

By email

**Please
ask for:**

Clare Malster

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

E-Mail: communityengagement@scotborders.gov.uk

3rd September 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Please accept my apologies for the late arrival of the letter agreeing the SDS Forum's participation request and outlining the outcome improvement process. I am pleased that two representatives of the SDS Forum were able to attend the options appraisal meeting but accept that you did not have the formally agreed time to consider your response to the outcome improvement process, and I would like to ensure that you have that this time.

In response to the points raised in your letter:

I would like to emphasise that the Council has not made a decision on the use of the card for people using a direct payment. This will follow the outcome improvement process.

The early thinking about introducing the cards with a small group of people has not taken place as the decision has not been made either to implement prepaid cards nor, if implemented, how to roll this out.

The options appraisal meeting focussed on the impact of different ways of rolling out the card as the implications of these different approaches are significant for direct payment users and the Council/ Health and Social Care Partnership, and will help determine whether prepaid cards should be introduced or not. These options are:

Option 1: All new users paid by card from "go live" date (with limited/no exceptions); All existing users migrated to cards within 12 months (with limited/no exceptions)

Option 2: All new users paid by card from "go live" date (limited/more exceptions); All existing users migrated over 2 - 3 years (more exceptions)

Option 3: All new users paid by card from "go live" date (even more exceptions); No compulsory change for existing users – it's their choice

The SDS Forum has requested that the outcome improvement process includes the following points:



- The ability of people to exercise their choice, control and flexibility regarding how they receive and make use of their SDS budget under Option1; the needs and wishes of local people using services and their carers; the application of the underlying statutory values and principles of SDS.

The Council and Health and Care Partnership want a full options appraisal to provide the information necessary to make a decision on whether prepaid cards should be introduced and I would welcome the continued participation of the SDS Forum in this work. I therefore propose that the following is added to the outcome improvement process.

a) A follow up workshop to evaluate the impact of 2 additional options as follows:

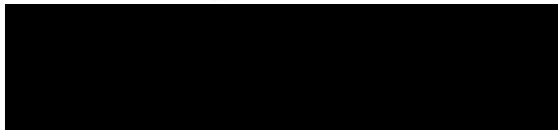
1. The system remains the same i.e. direct payment users continue to be paid by BACS to a bank account opened specifically for direct payments.
2. People using a direct payment- new and current DP users- have a choice between being paid by BACS to a bank account opened specifically for direct payments or being paid by payments being made to a prepaid card.

b) Participation in the drafting of the equality impact assessment

The options appraisal group will be expected to produce a report on these options, including an equality impact assessment, for the Partnership and the Council.

Please let me know whether the SDS Forum accepts the additions to the outcome improvement process.

Yours sincerely

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Michael Murphy

Interim Chief Officer Adult Service Health and Social Care Partnership