

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**ADULT SERVICES
CABINET MEMBER**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PAYMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT
POLICY FOR SERVICE USERS AND CARERS**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The Cabinet Member is asked to approve the proposal for the implementation of the Payment and Reimbursement Policy for Service Users and Carers.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Government policy actively encourages the involvement of citizens in the development and delivery of local services.
- 2.2 In order to recognise the expertise and experience of citizens who can make a valuable contribution to the development and delivery of local services it is sometimes appropriate to pay people. However, the benefits system is very complex and getting involved in the work of statutory agencies can sometimes disadvantage people.
- 2.3 In recent years, government guidance has been produced around payment and reimbursement of service users and carers. *Reward and Recognition: The principles and practice of service user payment and reimbursement in health and social care; a guide for service providers, service users and carers*, Department of Health, August 2006 *Benefit Barriers to Involvement; Finding Solutions*, Commission for Social Care Inspection, October 2007.
- 2.4 This policy will help us to meet the statutory requirements to involve citizens in the work of the council. It will help recognise the expertise and experience of citizens who can make a valuable contribution to the development and delivery of local services. Payment demonstrates a desire for a more level playing field between those who commission, provide or monitor services and those people who use services. The policy provides a fair and equitable approach that is consistent across the different areas of involvement and has identified procedures, payment arrangements and resources to support it. People who get

involved in the work of Adult Social Services will not be financially disadvantaged as a result of their involvement. By removing as far as possible any external constraints that might prevent participation, we will demonstrate our commitment to equal citizenship and diversity.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Option 1 (the preferred option)

To approve the implementation of a Payment and Reimbursement Policy for Service Users and Carers.

3.2 Option 2

To adopt a policy of no reimbursement.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Option 1

Payment for time will be made when people are asked to get involved for their specific skills, expertise and time on a particular piece of work, for example acting as a co-facilitator or participating as a key presenter at a workshop or training programme. In addition, payment will be applied if a service user/carer has been asked to join a particular panel, e.g. recruitment interview panel.

4.1.2 'One-off gift payments' in the form of cash or a voucher will be made to people in appreciation of their involvement. These payments can be made where they are taking part in Adult Social Services work for the first time in this financial year, and are not intending to do so again for at least a year.

4.1.3 The policy will only apply to those individuals who have been invited to be involved or to attend events arranged by Adult Social Services.

4.1.4 Expenses will not be reimbursed where a service user or carer takes part in a large research survey or consultation. Expenses will not be reimbursed where a service user/carer chooses to attend an open meeting where they are there as an individual in their own right, not as a user representative of Adult Social Services.

4.2 Option 2

The service currently tries to involve people in developing and improving services but, due to no reimbursement policy being in place, the approach to supporting people with payment or expenses is inconsistent across the service. The service can be challenged due to lack of transparency and equity.

5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

5.1 Financial implications – It is envisaged that the uptake will initially be low but it is likely to grow over time. Costs will be accommodated within existing resources by redesigning how we do things and the demand will be monitored.

5.1.1 Expenses will be reimbursed for the following:

- Travel costs
- Parking costs
- Subsistence
- Individual support needs
- Administrative costs
- Accommodation expenses

5.2 Staffing implications – The staff within Income Advice and Collection Service will be asked to offer benefit advice to people wishing to get involved on an individual basis. In the longer term it is expected this advice will be provided by a User-Led Organisation

5.3 Property implications – N/A

5.4 IT implications – N/A

6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

6.1 Statutory implications - This policy takes into account good practice guidance published by the Department of Health, which recommends that systems are put in place to protect the income of people who get involved in the work of health and social service agencies and to ensure that service providers are meeting their duty of care.

6.2 Environmental implications – None

- 6.3 Diversity implications - A Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed. Consultation will take place as part of the ongoing process.
- 6.4 Section 17 – Crime and Disorder implications –N/A
- 6.5 Risk and other implications – None at this time

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation has taken place with Service Managers and Senior Management Team. As a result of this some amendments have been made to the original policy.
- 7.2 Recently groups of service users and carers have been involved in commissioning work and other project work. Experience to date has shown that people are happy to just be paid expenses and a number of people choose not to claim these expenses when given the opportunity.
- 7.3 Guidance has been followed which is based on national consultation with citizens. Consultation will continue to be ongoing.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Cabinet Member is asked to approve the proposal for the implementation of the Payment and Reimbursement Policy for Service Users and Carers.

SERVICE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Reward and Recognition: The principles and practice of service user payment and reimbursement in health and social care; a guide for service providers, service users and carers, Department of Health, August 2006

Benefit Barriers to Involvement; Finding Solutions, Commission for Social Care Inspection, October 2007

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