



---

**REPORT TO: MORAY INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD ON 29 JUNE 2023**

**SUBJECT: CHILDRENS SERVICES SOCIAL WORK, SELF DIRECTED SUPPORT BUDGET OVERSPEND**

**BY: HEAD OF SERVICE AND CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1. The report is to inform the Board of the overspend to the Children's Services Self Directed Support budget in 2022/23.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) consider and note the explanation for the overspend in the Children's Services Self Directed Support budget**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. Self Directed Support was introduced to Children's Services in 2013/14.
- 3.2. The legislative framework for Self Directed Support is the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013. It is also supported by the Self-directed Support Framework of Standards introduced in March 2021. The statutory guidance was updated in October 2022 to encompass the Framework of Standards. Other legislation includes the Self-directed Support (Direct Payments) (Scotland) Regulations 2014 and Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.
- 3.3. Since 2014 the Self Directed Support budget in Children's Services has been steadily increasing. In 2022/23 the budget was overspent by £106,020.20 on a budget of £208,233 with an increase in packages from 165 in 2021/22 to 310 in 2022/23.
- 3.4. The assessment process for Self Directed Support is clear and follows the local authority's duty to assess under section 23 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. That is, for those where there is a disability or additional support need and where assessments are designed to identify unmet need and outcomes for children, young people with a disability and their families where there are young carers or parent carers.

#### **4. KEY MATTERS RELEVANT TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1. The tool supporting the appropriate level of Self Directed Support is the Resource Allocation System. The price point has recently been marginally reduced as a response to the overspend. A price point review is due which will require Accountancy support.
- 4.2. The nature of the Self Directed Support budget in Children's Services makes accurate projecting and forecasting a challenging task. This is as a result of the changing needs of individuals and variable provision of services (including targeted services) to meet these assessed needs.
- 4.3. There are a number of stable packages which can be reasonably predicted with an associated financial projection. However, there are a number where assessed need can change significantly which could then have an impact on the care package and the Self Directed Support budget. We commit to offering the flexibility that families need.
- 4.4. Through the course of 2022/23 there have been a number of factors which are considered to have contributed to the recent increase in the Self Directed Support spend.
- 4.5. The Social Work Management Team is working with Accountancy to ensure that there is clear line between Self Directed Support and other spend which is additional resource to commissioned services. As part of this, there are processes in place to highlight any escalating spend at an early stage.
- 4.6. There is a limit to the range of targeted services available in Moray for our neurodivergent children and young people. As such, the use of the Self Directed Support budget has been a route to meet these assessed needs.
- 4.7. There was an increase of 206% in 2022/23 for neurodivergent children and young people accessing services to ensure positive outcomes. Linked to this, there was an increase in Self Directed Support payments.
- 4.8. The Scottish Government summer funding in 2021 distorted the use of some services as funding was provided to support children and young people to access play schemes and 1:1 support over the summer of 2021 through this fund. As such, further support has been requested by some from some of these families via the Self Directed Support budget.
- 4.9. For the reasons identified previously, there was an overspend in 2022/23 to the Self Directed Support budget. This increase was linked to an increase in assessed need and the limits to the range of support provided by targeted services. The Social Work Management Team is exploring opportunities to provide commissioned services to meet the needs of neurodivergent young people.
- 4.10. The Social Work Management has identified the following mitigations:
  - Close working relationship between the Social Work Management Team and Accountancy; including oversight and escalation processes

- Increased monitoring and support in response to the establishment of the Disability Pod
- Review of policies and procedures alongside the Policy and Procedure Team
- Ongoing review of price points and eligibility criteria for Self Directed Support
- Ongoing work to explore the development of commissioned and cost effective services in Moray

4.11. The Children Services Plan 2023-26 has a priority of supporting children and families who experience challenges due to disability and neurodiversity. This supports the planning in relation to the Self Directed Support budget.

## **5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

### **(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)) and Moray Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan “Partners in Care 2022 – 2032”**

The Corporate Plan 2024 makes a commitment to improving outcomes for Moray’s most vulnerable young people and families and that more children will live with their families, being cared for in strong safe, communities across Moray.

### **(b) Policy and Legal**

The legislative framework for Self Directed Support is the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013. It is also supported by the Self-directed Support Framework of Standards introduced in March 2021. The statutory guidance was updated in October 2022 to encompass the Framework of Standards. Other legislation includes the Self-directed Support (Direct Payments) (Scotland) Regulations 2014 and Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

### **(c) Financial implications**

The Self Directed Support budget in 2022/23 was overspent by £106,020.20.

### **(d) Risk Implications and Mitigation**

There is a risk that given the increase in needs the budget continues to increase year on year with no allowance for this.

The identified mitigations are outlined in 4.10.

### **(e) Staffing Implications**

There are no staffing implications.

### **(f) Property**

There are no property implications.

### **(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

A Child Right Impact Assessment will be completed as part of a review of the price point.

### **(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

There are no climate change or biodiversity impacts.

**(i) Directions**

None.

**(j) Consultations**

Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray, Chief Social Work Officer and Head of Service, Social Work; Democratic Services Manager, the Equal Opportunities Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with the content relating to their areas of responsibility.

**6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Moray Integration Joint Board consider and note the explanation for the overspend in the Children's Services Self Directed Support budget.**

Author of Report: Carl Campbell, Service Manager  
Background Papers:  
Ref: