

Our ref: MB/LH

Service: Adult Social Care

Direct line: 01384 815886

Date: 15th February 2021

Professor Martin Green OBE
Care England
40 Artillery Lane
LONDON E1 7LS

Dear Professor Green

Commissioning and Support of Care Services During and Post-Covid 19 Pandemic

Thank you for your letter of 4th February 2021, please accept our sincere apologies for the delay in responding.

Please find below responses to the questions you have raised in your letter, in the same order as they were addressed to us.

- 1) *The nature of the additional and direct financial Covid support the Council has provided since the commencement of the pandemic.*

DMBC provided circa £2.5m of financial support to the Adult Social Care market in Dudley. This was in addition to the Government initiatives regarding Infection Control funds and recently announced funding for lateral flow tests and workforce support. In addition to this, the Council (in conjunction with the CCG) increased the home care rate (for new long-term care) for the period of October 2020 to March 2021. The Council also sourced a significant resource of PPE which was / still is made available to care providers in the Borough.

- 2) *Of the financial support referred to in (1) above, is it continuing? If not, for what period was it provided? If it is continuing, for how long will it continue?*

The funding was for the period March 2020 to July 2020. Further market support was provided through IPC monies and passported to the market at pace. The Council also used elements of discretionary spend within the IPC grant to support providers.

- 3) *Of the financial support referred to in (1) above, did it include any support to address the financial impacts of falling occupancy levels?*

The funding identified in (1) covered a range of factors including the falling occupancy levels in Older Peoples Care Homes.

- 4) *What was the care home occupancy level in your local area in March and April 2020 and what was this occupancy level in December 2020 and January 2021?*

The following information was taken from our Covid tracker returns which commenced in April 2020, with the March data being provided from the regular end of month return. This information has been double checked and its accuracy confirmed.

- March 2020 – 88% occupancy.
- April 2020 – 86% occupancy.
- December 2020 – 85% occupancy.
- January 2021 – 86% occupancy.

- 5) *What fee level increases are being proposed by the Council for the year 2021/22?*

We are unable to confirm any fee increases for 2021/22 until our proposals have been ratified at Full Council on the 21st February 2021.

- 6) *If not already addressed within the answers to questions (1) to (5) above, what other forms of financial support for care providers is the Council considering for the remainder of the financial year 2021/22 to assist the sustainability of their care service provision during this period?*

The Council is aiming to passport as much as possible, within the remit of the new funding and timescales, to the care market.

- 7) *Has the Council consulted on any of the foregoing; if not does it propose doing so and when does it propose doing so?*

The Council has undertaken ongoing market engagement since the Summer with regard to market pressures / market support and other key considerations of cost pressures.

Should you require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



Matt Bowsher
Director of Adult Social Care