

Appendix

Personal Budgets

Phase 2

Evaluation 2010



Wirral

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1 Executive Summary

Personal Budgets are a new way of giving individuals greater control and flexibility over the way assessed needs are met. A Personal Budget is the amount of money that is available to individuals from Wirral Council to help meet eligible social care needs. It also takes into account the needs of family carer's where appropriate. A Personal Budget is calculated following the completion of a straightforward assessment where discussion takes place with individuals about the support that is required and how much money the council will contribute to meeting assessed needs, after the individuals own financial resources have been taken into account. A Personal Budget will be offered in most cases after immediate needs have been met, for example, once individuals have received support through the HART (re-ablement) or Assistive Technology service.

With a Personal Budget individuals can:

- know up-front how much money is available from the council to meet assessed needs
- decide how that money to be used
- get the support and advice to make the choices that best meet needs
- know how much to contribute financially.

The Department of Adult Social Services has been working on the concept of Personal Budgets since November 2007. A project approach consisting of 3 Phases to introduce Personal Budgets to people in Wirral has been taken. On 26th January 2009 Phase 1 began to test out Personal Budgets to a small cohort of 17 people. During the initial stages the department worked with those involved in the project to help shape and learn from people's experiences of having a Personal Budget.

Phase 2 of the project was then undertaken with a much larger cohort of people. The evaluation of Personal Budgets Project Phase 2 has now been completed. The purpose of the evaluation was to record the effectiveness of the processes and documentation used, and to collate the views and experiences of people who use services, carer's, staff and identified others related to the project. This report provides information around the approach taken to evaluate Personal Budgets evaluation Phase 2 and details of the findings.

Phase 2 of the Personal Budgets project has proved that the involvement of all stakeholders in the co-design of processes and systems is critical to ensuring sustained ownership. A product of Phase 2 was to deliver a re-designed business process for delivering Personal Budgets which has been achieved. The re-design has taken place with a wide range of stakeholders, through extensive testing and 188 staff has been briefed on the new process which has been delivered by a customer, reform unit staff, access and assessment staff and finance and performance staff.

Phase 2 has positively impacted on the delivery of key performance indicators on self directed assessment (8858) and self directed support (NI130) and Putting People First Milestone 2 (self direct support and Personal Budgets). Customers have reported improved outcomes from Phase 2 with 81% of customers reporting that their Personal Budget made a difference to whether they felt supported with dignity and 74% felt safer at home. 74% of carers reported that they felt their Personal Budget had improved their quality of life.

Further evidence suggests that individuals benefit more once they have had their Personal Budget for six months with 100% of customers from Phase 1 of the Personal Budgets project reporting that the Personal Budget made a difference to the control they had over their support compared to when they first had the Personal Budget. 25% of Phase 1 customers originally reported that the Personal Budget had made a difference to their health with 75% reporting it had made a difference after six months of having a Personal Budget.

2 Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in Phase 2 of the Personal Budgets project especially those people who use services and carers who embarked upon this journey with us. Special thanks should be acknowledged to Birkenhead locality, Adults with Learning Disability teams and Sue Lowe, customer representative, who have worked ceaselessly to test and re-test the re-designed business processes, providing appropriate challenge and ensuring that we learn together the new job to be undertaken – that of providing personalised support.

3 ‘Putting People First

Ivan Lewis, the Minister for Social Care has described Personal Budgets as “a revolution in terms of the way we seek to offer services to people in this country in the future. This will be the mainstream of the social care system in this country, the radical transformation of social care putting those who use services and their family members in the driving seat, providing control, choice and power”.

Wirral Council Department of Adult Social Services have implemented a transformation agenda, which includes personalisation. It has a major focus on the provision of effective and efficient services. This means a change agenda for adult social care, service remodelling, partnership working to promote and deliver choice, training and support for workforce to deliver personalised care, using Personal Budgets and self directed support, enabling individuals to assess and manage their self care needs. The model for ‘Putting People First’ is clearly focussed around individuals and has four key themes as detailed below:

Putting **People First**
Transforming Adult Social Care



4 Background

- 4.1** Wirral Council has clearly articulated the concept and benefits of Personal Budgets and aims to ensure the individuals are offered choice, control and improved outcomes to live their lives in the way and place of their own choice.
- 4.2** The outputs from the project are in line with putting people first milestones:
- Ensuring effective partnerships with people using services, carers and other local citizens
 - Providing self-directed support and Personal Budgets
 - Taking a whole system approach to prevention, intervention and cost effective services
 - Providing information that all citizens should be able to easily find, locally relevant quality information and advice about their care and support needs in order to enable control and inform choice
 - Local commissioning is developed ensuring a diverse and high quality market in care and support services to offer real choice and control to individuals and their carers.
- 4.3** The roll out of Personal Budgets in Wirral has been agreed in 3 Phases. Phase 1 commenced in January 2009, with a small cohort of people who use services of various ages having varying needs, located in all wards of Wirral Council. The aim of Phase 2 was to test a minimum of 10% of people receiving community based services which equated to approximately 200 cases. This was intended to give a more realistic and statistically valid assessment of the impact of the resource allocation system on the budget and test if processes and systems were workable on a wider cohort of individuals. Phase 2 commenced in December 2009 and ran for 9 months. Phase 2 was undertaken within the Birkenhead locality, Wirral people who have a learning disability and survivors of stroke leaving hospital.
- 4.4** Learning from Phase 1 and Phase 2 will be taken forward into Phase 3 of the Personal Budgets project. Phase 3 will see the offer of Personal Budgets made to all eligible residents in Wirral. The aim of Phase 3 Personal Budgets project is to ensure that at least 30% of eligible people in Wirral receive a Personal Budget by the end of March 2011 which is an indication that people are receiving personalised support to enable them to have more choice and control over their lives.
- 4.5** This evaluation report reflects on the learning to date from Phase 2 and from customer feedback from Phase 1 six months after they had received their Personal Budget. The evaluation draws together a range of information which gives a fuller picture of the impact of Personal Budgets in a range of areas. The evaluation covers the following areas:
- customer feedback; chapter 4
 - financial impact; chapter 5
 - performance information; chapter 6
 - training and support; chapter 7
 - involvement of relevant stakeholders; chapter 8
 - Regional and National learning; chapter 9.

5 Phase 1: Evaluation

- 5.1** Wirral's first Personal Budget evaluation report, gave positive feedback from those individuals who took part in Phase 1. Eight people who use services and six carers returned completed questionnaires. 25% of people who use services taking part in the Phase 1 said their Personal Budget had made a positive difference to their health and wellbeing. 37.5% of people felt safer in their home as a result of their Personal Budget and 25% felt safer whilst outside. 75% felt that their Personal Budget had given them more control and increased their social life.
- 5.2** 83.3% of carers said that the Personal Budget had increased their ability to continue caring and 66.7% said that it had a positive affect on their physical and mental wellbeing along with a positive affect on their quality of life.
- 5.3** To further assess experiences from people who had been in receipt of a Personal Budget for more than six months the original questionnaire was sent again to participants of Phase 1.

People in receipt of a Personal Budget for more than 6 months from Phase 1

- 5.4** To further assess experiences from people who had been receipt of a Personal Budget for more than six months the original questionnaire was sent again to participants of Phase 1. Eight people who use services and six carers returned completed questionnaires. Findings from the questionnaires were that satisfaction for people in receipt of a Personal Budget had improved in all but one area from when the questionnaire was first sent out compared to six months later.

	Phase 1 original questionnaire	Phase 1 After 6 months
Has the Personal Budget made a difference to your health?	25%	75%
Has your Personal Budget made a difference to how safe you feel at home?	37.5%	87.5%
Has the Personal Budget made a difference to how safe you feel when you go out?	25%	75%
Has your Personal Budget made a difference to the control you have over your support?	75%	100%
Has you Personal Budget made a difference to your social life?	75%	62.5%
Has your Personal Budget made a difference to whether you are supported with dignity?	12.5%	75%

- 5.5** Carer's satisfaction also improved reporting increases in improved quality of life, improved mental health and wellbeing and improved opportunities to undertake paid work.

	Phase 1 original questionnaire	Phase 1 After 6 months
What effect has your Personal Budget had on your quality of life?	66.67%	100%
What effect has your Personal Budget had on your capacity to have social life or follow leisure activities?	50%	100%
What effect has your Personal Budget had on your ability to continue or undertake paid work?	0	50%
What effect has your Personal Budget had on the relationship you have with the person you care for?	50%	100%
What effect has the Personal Budget had on other significant relationships (family and friends) in your life?	50%	83.3%
What effect has the Personal Budget had on the level of choice and control you have over the important things in your life?	16.67%	100%
During the Personal Budgets process how far would you say you felt you were an equal party with expertise to contribute?	83.33%	100%

6 Phase 2: Research Methods

- 6.1** The focus of the evaluation was to collect people's thoughts and experiences during the project period. Linked to this was a fundamental wish to empower people who use services and carers to tell their own stories of how Personal Budgets had changed their lives.
- 6.2** Feedback was gathered using simplified versions of the same tools (questionnaires) used to evaluate Phase 1. This was so that results could be directly compared during the analysis. The questionnaires for people who have a Personal Budget and Carers measured key social care outcomes from the person's perspective. Both qualitative (experiences) and quantitative (performance) data was collected and analysed.
- 6.3** Staff conducted telephone and face-to-face interviews with people in receipt of a Personal Budget (for six weeks or more) and carers. Questionnaires were distributed to staff involved in Phase 2 off the project. The research method is summarised as follows:

Stakeholders	Method
Staff involved in the project	Questionnaire + face-to-face interaction
People who have had a Personal Budget for six weeks or more	Telephone and face-to-face interviews using simplified version of Phase 1 questionnaire
Carers	Telephone and face-to-face interviews using simplified version of Phase 1 questionnaire

7 Findings: Customer Feedback

7.1 55 individuals and 19 carers were identified as having a Personal Budget for more than six weeks. All individuals and carers were contacted however 26 individuals and 19 carers responded and took part in completing evaluation questionnaires.

7.2 People who use services feedback

Gender	Male	7
	Female	19
Ethnic origin	White British	26

7.3 We asked individuals if their Personal Budgets had made a difference

Question asked	% improvement
Has your Personal Budget made a difference to your health?	69%
Has your Personal Budget made a difference to how safe you feel at home?	73%
Has your Personal Budget made a difference to how safe you feel when you go out?	46%
Has your Personal Budget made a difference to the control you have over your support?	62%
Has your Personal Budget made a difference to your social life?	42%
Has your Personal Budget made a difference to whether you are supported with dignity?	81%

7.4 Comments made by individuals during the questionnaire

“Don’t think it could have been done better. Social Worker very good, not like the old days”.

“I am very pleased with the service as it stands now not sure how things could be improved”.

“I don't think they can do anything else really. It's working for me, they're very good, if there is a problem, my assessment officer sorts it, she has been absolutely brilliant”.

“Before I had assessment support officer I felt like I was being told what I need rather than asked, which made me feel patronised.”

“My Personal Budget has improved my confidence and communication. Laughing with the carer is so important and being able to speak and relate to others”.

“I have excellent support around Personal Budgets from social services staff they were very helpful, kind and reliable. However the assessment document was very long and tiring”

“Paperwork took too long. Found it hard to remember what had been said”.

“Filling in the SDA without support was difficult and upsetting”.

7.5 Carers feedback

Gender	Male	4
	Female	15
Ethnic origin	White British	19

7.6 We asked carers if their Personal Budgets had made a difference

Question asked	% improvement
What effect has the Personal Budget had on your quality of life?	74%
What effect has the Personal Budget had on your capacity to have a social life or follow leisure activity?	68%
What effect has the Personal Budget had on your ability to continue or undertake paid work?	11%
What effect has the Personal Budget had on the relationship you have with the person you care for?	42%
What effect has the Personal Budget had on other significant relationships (family and friends) in your life?	42%
What effect has the Personal Budget had on the level of choice and control you have over the important things in your life?	47%
During the Personal Budget process, how far would you say you felt you were an equal part with expertise to contribute?	58%

7.7 Comments made by Carers during the questionnaire

“Yes it helped me get help I now have piece of mind, in case of emergencies. It has made ours lives easier.”

“Well I think I may be able to go away on holiday in the future because I know he will still get what he needs”.

“Makes it easier for me to go to work and makes it possible”.

“I value the help that I have received and couldn’t do without the help. Not many people understand and neighbours don’t pop in to ask for a message like in the old days”.

“I was having real difficulties with the care agency before the Personal Budget; it’s made my life a lot better”.

“Social Worker has been brilliant and helped a lot”.

“A positive experience and I feel like they have listened”.

“I don't want Direct Payments, or to be responsible for paying wages and tax it is more work and extra pressure for me with these 'separate' bank accounts, it is difficult enough managing my account and my Mums finances without a Personal Budget account for carers. On the plus side it did enable a care package to be put into place really quickly and the staff helping to sort it out and set it up have been brilliant”.

“Overwhelming, didn't know were to go for what”.

“The paper work was daunting to say the least, but my social care worker was great, he filled everything in with us and in the end it was worthwhile”.

“Knowing what to spend the money on is difficult to understand but working my way through it”.

7.8 Staff feedback

7.9 36 staff completed an evaluation questionnaire which asked staff to look at areas of work and for each area say whether having a Personal Budget had (a) helped, (b) made things worse, (c) made no difference. The results were as follows:

Area of work	(a) Helped	(b) Worse	(c) No Difference
Making a positive difference to peoples lives	50%	8%	31%
Helping people plan creatively	67%	6%	17%
Getting the right amount of help to people	33%	19%	31%
Getting help to people in a timely way (when they want it)	8%	64%	11%
Using your own skills and knowledge	39%	22%	33%
Allocating resources fairly	31%	28%	22%
Helping people to maintain existing support networks	44%	3%	31%
Supporting people to take an active part in their community	44%	3%	44%
Managing risks	19%	11%	61%
Supporting people to take control and make choice about their lives	56%	6%	22%
Developing support that is tailored to the needs of an individual	44%	11%	28%
Staying motivated in your own work	8%	56%	19%

7.10 Comments made by staff during the questionnaire

“Personal Budgets empower people”.

“The concept is rewarding”.

“The concept of Personal Budgets is positive; systems and lack of resources are slowing it up”.

“I feel if we moved at a slower pace I feel us the front line workers would feel more in control”.

“Service users unable to help themselves, with the present system, the worker does it all for them”.

“Could do with more info on what we can access or brokerage”.

“It would be useful to have a resource directory, covering providers, community services, criteria, costs”.

“My experience shows that 100% of the people contacting DASS want face to face contact”.

“New systems sometimes confusing and time consuming, complex cases take a lot longer and a lot more planning with clients and families”.

“Greater participation with local communities needs to be facilitated in order to effect stronger stakeholder involvement in the development /shaping of services which customers require”.

“Whilst you’re still carrying on with the double running of the systems, it’s very easy to lose people from – in terms of their buy-in, from staff feeling its more work and they’re not quite sure where it’s going”.

7.11 Conclusion

Evidence suggests that Personal Budgets are meeting people’s aspirations for independence and are giving people greater control over their lives. Two example case studies are attached at the appendix, which further demonstrates, a shift towards focussing on individuals and fitting services around people not people around services. Feedback confirms that customers have a stronger voice and have been major drivers in developing the systems, processes and improving approaches.

The process of delivering a Personal Budget involves spending more time with customers at the assessment stage, which has proven to be a very positive experience for those people. However, the testing and re-testing of business processes has been time consuming. However, this has results in a set of processes which are significantly streamlined and easy to use focussing on the customer at all times and which meet the Council’s statutory duties.

There is an impact on the role and function for the social care workforce where the customer is in control of the support planning stage and the investment in training and support has been significant to enable staff to the new approaches and re-skilling where required.

8 Findings: Financial Impact

- 8.1** When the evaluation was completed there were 1,782 individuals with a completed self-directed assessment. 477 of these individuals had completed the Resource Allocation System and been given an Indicative Budget.

- 8.2** Of the 477 individuals with an Indicative Budget, 14 had chosen to go into residential care and 50 had chosen to go into nursing home care. These people were excluded from the financial evaluation because a Personal Budget cannot be used to pay for residential or nursing home care. Therefore the financial evaluation was based on 413 individuals. The cost of the Indicative Budgets allocated for these individuals is £5,451,784 (an average of £253.85 per person per week). This was not individual's final budget following support planning.
- 8.3** In order for a comparison to be made it was important to know how much support costs would have been under the previous assessment and care management model, for these individuals.
- 8.4** 224 of the 413 individuals had an existing support package in place. This gave a high level of confidence that an average cost for these existing packages could be used to estimate the cost for those individuals who did not have a package of support already in place. This gave a total annual cost of support of £5,021,432.
- 8.5** The evaluation shows that for the majority of cases the actual cost of support that is put in place is less than the Indicative Budget. This may be because the support being provided was not at the right level to meet needs currently and therefore support needs may have increased since the last assessment. However for some people the cost of support put in place can be more due to very complex needs. In these cases all monies agreed for these individuals would have been approved by the risk and support group. 113 individuals have completed the whole process and have a fully costed support package and are receiving services. The average cost of their support is 28% less than their Indicative Budget.
- 8.6** The new system has also identified the additional needs of carers that were not previously met. 53 carers were identified who qualify for a carers Personal Budget at an average of £40.64 per week, £112,000 per year.
- 8.7** A summary of the findings is provided below.

Previous cost of support for the sample 413 people	5,021,432
Indicative Budget at £1.88 per point	5,451,784
Actual cost of final budget after support planning (known as a Personal Budgets)	3,925,284
Spend on new carers identified (assuming no further increase)	112,000
Positive variance	984,147

- 8.8** A 'positive variance' is the amount that is not spent on people but was spent previously on their commissioned support. If everyone elected to take a Personal Budget this would mean a reduction in the Department's spending. However, the project confirms the expectation that not everyone will elect to have a Personal Budget.

8.9 This will particularly be the case for people with complex needs or whose commissioned support is currently much greater than would be offered by a Personal Budget. In these cases transitional arrangements will need to be put in place for an agreed period of time in order to keep the individual safe. 32 people fall into this category and the difference in cost of continuing their existing support arrangements is £890,196 per year. Over time this group of individuals will be replaced or will be motivated to elect for a Personal Budget which would give them better outcomes with increased choice and control.

8.10 Further learning from the initial phases shows that the needs of carers are being more clearly identified and eligible needs are being met. Supporting carers is a priority within Wirral Council's Corporate Plan. As with all Personal Budgets affordability is based on effective assessment and support planning, identifying the carer's relationship with the person they are supporting. The cost of support to carers has therefore been included in this initial evaluation.

8.11 Conclusion

The conclusion for this part of the evaluation is that there is enough evidence to show that the Resource Allocation System gives, as an Indicative Budget, 8.57% more than the existing cost of commissioned support from the assessment and care management model, assuming that these current services are meeting all of the individuals' current needs. However this is not the actual cost incurred by the Council. The Indicative Budget gives no guarantee of the amount the Council will spend on meeting an individual's needs, this is determined at the support planning stage. The evaluation demonstrates that the average cost of support for the group of people identified is 78.2% of the previous cost of support and 72% of the Indicative Budget.

9 Findings: Performance Information

9.1 There are two key performance indicators which have been used as a measure of success for implementing Personal Budgets and have been monitored during Phase 1 and 2 of the Personal Budget project. Performance targets have been set and progress has reported weekly in team meetings and monthly by the Personal Budgets project board. The performance indicators are as follows:

- The percentage of completed assessments that are recorded as self directed assessments (a local indicator called 8858)
- Percentage of social care clients receiving self directed support (a national indicator called NI130)

9.2 Self directed assessments (8858)

Number	Target 09/10	Actual 09/10	Target Q1 10/11	Actual Q1 10/11	Target Q2 10/11	Actual Q2 10/11	Target Q3 10/11	Target Q4 10/11
Percentage	25%	1.93%	12.50%	14.58%	18%	20.90%	32%	50.00%
Number of self directed assessments	4615	413	577	662	1661	2159	4430	9230

9.3 Self directed support (NI130)

Number	Target 09/10	Actual 09/10	Target Q1 10/11	Actual Q1 10/11	Target Q2 10/11	Actual Q2 10/11	Target Q3 10/11	Target Q4 10/11
Percentage	15.00%	5.55%	7.00%	6.76%	10%	9.36%	20%	30%
Number of people with self directed support	1300	504	483	428	725	704	1626	2751

9.4 The Personal Budgets project (Phase 1, 2 and 3) is ensuring that the Putting People First Milestone 2 (self directed support and Personal Budgets) will be delivered on time. The key dates and deliverables are as follows:

Key Date	Key Deliverable	Status
April 2010	That every council has introduced Personal Budgets, which are being used by existing or new service users/ carers	Achieved via Phase 1
October 2010	That all new service users / carers (with assessed need for ongoing support) are offered a Personal Budget. That all service users whose care plans are subject to review are offered a Personal Budget.	Full roll out begins on 19.11.10. Training on process undertaken in October 2010
April 2011	That at least 30% of eligible service users/carers have a Personal Budget.	On target

9.5 Conclusion

Phase 2 of the Personal Budgets project has positively impacted on the number of people receiving a self directed assessment (8858). Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 targets have been exceeded. This performance indicator consistently under performed in 09/10 prior to the start of Personal Budgets Phase 2 project.

Phase 2 of the Personal Budgets project has positively impacted on the number of people receiving self directed support (NI130). Quarter 1 target was narrowly missed by 55 people and Quarter 2 target was narrowly missed by 21 people. This performance indicator consistently under performed in 09/10 prior to the start of Personal Budget Phase 2 project.

The Personal Budgets project (Phase 1, 2 and 3) is ensuring that the Putting People First Milestone 2 (self directed support and Personal Budgets) will be delivered on time. The October 2010 key date was narrowly missed due to a delay on the Council's decision to roll out the resource allocation system.

10 Findings: Training and Support

10.1 Training and support has been designed and delivered alongside the Personal Budgets project. The involvement of relevant stakeholders in the design and delivery of this training and support has been critical. The following is the training and support that has been provided:

- **Personalisation Process Training:** Ten sessions have taken place. A total of 188 staff have received full training on the revised business processes taking into account lessons learned during Phase 2. This is core training for all access and assessment branch staff and includes other staff in the Department and equips staff for delivering the new agenda. This training was designed in response to feedback received from staff as part of Phase 2.
- **Personalisation Awareness:** Eight Personalisation Awareness sessions have taken place between January and August 2010 with 116 people attending from Adult Social Services, independent provider services, carers and the voluntary sector. All sessions were well attended with an 80% attendance rate. An additional four sessions have been advertised and places booked offering 68 places.
- **Support Planning:** Nine Support Planning training programmes have been delivered to priority groups between January and August 2010 with a further seven planned to take place between September 2010 and January 2011 ensuring that all priority staff attend across localities and organisations.
- **Self Directed Assessment and Resource Allocation System:** Support on the self directed assessment and resource allocation system has been delivered as part of the support planning training facilitated by staff development and Reform Unit and through mentoring provided by the Reform Unit and Finance staff.
- **Outcomes:** Training on Outcomes has taken place for 25 staff. A further three dates have been identified to take place in October and November 2010.
- **Co-production:** An AFTA Thought event on 16th July 2010 took place for 100 people including staff from DASS, NHS Wirral and individuals who use services.
- **North West Personalisation Project:** is a partnership between the Open University, Department of Adult Social Services and NHS Wirral to develop a distance learning course on personalisation.

10.2 Feedback from the training events has been reflected upon and, where relevant, adjustments made to the training programmes. Some feedback received from the personalisation process training is as follows:

"I enjoyed the training and love the fact that customers are having a say in their future support needs. I would consider perhaps a future change in career for myself in creating support plans"

"Excellent involvement of individuals to provide input/reflection on the customer perspective. Sufficient time allowance to cover all elements/questions"

"Clearer sense of the journey through process documents involved and emphasis on the focus being person using services"

"I feel today's workshop has helped reduce the 'process from overwhelming challenging to challenging which is a positive outcome for me"

“The training was excellent, it will enable me to effectively manage my area under the new process and advise my staff. The new process should really improve income collection if it is carried out effectively”

10.3 Conclusion

The training and support provided has been well received. The involvement of relevant stakeholders in the design and delivery of this training and support has been critical. Feedback from all events has been reflected upon and, where relevant, training programmes have been adjusted. Learning and resources available from the ‘Skills for Care’, North West Joint Improvement Partnership and other relevant organisations has been.

11 Findings: Involvement of Relevant Stakeholders

11.1 A central feature to the introduction of self directed support and Personal Budgets project has been the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. The guiding principal has been to involve relevant stakeholders at every step in the project, not just through consultation, but through co-designing processes, systems and documentation together. This has been achieved in the following ways:

- The Personal Budget Project Board was reviewed and restructured to initiate Phase 2 of the project working within the ethos of co-design and based on the PRINCE 2 model of project management/planning. Project board meetings took place on a monthly basis and a person who uses services was a member of the board. A protocol for the involvement of people who use services and carers was designed and used setting down role, purpose and data protection issues
- The project was managed through five work streams focussing on Awareness, Assessment & Validation, Support Planning, Monitoring & Review and Training & Development. Testing has been undertaken through co-design, with both staff and customers, to ensure full engagement is secured in reaching a position where new processes are created together, worked through together and agreed together. This has created a sense of ownership and will ensure a consistent approach is taken by staff in applying processes and procedures when undertaking their roles
- A process and practice handbook has been developed with staff and customers. Consultation took place with stakeholders within all Department of Adult Social Services Branches, the Council Legal Services and Audit Departments and Unions
- Wirral’s joint health and social care self directed assessment has been extensively tested by customers and staff and refined during Phase 2 of the project work. This Joint Assessment documentation has also been designed and agreed with health colleagues will be rolled out across the health economy as part of Phase 3 Personal Budgets project
- Work has started with the voluntary and community sector to develop brokerage support within existing contract arrangements. This work will continue with the new contracts from April 2011 and work is currently taking place to develop an approved provider list for those agencies wishing to provide brokerage support
- Extensive work has been undertaken on the resource allocation system with input from the Department’s Finance Team, Corporate Finance and an external consultant paid for from the Department of Health. The resource allocation system has been subject to scrutiny from as part of the work of the Taskforce looking at options for Adult Social Care and locally elected members

- The reform unit staff, staff within finance and performance branch and access and assessment managers have provided an intensive mentoring and support service to staff working as part of Phase 2 and have been on-site in the teams providing advice and guidance and attending assessment visits with staff
- Weekly team meetings within Phase 2 teams have taken place reporting on progress of performance indicators and time for a question and answer session which has been facilitated through 'learning boards' for locality / team staff to place questions and suggestions of 'post it' notes as and when they occurred. All question and answers have been recorded however some common themes emerging throughout the project included:

Q1. After the Personal Budgets project is complete will Personal Budgets be compulsory or will it be optional?

A1. The departmental and national vision is to make Personal Budgets compulsory remembering that Personal Budgets are a way of giving individual's greater control and flexibility over the way their assessed needs are met. The Personal Budget is an amount of money that is available to the individual from Wirral Council to help meet social care needs. The definition of a Personal Budget as measure through a national performance indicator (NI130) is that with a Personal Budget an individual can:

- know up-front how much money is available from the council to meet individual needs (called an Indicative Budget)
- decide how they want that money to be used (called support planning)
- get the support and advice to make the choices that best meet their needs
- know how much contribute financially and the final budget.

Q2. If the individual in receipt of a Personal Budget is also acting as an employer, how does this affect and protect the rights of the employer and those they employ e.g. employment law, Criminal Records Bureau check (CRB)?

A2. If the individual wants the Personal Budget delivered via a Direct Payment, where they then choose to act as an employer, then the Direct Payment team in the Department of Adult Social Services give free advice and guidance on becoming an employer. There are a number of organisations that people are advised to contact for advice and support.

Q3. Is there any interim brokerage services available seeing as no organisations are coming forward?

A3. The Department of Adult Social Services currently provide some in house support around brokerage through the brokerage and Direct Payments team however we also have a list available of the current brokers we know in Wirral and are developing an approved provider list that can be distributed to individuals. However, individuals do not need to use those on our approved provider list. It is there choice who they use.

- Q4.** Is the self directed assessment sensitive to the fact that other streams of funding such as Independent Living Fund are changing their criteria?
- A4.** The Self Directed Assessment embeds Fair Access to Care criteria which has been set by Local Authority ensuring that eligible needs will be met. Triggers have been set within the Self Directed Assessment that indicate the possibility that other funding streams may need to be considered. If those funding streams are denied and the support plan exceeds the Indicative Budget, it will be presented at the risk and safety group.

11.2 Conclusion

Involving people who use services at an early stage within Phase 2 of the Personal Budget project has improved the development of processes ensuring that the approach taken has a 'buy-in' from those affected. It has helped policy makers to engage with the involvement process personally. People who use services and carers are members of the project board, various work streams, risk and safety meetings and have enabled a balanced decision making process. The Independent Disabled People's Forum has provided support and guidance with support planning. The development of brokerage support in the community is critical to ensuring customers have choice and control over their lives.

12 Findings: Local, Regional and National Learning

- 12.1** Wirral Council undertook an internal audit on the personal budgets business process in November 2009 to ensure that the identified controls within the phase 1 project were working effectively and were adequate to mitigate the risks identified. The audit identified a number of areas of good practice and recommendations. In March 2010 the internal audit follow up report confirmed that all the recommendations had been fully implemented.
- 12.2** Wirral continues to be members of the North West Joint Improvement Partnership (NWJIP) and Merseyside Meetings. A raft of information has been exchanged and joint working continues with North West Councils. The learning resources available through this network have been used in the design of the business process for personalisation and in the training and support programme which have been designed.
- 12.3** As a high priority the development of the resource allocation system was regarded as the most challenging task throughout Phase 1 and Phase 2. Wirral has benefited from working with an external consultant commissioned by the National Programme Director for Personalisation via the North West Joint Improvement Programme, who has assisted in the further development of Wirral's resource allocation system.

12.4 Conclusion

The input from regional and national learning has been invaluable in the design, delivery and approach to Wirral's Personal Budget project Phase 1, 2 and 3. Learning from the 13 national pilot sites has been used, alongside other available resources and best practice has been utilised at every opportunity to ensure Wirral's approach to Personal Budgets is grounded in the important principals of personalisation.

13 Conclusions

- 13.1** Personal Budgets are meeting people's aspirations for independence and are giving people greater control over their lives. Evidence from customers suggests a shift towards focussing on individuals and fitting services around people not people around services. Feedback confirms that customers have a stronger voice and have been major drivers in developing the systems, processes and improving approaches.
- 13.2** The Phase 2 evaluation can confirm the concept of Personal Budgets is welcomed by customers and social care professionals. Feedback and case studies suggest Personal Budgets are improving outcomes for individuals. Similar outcomes can be identified between the results of the Personal Budget project Phase 1 and Phase 2 with significant improvement being reported once an individual has received a Personal Budgets for six months.
- 13.3** During Phase 2 testing new business processes was time consuming. This was as a consequence of running two systems and testing new processes. The new business process has now been streamlined and positive feedback has been received through the personalisation process training on the new business process. A new set of processes are now in place which are significantly streamlined and easy to use focussing on the customer at all times and which meet the Council's statutory duties.
- 13.4** The process of delivering a Personal Budget involves spending more time with people who use services, which has proven to be a very positive experience for those people. There is an impact on the role and function for the social care workforce where the customer is in control of the support planning stage and the investment in training and support has been significant to enable staff to the new approaches and re-skilling where required.
- 13.5** The conclusion for this financial evaluation is that there is enough evidence to show that the Resource Allocation System gives, as an Indicative Budget, 8.57% more than the existing cost of commissioned support from the assessment and care management model, assuming that these current services are meeting all of the individuals' current needs. However this is not the actual cost incurred by the Council. The Indicative Budget gives no guarantee of the amount the Council will spend on meeting an individual's needs, this is determined at the support planning stage. The evaluation demonstrates that the average cost of support for the group of people identified is 78.2% of the previous cost of support and 72% of the Indicative Budget.
- 13.6** Phase 2 of the Personal Budgets project has positively impacted on the number of people receiving a self directed assessment (8858) and positively impacted on the number of people receiving self directed support (NI130). In addition the Personal Budgets project (Phase 1, 2 and 3) is ensuring that the Putting People First Milestone 2 (self directed support and Personal Budgets) will be delivered on time.
- 13.7** Training and support has been well received and the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the design and delivery of this training and support has been critical. Feedback from all events has been reflected upon and, where relevant, training programmes have been adjusted. Learning and resources available from the 'Skills for Care', North West Joint Improvement Partnership and other relevant organisations has been.

- 13.8** Involving people who use services at an early stage within Phase 2 of the Personal Budget project has improved the development of processes ensuring that the approach taken has a 'buy-in' from those affected. It has helped policy makers to engage with the involvement process personally. People who use services and carers are members of the project board, various work streams, risk and safety meetings and have enabled a balanced decision making process. The Independent Disabled People's Forum has provided support and guidance with support planning. Although work has started with the voluntary and community sector to develop brokerage support this needs to be accelerated as it is critical to ensuring customers have choice and control over their lives.
- 13.9** The input from regional and national learning has been invaluable in the design, delivery and approach to Wirral's Personal Budget project Phase 1, 2 and 3. Learning from the 13 national pilot sites has been used, alongside other available resources and best practice has been utilised at every opportunity to ensure Wirral's approach to Personal Budgets is grounded in the important principals of personalisation.

14 Recommendations for Phase 3

14.1 Phase 3 of the project began in September 2010 with recommendations made on a suitable resource allocation system and the launch of a new business process through training to 188 staff. The majority of the work has been done as part of Phase 2 which has assisted with the preparatory work needed for fuller roll out. It is therefore considered that it is appropriate to roll out Personal Budgets as part of Phase 3 of the Personal Budgets project.

However, there are some further areas which will need to be implemented, evaluated and overseen as part of Phase 3 to ensure further learning takes place on this new way of working. The recommendations for Phase 3 are detailed below:

Area of focus	Recommendations
Customer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and evaluate the use of the new business processes to ensure staff are adhering to processes • Adjust, where relevant, business processes focussing on customers and the council's legal duties • Analyse feedback from customer feedback surveys, compliments and complaints and feed learning into processes and approaches • Provide appropriate, timely advice and information to customers on Personal Budgets
Financial impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and evaluate impact of resource allocation system • Make recommendations to Council for any relevant adjustments to be made to resource allocation system alongside Fair Access to Care criteria
Performance information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor key performance indicators (NI130 and 8858) to ensure targets are met and report to relevant stakeholders • Ensure Putting People First Milestones are met
Training and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver training to relevant staff • Schedule additional sessions on personalisation process training during December 2010 • Support and mentoring programme in place to support staff with applying the new processes delivered by Reform Unit and Finance and Performance staff
Involvement of relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with all key stakeholders to ensure any changes are communicated effectively and understood • Continue to develop brokerage support in the voluntary and community sector • Continue to develop an approved provider list for brokerage support • Implement plan for involvement of customers in Phase 3

Local, Regional and national learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to use regional and national available resources• Plan focus of external consultant's work – 2 days remaining• Implement the recommendations from the Audit Commissions report (October 2010) 'Financial management of personal budgets; challenges and opportunities for councils'• Implement the guidance accompanying the Vision for Adult Social Care related to personal budgets
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Personal Budget Case Studies

The following case examples provide an insight into the impact Personal Budgets is having on the lives on people in Wirral. Consent has been given to publish the photograph and stories of the individuals for the purpose of this evaluation report.

An interview took place, this is what was said:

I am 87 years of age and in very poor health. I am housebound and cannot look after myself. I am becoming forgetful and confused and when this happens I get very anxious. I spend most of my time alone staring at the four walls, and this makes me feel very sad and lonely. I often miss meals either because I forget to eat or I can't be bothered. I forget to take my medication, I have not taken it on a number of occasions, and there is so much of it! I find every aspect of looking after myself exhausting, sometimes I just feel like giving up.

Carer - I am her daughter and I am tired! I live in Maghull with my husband and have a full time job in Bootle working for the Inland Revenue. I have been the main carer for my mum for some time, over the past few months, I have been really worried about her, she has lost a lot of weight and I think she is depressed. I am travelling to the Wirral on a daily basis and sometimes twice a day, to look after her. I do feel guilty when I have to leave her, she often wants to just chat, but after I have sorted all the things I need to do for her I haven't got time to chat. There were times when all that I could see for mum was a residential care home, mum wouldn't want that, but I can't go on the way things are.

How was your first interview with your assessment support officer?

Carer - explained Personal Budgets to us, and I was very apprehensive, so was mum, he reassured us and we decided to go with it. The assessment document was lengthy and daunting, but I deal with paper work in my job, I can imagine it would be difficult for others.

How did you find the process from the assessment to receiving your Personal Budget?

The assessment support officer was lovely.

Carer - The length of the process was fine, our assessment support officer kept us informed along the way, when you know what is going on and help is on its way, every thing feels much brighter.

How did you choose your support?

Carer - We choose an agency, to support mum, our assessment support officer provided a list of Wirral agencies, I was concerned they would not be responsive to mums needs and wishes; however I contacted a provider who came to help us with mums support plan. The agency worker listen to everything mum wanted, she also took on board the flexibility that maybe needed if I wanted to go away at short notice.

Do you use all your Personal Budget on agency?

Most of it, mum employs a cleaner who now helps mum get a shower when she requires one.

Have you had any problems with your support?

Only once the care worker didn't turn up until 6.15 to give me my tea, it was too late for me, I did explain that to the worker, it hasn't happened since then.

Carer – It is going great, I recently went away for a break at short notice, the agency provided the care at the weekend mum needed she was fine, I doubt she even missed me. I had no idea an agency could work in such a personalised way.

I see you have assistive technology what do you think about it?

I have bits of technology in my flat, it helps me with my medication and security, my piper life line is great, everyone should have one. I did leave my piper life line in the living room one evening, I fell out of bed and ended up on the floor all night, I was so scared and in pain, my hair dresser found me the next morning. I had a long stay in hospital which was awful. I always wear my life line now, it has kept me out of hospital and I feel so much safer.

You have had your Personal Budget for over 3 months now what difference has it made to you?

Although my health is not great, it's a lot better than it was, I do have osteoporosis you know! I love my food again and have recently put weight on and I have been discharged from the dietician. I am no longer housebound I go out with my support worker twice a week and still go to my daughters house in Maghull on Sundays. I can still be forgetful at times but don't we all?

I have support from an agency every day, which is on a chart for me to help me remember. I was concerned of having different people assisting me with my personal care at first, but the agency has arranged regular girls to support me and they are lovely. I love chatting with them and I know they listen to me, one of them remembered me telling her I use to play in the Arno in Birkenhead as a youngster, she arranged a surprise visit one afternoon, it was wonderful. I went to West Kirby the other day, I had an ice cream, I can't remember the last time I did that. My daughter has recently been able to go away on holiday, she organised with the agency the support I would need when she was away, all worked out fine.

The best things about having a Personal Budget is not having to rely on my daughter and bringing her out of work all the time, we now have a proper mother and daughter relationship again. I have more control and choice in my life, I feel safer, knowing I have nice people coming to help me daily. I feel my life is worth living again.

Same question for the carer

Mum is great, it is lovely to see her smiling again, she looks a lot better and has lots to tell me when I visit. She still loves spending Sundays with me and my family, it feels more relaxed, I love watching her enjoying her food again. I really enjoyed my recent holiday, I doubt mum even missed me. I have confidence in the support she receives. I am not as stressed and tired as I use to be. I have more time to spend with her to just chat as we use to do. Mums Personal Budget has changed hers and my life.

Reflections from the Assessment Support Officer

I have seen the way in which a Personal Budget can work for an individual. It was a very daunting process for the individual and their carer, and for me initially, however it was important to never lose sight of what they both wanted to achieve.

Personal Budgets have so much more flexibility. They enable and empower people to live their life how they choose to do so. I have seen such a difference especially with the individual and her carer; they both have a life now, individually and as mother and daughter. Prior to Personal Budgets I feel the system took away peoples chance to live a flexible life.

The process was very smooth and it was clear what they wanted to achieve and it helped that the carer was very supportive. It would have been much more difficult if there was no one to assist with managing the budget. In some cases I know that this won't happen and there will be a lot of challenges surrounding Personal Budgets and individuals wanting to manage their support and budget. However over time I see them having a positive affect on many people's lives.

It has given me so much satisfaction knowing that a Personal Budget and the support I have given has had such an impact on the woman's life and also her daughters and her families' life. I did find the process so much longer and yes it can sometimes feel quite stressful, however putting that aside it has made a difference, its individual and mum and daughter are happy.

It is very hard to know what I would change about the process as each case brings its own challenges and it is an ongoing learning curve.

Case Study 2

I am a wheelchair user and have moderate learning difficulties. When I first heard about the Personal Budget I requested to have one, as the care package I used to get often limited my choices. I used to live in shared accommodation with two other people and things that were important to me, I sometimes felt let down with, because the carers had to take care of all of us together. I even missed a really important event to me because we were an hour and a half late, which really upset me. I wanted to be more independent and make my own decisions.

I applied for the Personal Budget and at first it was difficult to get, because of my shared accommodation and care. However, as soon as I moved out I was able to apply for everything I need. I felt unsure at first about the self-directed assessment and support plan, but my mum and social worker helped me a lot. I feel it takes into account all my needs and the biggest difference in my life with a Personal Budget, is that it is based around me and what I want. It has really helped me to feel more independent. It was difficult to set up the Personal Budget but once I got it was really good. It took a few months to get everything into place. My mum and social services help me to decide everything that I wanted to do. I couldn't have done it without my Mum's help though.

My experience of getting a Personal Budget has been very positive. I also feel very positive that I will receive the right help and support in the future. These types of forms centre around my needs and wishes, although they are difficult and sometimes long-winded to fill in, it is worth it when everything is in place. It has helped me decide what is important to me, what I wanted to be different and the ways I can still get the support I need.

Now I can decide who I see and when I see them. Because I can swap and change, I feel more in control of what is going on. I have also had an advocate to help me with my finances and set up most of my direct debits. My new home is adapted for my needs and I have Assistive Technology to call on someone if I need to. I get very jumpy and wary if I'm on my own for long, especially during night times. I think I could do with some more personal care hours because my Mum spends so much time with me in between the carers that visit. She helps me to feel safe at home. I sometimes wish Mum had more support too. I hope I will feel more confident as time passes. I applied for more care hours but couldn't get them. The Personal Budget has however included or considered all my needs. I get help with getting washed and dressed, getting in and out of bed, practical stuff like washing and shopping. I've even had advice to help me lose weight. It's helped me to socialise and get out more in the community when I want, and to feel more independent and in control. I feel listened to and I can now have more family and friends to visit me, as I have got my own living space and I can decide what I want to do.

My voice as a person using services has been listened to and acted on. I know how to find out information about services and problems are sorted fairly quickly and simply. I know my safety is of the utmost importance to everyone who cares for me. I can rely on getting the right care (although I could do with more hours). Since having a Personal Budget I have an improvement in my well-being and health. I do feel happier having more choice. Personal Budgets give you more options, and I think they are a good idea.