

Social Care

Personal budget policy



Read more:

Care Act: Sections 26

Guidance: Chapter 11, p187

Introduction

Our principle

We want people to remain in control of their lives, to remain independent and to have the opportunity to make their own choices about their care and support arrangements.

What is a Personal Budget?

An allocation of funding to meet assessed eligible care and support needs. We will always tell you about your personal budget, the amount, how it was worked out and how you can use it to make choices to meet your care and support needs.

How Personal Budgets work

When we talk with you about what you want to achieve and how you plan to achieve them we will first look at your immediate network, for example, family and friends, then at what community resources could help you, for example voluntary groups. After that, if there are still eligible outcomes that cannot be achieved in any other way we may agree to help you pay for them. We initially set a budget that is based on our experience of how much it has cost people with similar needs. This helps us to work with you on your individual care and support plan.

Using this figure, together we will write your detailed care and support plan which will determine more accurately the costs based on your individual circumstances. This may be more or less than the initial amount.

We will also talk with you about your finances to work out what you should contribute towards your budget. The final combined figure is your personal budget.

We do not have a rigid policy as to what the maximum level of funding will be, but we operate a decision making process that considers all requests for a personal budget. This checks that all possible options have been explored to meet a person's eligible needs based on their own facts and that the Council is obtaining best value. It uses the following guidance from the Care Act 2014:

'In determining how to meet needs, the local authority may also take into reasonable consideration its own finances and budgetary position, and must comply with its related public duties. This includes the importance of ensuring that the funding available to the local authority is sufficient to meet the needs of the entire local population. However, the local authority should not set arbitrary upper limits on cost it is willing to pay to meet needs through certain routes.

The authority may take decisions on a case-by-case basis which weigh up the total costs of different potential options for meeting needs, and include the cost as a relevant factor in deciding between alternative options for meeting needs. This does not mean choosing the cheapest option; but the one which delivers the outcomes desired for the best value'.

When your budget has been agreed, you can choose to have this money as a Direct Payment. We will transfer the money into your Direct Payment account so that you can make your own care and support arrangements or nominate someone to do this on your behalf.

Or you can ask us to make your care and support arrangements for you (there will be less choice with this option).

Alternatively you can have a combination of both.