



# **Liverpool City Council**

## **Response to Liverpool LINK Personalisation Report**

January 2010

## **Executive Summary**

Liverpool City Council (LCC) has been asked to respond to a report produced by the Liverpool LINK Personalisation Task & Finish Group in relation to the Personalisation/Transformation in Liverpool.

This response will address specific issues raised in the report and will answer particular questions where and when appropriate and relevant. This response will address specific point from the original report and for that purpose some of the text from the report is reproduced here.

The report contains a number of recommendations and this document will give a response to each recommendation in terms of what Liverpool is currently doing to address this area or where relevant what action is planned in the future.

It should be noted that LCC welcomes this report from LINK and is happy to engage and work in partnership to achieve the shared objectives and outcomes of personalisation and transformation of adult social care in Liverpool. This report is available on request in alternative formats. Please contact us for further details.

## Direct Payments

### LINK Report:

- *Direct Payments not being well publicised and information not standardised*
- *Users being told by the Council what they should use their money for, taking their independence away*
- *The actual process can drag on for months*
- *People with mental health problems and older service users being “too scared” to apply for them because of the process and the paperwork involved*
- *Not enough training for recipients with the paperwork and the fact that they will become employers*
- *Carers not being given enough support leading to them suffering stress and other illnesses*
- *Since Direct Payments were adopted not much has been improved to aid people to easily apply for them*
- *More training – especially on Employment Law, Health and Safety, Risk Assessments and Manual Handling for both User and Carer*
- *More information – this should be standardised across the board, easy to access and available in any format*
- *It was recognised that what the Authority thought Direct Payments should be used for was different from what the Recipient thought. Also that this changed depending on the Authority concerned.*
- *It was agreed that Careline should be overhauled and that Qualified Assessors should be used as the first point of contact so that the Service Users needs would be recognised and understood straight away. It was felt that some of the Careline Operators were not sympathetic and their manner brusque and that this put Service Users off going any further.*

### LCC Response

The uptake of Direct Payments has steadily risen over recent years as people have been given the opportunity to access this form of support, the assessment process should not be delayed if people opt to access Direct Payments. Once people choose this route, often the process of setting up bank accounts for individuals, recruitment and employing Personal Assistants etc can take some time but the whole process should take no longer than six weeks and in the majority of case is completed within three weeks, clearly each case is very individual and will take a different amount of time depending on the circumstances of that specific case..

Information on how to access Direct Payments has been made widely available via the Liverpool City Council Website along with additional information as follows:

### **Useful contacts**

#### **Contact the Direct Payments by calling Careline on 0151 233 3800.**

Careline - our fully trained customer advisers and social workers offer a confidential service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - call 0151 233 3800, Minicom 0151 225 2500 or email [careline@liverpooldirect.gov.uk](mailto:careline@liverpooldirect.gov.uk)

Age Concern (Liverpool), Sir Thomas House, 5 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool L1 6BW. Telephone 0151 330 5678.  
E mail: [mail@ageconcernliverpool.org.uk](mailto:mail@ageconcernliverpool.org.uk)

Merseyside Coalition of Inclusive Living, c/o Lime Court Centre, Upper Baker Street, Liverpool L6 1AE. Telephone 0151 260 4001. email [info@mcil.org.uk](mailto:info@mcil.org.uk)

Support and Advice on Independent Living in Liverpool (SAILL) can be contacted through Merseyside Coalition of Inclusive Living on 0151 260 4001.

Check out our new website for people over 50 that gives you all the information you need for council services, health services and leisure activities [www.fiftyplus.liverpool.gov.uk](http://www.fiftyplus.liverpool.gov.uk)

Help the Aged Senior Line: Telephone 0808 800 6565

An Easy Guide to Direct Payments is available on the Department of Health web site [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

In addition to the above all assessment documentation used by Social Workers includes a section on Direct Payments and social workers are able to advise people on this option. Furthermore LCC has recently commissioned Merseyside Coalition of Inclusive Living (MCIL) to provide a city wide training programme to inform, advise and educate people who services, their carers and families about Direct Payments this programme was established to cover the following:

***To both support existing direct payments recipients and to encourage and advise future participants of the scheme, MCIL will undertake a programme of training and awareness sessions.***

***The half day sessions on the issues around employment law will comprise of the following modules:***

- ***Unfair dismissal***
- ***Discrimination***
- ***General Issues***

***In addition SAIL will deliver a half day awareness raising session to promote the understanding of the benefits of direct payments but also inform and educate potential recipients in terms of the process of initial access and ongoing maintenance of the scheme.***

***It is foreseen that these sessions will be delivered across a wide geographical spread around the city and within communities to ensure access and availability to all participants. The programme will initially start with a rolling 12 month programme to be reviewed in March 2010***

***MCIL will:***

- ***Develop and deliver the sessions in partnership with Merseyside Employment Law***
- ***Provide ongoing evaluation and feedback in relation to all sessions***
- ***Provide written and verbal reports to Liverpool City Council in relation to the delivery and outcomes of all sessions***

**(Training proposal drawn up by MCIL: 2009)**

In order to continue to support people wishing to take up Direct Payments and other forms of self directed support LCC is currently producing a Self Directed Support Pack which will assist people when making choices and provide a wide range of advice, support and guidance this pack will be available in a variety of accessible formats.

## Personalisation

### LINK Report:

- *The personalisation of care budgets could be the most dangerous or the best thing to happen to social care*
- *Care service users are becoming employers but not aware of liability – risks!*
- *Fear of abuse of the system – and of individuals*
- *Choice of how to use money to buy services is good but could be controversial – personal services may include sexual services for instance*
- *Concerns re: safeguarding processes – social workers having minimal contact with care users*
- *Care Quality Commission has no remit over services provided to individuals who purchase their own care*
- *How can people find out about available services / brokerage schemes? How can they be sure advice is not biased and can be trusted?*
- *A positive outcome might be that care providers who are employed directly by care users might be more dedicated / responsible*
- *How will care needs assessments be scrutinised? No assessment should take less than 1 hour*
- *What training will be available or expected for carers? (e.g. respect for service users / use of hoists or other equipment / moving and handling)*
- *Concern that the personalisation agenda will be an additional responsibility for women – already the main care givers*
- *Need for consistency / continuity / trust for service users (particularly those with mental health support needs) – concerns that this may be lost*
- *Fears re lack of redress for individuals who employ staff. What complaints system exists?*
- *Community based brokers should help with paper work but where will funding come from?*
- *What impact will personalisation have on voluntary sector services?*
- *Ideally services should be free – things seemed to work well when they were and people started cutting back on the support they received once they had to pay for it. Yes, personalisation offers choice and the ability to tailor services to fit individual need but it may be going from one extreme to the other...*
- *Carers can only provide the services outlined in an agreed care plan – they can't work outside that plan / use their own initiative to deal with circumstances as they arise as they will not be insured to do so*
- *Financial reviews should always take place when assessments are made. Currently money is not backdated – some are receiving services that they are not being paid for and are worried that debt is mounting*
- *Systems vary between local authorities*
- *There is a lack of available carers leading to more unpaid carers doing the work*
- *Hard to get cases reviewed if classed as 'Open but not Active' or 'No Further Action'*
- *Difficult to access Careline*
- *Covering the cost of 24 hour care support whilst on holiday*

- *Consultation has been good but how does it get fed back up to the decision makers?*
- *Targets – 4,000 in receipt of own budgets by 2010? Is it do-able or is the process too target driven?*
- *What happens when things go wrong? If people come off direct payments do they lose their care package? They will need continual support at this point*
- *There is still too much unpaid care happening – more publicity about personalisation is needed and better communication channels*
- *Pensioners who care for other pensioners lose money as soon as they get their own pension – you are not allowed to have 2 payments but you actually need more support in these circumstances (the National Pensioners Convention is working on this issue)*
- *Consultation periods have been too short re: dementia services*
- *Child carers in danger of exploitation and need more support from local authorities*

## **LCC Response**

### **Carers**

**Carers (paid and unpaid) can only provide the services outlined in an agreed care plan – they can't work outside that plan / use their own initiative to deal with circumstances as they arise as they will not be insured to do so.**

The level of support and the types of tasks that an unpaid carer provides for the cared for person should be recognised within the care (support) plan. Whilst by the very nature of the relationship between the carer and cared for person the tasks identified within the care (support) plan can't be exhaustive it is important that the carer is included in order to recognise the carer role as important and as a partner in care.

### **Child carers in danger of exploitation and need more support from local authorities**

It is vitally important to ensure that children and young people are prevented from having to undertake a caring role. It is also important to understand the needs of young carers and their families in the context of personalisation and in Liverpool we

have already started to engage with them to understand their specific needs and requirements. Liverpool is currently embedding 'think family' which will ensure a 'whole family' approach is implemented ensuring vulnerable families are not lost within complex adult and children health and social care systems. An example of this is the young carers' assessment and care planning policy and documentation and the supporting care pathway between adult and children's services which has been in place since 2007.

### **Carers not being given enough support leading to them suffering stress and other illnesses**

It is essential that carers are supported to have a life of their own and to stay mentally and physically well. To this end it is important to understand the needs of carers particularly in the context of personalisation and in Liverpool we have already started to engage with them to understand their specific needs and requirements. What we have learned is that carers continue to need access to support and services for them as carers but also they need support with assisting the cared for person with managing their personal budgets. Carers have a statutory right to have their own needs assessed and this is a vital tool in maintaining carers health and wellbeing by ensuring they have the support and services they want and need to manage their caring role. There is already a wide range of carers support services in place that provide carers with the opportunity to take a break from caring and maintain their own health and wellbeing some of which are outlined below however other include Direct Payments for Carers, the Carer Voucher Scheme designed to provide carers with increased choice and flexibility by enabling them to arrange their own break, Liverpool Carers Centre. There is also a wealth of support available to carers with managing a personal budget (either their own or that of the person they care for) which is delivered through Liverpool City Councils Self Directed Supported Team.

### **What training will be available or expected for carers? (use of hoists or other equipment / moving and handling)**

The training needs of carers should be identified during the carers' assessment process and / or during the support planning process of the cared for person and met in the most appropriate way for the carer. The 'Caring for Carers' training programme (see attached leaflet) is just one way in which a carers' training needs could be met however this is just one of a number of carer specific training programmes available in the city such as Making Space Carer Residential Training Breaks, Supporting the Dementia Journey and Caring With Confidence..

### **Fairer Charging**

- Whilst we understand that "Fairer Charging" may be here to stay a review needs to be carried out as it appears that the poorer and most vulnerable people in our Community may to be being penalised unfairly and that there are anomalies with the charging process and how it's worked out.

The FC guidance was based wherever possible on the Department of Health rules for charging for residential and nursing care (known as CRAG) particularly in relation to savings. In addition anyone whose income was equal to or less than basic income support or guaranteed pension credit plus 25% was excluded from charge and for anyone whose income was above this level, a 30% disregard on their net disposable income is applied. If LINK can provide any specific examples of FC individuals they feel have been penalised we can check their financial assessments.

### **Finance**

- Financial reviews should always take place when assessments are made. Currently money is not backdated – some are receiving services that they are not being paid for and are worried that debt is mounting

We always aim to align the financial assessment and care assessment, however where there is a delay, for residential and nursing care service users are always advised to pay the minimum contribution until the assessment is complete. Charging

for domiciliary care has been in place for a number of years and we have no evidence there is any significant gap between the charge to the service user and the service starting. Charges for day care and community support are being rolled out at the moment so some service users will have already been financially assessed whilst others have not yet been contacted. However the charge will only apply when the service user has been financially assessed and informed of what they will have to pay and from what date. If for some reason a debt does arise, we would always make an arrangement with the service user for them to repay it over a period of time

## **Communication**

We continue to endeavour to ensure ongoing and clear communication with all the citizens of Liverpool. We utilise a number of methods, which include:

- Internet – Making it Personal webpages  
[www.liverpool.gov.uk/makingitpersonal](http://www.liverpool.gov.uk/makingitpersonal)
- Liverpool City Magazine – ongoing updates around transformation & personalisation
- Transform Newsletter – a customer newsletter is in production to keep all stakeholders informed of developments and progress

An outcomes document is in production to summarise the both the strategic and operational direction as shaped by the feedback from people who use services, their carers and families, key stakeholders and citizens. This will be widely disseminated March/April in a wide range of accessible formats.

## **Targets**

The national performance indicator imposed on all local authorities constitutes a fraction of people currently receiving social care support, therefore this is a realistic and manageable requirement, and Liverpool will meet this indicator for the 2009/10 period.

## **Ongoing Support**

The implementation of personalisation will not reduce contact with people but should strengthen and increase support as people's requirements change and evolve and there will also be a need for social care professional input to ensure people are appropriately supported. Whilst it is not possible to comment on individual cases, we aim to address concerns and issues wherever raised and welcome an ongoing two way dialogue with LINk and other groups.

**Liverpool City Council**

**January 2010**