



Information Governance Team

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11 December 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)
Request ID: FOI668689516**

Thank you for your request for information relating to Council's Management of Direct Payments.

You have requested the following information:

1. Outsourcing of Services

a. Does the council currently outsource the following services?

Direct Payments Support Services (e.g., assisting individuals to manage direct payment funds and ensuring compliance with relevant regulations).

Yes.

Direct Payment Payroll Services (e.g., managing payroll for personal assistants or carers paid through direct payments).

Yes.

b. If outsourced, please provide:

Whether this is via a framework or sole supplier.

A tender was run for this process with multiple Lots and award of contracts.

The name of the provider(s).

Lot 1: Direct Payment and Money Management Services – Awarded to Penderels Trust.

Lot 2: Alternative Direct Payment and Money Management Services - Awarded to Solo Support Services.

The start and end dates of the contract(s).

23 May 2022 until 23 May 2026 after which a contract extension may be considered of which there is one for two years, extending to 23 May 2028.

The annual cost of each contract.

Following careful consideration, the information you requested falls under the exemption(s) in Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which relates to 'information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.'

The exemption applies as the information is published and publicly available to view by accessing the Council website, please use the following link:

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/1362/contracts_register

This exemption is not subject to the public interest test.

2. Functions Offered as Part of the Direct Payments Process

Lot 1 – Direct Payment and Money Management Services:

No	Title	Description
1	Direct Payments	A direct payment is an amount of money paid directly to an individual to arrange and buy their own support instead of having support arranged or delivered by the Council. This service is aimed at supporting people to effectively manage their direct payment through information and advice. This includes support with recruitment of personal assistants, arranging care providers and managing the finances.
2	Managed Accounts	Third party management for people who may need additional support managing their care monies. All the funding from an individual's care package (including any additional top-up they pay) is received by the provider who acts as the 'third party'.

3	Payroll	A payroll administration service for all Adults, Carers or parents who receive a Direct Payment in relation to the payroll function required to be undertaken for each personal assistant. The implementation of an audit function whose focus would be to pick up on anomalies, for example, arising from timesheets, including non-submission of timesheets, unsigned timesheets, overlaps in working time between PA's and discrepancies in signatures. This would enable greater oversight/scrutiny to reduce the occurrence of fraudulent activity and timeframe to detection.
4	PA Register	A register of personal assistants (PAs) who are available for work (acting both for the employment of personal assistants and people who want to work as personal assistants) to link together. The PA will be employed to help someone with their daily support needs through using their personal budget and having a direct payment. A person can employ a personal assistant to provide support such as: cooking; cleaning; help with personal care tasks of washing and toileting; driving or help with getting around; medical tasks; shopping; banking or paying bills.
5	Authorised Person Service	Where required, the provider will offer a service which makes support decisions and manage the direct payment on the person's behalf, acting in their best interests where they have been assessed as lacking capacity or have fluctuating capacity. This relates to cases where the recipient receives support from an agency only.
6	Promoting Financial Independence	Available to all adults within the service, support will be provided to either retain or regain skills in managing their personal money or to develop skills if there is no previous experience in managing their personal money.
7	Training	This relates to where the provider will offer training to the recipients of direct payments and staff arranging or reviewing direct payments jointly with Coventry City Council. This can include, but not exclusively, budget management, completion of paperwork and being a good employer. This will include a range of training methods using a blended face to face and virtual offer including surgeries, induction training, in-depth classroom style, seminars, briefing sessions and refresher training.

8	Peer Support Group	This is a service where the provider will coordinate sessions with direct payment recipients who wish to gain more information, help and support from their peers or from key experts in the field. These sessions will be delivered in a flexible way to meet the needs and availability of the citizens involved. This could include face to face, virtual or out of office hours.
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Lot 2 – Alternative Direct Payment and Money Management Services

No	Title	Description
1	Third Party Management with employment (Authorised Person)	A service offered to employ personal assistants on behalf of direct payment recipients who cannot employ their own personal assistants because of a lack of capacity and/or capability to manage their direct payment (e.g. where service users do not have any family to manage this on their behalf), enabling these people to benefit from the choice, control and flexibility of having a direct payment.
2	Alternative Direct Payment and Money Management Services Only	A service offered to receive and manage direct payments funds on behalf of the direct payment recipient including payroll, payment of wages to personal assistants, payment of invoices to self-employed carers, care providers, HMRC and employment liability insurance providers. This service is the same as elements in Lot 1. The intention is that this service will only be used in exceptional circumstances, and the majority of service users will be referred to the awarded provider for Lot 1.

a. Does the council offer the following functions as part of its Direct Payments process?

Pre-paid card function for managing direct payment funds.

Yes.

Independent Service Fund (ISF) option for managing direct payment funds.

Yes.

Appointeeship scheme.

Yes.

b. If yes, please specify:

Whether these functions are managed in-house or outsourced.

Outsourced.

The name of the provider (if outsourced).

Age UK

3. Service Delivery Details

If the above services or functions are delivered in-house, please provide:

a. The internal team or department responsible for delivering:

Direct Payments Support Services.

Direct Payment Payroll Services.

Pre-paid card functions (if applicable).

Independent Service Fund management (if applicable)

For Question 3a, this is not applicable.

b. The annual budget allocated for these services and functions.

Direct Payments Support Services.

Direct Payment Payroll Services

Estimated annual contract value 250k.

Pre-paid card functions (if applicable).

Annual cost for 2023/24 £17,067.62

4. Procurement and Contracting

a. How does the council procure these services and functions?

If procured through a framework agreement, please provide:

The portal or website where the opportunities are advertised.

Whether the council has any plans to re-tender these services.

If procured through a direct tender process, please provide:

The date of the most recent tender issued for these services.

Any plans or timelines for future tender opportunities.

A competitive tender process was run via the Council's e-tendering system - www.csw-jets.co.uk.

The last tender process commenced in November 2021 in order for the contract to commence May 2022.

Any further tender process will be in line with the client area's requirements and linked to current contractual arrangements and timescales, as noted above, including consideration of contract extensions if implemented.

5. Contact Information

Could you provide the name, job title, and contact details of the person(s) responsible for:

a. Commissioning Direct Payments Support Services.

Paul McConnell, Joint Commissioning Manager.

Email: paul.mcconnell@coventry.gov.uk

b. Commissioning Direct Payment Payroll Services.

Please refer to Question 5a.

c. Commissioning pre-paid card or ISF functions (if applicable).

Andrew Errington, Head of Safeguarding Practice Development & Adults Principal Social Worker.

Email: andrew.errington@coventry.gov.uk

d. Procurement or contract management of these services and functions.

Procurement Services.

Email: procurement.services@coventry.gov.uk

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For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email icocasework@ico.org.uk.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

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