

Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee

BRIEFING NOTE – No. 4/2016

Date: 8 March 2016

To: All Members of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Purpose: At the meeting of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 October 2015 Members discussed Adult Social Care transformation SR 25.01(Personal Budgets giving people more choice and control) and requested a briefing note setting out how the Council was ensuring that clients fully understood how to use their personal budgets.

Heading: Corporate Risk SR 25.01 - Adult Social Care transformation (Personal Budgets giving people more choice and control)

Background

Personal budgets are an allocation of funding given to users after an assessment which should be sufficient to meet their assessed needs. Users can either take their personal budget as a direct payment, or, while still choosing how their care needs are met and by whom, leave councils with the responsibility to commission the services. Or they can have a combination of the two.

Direct payments are cash payments given to service users in lieu of community care services they have been assessed as eligible for, and are intended to give users greater choice in their care. The payment must be sufficient to enable the service user to purchase services to meet their eligible needs, and must be spent on services that meet eligible needs.

Current Position

As part of the adult social care assessment processes it is the duty of the assessing officer to discuss the personal budget deployment options available. Where the client opts for the assessing officer to arrange their support, the officer will discuss the needs identified and what outcomes they would like to achieve. They will then provide advice and information on the available contracted services through Medway Council.

To promote greater choice and control, social care clients are encouraged to take their personal budget as a direct payment. Should the client wish to take advantage of this preferred option, the assessing officer will refer to the Self Direct Support Team.

The Self Direct Support Team is a dedicated team supporting clients across Children and Adult Social Care, Health and Education providing advice and information to those who choose to manage their own support arrangements. This might include recruiting their own support workers, contract with a provider or purchasing a piece of equipment.

Social care clients are supported to complete a Care and Support Plan. Care and Support Planning is a defined process which helps people set their own aims, and then secures the support and care that are needed to achieve them. It is the key that unlocks person centred, coordinated care. It is about working with a social care representative to think about:

- what is important to them
- things they can do to live well and stay well
- what care and support they might need from others
- how the budget will be used to meet the eligible need and agreed outcomes
- their contribution to the cost of their support

The plan is agreed with the social care representative who ensures the budget is used to meet the eligible need and agreed outcomes. The budget can not be used for any other purpose. Clients receive a copy of their plan.

Through the review process clients have the opportunity to revisit their support arrangement and make changes to those parts that are not working so well. They are also give advice and information about less invasive options such as telecare services.

In addition to social care reviews clients who have chosen to receive all or part of their personal budget as a direct payment will also have to comply with the scheme terms and conditions one of which is annual monitoring. The Direct Payment Monitoring Team complete annual audits on all payments to ensure spend is in accordance with the care and support plan. Occasionally clients have not used their entire personal budget the Monitoring Team will arrange for any unspent money to be reclaimed and will trigger a review with the social care team to revise the budget and plan.

Overall all social care clients are supported to make decisions as to how they can spend their personal budget in the best way to meet their agreed outcomes in whichever option they choose.

For further information, please contact Michael Hood Self Directed Support Operations Manager Children and Adults Directorate ext 1173