

Croydon Council

For General Release

REPORT TO:	ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES REVIEW PANEL 6 NOVEMBER 2019
SUBJECT:	ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECT PAYMENTS
LEAD OFFICER:	Guy Van Dichele, Executive Director, Health & Wellbeing and Adult Services
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Jane Avis, Cabinet Member for Families, Health & Social Care
WARDS:	ALL
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON: This report provides an update on the implementation of new adult social care Direct Payments arrangements for Croydon residents in support of the Council's priority to help people live long, healthy, happy and independent lives.	
FINANCIAL IMPACT There no financial implications arising from this report	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To note the contents of the report

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 A Direct Payment is a payment of money from the Council to either a resident in need of social services care and support, or to someone else acting on their behalf. The Direct Payment is to pay for the cost of arranging all or part of the support. The Council will make a direct payment instead of arranging or providing any services itself, if a resident wishes so. Direct Payments give those who need care and support to live at home greater choice and control over their support which in turns gives them greater independence.
- 2.2 This report provides an update on the Council's progress towards extending Direct Payments to more residents in support of the Council's priority to support Croydon people to live long, healthy, happy and independent lives,

3. TRANSFORMING THE COUNCIL'S DIRECT PAYMENTS OFFER TO RESIDENTS USING ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

- 3.1 A health and care direct payment is paid to an eligible person using adult social care services, or a carer of someone using social care services, so that they can choose the who, how, when and where of how their care and support needs will be met. The Care Act 2014 requires that the Council gives all residents eligible for community based care and support services the choice of receiving some or all of their support through a Direct Payment. In Croydon around 4,000 service users and up to 1,000 carers will be eligible for Direct Payments. Presently around 12% of eligible social care users and around 25% of eligible carers take up this choice.
- 3.2 Direct payments support people to live independently in their locality, keeping as much dignity as possible and prevent and or delay the onset of acute support needs. They can help residents with care and support needs to live with as much opportunity, independence and control as people without such needs. Direct Payments also provide residents and carers with an opportunity to personalise their care to better meet their needs.
- 3.3 In support of the Council's priority to help people live long, healthy, happy and independent lives, the Health, Wellbeing and Adults service intends to move to a position where direct payments become the 'first choice' for locality based care and support. Although the decision over whether or not to choose a Direct Payment over a service directly arranged through the Council will rest with the resident or carer.
- 3.4 In 2018 the Council launched a transformation project to support many more people into independence through a Direct Payment. The key changes will be:
- a) **Increasing choice** – A New policy and guidance for residents and staff will be clearer and give residents more flexibility and advice about how and where they can spend their Direct Payments. Following extensive consultation this policy and guidance is now finalised for implementation from December 2019.
 - b) **Helping residents to find the right care and support** – A new online directory of services, Adult Support Croydon, will help people find the services they want and need. This directory will be made available to residents from December 2019.
 - c) **Reduced red tape** – A new online Direct Payments accounts system will be used so that people can manage their direct payments and book and pay for services online, without having to fill in lots of paperwork and keep receipts. This system is about to be tested out now with residents.
 - d) **Helping residents to find and employ Personal Assistants** – Many people who choose Direct Payments want to employ a Personal Assistant (PA) who can help them in their care and support. The Council, in partnership with Croydon CCG, has commissioned a new agency that will be dedicated to helping residents recruit PAs and support them in being an employer. The new service will be called the Croydon Personal Assistant Support Service and will be delivered by Independent Lives, a user led charity with experience of supporting people to recruit and retain Personal Assistants for Hampshire and West Sussex county councils. The agency will also offer training and

other workforce development and support to Croydon residents who wish to work as a Personal Assistant.

- e) **Increasing take up** – By simplifying the system, and by having a clear policy, more residents will make Direct Payments their **first choice** and achieve greater independence. Through the Community Led Support approach being developed across adult social care teams more people will be supported in taking up a Direct Payment.

3.5 It is anticipated that over the next two years the Council will move from there being c.600 residents with an adult social care Direct Payment to c.1,300 residents with an adult social care Direct Payment.

3.6 Some key milestones towards implementation will be:

November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting up the Croydon Personal Assistant Support Service • Online Direct Payments system testing • Finalising service pathways and staff guidance • Building up providers listed on the Adult Support Croydon directory
December 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Support Directory goes live • Training for staff and partner agencies
January 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin phasing in of Direct Payments as ‘first choice’

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 The consultation over changes to the Direct Payments policy and its administration involved providing the detail of the changes in a number of media and formats. There was a complete version of the draft policy, summary versions and an easy read version. The consultation was communicated in a variety of ways including a media release, via the Carers Centre, council social media channels, Get Involved, Intranet, direct mailing to health, wellbeing and adults colleagues and the direct payments user group

4.2 In addition to the online survey, workshops and other engagement events were held with staff, partner and residents groups including: The Direct Payments Service User Group; the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board: the BME Forum; a Carers and Carers’ organisations workshop; the Dementia Alliance; Croydon Adults Social Services Users Panel (CASSUP); the Autism Partnership Board; Age UK staff workshop, and; Council staff meetings and training events.

4.4 Almost all respondents supported the proposed policy and approach with enthusiasm. The main focus of the responses was much less about the policy itself and more about its implementation. The key themes coming out of this consultation were:

- a) Make Direct Payment the ‘first choice’ but make sure that people are made aware that this is their choice and that there are alternatives

- b) Good customer care – good communications and early information will help people make the best decisions for them around Direct Payments
- c) Residents will go online for Direct Payments with the right help and support
- d) Flexibility and creativity is needed in Direct Payments policy implementation and Care and Support Plans, especially for people with more complex disabilities
- e) The standard Direct Payment hourly rate given for Personal Assistants needs to be looked at
- f) Resident contributions and the time it takes the Council to undertake financial assessments is a key consideration for residents when choosing to take Direct Payments
- g) Council staff and staff working in advisory agencies, e.g. Age UK and Mencap, will need training and guidance to ensure that advice on Direct Payments is clear and consistent
- h) Residents, staff and local organisations were interested in the proposal that payments could be made to carers who helped someone go online for their Direct Payment. However, it was felt that more work was needed on clarifying how this policy might work.

4.5 The response to this consultation has been to incorporate respondents' comments into the policy guidance itself where appropriate and to take on board comments and advice in developing the implementation plan.

4.6 The proposal to make a payment to carers who assist someone to go online has not been included in the final draft of the policy. This will instead be trialed in 2020 before implementation.

5. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

6.1 Adults and carers accessing social services care and support from the Council will include a diverse group of residents, including a large number of vulnerable adults. Direct Payments and its accompanying infrastructure will enable many more residents to better personalise their care and support and give them more choice over who provides their support and how and when they receive their services. Some residents may struggle to manage the personal responsibilities and or technology that will come with a Direct Payment and may need additional support or an alternative such as services arranged directly by the Council. Advice, information and support will be available to those who are considering and or using a Direct Payment. The choice over having a Direct Payment rests with the resident.

6.2 An Equalities Assessment has been completed to assist the development and delivery of these changes. The implementation of the changes will be carefully monitored for equalities impact and measures taken to address any issues should they arise

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.1 There are no significant environmental considerations arising from the proposals in this report

8. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 8.1 There are no significant crime and disorder considerations arising from the proposals in this report.

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APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

Appendix 1: Direct Payments Update Presentation

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Direct Payments Consultation: Key Themes Arising from Consultation