

The Highland Council

Education Children and Adult Services Committee 20 January 2016

Agenda Item	15.
Report No	ECAS 11/16

Self-Directed Support for children and young people

Report by Director of Care and Learning Service

Summary

This report sets out a summary of proposed changes in order to support the implementation of improved choice and access to Self-Directed Support for children and young people with a disability or complex health needs.

1. Background

- 1.1 Previous reports have set out some of the challenges involved in supporting the roll-out of Self-Directed Support (S-DS) options in Highland.
- 1.2 There are four options or choices for self-directed support. A person can choose to have lots of control over their care and support or they can leave most of the decisions and work to the local authority - or they can have a mix.
 - Option 1 – a direct payment
 - Option 2 – the client decides, and the local authority arranges support
 - Option 3 – after talking to the client, the authority decides and arranges support
 - Option 4 – the client uses a mixture of ways to arrange care and support.
- 1.3 Option 1, involving Individual Budgets, puts control of resources into the hands of people with support needs, who have been assessed as eligible.
- 1.4 There has been no additional funding to support implementation, so ways must be found for making the different S-DS options a reality. It is not possible to give more people Individual Budgets, and provide the same level of traditional respite services, as the current budget will not cover the anticipated increase in demand.
- 1.5 The options described in this report aim to support individualised solutions for children and their families with existing resources, by moving money from Council services into more flexible S-DS Individual Budgets in each Area of Highland. To be clear, the proposals are not aimed at identifying budget savings.
- 1.6 Considerable detailed discussion has taken place to develop ideas which can free up resources in order to make Individual Budgets available to a larger group of service users. Whilst the growth in demand has been relatively incremental over the last two years, it is anticipated that this trend will increase. The forecast budget outturn for 2015/16 involves a £300,000 overspend and this would increase if no action is taken to re-shape resources.

2. Consultation exercise

- 2.1 As previously reported, in the consultation with parent carers commissioned from Highland Children's Forum, when we shared with them the dilemmas facing the Council with regard to releasing funding from direct services for Individual Budgets,

some key messages were heard:

- Most of the things that children and young people identified as helping them to have a good life were low cost and local.
- There are fewer services in rural areas, and subsidies to services might lead to inequity.
- If there was support for managing Individual Budgets, more people would choose this option.
- There is a need to protect residential respite for those with the highest level of need, for whom there is no alternative appropriate provision.
- While low-level need can be met through low cost, local solutions, without a small budget families can tip towards crisis.
- Parent carers can't make informed choices about services without an understanding of the real cost of subsidised or in-house services.

2.2 These views were considered when preparing this report, including at two consultation workshops with elected members, and have helped to shape the recommendations.

2.3 Some key principles underpin the proposals. The aim is to:

- Introduce more choice and flexibility in the way that children, young people and parent carers access services by freeing up resources which are currently tied up in Council-provided services.
- Encourage the development of local solutions and/or the growth of alternative services in the third sector.
- Free up parent carers from some of the burden of bureaucracy by offering a brokerage service.
- Make the true costs of services known to all service users, ensuring that they are able to make informed choices about the use of an Individual Budget.
- Protect those families with the highest levels of need.
- Maintain the provision for those with low assessed levels of need, on the basis that early intervention has been proven to be effective.

3. Proposed changes

3.1 There are four main changes proposed as part of an action plan, designed to be introduced incrementally over the next 3 financial years. These are:

1. Brokerage Service
2. Reconfigure use of residential respite
3. Reconfigure the Resource Allocation System
4. Introduce true cost of services when calculating Support Plans

3.2 It should be noted that for some families, more than one change will affect them, depending on the package of support which they are accessing.

3.3 The first proposal is to tender for a Brokerage service for children and families in Highland. This involves helping families to identify and contact appropriate services that can best meet needs.

3.4 This would assist families to manage their budgets and lead to greater flexibility and choice in the market of personal care and support – which is currently very limited for under 16's. Whilst there are some services available currently, there is no Highland-wide coverage.

- 3.5 The funding for the Brokerage service would initially be sourced from released Council funding; but once established, the cost of using the Brokerage service would be recovered from those service users who choose to use it.
- 3.6 The second proposal is to reconfigure provision at Thor House and the Orchard, which offer residential respite care.
- 3.7 Analysis of the pattern of provision has led to the following recommendations to limit access to residential respite provision to those with greatest need:
- At Thor - restrict overnight respite provision to Monday to Thursday plus 8 weekends per annum. Focus on day care provision only from Friday to Sunday.
 - At the Orchard - cease overnight respite one weekend in four in each of the two Respite Units
- 3.8 This approach enables support to those families under the most pressure to be maintained; protecting those with greatest need, and means that the released resource can be spread further for those considered to have less need.
- 3.9 These changes are anticipated to free up £200,000 per annum from the running costs. This may increase in future years. Further work is needed to analyse the pattern of usage of the Staffin Unit, and no change is proposed at this time.
- 3.10 The third proposal is to reconfigure the Resource Allocation System (RAS), adjusting the £s allocated per point in the assessment to determine the total value of the support package.
- 3.11 Different options have been considered for adjusting the 5 levels of the RAS, and it was considered essential to protect the lowest budgets as they enable families to reduce their dependence on services and prevent escalation of needs - promoting early, preventive approaches.
- 3.12 The proposed adjustment maintains the highest levels, but reduces the lower level and middle levels of Individual Budget, and enables new service users to access Individual Budgets. The amount of money this would release depends on the number of cases, but comparing current scoring to the new proposed scoring, the potential release of funding would be:
- For 93 cases - £82,236.
 - For 200 cases - £176,852
 - For 300 cases - £265,277
 - For 400 cases (which might be achieved within 1-2 years) - £353,703
- 3.13 This table gives details of the proposed changes to the RAS scoring.

Current RAS £s per Point	New Scoring System
20	16
25	19
30	24
35	31
40	40

- 3.14 The fourth proposal is to introduce the true cost of Council direct and subsidised services when calculating Support Plans. Information about the true costs of Council services would be made available when calculating Support Plans, including subsidies to external support services providing specialist out of school care which

can lead to an inequity for those who do not have Individual Budgets.

- 3.15 From April 2016, all costs of services used in the RAS calculations will be identified as the true cost so that service users have this information when making future plans, and it is intended these true costs would be phased in over 3 years as follows:
- Year one – Specialist out of school care and child-care (including workers supporting access to mainstream services).
 - Year two – Support work
 - Year three – Residential respite

4. Implications

- 4.1 These measures are necessary to manage and support the continued development of S-DS within budget, and to meet legislative requirements.
- 4.2 There are no new resource, legal, climate change/carbon clever, or Gaelic implications.
- 4.3 All of the services impacted by this report support children and young people affected by disability. The report does not reduce the resources available, but seeks to re-shape provision and make wider choices available.
- 4.4 The recommendations seek to enhance the opportunities for local solutions to be developed, which may impact positively on families in rural areas.

5. Recommendations:

- 5.1 Members are asked to agree that:
1. a tendering exercise will be carried out for a brokerage service
 2. residential respite will be reconfigured
 3. the Resource Allocation System will be reconfigured
 4. the true cost of services will be introduced when calculating Support Plans.
- 5.2 Members are also asked to agree that the timescale for implementation will be three years.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 8 January 2016

Author: Sandra Campbell, Head of Children's Services