



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022/23

**COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

24TH OCTOBER 2022

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR,
COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

AND

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS**

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Agenda Item No. 6

**AUDIT WALES – DIRECT
PAYMENTS FOR ADULT
SOCIAL CARE**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report has been prepared to provide the Community Services Scrutiny Committee with the Council's response to the recommendations raised within the Audit General for Wales' report arising from its national study of Direct Payments for Adult Social Care (dated April 2022).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Scrutiny Committee:

2.1 acknowledges the Council's response to the Auditor General for Wales' report arising from its national study of Direct Payments for Adult Social Care and scrutinises the action plan to address the recommendations made.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To provide the Community Services Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to examine the Council's response to the recommendations raised within the Audit General for Wales' report arising from its national study of Direct Payments for Adult Social Care.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 On 6th April 2022, Audit Wales released their national report looking at how Direct Payments are helping people to live independently. A copy of the report is attached at Appendix A.

- 4.2 The report states that Direct Payments are an alternative to Local Authority arranged care or support and can help meet an individual's or a carer's need. Direct Payments aim to give people more choice, greater flexibility and more control over the support they get.
- 4.3 Audit Wales' report looked at how Direct Payments help sustain people's wellbeing and whether they are improving quality of life. Audit Wales also looked at how Local Authorities manage and encourage take up of Direct Payments and whether these services provide value for money.
- 4.4 The Council's Adult Services Department have considered the findings of the report and produced an Action Plan (attached at Appendix B) outlining the progress to date and the actions to be taken in order to address the recommendations made. These actions will be included in the Adult Services Service Delivery Plan for action.
- 4.5 Over the last year, Adult Services have reviewed its Direct Payment processes and Policy via a service user led approach, and a new updated Policy is currently being prepared for approval. Following approval of the new Policy, Adult Services will invest time and effort in promoting and engagement to further encourage participation and take up of Direct Payments.
- 4.6 The current number of adults in receipt of a Direct Payment has increased to 421 as at 30th September 2022, continuing an upward trend over the past 4 years as shown in the table below.

| Adult Services | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| 2018-19 | 373 |
| 2019-20 | 402 |
| 2020-21 | 400 |
| 2021-22 | 412 |
| 2022/23 | 421 |

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 5.1 There are no equality and diversity or socio-economic implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no Welsh Language implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 7.1 There are no consultation implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and accompanying Part 4 Code of Practice sets out that where an Authority has carried out an assessment which has revealed that the person has needs for care and support then the local authority must decide if those needs meet the eligibility criteria, and if they do, it must meet those needs, which could include the offer and provision of Direct Payments.

10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

10.1 This report supports two of the Council's corporate priorities, namely:

- People - promoting independence and positive lives for everyone.
- Living within our means - where services are delivered efficiently to achieve value for money for the taxpayer.

10.2 The offer and provision of Direct Payments, allows the Council to meet the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. They can meet the needs of the Council's residents, including an ageing population and those with more complex needs, are more sustainable and increases focus on wellbeing and independence, resulting in the wellbeing goals of a Wales of cohesive communities, a healthier Wales and more equal Wales being supported

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 This report provides the Council's response to the recommendations raised within the Audit General for Wales' report arising from its national study of Direct Payments for Adult Social Care (dated April 2022).