

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr McGarry

9 December 2016

Councillor Susan Elsmore  
Cabinet Member  
c/o Room 520  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW



Dear Susan

### **Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee – 7 December 2016**

On behalf of the Members of the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you and officers for attending for Agenda Item 4, Direct Payments.

Members were interested to learn more about the work to review arrangements and develop options for the future. Members note the objectives of improving arrangements for those using Direct Payments by simplifying the referral pathway and increasing choices. Members also note the aim of achieving value for money for the Council whilst ensuring quality of provision. Underpinning these is the need to increase the numbers of personal assistants available to provide care and support. Members support these goals, which will help us to meet our legal duties.

Members have re-arranged our work programme to accommodate pre-decision scrutiny of the Cabinet report on Direct Payments. The 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017 committee meeting will include this and an item on Adult Safeguarding. Our 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 committee meeting will include scrutiny of the draft Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Regional Partnership Board.

As part of our pre-decision scrutiny of Direct Payments, Members would like to receive more information about what the arrangements will look like in practice. In particular, Members would like more information on:

- The respective roles of Social Services and Preventative Services in the new pathway;
- The monitoring requirements built into the specification;
- The evaluation criteria and weighting;
- The transition arrangements, to ensure continuity and no detriment to service users.

Members accept the offer to receive comparator information on Direct Payments rates. Please send this to Scrutiny Services for inclusion in our committee papers in January 2017.

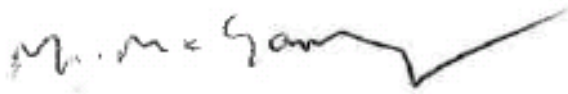
Members recognise that there is a real opportunity to make a difference for service users and carers by ensuring the direct payment system works for them. Members also

recognise the need to ensure value for money for the Council. However, Members are concerned about the tight timescales outlined at the meeting. Members recognise that officers are working hard to deliver to these timescales. However, Members would like assurance that more time will be taken if it is needed to ensure that the best possible scheme is developed.

Finally, Members noted the consultation finding that *'93% of respondents felt that their social worker was helpful during the process.'* Members ask that you pass on our commendations and thanks to social workers for their hard work assisting clients positively. Their efforts are recognised and appreciated.

Once again, thank you for bringing progress in this area to our attention. This letter has requested information be supplied in time to go out with our committee papers for 18 January 2017 meeting. However, other than that information, it does not require a response.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARY M<sup>c</sup>GARRY**

**Chairperson - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

Cc:	Sarah McGill	Director of Communities, Housing and Customer Services		
	Tony Young	Director of Social Services		
	Amanda Phillips	Assistant Director of Social Services - Adults		
	Denise Moriarty	Strategic Lead Planning Officer – Learning Disabilities		
	Liz Patterson	Personal Assistant	Matt Swindell	Cabinet Office