

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
**DATE:** THURSDAY, 26 JULY 2012  
**REPORT BY:** DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
**SUBJECT:** CHILDREN'S INTEGRATED DISABILITY  
SERVICE/DIRECT PAYMENTS FOR CHILDREN

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To provide members with a combined update as to the future structure of the Children's Integrated Disability Service and to inform members as to the current position in relation to Direct Payments for young people.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

#### **2.01 Children's Integrated Disability Service**

The Integrated Disability Service is a social care service with close links to Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board based at Catherine Gladstone House in Mancot. The service has been through a period of transition over the past several years with various options being considered regarding the future of this service, including at one point a Section 33 agreement for formal integration.

- 2.02 The service was overseen by an inter agency project board until 2010 when Flintshire discussed with Wrexham the feasibility of collaborating to deliver a joint Flintshire and Wrexham young peoples disability service.

#### **2.03 Direct Payments Update**

Direct Payments to people with parental responsibility for a disabled child are provided within a framework of Part 111 of the 1989 Children Act, which requires local authorities to provide a range of services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need.

- 2.04 Since 1<sup>st</sup> November 2004, local authorities in Wales have had a duty to offer Direct Payments to all individuals who are eligible to receive them and who want them. Among eligible groups are those with parental responsibility for a disabled child, as well as disabled youngsters themselves, provided they are 16 or 17 years old.

- 2.05 The general principle underpinning direct payments legislation is to

leave people with the choice about how their assessed needs are best met. The local authority's responsibility is to ensure that the outcomes set in the child's care plan are being achieved through the use of the Direct Payment, as well as ensuring that the direct payment is safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **3.01 Children's Integrated Disability Service**

Following a period of close working with Wrexham CBC and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board a decision was reached in 2011 by Wrexham CBC not to merge services with Flintshire at this time.

3.02 In parallel with the work ongoing with Wrexham, Flintshire Children's Services and Flintshire Adult Social Care have worked closely to create a Transition Team for young people aged 16 years plus. This team became active on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

3.03 The management of the social care aspect of the Children's Integrated Disability Service is to transfer back under Children's Fieldwork Services from August 2012. The social care team will remain based at Catherine Gladstone House in Mancot to encourage and promote the inter agency working which has taken place since the team's inception. The management arrangements for the social care element of the CIDS has been of a temporary nature due to (i) the cessation of the Joint Working Special Grant which previously funded the Service Manager's post (ii) the transfer of the previous service manager to a permanent post within the directorate given the uncertainty of the funding, to be replaced by a temporary manager until the funding ended and (iii) the appointment of the Service Manager (Youth Justice) to oversee the CIDS as an additional responsibility pending either a conclusion to the discussions with Wrexham or a decision as to the team's future management arrangements given the depletion of the team due to members transferring to the new Transition Team.

#### **3.04 Direct Payments**

The numbers of families receiving direct payments has steadily increased since direct payments were introduced. In 2005-2006 there were 9 families in receipt, in 2008-2009 there were 17 in receipt, 2009-2010 there were 20, 2010-2011 there were 31 and last financial year there were 34.

3.05 There can be no set budget for direct payments as all payments are made on the basis of assessed need. The use of Direct Payments has increased significantly since 2005-2006 when the expenditure was £12,600 to £124,272 in the previous financial year 2011-2012. This should be viewed as positive as the numbers of disabled children

supported through direct payments across the UK are disproportionately low. Currently the rate of direct payments is £10.22 per hour which is in line with payments made by Adult Social care.

3.06 As can be seen in the attached chart we have now commenced recovering unused direct payments which reduces the overall expenditure.

Year	Expenditure	Income Recovered	Net Expenditure
2008/09	60,367.68	0.00	60,367.68
2009/10	61,653.52	-7,559.71	54,093.81
2010/11	88,164.31	-7,996.23	80,168.08
2011/12	124,272.56	-29,058.06	95,214.50

3.07 The use of direct payments are in the main utilised to purchase personal assistants to assist the family in supporting them with their parental role and/or to develop the independence skills of the disabled child or young person. These services are what currently could be provided by the local authority had they been available however this would have been at a greater cost.

3.08 The majority of direct payments are additional to other support packages such as respite care and often are seasonally adjusted to meet the needs of parents in school holiday time. In some circumstances these additional direct payments can make the difference as to whether families can cope and often prevent expensive out of county placements. It is interesting to note however that within Adult Social Care a growth in demand for Direct Payments sees a comparable reduction (and sometimes savings) in other budget areas. This has not been the case for Children's Services. Demand continues to be high in both areas. This is replicated amongst other local authorities in North Wales.

3.09 Financial monitoring of direct payments within Children's Services takes place within Child in Need reviews and should a support package require renewal this is returned to the Direct Payments panel for a decision.

3.10 The main reason that a young persons Direct Payment ends is due to the young person transferring to Adult Social Services. The service users who have transferred to Adults have all continued to being in receipt of a Direct Payment / Citizens Directed Support package upon transfer.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Members accept the report for information on the future structure of the Children's Integrated Disability Service, and note the implications of the increasing Direct Payments service for children.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

##### **5.01 Children's Integrated Disability Service**

The creation of the Transition team has been completed at no additional cost to the Directorate.

- 5.02 Similarly the new management arrangements for CIDS carry no additional costs at this time.

##### **5.03 Direct payments**

It is likely that there will be an increase in direct payment expenditure in future years as parents continue to become aware of this. If families satisfy the requirements of the criteria for eligibility and wish to pursue this option, such a request cannot ordinarily be refused.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

- 6.01 None arising directly from this report, save to note the general research which indicates that families with children with a disability are more likely to experience poverty.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 7.01 None arising directly from this report

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.01 None arising directly from this report, save for the need to ensure that families who have a child with a disability are able to access the support services they require, without discrimination.

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.01 None arising directly from this report, as previously stated.

#### **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

- 10.01 None arising directly from this report

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Consultation with team members has been an ongoing feature of this journey.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 WAG Direct Payments- Community Care, Services for Carers and Children's Services (Direct Payments) (Wales) Guidance 2011

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

**Contact Officer:** Carol Salmon, Head of Social Services for Children  
**Telephone:** 01352 702504  
**Email:** [carol.salmon@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:carol.salmon@flintshire.gov.uk)