

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
2	Date:	10 June 2013
3	Title:	The Future Delivery of Direct Payments, Support to Carers and the Brokerage Service
4	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5 Summary

- 5.1 The purpose of this report is to set out an options appraisal and proposals to reconfigure the following teams that share the same management structure. The report will focus on:
- 5.2 A Review of the Direct Payments function with a view to increase current staff capacity and future proof the function to meet audit requirements. Deal with increased levels of demand and ensure the effective recovery of overpayments to customers.
- 5.3 The need for a comprehensive review of Carers Corner to be commissioned including consideration to changes to the future delivery of this service.
- 5.4 A Review of the Brokerage team to reflect the fact that workloads are reducing due to a more personalised approach to meeting service users care needs and evaluate more effective ways in which this function can be delivered.

6 Recommendations

- **Cabinet Member approves that the Direct Payments Officer posts are increased from 2.8 FTE at band F to 4 FTE band F on an interim basis to address current staffing deficits.**
- **Cabinet Member approves that a comprehensive review of Carer's Corner be commissioned to establish the effectiveness of the current service provision and determine how this service should operate in the future.**
- **Cabinet Member approves that the brokerage team is disestablished in favour of 3 band D admin staff to be placed within existing Assessment and Reviewing Teams a saving of £31,006 against existing revenue budgets.**

7 Background & Proposals and Details

- 7.1 **Direct Payments Team** – An analysis of the current function of the team has taken place and in order to comply with the recent audit report, the human resources necessary to manage the function will need to increase from 2.8 to six FTE Direct Payment Officers. This is necessary to comply with The Chartered Institute of Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance.
- 7.2 The guidance states that all new Direct Payments should be audited at 6 months and all Direct Payments should be audited at least annually. In addition to this, all new Direct Payment users intending to employ their own staff are visited at the commencement of the Direct Payment to ensure that the prospective employer is aware of their responsibilities and where necessary assisted with payroll registration etc, to prevent misuse of the Direct Payment and lessen the likelihood of fraud. Currently 937 customers are in receipt of a Direct Payment with a requirement of approximately 1251 financial audits to be completed by the team this financial year. This equates, with available staff time, to a requirement of 10.15 audits per week by the existing team. Based on the analysis undertaken, the existing resources are inadequate to meet this requirement and fulfil the additional duties that are also undertaken by this team. Current performance targets have been set by the Service Manager in conjunction with the Manager of the service of an interim target of 10 audits per week to be completed by the existing staff members. This is being monitored weekly to ensure this requirement is being met. This requirement will be increased if the recommendations contained in this report are accepted.
- 7.3 The current team process all Direct Payments, carry out the payment run, and keep service users informed of changes to their payments. A further analysis of trends shows that the number of direct payment users has increased over the last 5 years at an average rate of 13.75% per annum, given the current drivers, this rise is expected to continue and it will be necessary to review annually the staffing budget and staffing numbers required for this service.
- 7.4 **Option 1** - The attached analysis Appendix 1 sets out the team's tasks in detail with a financial breakdown to meet these tasks in full. It is advised that for this team to continue to support customers effectively and comply with CIPFA guidance consideration it would require a further **£91,901** investment in this team to increase the staffing level to an appropriate level to fully comply with these core functions and meet Internal Audit

requirements and CIPFA guidance. This would be the ideal solution to meet existing demands and future proof the service.

This option is not achievable given the current budget situation across the Council.

- 7.5 **Option 2** – Through the reconfiguration of the Brokerage Service and revenue savings generated, this will enable the service to increase staffing levels from 2.8 to 4 FTE Direct Payment Officers. Additionally it is proposed to allocate some of the existing workload currently undertaken by Direct Payments Officers to social care assessment staff. This allocation of work would concentrate on social care staff advising new customers of their obligations as an employer. This element of work currently takes up around 4.1 hours of staff time per week and should be undertaken by assessing staff. This proposal will free up staff time to deal with routine work undertaken by the service and fulfil auditing requirements at an increased level. This option should be viewed as an interim arrangement until additional resources can be allocated from within existing resources. To facilitate this option would require an investment of **£27,626** and assist the service to meet Internal Audit requirements and CIPFA guidance.

This is the preferred option to resolve historical budget deficits and realign resources to enable the Direct Payments staffing increases to occur. This would be an interim solution and will not address the staffing requirements as detailed in Option 1, which is the level determined as part of this review.. This will require an investment of £27,626 in this team to increase the staffing level to the level detailed above and this can be achieved through the reconfiguration of the Brokerage Service.

- 7.6 **Carers Corner** - The Carers Corner was never staffed sufficiently staffing establishment from its opening has never met with the expectation placed upon the service that is that the service is available Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. Option 1 and Appendix 2 detail the funding requirement to facilitate the correct level of staffing to maintain this service within existing operating hours. Given the current financial situation across the Council, this option would appear to be unachievable. In light of this situation, there is a need to undertake a comprehensive review of Carers Support Services and consideration given to reconfiguring the service to secure the future of Carers Services and to provide a level of quality, support and consistency to Carers using these services from across the Rotherham Borough. This review will also need to consider the services delivered from this centre currently by Children's services for which there is no financial contribution received.

- 7.7 **Option 1** – An ideal solution to resolve the staffing deficits in this service would be to increase the level of additional funding required for this Service by £50,658 (See Appendix 2). This level of investment would alleviate the current need for good will on the part of other teams called upon to provide cover and provide stability and enhanced quality of support to carers. Staffing levels will be adequate to provide a service from Monday to Friday during normal working office hours.

This option is not achievable given the current financial situation within the Council

- 7.8 **Option 2** – Undertake a comprehensive review of this service and the roles of Carers Officers to establish the nature of the core business that is being undertaken, the effectiveness of the service and evaluate the options available to the Council in the future delivery of support to primary carers across the Borough of Rotherham. The review should include the exploration of maximising partnership working with 3rd sector organisations in the future delivery of support to carers.

7.8.1 The current staffing arrangements for this service are dependent on staff, predominantly from Direct Payments providing cover to ensure the service is open 5 days a week.

7.8.2 The Resource Manager for this service is in the process of evaluating staffing requirements to ensure the centre remains open 5 days a week. This will enable service continuity during the period of the review of this service and ensure any additional resources to the Direct Payments Team and not diverted back into maintaining this service if the preferred recommendations in this report are endorsed.

This is the preferred option and in line with actions already agreed by DLT relating to this service.

7.8.3 **Brokerage Team** - The current Brokerage Team was established in 2007 in response to a Department of Health report, which recommended that Brokerage would increase productivity by:

- Free up assessment officers to address the core task of assessment.
- Rationalise the number of contracts, managing the market.
- Ensure timely and appropriate placements.
- Better management of reported hours, billing and payments.
- Accurate reporting and contract management,

7.8.4 The Brokerage Team have been successful in freeing up the time of assessment officers by removing delays in provision and concentrating on the one task “provision”. The team is limited in

its function and only arrange packages from services contracted to RMBC. It was envisaged on setting up the team that it would develop and provide services to the public who use Direct Payments by assisting these service users to arrange care services, the focus of the team however, remains contracted services.

7.8.5 The current brokerage team consists of:

1 Team Leader at Band G = £29,168 including on costs
4 FTE Brokers at Band F = £102,216 including on costs

Budget Allocation for 2013/14 = £94,118

Unfunded element of this service against the 2013/14 Budget Allocation = £37,266

7.8.6 **Option One** - As a result of the success of Direct Payments, the volume of work referred to the Brokerage Team has reduced. Savings can be made by disbanding the current team in favour of the placement of clerical staff within each of the assessment and reviewing teams to carry out this function. This would ensure that the needs of service users within the catchment area of the specific team were better understood and provide better management of domiciliary services contracted to the team's catchment area.

7.8.7 In providing the service in this way during periods of less demand for the arrangement of services, the staff member would be utilised to provide additional clerical support to the social work teams.

7.8.8 **Proposed Change** - Disestablish the existing posts from this service as detailed above of 1 Team Leader Band G and 4 FTE Band F Brokers.

Replace these posts with a new integrated service working directly with social work teams as follows:

1 x Band D Admin Worker located in each of the following teams:

Hospital Social Work Team
Reviewing Teams
Access/Assessment Team

Clerical Support officers 3 x £16830 plus on costs, an annual cost of:

Total	£63,112
Saving	<u>£31,006</u>

An evaluation of the existing service has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 3 of this report detailing current levels of activity across this service area. There will be a need for the redeployment of the current staff team members if this option is adopted, however if the proposed changes to Direct Payments is agreed there is the possible opportunity to retrain staff. This will provide the opportunity for affected Brokerage staff at Band F to apply for a position in Direct Payments at their current grade in the Direct Payments Team.

This is the preferred option to resolve historical budget deficits and realign resources to enable the Direct Payments staffing increases to be achieved.

7.9 Option Two

Disestablish the brokerage function in full and reallocate the work back to care management and assessment teams. These teams would then be required to liaise with providers to obtain the support packages on behalf of their customers. This would result in savings of £94,118 and would fully fund the increases to the Direct Payments Team with further efficiency gains also achieved.

This option is not viable as it would result in increased workloads for Care Management and Assessment Staff and would have a detrimental impact on both National/Local Performance Indicators and outcomes for customers.

8 Timescales

The proposed changes to the Direct Payments and Brokerage teams can be achieved within a 12-week timescale from the point at which staff are notified that they are affected.

9 Finance

9.1 The financial implications are detailed in the body of the report and supported in the attached appendices and are summarised as follows:

Additional investment in Direct Payments Team	£27,626
Saving from restructure of Brokerage	£31,006

Efficiency gain to the Council = £3380

9.2 Redundancy costs may be incurred by the Council in the event that affected staffs are not redeployed as part of any options agreed for implementation by DLT.

10 Risks and Uncertainties

- 10.1 The current Brokerage staffing configuration is inefficient, the need for this type of Brokerage will decrease as personalisation, and individual budgets increase a failure to address this now will result in further inefficient use of staff time. The current budget allocation is insufficient to fund this service and given the current financial situation across the Council, additional funding allocations to this service are unlikely. Any decision to cease this function may result in increased workloads for care management and staff and have a negative impact on staff meeting national and local performance indicator targets.
- 10.2 The risks of not implementing in full the recommendations relating to the Direct Payments team will result in the team being unable to meet its functioning commitments and will remain unable to meet its audit requirements in line with CIPFA guidance. This will result in potential repayments not being collected, and risk increased misuse of direct payments or increase the risk of fraud. The current budget allocation is insufficient to fund this service to fulfil their core functions and given the current financial situation across the Council, additional funding allocations to this service are unlikely. Any staffing increases will therefore have to be contained from within existing budget allocations in this Programme Area.
- 10.3 The potential increase in take up of Direct Payments is uncertain, but given current drivers will increase and as a result, the Staffing establishment will need to be reviewed annually to keep pace with these trends. A further report will be submitted to DLT at a later date to clarify the ways in which these trends can be met.
- 10.4 A small number of staff, approximately 4, may be at risk of redundancy if these proposals are adopted and redeployment opportunities are not maximised. The timetable for implementation is achievable if all stages of the service reconfigurations go ahead without excessive challenge from staff and Trade Unions.

11 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

If the proposed changes to the brokerage service are agreed it may result in improvements to Local Performance Indicators specifically **NAS18 Percentage of customers in receipt of a statement of need.**

12 Background Papers and Consultation

A program of consultation will be undertaken with staff and Trade Unions subject to the approval of these proposals by DLT. Consultation has been undertaken with the Finance Manager in relation to current budget allocations aligned to these services and proposed financial requirements in the reconfiguration of these services.

Background papers considered include:

Our Health Our Choice our Say

Direct Payments Act 1996

Think Local Act Personal

CIPFA guidance Direct Payments

RMBC internal audit report

The Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995:

The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000

Disabled Persons (Services Consultation and Representation) Act 1986

Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

Contact Name: Shona McFarlane
Director of Health and Wellbeing
Telephone: 01709 823928
E-mail: shona.mcfarlane@rotherham.gov.uk