

**SUBJECT: Reorganisation of Direct Payments Team in Social Services**  
**MEETING: DMT/Single Member Report**  
**DATE: 25 October 2017**  
**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

1. **PURPOSE:** To inform senior management about the current position of the Direct Payments Team, and to recommend a reorganisation of the team.
2. **RECOMMENDATIONS:** To change the current Direct Payments Coordinator post from a 0.8 FTE post (30 hrs/wk Grade J), to a 0.57 FTE post (21 hrs/wk Grade J), and to create a 0.51 FTE Business Admin Officer post (19 hrs/wk Grade D).

3. **KEY ISSUES:**

**3.1 Current structure and workload for the DP Team.**

The Direct Payments Team has the following structure:

Direct Payments Coordinator	Grade J	30 hrs/wk (0.8 FTE)
Independent Living Advisor	Grade F	37 hrs/wk (1.0 FTE)
Independent Living Advisor	Grade F	37 hrs/wk (1.0 FTE)
Audit/Reviewing Officer	Grade E	22.5 hrs/wk (0.6 FTE)

Prior to 2017, the DP Team had a stable staffing structure which has seen the number of DP Recipients grow from around 50 to 180. The workload for each of the 2 Independent Living Advisors (ILAs) has grown beyond what was originally envisioned. It was previously predicted that each ILA could deal with a caseload of 65-70 cases. They are now each dealing with over 90 cases, and these cases have increased in complexity.

**3.2 Current pressures on the team.** As well as dealing with more DP Recipients than were originally envisioned, the complexity of most of the DP packages has grown. This is due to a number of factors:

- a) increasing complexity of Employment Law which impacts on the employers of PA staff (the DP recipients or their proxies), and on the PA staff who are directly employed by DP recipients; in some cases this results in employment tribunals;
- b) increasing complexity of procedures such as DBS/safeguarding checks; training/accreditation requirements for PA staff; pension auto-enrolment;
- c) increasing difficulties with the recruitment and retention of PA staff;

- d) complications resulting from the new social services charging policy of the Welsh Government;
- e) reviewing and revision of DP packages under the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

The 2 ILA staff and the Audit Officer report that they have an increasing need to do more admin tasks themselves, such as sending out information to DP Recipients, Personal Assistants, arranging training sessions for PAs, getting invoices paid.

The vacant post of DP Coordinator has been unfilled for 3 months, and the DP team needs to have a manager who can deal with strategic matters, support the team through line management, and provide good communication between the DP team and the other teams in social services.

**3.3 Future pressures for the team.** It is unclear whether the number of DP packages will increase, decrease or stay constant for the foreseeable future. Following discussions within the DP team and with team managers, it seems likely that the current level of DP packages will continue in the short term, and might need to increase over the long term.

### **3.4 Options.**

The DP Team discussed and presented a range of options to the managers in Social Services of teams which use Direct Payments:

- a) Recruit a replacement for the vacant 0.8 FTE DP Coordinator post and leave the team structure unchanged.
- b) Replace the 0.8 FTE DP Coordinator Post with a 0.57 FTE DP Coordinator Post, and use the saving to employ a 0.51 FTE Business Admin Officer.
- c) Do not replace the DP Coordinator post and make the team into a self-managing team of 3 staff.
- c) Other options included increasing the number of Independent Living Advisor posts, but reducing the audit/review function.

### **3.5 Consequences:**

Option a) would mean a new manager for the DP team could be recruited, which would give more leadership support to the team, but would not resolve the issues of increasing complexity of workload, with no business support.

Option b) would provide business support for the DP team, and would provide a reduced level of leadership support to the team. The additional admin support would free up time for the ILAs and the audit/review officer, which will add more capacity to the team to deal with additional uptake of DPs and/or more complexity in DP packages.

Option c) would save the cost of the DP Coordinator post, but would leave the 2 ILAs and the Audit/Reviewing Officer as an isolated team with no management or business admin support. This arrangement would be highly vulnerable to reductions in capacity due to sick absence, and would present a high risk to the ability of MCC to manage its DP operation effectively.

Other options are less clear in terms of consequences. Further work is needed to identify the direction of DP usage in Monmouthshire.

### 3.6 Salary cost comparison

Costs for Present Team (including On costs and assuming tops of scale)

Direct Payments Coordinator	Grade J	30 hrs/wk (0.8 FTE)	42608
Independent Living Advisor	Grade F	37 hrs/wk (1.0 FTE)	33837
Independent Living Advisor	Grade F	37 hrs/wk (1.0 FTE)	33837
Audit/Reviewing Officer	Grade E	22.5 hrs/wk (0.6 FTE)	17486
		Total	127768

## Costs for Proposed Team

Direct Payments Coordinator	Grade J	21 hrs/wk (0.57 FTE)	29507
Independent Living Advisor	Grade F	37 hrs/wk (1.0 FTE)	33837
Independent Living Advisor	Grade F	37 hrs/wk (1.0 FTE)	33837
Audit/Reviewing Officer	Grade E	22.5 hrs/wk (0.6 FTE)	17486
Business Admin Support	Grade D	19 hrs/wk (0.51 FTE)	12823
		Total	127490

### 3.7 Proposal:

DMT approve the restructuring of the DP team according to Option b:

The business admin support role would be advertised as soon as possible on a permanent basis;

The DP Coordinator role would be advertised as a 6 or 12 month secondment basis.

### 4. REASONS:

4.1 This reorganisation provides better use of resources, and will provide more team cohesion than is currently in place. The restructure allows for further development of the team as necessary: If DP use will continue at current levels, then the new team structure will be able to deal with the workload involved.

4.2 If DP useage continues to grow, then more capacity will be needed for the Independent Living Advisor and Audit/Review functions, but the new structure will provide some support for this and the capacity for these functions to expand if resources allow.

4.3 Once this initial restructuring is completed, the DP team will do a resource mapping exercise to see how the team can work more effectively, in line with the recommendations from the independent review of the DP operation completed earlier in 2017.

### 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 Option b is cost neutral.

### 6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

The significant equality impacts identified in the assessment are summarised below for members' consideration:

**This post affects the care package funding arrangements for a small number of people with complex health needs, ensuring that they have the correct funding for their circumstances. The equality impact is considered to be negligible, and could be seen as positive by ensuring that correct procedures are followed.**

The actual impacts from this report's recommendations will be reviewed every year and criteria for monitoring and review will include:

**Regular updates to DMT on DP useage and workload of the DP team.**

**7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

The local authority has a responsibility/duty to ensure that vulnerable adults are safeguarded from abuse. This proposal does not have a significant impact on this role.

**8. CONSULTEES:**

**Senior managers in social services;  
Team managers and service managers;  
DP team staff; Finance manager; HR Dept**

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS: none**

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