

**REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH
COMMITTEE****UPDATE OF POLICY AND STAFF GUIDANCE: REVIEWING PERSONAL
BUDGETS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To summarise key changes within the new staff guidance for reviewing personal budgets and to request approval of amendments to the Policy.

Information and Advice

2. Every local authority has a legal obligation to review all existing community care packages, personal budget arrangements and care home placements. Department of Health (DOH) guidance *advises* such reviews should take place annually. Given the significant range of support provided by Nottinghamshire County Council, from single simple inexpensive care packages to others that are both complex and costly, the Department of Health also advises reviews should be 'proportionate'.
3. Historically, most local authorities have found the task of reviewing all existing care packages very challenging because of the high volume of cases involved. Hitherto Nottinghamshire County Council was able to complete a large number of reviews by issuing a review form for completion by independent care providers. Whilst this was an effective and low cost way of administering reviews, it did not provide a truly 'independent' review of the care provided. Furthermore, Department of Health guidance is clear; reviews should be carried out by staff other than those providing the service. For these reasons, the reviewing policy needed updating. Unfortunately, with more complex assessment processes in place, the challenge of completing all the required scheduled reviews remains, particularly if staffing costs are not to rise significantly.
4. To tackle this challenge, the Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection policy and guidance has been updated to provide a framework whereby the most vulnerable services users can be identified to receive 'face-to-face' reviews, whilst other review 'types' can be used for more simple situations thus ensuring a 'proportionate' approach.
5. Before describing briefly the different review 'types', it is important to note, a service user or relative can ask for a review at *any time*. In addition, the majority

of reviews completed within the department are not annual scheduled reviews but rather unscheduled reviews, whereby a service user requests reassessment because needs have changed.

6. The revised policy and guidance (see Appendix xx) introduces *some* new arrangements whilst consolidating existing practise. Adult Social Care and Health Committee reviewed the document on [date] and resolved to recommend it to Policy Committee for approval.
7. Below is a brief summary of the key changes:
 - Minor amendments can be made more quickly and easily to existing care packages as these no longer require a face-to-face visit. Often changes can be agreed over the telephone, making it easier for staff but more importantly, more convenient for service users and relatives (section 2.1 page 3 of guidance).
 - The guidance clarifies which cases should always have a 'face-to-face' review (section 8.1 page 15), describing key factors of vulnerability i.e. where service users' lacks capacity, where there has been a history of abuse and or the care support arrangements are complex and costly.
 - In other situations, where the service user to be reviewed, has both simple and a single service of support, other approaches are available such as 'telephone reviews' and or review by 'correspondence' (section 8.2 page 16).
 - In residential/nursing care homes, staff are advised to carry out 'surgeries' thereby undertaking a number of reviews of residents within the same care home setting.
 - The guidance also emphasises the importance of reviewing carers' needs (section 3.7 page 8).
 - Whilst different types of reviews are described, if during a 'telephone' review it becomes clear a 'face-to-face' review is needed, then the review types can be immediately changed.
 - The guidance also outlines what is expected of staff when completing a review and an easy checklist has been made available for staff to use as an aide memoire.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Human Resources Implications

9. The Human Resources implications have been considered and it is not thought that there will be any impact on the current staffing establishment.

Financial Implications

10. None anticipated as a result of the introduction of this new policy and guidance.

Equal Opportunities Implications

11. The policy applies to all service user groups.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that:

- 1) That the Reviewing Policy for Personal Budgets and staff guidance attached to the Report be approved.

COUNCILLOR KEVIN ROSTANCE

Chairman Adult Social Care and Health Committee

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Constitutional Comments (SLB 20/02/2013)

12. Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report; it is responsible for policy approval

Financial Comments (CLK 23/01/2013)

13. There are no financial implications in this report.

Background Papers Available for Inspection

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- (a) Reviewing Personal Budgets Policy

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/DMS/Document.ashx>

- (b) Reviewing Personal Budgets Staff Guidance

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/DMS/Document.ashx>

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All