**Support Services for Personal Budgets – Draft for Consultation**

Direct Payment support service is currently being provided by The Rowan Organisation (employment related support). Compass Disability Service provide payroll support for customers who are employers and third party managed account support for those direct payment customers who require help with managing the money .

The Council’s internal Independent Living Team (ILT) lead the development of the direct payment scheme on behalf of Warwickshire County Council. This includes developing tools to provide information and advice regarding direct payments such as information factsheets, assistance to broker other ways of managing direct payments, assistance with setting up bank accounts, facilitating training and workshops and facilitating peer support. .

**The Rowan Organisation – employment related support**

Rowan are contracted to provide employment related support, including assistance with employing staff (e.g. personal assistants), ongoing employment related support (sickness, maternity etc.) and keeping a Personal Assistant Register of those looking for work as a personal assistant (PA). This also includes advertising job vacancies on behalf of the direct payment customers

In summary, the service specification outlines that the provider should:

* Provide an introduction to new customers regarding “becoming an employer” and ensure their familiarity/understanding of the responsibilities this entails (in line with any relevant legislation) – this should be in the form of an “Employer’s toolkit” and (as a minimum) include information on their obligations with regards to employment.
* Assist the customer to draft job specifications/advertisements.
* Discuss contingency arrangements to cover PA absence
* Provide support in identifying suitable PAs, including help recruiting and managing their employment, including an electronic PA register.
* Engage in safeguarding activity, including:
  + Support to obtain and advice regarding references.
  + Providing advice on obtaining DBS checks.
* Provide a recruitment line to answer queries and support with advertising vacancies.
* Support with shortlisting/interview/appointing PA activities.
* Signpost to the contracted payroll service provider.
* Work in partnership with the Council’s Independent Living Team to promote the wider take up of direct payments.
* Provide assistance to customers to arrange the necessary insurance policies.
* Support customers to access any training they require either for themselves or their PA(s).
* Keep customer records to hold information on the customers they support.

Currently the Rowan Organisation supports 790 adults and 106 SEND (children).

The contract with Rowan began on 1st December 2012 for three years, and is therefore due to expire in December 2015. There is the option to extend this contract for a further two years, and it is expected that the contact will be extended beyond its current expiry date.

**Compass Disability Services – payroll support**

Compass are contracted to provide payroll support, including the production of payslips and provision of a third party managed accounts service.

In summary, the service specification outlines that the provider should:

* Provide payroll support.
* Signpost customers to resolve any gaps in their knowledge or development as an employer.
* Provide written and electronic information in a range of formats, including access to a website (to allow easy resolution of queries out of hours).
* Provide a managed accounts service to hold and administer the financial side of direct payments on behalf of a customer (as a purely administrative function), including making and receiving payments on behalf of the customer (under their instruction) and keeping an up-to-date record of income and expenditure.

Compass currently supports 508 customers (adults and SEND) with payroll and there are 154 customers who have managed accounts.

The contract with Compass began on 1st October 2012 for three years; it is therefore due to expire in October 2015. There is an option to extend this contract for a further two years, however it is expected that the contract will **not** be extended beyond its current expiry date.

**Warwickshire County Council Independent Living Team (ILT)**

The ILT at Warwickshire County Council provide information and advice on Direct Payments and assistance to customers looking to spend their personal budgets in ways other than employment (e.g. use of providers).

The Independent Living Team (ILT):

* Develop the scheme on behalf of Warwickshire County Council
* Research and interpret legislation into local policy, guidance and procedures
* Set up and process direct payment on behalf of Social Care and Support.
* Provide customers with specialised information and guidance about Direct Payments and legislation and support customers to attain the skills to manage their Direct Payment independently and safely.
* Undertake visits where specialised support is required.
* Explain to customers what happens when circumstances change – e.g. going into hospital, being eligible for a period of Reablement.
* Support customers to get back on track when things happen.
* Support and guidance on how to appoint a Suitable Person for people who lack capacity.
* Support customers to increase confidence and sense of control with their Direct Payment.
* Providing information and guidance on self-employed personal assistants.
* Supporting customers with pooling direct payments and facilitating peer networks.
* Signposting and support customers to broker where they can locate/purchase support independently e.g. Warwickshire County Council Resource Directory/PA registers (including how to make arrangements with social care agencies).
* Support Direct Payment customers with the Direct Payment agreement/managed account agreements.
* Support customers with setting up a banks account (and other money management options).
* Advise customers on keeping records for monitoring purposes and what monitoring is.
* Advise customers on what Direct Payments can and can’t be used for and who can support them to maintain and manage their Direct Payment (e.g. family member/friend/user led organisation/Peer Support Group/managed account etc.).
* Support with contingency planning (not providing or making arrangements for this support).
* Support with safeguarding arrangements, including the completion of the ‘Keeping Safe Plan’ if appropriate.
* Refer customers to contracted providers (The Rowan Organisation and Compass Disability Services) where appropriate.
* Signpost customers to where they can obtain the relevant advice and information if they decline support from the council’s contracted services.
* Facilitate Warwickshire County Council staff Direct Payment workshops and provide workforce development Direct Payment training And develop e- learning programme