

Cabinet Member for Adult Services

24 February 2025

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Adult Services - Councillor L Bigham

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Adult Services and Housing

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title: Adult Social Care Direct Payment Strategy 2024-2029

Is this a key decision?

No – This concerns a Direct Payment Strategy and although Adult Social Care is city wide it does not have significant implications for any ward.

Executive summary:

In Adult Social Care we aim to support people to live full and active lives in their local communities and be in control of their care and support wherever possible. Self-directed support enables people to identify their own needs and make choices about how and when they are supported to live their lives. Direct Payments are a type of self-directed support, and the Care Act 2014 identifies that the local authority have a key role in ensuring that people are given relevant and timely information about Direct Payments

This Direct Payments Strategy sets out our ambition for people who wish to be in control of the support they are eligible to receive from Adult Social Care and professionals that arrange, deliver or have a supporting role in this. We aim to support people to have power and control over their lives and see 'self-directed support' being essential to achieve this as well as setting a clear path to how we turn the ambitions of the strategy into impact for people with care and support needs.

This Direct Payment Strategy has been developed in order for us to set out how we will continue to develop our Direct Payment offer. In developing and implementing the Strategy, we recognise the crucial role we have in promoting the use of direct payments and enabling people to make requests to receive direct payments in an efficient way. We want to ensure we are fully engaging people to consider direct payments and how they could be used to meet needs.

The Strategy sets our approach to self-directed support in the coming years and to ensure we recognise and have in place the structures, systems, and support needed to achieve good quality self-directed support and address the factors which influence the success and uptake of Direct Payments.

Recommendations:

Cabinet Member for Adult Services is recommended to:

1. Approve the Adult Social Care Direct Payment Strategy 2024-2029

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 – Adult Social Care Direct Payment Strategy 2024-2029

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

None

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Adult Social Care Direct Payment Strategy 2024-2029

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. In Adult Social Care we aim to support people to live full and active lives in their local communities and be in control of their care and support. This Direct Payments Strategy sets out our ambition for people to be in greater control of the support they are eligible to receive from Adult Social Care and professionals that arrange, deliver or have a supporting role in this. We want to ensure people have power and control over their lives and see 'self-directed support' being essential to achieve this.
- 1.2. A Direct Payment is a monetary payment given to an individual or their representative from their Personal Budget to be spent on the care and support needs outlined in their agreed Support Plan, Child in Need Plan or the Early Help Plan. This enables people to choose how and when they receive services instead of the Council arranging services on their behalf.
- 1.3. The legislative context for Direct Payments is primarily set out in the Care Act 2014 and our arrangements for offering a Direct Payment are in line with the Care Act 2014 and associated Direct Payments Regulations and Care and Support Statutory Guidance. We have a Direct Payment Policy (reviewed and updated July 2024) which sets out how Coventry City Council interprets its duties and responsibilities in relation to Direct Payments where the Care Act allows scope to do so, in line with the One Coventry Plan to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities that can meet the needs of residents and communities. Separate practice guidance for staff working in adults' and children's social care services is available in relation to Direct Payments, the legislation governing the rules of Direct Payments and how the legislation should be applied.
- 1.4. Legislation outlines the groups of people who are eligible for a Direct Payment, these include people with disabilities aged 16 and over, Adults who meet social care eligibility criteria, in accordance with the Care Act 2014, and Adults (including people who are entitled to after care in accordance with section 117 of the Mental Health Act). Carers, including young carers and adult carers, providing regular and substantial care. Direct Payments cannot however be used for long term residential and nursing care services.
- 1.5. Direct Payments are set up via a Prepaid Card, a Managed Account with a third-party organisation (Penderels Trust) or as an Individual Service Fund (ISF). Auditing and monitoring of Direct Payment accounts takes place by the Adult Social Care Independent Living Team. In 2023/24 795 people received a Direct Payment during 2023/24 from which a disproportionately higher number were from ethnically diverse communities. The spend on Direct Payments (including Individual Service Funds) in 2023/24 was £11.9m, this accounted for 11% of the 'spend on people'. As of January 2025, 636 adults are receiving a DP which includes 197 people who have a managed account and 60 people who have a carers DP. In addition to these 118 children under the age of 18 receive a DP.
- 1.6. Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) measures identify the proportion of people who use services who receive direct payments. Outcome measure 3D2a

identifies that 22.5% of people receive a Direct Payment in Coventry (England 25.5% and West Midlands 25.8%).

- 1.7. Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) measures identify the proportion of carers who receive direct payments. Outcome measure 3D2b identifies that 64.2% Carers receive a Direct Payment in Coventry (England 77.4% and West Midlands 82.3%). (This figure doesn't demonstrate wider activity that we do to support carers, such as the provision of laptops through the Cov Connects scheme or the discounted provision through Go CV+ and the wider support mechanisms provided through the Carers Trust Heart of England). In May 2024 we published a Carers Direct Payment Leaflet to promote awareness of the support available
- 1.8. Through adopting and implementing this strategy we aim to provide the basis for improvement against this performance, however, rather than purely increasing the number we need to be assure that direct payments are an option that is meaningfully discussed with residents when they come to make decisions about how care and support is arranged.
- 1.9. This Direct Payment Strategy has been developed in order to set out how we will continue to develop our Direct Payment offer. Through implementing the strategy, we will ensure our structures, systems, and support needed to achieve good quality self-directed support and address the factors which influence the success of Direct Payments are in place.
- 1.10. The principle behind Direct Payments is that people can have choice and control over the care and support they are entitled to. A report by Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) 'Better Direct Payments – From insight into Action (2022) brought together findings from a review of the available research and identified some of the barriers and enablers that contribute to the effective delivery of Direct Payments. The report also identified what factors influence the success of Direct Payments. Its these factors that we are using to shape our approach to developing Direct Payments.
- 1.11. We recognise that we need to continue to focus on; accessible information, advice and guidance, ensuring a knowledgeable and skilled Adult Social Care workforce, access to and development of Personal Assistants (PAs), access to a Direct Payment support service, development of Individual Service Funds, coproduction and engagement and monitoring performance and ensuring best practice approaches.
- 1.12. Although we recognise there is the capacity to improve, we do however have a number of positive mechanisms in place to support Direct Payments offer, including:
 - A Direct Payment Steering Group to develop a better understanding of people who are working with and using Direct Payments.
 - An experience survey commenced in 2024 for people who access Direct Payments.
 - A Direct Payment support service provided by Penderels Trust that can provide information and guidance in areas such as information and advice about Direct Payments, recruitment and employment support, PA register to improve

recruitment and support for PAs themselves, Payroll services and Managed Accounts.

- Monitoring and control procedures to identify the patterns in Direct Payment usage.
- A live demographic dashboard which tells us who is accessing Adult Social Care including Direct Payments compared to the city population and we are using this information to inform approaches to developing our Direct Payment offer.
- Production of Direct Payments information in the 6 main languages used in Coventry – Polish, Punjabi, Urdu, Arabic, Romanian and Tigrinya. We have also translated our Direct Payments leaflets into Punjabi, Urdu, Arabic and Gujarati in response to the over representation of ethnically diverse communities accessing Direct Payments. Our Easy Read information is also in the process of being updated.
- Two new promotional videos talking to people who receive a Direct Payment which are available to view on the Council Direct Payment web page <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/money-legal-matters/direct-payments>

1.13. Further to this our next stages of improvement actions will include;

- Establishing a peer group in Spring 2025 of those people accessing Direct Payments who want to get involved in shaping the development of our Direct Payment offer.
- Review and develop our training for staff in order to develop staff knowledge and confidence to ensure we are engaging people in accessing Direct Payments.
- Ensuring learning from issues of DP misuse is embedded and where possible, mitigated for the future. This includes ensuring staff have access to fraud awareness training and ongoing monitoring of DP expenditure.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1. Option 1 - recommended option

Approve and adopt the Direct Payment Strategy and in doing so support the direction of travel to improve our Direct Payments offer.

2.2. Option 2 – not recommended

Do not approve the Strategy.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 Although no direct consultation has taken place, the Strategy has been informed by feedback from people receiving Direct Payments including direct quotes from people

identifying how Direct Payments help and what difference they make. We are engaging on an ongoing basis with people who receive Direct Payments as part of the implementation of the Strategy. This includes via a Direct Payment experience survey for those people who are in receipt of Direct Payments and the establishment of a peer group of people receiving Direct Payments to shape the development of our Direct Payment offer.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 Once approved, the Direct Payment Strategy will be published on the Council's internet pages. However, the work to prepare staff for this and ensure the tools are in place has been ongoing for some time.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Resources and Director of Law and Governance

5.1. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the production of the Direct Payment Strategy.

5.2. Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from the production of the Direct Payment Strategy. It is expected however that its introduction will assist the City Council in ensuring that its statutory responsibilities in particular under the Care Act 2014 are met.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/one-coventry-plan>

This Strategy would contribute to the Council's key objectives and the One Coventry Plan priorities 'Improving outcomes and tackling inequalities within our communities' and 'Improving the economic prosperity of the city' through a contribution to supporting our most vulnerable people with care and support needs and employment opportunities for those supporting people via a Direct Payment.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

There are no specific identified risks associated with the recommendation. The delivery of the Strategy will be overseen by the Adult Social Care Direct Payment Steering Group.

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

The Direct Payment Policy which sets out how Coventry City Council implements Direct Payments and interprets its duties and responsibilities in relation to Direct Payments (where the Care Act allows scope to do so) has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. This Strategy is expected to have a positive impact setting out our ambition for people who wish to be in control of the support they are eligible to receive from Adult Care Social Care and professionals that arrange, deliver or have a supporting role in this.

6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

None

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

People can receive a Personal Health Budget which allows people to manage their healthcare and support such as treatments, equipment and personal care, in a way that suits the person. We will continue to work with our health colleagues to ensure effective transition from Direct Payments to Personal Health Budgets where this is required and to explore continued opportunities for the development of integrated personal budgets for people who have social care and health care needs.

Report author(s):

Name Andrew Errington

Title Head of Practice Development & Safeguarding (Adults Principal Social Worker)

Service Area:

Adult Services

Tel and email contact: Tel: 024 7697 6792

Email: andrew.errington@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Aideen Staunton	Head of Service Partnerships and Social Care Operations	Adult Services and Housing	22/01/25	22/01/25
Tracey Denny	Head of Service Localities and Social Work Operations	Adult Services and Housing	22/01/25	22/01/25

Jon Reading	Head of Commissioning and Quality	Adult Services and Housing	22/01/25	22/01/25
Louise Ferro	Head of Business Systems and Improvement	Adult Services and Housing	22/01/25	30/01/25
Christopher Whiteley	Finance Manager	Finance	22/01/25	29/01/25
Tom Robinson	Governance Services Officer	Law and Governance	22/01/25	22/01/25
Lisa Lawson	Programme Manager	Adult Services and Housing	22/01/25	29/01/25
Claire Coulson Haggins	Team Leader, Legal Services	Law and Governance	22/01/25	04/02/25
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Pete Fahy	Director of Adult Services and Housing	Adult Services and Housing	22/01/25	31/01/25
Councillor L Bigham	Cabinet Member for Adult Services		04/02/25	06/02/25

This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/meetings