

OFFICER DECISION NOTICE



Reading
Borough Council
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This notice is to be used for the following types of officer decisions. (Select one option).

☐ **A.** Decisions taken by officers under a specific express delegation from Council or a Committee.

☒ **B.** Decisions taken by officers under a general delegation from Council or a Committee, which relates to (i) a permission or a licence, or (ii) the rights of an individual, or (iii) a contract or expenditure over which materially affects that relevant local government body's financial position.

1. Title of decision:	Unpaid Carers Respite Service Pilot – Permission to Award
2. Date of the decision:	03 July 2026
3. The decision maker:	Director for Adult Social Care Commissioning, Transformation & Performance

4. Decision details:

Following the Quick Quote process, the decision has been made to award the Unpaid Carers Respite Service pilot contract to Cardinal Care, based on the procurement evaluation criteria.

This contract is a call-off under the Council's Home Care Framework, in accordance with the terms and conditions and the established home care hourly rate.

The total contract value is £89,000, funded through the Accelerated Reform Fund (ARF) provided by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

The purpose of the pilot is to deliver flexible respite support to unpaid carers within Reading, enabling them to take a break from their caring responsibilities while ensuring that the cared-for person continues to receive safe, high-quality care.

The service has been designed to address identified gaps in respite provision and to respond to feedback from local carers, which highlighted barriers to accessing breaks, including concerns around quality, flexibility and confidence in care provision.

The pilot will support carers to maintain their wellbeing and sustain their caring role, contributing to the prevention of carer breakdown and reducing longer-term demand on Adult Social Care services.

The contract will run for an initial pilot period of up to 6–9 months, with delivery commencing in July 2026, subject to contract finalisation.

In the event that Cardinal Care is unable to deliver the full service requirement, additional providers identified through the same procurement process will be approached in a tiered order to ensure continuity of service delivery.

5. Reasons for the decision:

The successful provider demonstrated through the procurement process that they are able to deliver a safe, flexible and person-centred respite service aligned to the service specification within the available financial envelope.

Their bid provided assurance in relation to:

- Delivering high-quality care that meets the needs of both the unpaid carer and the cared-for person
- Robust assessment and risk management processes
- Ability to collect and report meaningful data and feedback to inform the pilot evaluation

The evaluation panel scored the bids against the agreed criteria and confirmed that the successful provider offered the most economically advantageous tender.

6. Alternative options considered (if any) and rejected:**Do not award the contract**

The Council could have chosen not to proceed with the pilot.

This option was not recommended as it would fail to address the identified need for accessible respite provision and would not support carers' wellbeing or sustainability of caring roles.

Deliver the service in-house

The Council could have considered delivering the service directly.

This option was not progressed due to the flexibility, specialist expertise and responsiveness offered by external providers within the home care market.

Reduce scope of pilot

Reducing the scope may have limited the ability to test the model effectively and generate meaningful learning to inform future commissioning decisions.

7. List of open Background Papers:

- N/A

8. List of confidential or exempt Background Papers:

- N/A

9. Any other matters taken into consideration:

☐ Legitimate expectation of consultation	☐ Procedural requirements
☐ Public Health implications	☐ Environmental or Climate Change
☐ Health and Safety	☐ Risk Management implications
☐ Transparency of Information (FOI etc)	☐ Privacy Impact Assessments

☐ Human Rights Act Duties	☐ Equality Impact Assessment
☐ Corporate Parenting	☐ Community Safety
☐ Regulatory duties	☐ EU withdrawal
☐ Armed Forces Covenant	☐ Other

Details of the matters taken into account:

The service is expected to have a positive impact on carers' mental health and wellbeing by providing planned breaks and reducing stress.

10. Legal considerations

Procurement colleagues have been involved in the development of this project to ensure compliance with procurement regulations and contractual requirements.

The contract is a call-off under the Council's Home Care Framework and will be issued in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions.

11. Financial considerations

The contract will be funded through the Accelerated Reform Fund (ARF), with a maximum contract value of £89,000.

The pilot will be paid on an hourly basis for service delivery, alongside a fixed contribution towards reporting, data collection and participation in governance arrangements

12. Internal consultations

Approval has been obtained through the following governance routes:

- DCASC Directorate Leadership
- Procurement colleagues

Sections 13- 18: To be completed only for Decision A (express delegation from a Committee)

13. The name of the Committee:	
14. Date of the meeting:	Click or tap to enter a date.
15. Minute number:	
16. The delegation given by the Committee:	
17. The name of any member of the committee who declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision:	
18. Any councillor or officer required to be consulted prior to the exercise of this delegation and details of their response.	