safe and independent at home.
3. The same report records that the service supports over 36,000 equipment deliveries annually, with a catalogue of more than 600 items, and is prescribed by health and social care practitioners including occupational therapists, physiotherapists, community nurses and hospital discharge teams.
4. The short-term arrangement with Accora Limited was put in place because NRS Healthcare entered receivership and there was a significant risk to service continuity. The absence of community equipment provision would have had an immediate impact on vulnerable residents and would have affected the Council's ability to discharge statutory responsibilities under the Care Act 2014, the NHS Act 2022 and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.

5. The original Director's Award Report authorised the arrangement up to a maximum aggregate value of £499,999. The Council has subsequently received invoices for services which were required during the emergency period, but which exceeded this approval limit. The final aggregate expenditure will be £663,178.94 and the amount requiring regularisation above the original approval will be £163,179.94.
6. There is a risk of legal action, additional cost and reputational damage if the Council does not resolve the final validated payment promptly once the reconciliation has concluded.
7. The Council should not withhold payment of sums that are not disputed where the service has been delivered, the liability is accepted, and delay would expose the Council to further legal, financial and reputational risk.

Alternative options considered

1. One option would be to take no further action following the first-stage payment. This is not recommended because a final validated accrued liability of £163,179.94 remains outstanding and the Council should settle sums properly due for services already delivered and accepted.
2. A second option would be to seek a further delegated decision for the remaining balance. This is not recommended because to do so would be a breach of the Council's Standing Orders which does allow directors to make key decisions
3. The recommended option is therefore to seek Cabinet Member approval to regularise the final aggregate expenditure and pay the remaining validated accrued liability.

CABINET MEMBER:

Signed by Cabinet Member ……..

Date ……

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