

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

20 DECEMBER 2012

SUBJECT:	REVIEW OF PERSONAL BUDGETS FOR CARERS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	GRAHAM HODKINSON
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE JONES
KEY DECISION? <i>(Defined in paragraph 13.3 of Article 13 'Decision Making' in the Council's Constitution.)</i>	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report puts forward proposals to review the current arrangements for providing carers with a personal budget. The saving from this proposal would be £250,000.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 In the process of conducting a community care assessment, a carer for an individual may be identified. The department is, under the Care in the Community Act, legally bound to consider the needs of the carer as part of the overall assessment and the carer has the right to ask for a separate assessment of their own needs. As part of the current assessment process, a carer's assessment generates (through the Resource Allocation System) a carer's budget, a sum of money based on the nature and extent of the impact of the carer role on that individual. This can be paid as a Direct Payment to carers to support them in their carer role. The average annual Direct Payment to carers in Wirral is currently £1,730.

2.2 There are a number of issues about the current process for generating a personal budget for carers:

- providing carers with a budget does not help create the range of support services that carers require to sustain them in their carer role
- there is confusion about what should be in the individual and the carer budgets
- the cost of providing support to carers in this way has contributed to significant budget pressures

2.3 The proposal is to review the current process and consider the efficacy of three alternative options:

- the cessation of personal budgets for carers with support for carers being commissioned by the department
- the introduction of an annual grant to carers
- the introduction of a payment to carers based on a banding system that reflects the impact of the carer role on the individual

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 This proposal may result in a reduction in the number of carers directly supported by the Department. However support will still be available to Carers from the Council, NHS and Voluntary Sector organisations.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 The review will consider a number of options to provide this service as set out in paragraph 2.3 above.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 The process for consultation with carers currently receiving a carer's budget has been agreed and can be started after the 9th November 2012.

5.2 Cabinet approval will be required to change the Resource Allocation System.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 The NHS has been given additional funding to support Carers and NHS Wirral has commissioned the Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Diversity (WIRED) Carers Support Service to offer short breaks for Carers. Carers are now able to access these services through GPs rather than through Adult Social Services. There may be an increase in demand for this service.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 For all individuals currently receiving a carer's budget, a review would be required before any changes were made to their current support arrangements.

7.2 It is anticipated that through a combination of the cessation of personal budgets for carers with support for carers being commissioned by the department, the introduction of an annual grant to carers and the introduction of a payment to carers based on a banding system that reflects the impact of the carer role on the individual overall savings of £250,000 can be generated in a full year.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 That this budget proposal is consulted on and the results of the consultation be reported to the Council with a view to generating annual budget savings of £250,000.

13.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 In order to assess the best use of resources the Department of Adult Social Services needs to review the way in which services to carers are provided through the most effective use of scarce budgets allocated to services.

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APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date