



Care management/social work procedures

1. Core Assessments

The needs assessment is conducted by the Family Worker/ Social Worker in the usual way; please refer to the appropriate referral and assessment procedures*.

2. Social Worker / Family Worker to discuss with parent/carer/child, if interested?

During this process the Family Worker/ Social Worker will briefly introduce the idea of direct payments and assess the individual's ability to manage, including the support network available to the individual. It is for the Family Worker/ Social Worker to assess whether the person understands direct payments and how they will manage the payments and any employment responsibility. The direct payments team are available to make suggestions in complex or unusual cases.

At this stage Family Worker/ Social Worker should just briefly introduce the ideas and concept of direct payments. Some points to remember are:

1. Direct payments are a flexible way to manage support needs
2. Direct payments are to be spent the needs agreed with the Family Worker/ Social Worker
3. The council gives the individual money so that they can purchase a service, this does not always mean becoming an employer
4. There is support available to become an employer if the person decides this is how they want to meet their needs
5. Direct payments allow choice and control

BFVA Housework, Support and Laundry Service

For individuals who will be using their direct payment to purchase support with housework, shopping and laundry through BFVA the Family Worker/ Social Worker should explain the scheme fully as the direct payments team will not be involved.

Unlike 'traditional' direct payments this is a much simplified process. Each person will be paid every four weeks. They will be given enough to pay for the hours they are assessed as needing, this can be paid into their own personal bank account. There is no need to open a separate bank account. They then pay their worker in cash and simply file the receipt they are given. Receipts may be requested by the finance department at some point, but otherwise individuals are not required to send them in.

The rules of this scheme are also simple, the money must be spent on the housework, shopping and laundry service agreed, the individual must keep their receipts and the money must be used legally.

All workers who are made available through this scheme are vetted, have insurance and are self employed so individuals will not need to worry about any of the implications of being an employer.

The benefits of having housework through BFVA are that individuals will get to choose and hopefully maintain continuity with their worker. In addition they will be able to negotiate the time they arrive and they can direct them in their home. BFVA are also offering a shopping service which will allow the individual to accompany the worker to the shops if they would like.

3. Confirm Exemption from Charging Policy

Family Worker/ Social Worker to check Charging policy to ensure child is exempt from charges. [See Charging Policy.](#)

4. Referral to direct payments team

The Family Worker/ Social Worker should refer the individual to the direct payments team by either calling or emailing the direct payments team (see contacts information on the right of this page). This is not required for those individuals who will only be receiving direct payments to pay for housework, shopping and laundry through BFVA (see stage 2 for further information). The direct payments team will then make an appointment with the individual usually within 5 days and begin to talk to the individual about direct payments in more detail. Points for discussion:

1. What direct payments are
2. What they can be used for activity, support: agency or employment
3. Payroll, Employers liability insurance
4. What support is available to become an employer

Details of information and support given will be communicated to the Family Worker/ Social Worker by email, these notes should then be recorded in Framework I by the Family Worker/ Social Worker.

5. Confirm in Child/ Young Person Plan

If the individual (Young Person and/or Carer) has decided that direct payments are the best choice for them the plan needs to be written in such a way as describes this, however it does not need to specify every detail. During this process the individual will discuss how they would like to use the any money that may be made available to them. Creative ideas should be welcomed and can be discussed at this point to meet the needs of the child..

It is important that the plan is clear about what the direct payment will be used for. Especially if the direct payment is to be calculated in hours of support

needed. It will be the Family Worker/ Social Worker's responsibility to assess whether the direct payments are being spent appropriately, at every review.

Transition from Children's Services to the Adult teams

Any future involvement of Adult Social Care will be agreed on an individual basis and in accordance with the Transition policy. Transition planning will be arranged in a timely fashion in advance of the young person reaching 18. This will include arrangements to be made where a parent has been in receipt of a direct payment.

In the case of a parent who is receiving direct payments a decision about who will become responsible for the direct payments also needs to be made. The child who is moving to adult services needs will have a standard assessment of needs in line with the Transition policy.

The assessment of the persons' ability to understand and manage direct payments is important to ensure that appropriate support can be arranged to facilitate continuity of their direct payments and their care.

[Further information about Transition](#)

[Further information about consent, support services and the use of a 'trust' can be found through these links.](#)

Safeguarding

People who use direct payments are potentially at a greater risk of abuse and neglect than others who are in touch with social care services. This does not mean direct payments should be avoided as an option for someone trying to gain control and independence it simply means that we need to put different kinds of safeguards in place. The direct payments team will give out a welcome pack which contains advice and information about how to apply safeguards to their own life. In addition people using direct payments will be given clear advice about who to contact if they feel they are at risk.

[All people undertaking direct payments will need to have the relevant checks undertaken.](#)

[Further information about CRB](#)

6. Cost Direct Payment Plan

Developing the plan should have helped the individual decide how they would like to use a direct payment. The Family Worker/ Social Worker and the finance officer will cost up the direct payment using the correct rate, or by exploring the cost of the activity. The rates are available on the direct payments rate form.

Any start up costs or ongoing costs need to be included in the costings.

[Link to the Direct payments rate form](#)

7. Agree funding

Copy of core assessment and plan with costings needs to be provided to the Team Manager for agreement.

8. Complete relevant paperwork

Family Worker/ Social Worker to complete paperwork and send to relevant sections

Relevant Paperwork:

Funding agreement
A costed care plan
The letter of agreement
Details form

This must all be passed to the finance officer so that the payments can be made.

Letter of agreement

Letter of agreement filled in by the Family Worker/ Social Worker with assistance from the direct payments team and signed by the person who will receive the direct payments. A copy is kept by the individual, on the Child's file and one kept on the finance file. The importance of this agreement should be made clear and the person who will receive the direct payment should be made aware of the rules of the scheme by the Family Worker/ Social Worker.

A start date should be agreed in order that finance can process the payments and so that brokerage can give notice to the existing service. This is very important; ideally the start date should be two weeks from the time that all the paperwork is complete and in the office. This will allow the finance team enough time to start the payments.

[Link to letter of agreement](#)

[Link to Details form](#)

9. Direct Payments Team supports individual with implementation

Direct payments team – advice and support

Employ a support worker directly

If the individual decides that they would prefer to employ someone to work with them directly the direct payments team will offer advice about how best to do this. Advice and support will include advertising and recruitment employment advice, payroll, insurance, appropriate uses for the money, and accounting.

Work towards the advert can begin now although this will not be placed until the cost of the package has been agreed. If the individual has somebody in mind for the position, discussions can begin but no formal job offer should be made until approval has been given. The Direct Payments Team can:

Help the individual to place the advert if necessary.

Advise and give information about ACAS.

Help set up payroll where appropriate.

Support can be given during interview process if wanted and appropriate.

Offer advice about taking up references and start dates

Arrange CRB and other relevant checks will be offered and each individual will be given advice about the benefits of taking this up.

Offer advice about job descriptions and contracts of employment.

Provide relevant training opportunities for managing direct payments and for staff employed such as safeguarding children, moving and handling ect. depending on the child's needs.

Agency

If the individual has decided that it would be most appropriate for them to use an agency they should start making enquiries from the list available. Advice will be given by the direct payments team about contracting with an agency, checking bills and directing staff.

The agency rate is an average of agency rates within the Borough. It should be made clear that the individual can choose to have a more expensive agency and have less hours or a cheaper agency and more hours. No one should make any contractual agreement with an agency until the package has been agreed at panel.

[Link to the Agency list](#)

Other activity

Direct payments can be used for other activities such as leisure activities. Investigations into start up and ongoing costs should be made at this point but individuals should not commit themselves until the funding has been agreed

The e+card is a yellow wallet sized plastic card that Bracknell Forest Borough Council has been pioneering its uses in a wide range of applications using its 'smart card' technology. We are developing the e+card across Bracknell Leisure 'Be' Sites, to make it easier, faster and simpler for children with Disabilities to access leisure opportunities.

[Link to E+card further information](#)

10. Payments made

See finance procedures for direct payments

[Link to finance procedures for direct payments](#)

11. Monitor & Review

Review

People who receive direct payments should have their care plan reviewed as part of their children in need or Looked After Children Review at least every 6 months.

Before the review the Family Worker/ Social Worker should check with the finance officer whether the bank statements have been sent in regularly and whether the individual seems to have too little or too much money in their account.

During the review the Family Worker/ Social Worker will discuss how well the individual is coping with the direct payment, whether they need any further support from the direct payments team and how they will be spending their direct payments.

If any areas have been highlighted by the finance officer this should be raised during this review.

If there is going to be a change to the direct payment the Family Worker/ Social Worker will need to cost the care plan, agree with their team Manager and complete the relevant paperwork as previously outlined.

[Link to further information Transition from Children's' to Adults' services](#)

Monitoring

Throughout the year the finance officer will receive quarterly returns from the person receiving the direct payment. They will monitor the amount of money in the account and inform the Family Worker/ Social Worker if:

1. The person does not return their quarterly returns
2. There is too much money in the account (4 weeks extra on top of what they normally receive)
3. There is too little money in the account

If contacted by the finance officer the Family Worker/ Social Worker will follow up as required with the relevant individual.