



HEALTH SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13TH MAY 2014

**SUBJECT: THE WITHDRAWAL OF INCENTIVE PAYMENTS TO SERVICE USERS
WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES WITHIN COMMUNITY SUPPORT
SERVICES**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of the current position in Community Support Services in relation to incentive payments made to service users.
- 1.2 To seek scrutiny members' views on the proposal to withdraw incentive payments and the proposal to make a one off payment for the reasons outlined in the report, prior to the report going to Cabinet for final agreement in June 2014

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report will outline background information of the historic inequitable arrangements for incentive payments made to people with a learning disability.
- 2.2 The report will detail the consultation exercise undertaken by the People First Advocacy Organisation and make recommendations to cease provision of incentive payments.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Previously Scrutiny and Cabinet agreed to a Daytime Opportunities Modernisation, which focussed on development of more inclusive community, based services for people with a learning disability.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The arrangement of providing an incentive payment to people with a learning disability to attend local authority day services is an historic one that pre-dates local government re-organisation in 1996 when services were segregated and included activities such as contract work. The principle of paying people to attend their day service is outdated and it is not replicated in other service areas or the independent sector.
- 4.2 The payments are small and the maximum daily attendance payment made is 60 pence and the lowest 15 pence.

- 4.3 Arrangements for attendance payments are inconsistent across Community Support Services for example payments are not made to people who receive a service from the Links, Community Support Team and Blackberry Catering.
- 4.4 There is a further disparity in payments due to the differing arrangements that were in place pre 1996 that included a "sliding scale" of payments based upon people's disability. This could be viewed as inequitable practice as the lower rate of payment in some service areas is made to the individuals who have the most complex needs.
- 4.5 People First undertook a consultation exercise with service users to ascertain their views on the proposal to withdraw these payments.
- 4.6 People First wrote to all service users in receipt of these payments explaining their role and advised that they would attend meetings at all the relevant day services to seek people's views on the proposal. Individuals unable to attend the meeting were offered the opportunity to send comments directly to People First.
- 4.7 Meetings were held at 8 areas where incentive payments are in place 2014 with good engagement from those who attended.
- 4.8 It is acknowledged that some service users will not receive the withdrawal of incentive payments positively and for some their incentive payment is the only money that they physically receive. Where this is identified as an issue we will work with Caerphilly People First in their advocacy capacity as all service users are in receipt of benefits. Discussions held with individuals reassured them in terms of the minimal impact this will have on their lifestyle.
- 4.9 The current arrangements are paradoxical i.e. service users may make a payment to a service for their attendance and subsequently receive a payment for attending.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An equalities impact assessment has not been completed at this time, however as noted in section 4, a very comprehensive and accessible consultation has been undertaken around these proposals, and further as noted in 4.7, where issues are found, the Council will work with Caerphilly People First, which is important to note due to their expertise in dealing with people with Learning Disabilities and the specific communication requirements needed.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Ceasing the incentive payments would realise a financial saving of £17,164 for a full year.
- 6.2 The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) doesn't drive this recommendation; it is based on equity and efficiency. It is proposed for 14/15 to give each of the services where payments are made a one off payment of £100 to enable people to determine how it is spent and adjust to the new arrangements. This £800 would be offset against any part year savings, which would go to address any budgetary short fall in the authorities bottom line.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct employment issues, however it should be noted that the tasks relating to the provision of incentive payments takes up a considerable amount of staff time.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 Comments received have been included in this report fully details are in Appendix 1.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members are asked to provide their views on the proposal to withdraw incentive payments for people with a learning disability in order to report to Cabinet in June 2014.

9.2 Members provide their views on the proposal for a payment of £100 to be made to each establishment for 2014/15 to inform the Cabinet report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To achieve consistent practice arrangements within both adult and community services.

10.2 Payment will assist transition to new arrangements and be used to illustrate monetary value.

10.3 Consultation has been undertaken by Caerphilly People First.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000.

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Appendices:
Appendix 1 Consultation Responses