

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

SUBJECT: **DIRECT PAYMENTS/PENDERELS TRUST**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide members of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee with an update regarding how Flintshire Social Services is empowering eligible people through Direct Payments to achieve greater choice and control over the support they need to meet their bespoke needs and outcomes.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996 places a duty on Flintshire County Council to make cash payments for community care direct to people who are eligible for care services and would like choice and control over how their assessed needs are met.

2.02 Direct payments (DP) enable local authorities to make funding available to individuals, or their representatives, where it will enable their care and support needs to be met. DP give people choice and control over the way in which their care and support needs are met in a way which compliments their existing support mechanisms to achieve their assessed needs and desired well-being outcomes.

2.03 FCC has, since 2002 shown a commitment to the ethos and principles of service user choice and control, through the development of the Direct Payments Scheme. Local developments have resulted in a range of person centred care delivery which are more cost efficient than traditional Domiciliary Care. The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) 2013 Act emphasises Welsh Governments commitment to citizens' voice and control with the inclusion of strengthened Direct Payments provision.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Flintshire County Council is considered an exemplar in the field of Direct payments and Citizen Directed Support and has made significant contributions to the development of person centred service delivery in Wales. Such practices have been shown to empower people to have greater voice, choice and control regarding the support they need to meet eligible needs/outcomes. This is evidenced in FCC annual survey. Direct payments provide opportunities for people to work in partnership with care professionals to arrange creative, flexible solutions that fit in with their

personal preferences and lifestyles. This autonomy helps contribute towards greater independence, responsibility and improved quality of life for people who rely on paid support.

3.02 The approaches pioneered in Flintshire have supported a cultural shift towards a more collaborative approach based on a culture of equal power, personal strengths and assets, community engagement and shared responsibilities. This ethos underpins the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2013 and will determine the National direction for social care approaches over coming generations.

3.03 Evidence shows us that when individuals arrange their own support their priorities include specific outcomes they want to achieve, having somebody that they trust, can get on with, who treats them with respect and supports them to have a better quality of life. A recent survey conducted with people who receive direct payments in Flintshire revealed over 65% sighted feeling safe as a key advantage of having a Direct Payment. There are 351 people currently in receipt of DP in Flintshire.

3.04 Personal Quote: *"I can employ who I want, not who I have to have"*

3.05 SAFEGUARDS

The introduction of Direct Payments and the National agenda to move towards more personalised solutions to meeting peoples care and support needs presents opportunities for people to have far greater choice and control. However, striking a balance between empowerment and protection poses a challenge for the local authority and those charged with a safeguarding role. There are, of course risks in the traditional care system. Services often only intervene when things become critical. The way current services are delivered leaves little scope for developing and building natural support and many people may come and go into a service user's home that they barely know. Direct payments and the choice and control they bring, means that service users can choose people they trust to come into their home. They can also maintain and build natural community support and networks when planning their support. Being involved in your community and having people in your life who are not paid to be there is, in itself an effective way to guard against abuse.

3.06 Personal Quote: *"Direct payments enable my child to access activities while being kept safe and building on their confidence away from the family environment. My son has a better quality of life, he is doing more with his life, and the PA's keep him safe. Because my son now has PA support, I also have a life"*

3.07 Personal Quote: *"Our mother has received direct payments for almost 3 years. In that time it has helped her to enjoy her remaining years in her own home. She still has her independence and dignity and holds her carers in high regard. She is almost 92 years and we think that this method of care and understanding has helped her and us as a family to stay close together. Penderels have been very helpful with any problems that may arise. Much obliged"*.

3.08 Personal Quote: *"My social worker and her manager have been so supportive and I thank them both for their help. My life is so much better"*.

- 3.09 The success of this approach relies on a relationship based approach, rather than a simple tick box assessment and plan, and an ongoing 'what matters' and 'how are we going to solve it' conversation with the person and their representatives.
- 3.10 Working in this way has helped shape relationships between practitioners, and between practitioners and the people they support. It has led to improved outcomes for individuals, efficient use of available resources, a motivated workforce and has raised public confidence in their dealing with social care practitioners.
- 3.11 **Reviews/monitoring**
- 3.12 Direct Payments reviews focus on what the agreed support has achieved rather than the hours of support provided or the tasks undertaken.
- 3.13 Personal Quote: *"I am very wary of strangers and am able to choose personal assistants known to me and in who's care I feel safe and relaxed"*.
- 3.14 **Penderels Trust** – Penderels Trust is contracted to Flintshire County Council to provide support and advice to people who choose to organise their care and support via a direct payment.
- 3.15 Penderels Trust have worked in partnership with Flintshire County Council for in excess of 10 years and have worked with the local authority to develop robust processes and models of support for Direct Payments recipients.
- 3.16 Penderels Trust work closely with the person, their representatives, local authority practitioners, advocates and others to ensure that the persons chosen care and support arrangements are safe, meet their intended purpose, are sustainable and enable the person to take as much control as they are able.
- 3.17 Personal Quote: *"Penderels Trust are always available with advice, or will come out and explain anything you don't understand clearly"*.
- 3.18 **FCC Support** – Further to support provided by the practitioner, the department employs an officer with specialist knowledge of self directed support, who supports and advises both individuals and local authority staff on matters relating to direct payments.
- 3.19 The Direct Payments Team works collaboratively with Safeguarding officers to ensure that safeguarding is built into personalised approaches and is not a separate process.
- 3.20 The local authority monitors the use of Direct Payments via the Financial Assessment and Charging Team. The team support individuals regarding any financial concerns raised and report on issues to managers. The functions of this team are supported by accountancy technicians who conduct annual reconciliations of accounts.
- 3.21 Personal Quote: *"I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at FCC and Penderels Trust involved in the direct payment scheme for their continued support and for giving me a better quality of life under extremely*

difficult circumstances. Many, many thanks”.

- 3.22 **Training** – Mandatory training is provided to the workforce in relation to Direct Payments. Partners from the private and voluntary sector as well as Personal Assistants (PA's) can also access these workshops. The training is provided in conjunction with local people who receive Direct Payments.
- 3.23 Personal Quote: *“It is good to know that David has people he knows and not chopping and changing. I know he is in safe hands”.*
- 3.24 **Public information** – The department provides a wide range of information pertaining to Direct Payments including sections on employing staff, commissioning an agency and keeping safe.
- 3.25 Personal Quote: *“Direct Payments enable you to choose who comes to your home, and not have a stream of people who you don't know”.*
- 3.26 **Peer support** – Flintshire County Council and Penderels trust support an active Direct Payments Peer Group. This is a long standing group of Direct Payments recipients, carers and parents who work in partnership with the council to develop Direct payments initiatives.
- 3.27 Personal Quote: *“The Direct Payment Peer Support Group (DIPS) is a great way of getting support and sharing information”.*
- 3.28 **Finances** - There is a common misconception that Direct Payments are cash payments and that vulnerable people will be left to arrange their own care and support. Contrary to this, the majority of Direct Payments recipients in Flintshire do not choose to manage the money, and we have worked with them to develop a range of options. Our aim has always been to ensure that people have the autonomy to achieve the highest level of choice and flexibility over their care arrangements whilst maintaining a partnership approach with the local authority.
- 3.29 **Direct Payments Development** – The department is
- undertaking its own review of the Flintshire Direct Payments Scheme to ensure that it remains fit for purpose under the new requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) 2013 Act.
 - working collaboratively with the North Wales Social Services Collaborative on a regional Direct Payments Project.
 - working with local care agencies to help them to shape their organisations to better fit the needs of people purchasing care and support via Direct payments.
 - working collaboratively with Care Council for Wales and other stakeholders on a wide array of issues pertaining to the Direct Payments workforce.
- 3.30 **Annual Direct Payments Survey**
- The department formally consults with its Direct Payments recipients on an

annual basis.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Members note the information contained within this report

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None in relation to this aspect of DP, savings in other aspects (efficiency)

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 This is aimed at supporting vulnerable people.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 N/A

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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