

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Interim Executive Director of Social Work and Health

Social Work and Health Improvement Committee: 17 March 2010

Subject: West Dunbartonshire Council's Self Directed Support Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek Committee approval of the West Dunbartonshire Council's Self Directed Support policy.

2. Background

- 2.1 Self Directed Support (SDS) is a term used to describe how people can exercise choice and control over their lives and the services they receive. This requires people to be aware of the financial value attributed to meeting their needs. This is known as an individual budget and allows them to make an informed choice about how this is used.
- 2.2 Self Directed Support includes the use of direct payments, the Independent Living Fund and the delivery of individualised person centred services. The SDS policy embraces these mechanisms and applies them across all client group areas.
- 2.3 SDS is a central plank of the Scottish Government's approach to the delivery of health and social care services in Scotland. The Government strategy recognises the need for services and supports to be flexible and to empower individuals to be more involved in the delivery of service to them. This places considerable emphasis on values and principles; ownership and leadership; choice and control; and the appropriate use of resources. The revised SDS policy reflects these aims.
- 2.4 As previously stated the three key elements of SDS are:
- **Direct Payments** – the provision of payment in lieu of social work services. This provides an alternative system for people who have been assessed by social work as requiring services and who wish to direct their own support. Direct payment monies can only be used to meet assessed social care needs. There are currently 40 individuals within the West Dunbartonshire Council area who are in receipt a direct payment.
 - **Independent Living Fund (ILF)** – ILF is a charitable trust which is funded by central government. In order to receive ILF a recipient must be in receipt of a minimum of £320 worth of social work services per week. There is no maximum worth to the amount of social work services provided. Payments are made directly to the recipient's bank account and the recipient has financial control for care arrangements and able to

choose their own provider. There are currently 120 ILF recipients within the West Dunbartonshire Council area.

- **Personalised Services/Self Directed Support** – Self Directed Support brings together the mechanisms of Direct Payments, ILF and personalised services which ensures that the person is placed firmly at the centre and has both influence and control over the package of care they receive. The SDS policy recognises that many people do not wish to have financial control over their package of care but do want to be involved in a person centred approach to the provision of services.

2.5 The SDS policy meets our obligations both in relation to the Scottish Government strategy and the recent Social Work Inspection Agency action plan following the recent inspection of Social Work services.

2.7 West Dunbartonshire Council is currently in discussion with In Control Scotland (an independent organisation which aims to promote and support change in the organisation of social care and support in Scotland). Currently they are involved with almost half of the Local Authorities helping them explore options around Self Directed Support.

2.6 In order to progress the personalisation agenda, WDC hosted an event in partnership with In Control Scotland. This event was aimed at identifying models of self directed support which could be taken forward across the Council. We have retained an option to be part of the In Control leadership programme which would further enhance our ability to progress this area of work.

3. Main Issues

3.1 The SDS policy provides clarity for all existing self directed support arrangements in West Dunbartonshire and underpins our commitment to supporting personalisation throughout the Authority. It provides a clear framework to support new activity and creates clear guidance for both staff and service users.

3.2 As previously stated the policy is in line with the aims of the national strategy and supports our approach to both personalised services and community living. It recognised the need for flexible services and fulfils our obligations under the Community Care -Direct Payments (Scotland) amendment regulations 2007 and the national policy direction.

3.3 The policy provides clear guidance on the use of personal assistants; how a Direct Payment can be used and the support which service users can expect to receive from officers of West Dunbartonshire Council. It provides support to service users to comply with employment law and best practise.

3.4 Since the introduction of Direct Payments and the ILF the uptake has been relatively slow (particularly in relation to Direct Payments). The following table shows the numbers of service users who have accessed these models of SDS since introduction.

Year	Direct Payments	ILF
2003/04	11	43
2004/05	27	50
2005/06	29	66
2006/07	31	103
2007/08	34	109
2008/09	35	117
2009/10	Current 40	Current 120

- 3.5** It is expected that the uptake of Direct Payments and ILF will grow gradually over the next few years at around 10% per year.

4. Personnel Implications

- 4.1** There are no specific personnel issues in relation to the SDS policy. However, any significant increase in uptake as a result of improved awareness may have an impact on resources and capacity.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** Committee should note that there are unlikely to be any additional resources from the Scottish Government to resource the ongoing development of SDS. The potential for expansion of SDS through increased Direct Payments, Independent Living Fund and Personalisation could result in temporary increases in demand for resources dependant on the type of ongoing demand for SDS. Any release of monies through either Direct Payments or Self Directed Support currently requires to be found from existing budgets. In addition, increased uptake of either Direct Payments or ILF may result in the need to further enhance our existing Self Directed Support team. The department has, to date been able to manage these pressures from within existing resources and it is expected that this is also likely to be the case in future – though the risks of SDS implementation creating financial strains will continue.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** The authority is required to have a Self Directed Support to reflect national policy from the Scottish Government. The recent SWIA inspection identified this as an area for improvement. Failure to adopt such a policy would lead to increased exposure to external scrutiny and have negative consequences for the Council's reputation.

7. Impact Assessment

- 7.1** No significant issues were identified in a screening for potential equality impact of these measures. It is generally expected that this revised policy will have a positive effect on equalities issues in ensuring Self Directed Support is made available to all care groups.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1** The key principles underpinning the national strategy are reflected within the West Dunbartonshire Council's Self Directed Support strategy. The use of Direct Payments and ILF by people living in West Dunbartonshire continues to grow and develop. The use of Self Directed Support means that people have the option to employ people to meet their individual support needs.
- 8.2** In finalising the new SDS policy, the Council is committing to developing policies and approaches in line with national objectives. These policies emphasise service users being in control of their lives and the resources they use.
- 8.3** Committee is asked to approve the new Self Directed Support policy.

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Appendix: Self Directed Support Policy and Procedures

Background Papers: Equalities Impact Assessment
Link to "In Control Scotland" website:
<http://www.incontrol.org.uk/site/INCO/Templates/GeneralChild.aspx?pageid=454&cc=GB>

Wards Affected: All