

3rd June 2013**Agenda Item: 8****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR PERSONAL CARE AND
SUPPORT – YOUNGER ADULTS****SHARED LIVES – CARER PAYMENT PROCESS****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for consultation on proposed Shared Lives payment rates and service users' contributions.

Information and Advice**Background**

2. The County Council has operated an Adult Placement Scheme (APS) providing long-term placements and short-term breaks in a carer's home for adults with a learning disability for many years. This model ensures trained and approved carers are able to look after vulnerable people in a household environment, providing an alternative to residential care.
3. In 2011/2012 the department developed a business case to propose that the APS service should be developed into a new service, called Shared Lives. Shared Lives is a service delivered by individuals and families within the community to people in need of support in their day to day lives. This will move away from the idea of just offering an adult fostering arrangement to providing a range of flexible support options that promote independence and community inclusion. The scheme will also be expanded to support more adults with a learning disability, as well as other service area groups including mental health, physical disability and older people. This expanded service will allow Shared Lives carers to provide a range of services including:
 - Short or long-term accommodation and support provided within the carers own home.
 - Rehabilitative or transitional support.
 - Short breaks – a couple of weeks, over night or just for an evening or a day (e.g. if the service user usually lives with their own family or another Shared Lives carer).
 - Day time support.
 - Outreach support where a carer acts as 'extended family' to someone living in their own home.
4. The service is managed by a small team within Nottinghamshire County Council who have the responsibility of recruiting and training carers, taking service user referrals, matching

service users and carers according to the needs of the service user and capacity of the carer. The team will then monitor the placements and offer on-going support to the carers.

5. Individual carers join the Shared Lives scheme which is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The Nottinghamshire County Council team includes the scheme's registered manager and ensures that individual carers meet the CQC standards.

New Payments Rates for Carers

6. As part of the development of the new service we are looking at all existing processes. At a meeting with existing carers in September 2012 the issue of current payments was raised. Carers felt that the payments did not reflect the differing impact of caring (i.e. someone who had a person with low needs was paid as much as a person with very complex needs or someone who went to a day service five days a week). Payments to carers had not increased in the last three years.
7. The current average income for a long term carer per person they support is £356 per week (inclusive of rent paid by housing benefit or the service user). This is to care for an individual with a learning disability with a variety of needs who may or may not be getting other services (e.g. day service). The new payment rates would span £192 to £792 (again inclusive of rent) for service users from all user groups depending on the level of need the service user has and the amount of other service they receive.
8. A new payment process has been created which reflects the levels of need of the individual they are caring for and the amount of additional service that person receives. The rates also reflect national benchmarked rates so are now more in line with other local authority payments and reflect a fairer price. The principles of this process were agreed as part of the Shared Lives in Nottinghamshire Policy which was approved by the Adult Social Care and Health Committee in November 2012 and by Policy Committee in December 2012.
9. The new Shared Lives rates still demonstrate considerable savings against either residential care or supported living and therefore does not impact on the ability of the Shared Lives scheme to achieve savings going forward. It is hoped that the new payment process will also encourage carers to work with people with higher levels of need where the savings potential is greatest.
10. The new process is being used for all arrangements which started after 1st April 2013.

Payment to Existing Carers

11. We have not yet rolled out the new payment rates to existing carer arrangements as this requires a period of consultation.
12. Under the new rates thirteen carers would see an increase in overall payment but for five carers the money paid would be less.
13. It is proposed that we protect the five carers who would lose money under the new payment rates, i.e. keep paying them at their existing rate for as long as the current arrangement exists.

Contribution from Service Users

14. The new payment process also involves a contribution from service users toward their daily living costs. Currently, despite being entitled to full welfare benefits in the same way as anyone living in the community, existing service users in Shared Lives schemes do not pay any contributions towards their food or fuel bills. This is unlike other Shared Lives schemes nationally where contributions range from £35-£78 per week. The rent element is currently paid via Housing Benefit but the board element is currently part of the Council payment. The recent Dilnot report made it very clear that councils should not be expected to pay for an individual's 'hotel costs' and that this should be separated out from the cost of care.
15. In Nottinghamshire we are proposing £56 per week as a standard none means tested contribution. This would reduce the overall payment from Nottinghamshire County Council to carers by £56 per week.
16. For any new arrangements, this contribution will be paid by the service user directly to the carer.
17. We have not yet implemented this contribution with existing service users as it will require a period of consultation with both service users and their carers.

Alternative Options Considered

18. Implementing a lower payment rate, under current national benchmarks would not require an increase to current arrangements. However, this would not provide fair rates going forward and may impact on the future viability of the service if both existing and new carers see the rates as too low.
19. Not implementing the new payment process for existing carers. However, as they have raised the issue of disparity in payments there was a danger of alienating existing carers whom we need to help in the recruitment of new carers (word of mouth is the best advert) if we did not address their concerns.
20. Not protecting payments to existing carers who would lose out under the new payment schedule. It was felt that this would give a message that existing carers are not fully valued and may jeopardise existing arrangements and new arrangements with existing carers. Even at current rates, the payment represents a saving compared to alternative residential or shared lives arrangements.
21. Implementing lower rates for service user daily living expenses. The rates are about average compared to other national schemes and reflect the approximate amount an individual would be spending on food and bills if living in their own accommodation. Therefore this is also helping prepare individuals to move onto more independent living.

Statutory and Policy Implications

22. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, 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.

Financial Implications

23. The impact of the new payments structure for existing carers, including the payment protection for carers who would lose out will be a net cost of £22,000 per annum for as long as the existing arrangements continue. (£67,000 is the net cost of implementing the new payment rates payable to existing carers with an additional £19,000 if we do not reduce payments to those who would lose out, total cost £86,000 per annum. Income from service user contribution for existing service users would be £64,000). This will be funded from the Learning Disability Community Care Budget.
24. The current payment from Nottinghamshire County Council to carers for supporting the existing twenty-two long term service users is £363,000 per annum. In addition to this paid leave for the carers is provided at a further cost to Nottinghamshire County Council of £107,000 (this includes spend in current local authority short breaks units as well as other Shared Lives arrangements and private residential care).
25. Current payments for long term arrangements would therefore increase from £470,000 a year to £537,000. Average increase from £410 per week to £469 a week per service user. This compares with an average weekly cost for a person with a learning disability in residential care of around £1,000.
26. The overall aim of the project is to save £450,000 over a three year period by recruiting new carers and increasing the number of people benefitting from Shared Lives as opposed to an alternative more costly service (e.g. Supported Living or Residential Care).

Equal Opportunities Implications

27. These proposals will provide for a fair price paid to carers which takes into account national benchmarks as well as the amount of care an individual is expected to provide.
28. Service users in other types of service all have to pay for their food and fuel bills. The contribution from service users in Shared Lives will ensure that they are no longer subsidised by the Council when they have benefits and other income to fund this.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that the Adult Social Care and Health Committee:

- 1) Agree to carry out a 3 month consultation period with existing carers regarding the proposed implementation of the new Shared Lives payment scheme.
- 2) Agree to protect existing carers who would otherwise see a decrease in their income.

- 3) Agree to carry out a 3 month consultation period regarding the proposal that service users living in Shared Lives services should make a set contribution towards their food and fuel bills.

JON WILSON

Service Director for Personal Care and Support – Younger Adults

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Cath Cameron-Jones

Tel: 0115 9773135

Email: cath.cameron-jones@nottsccl.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (LM 22/05/13)

29. The Adult Social Care and Health Committee has delegated authority to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (KAS 21/05/2013)

30. The financial implications are contained within paragraphs 23 to 25 of the report.

Background Papers

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. Shared Lives Services in Nottinghamshire (Policy approved 12th December 2012)
- b. Previous Shared Lives report 26th November 2012

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

ASCH124