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Planning

Direct Payments Support Services

Cardiff Council

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-084151

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05f88f

Published 18 December 2025, 9:36am

Scope

Description

Direct Payments are a way for a service user with an assessed care and support need, both Adults and Children, to arrange their own care and support, rather than receiving care and support from the Council's commissioned care providers.

Direct Payments can be used to purchase care and support services to meet the care and support needs of the person or their carer. Typically (other uses are permitted), Direct Payments are used for:

- Personal Assistants (PA)
- Care and support from a care agency or Micro Enterprise

The use of a PA, however, does involve additional complexity and responsibility for the service user. The service user must become the employer of the PA with all the responsibilities that entails such as identifying and interviewing the PA, issuing payslips, ensuring tax and national insurance is paid, providing a pension, ensuring appropriate insurance is in place and providing annual leave.

The Direct Payment Support Service for individuals who wish to take up direct payments

is provided on behalf of the Council by a contracted service provider. The Direct Payments support service model consists of :

- Core Support

The Core Support function is offered to all Clients that are registered with the provider, regardless of which additional service packages have been selected. The provider will offer advice and assistance to Clients on all aspects of choosing and making independent care arrangements. This advice will be given whether those arrangements are made through the employment of Personal Assistant(s) or through the use of third parties such as care agencies, or through the use of residential or respite provision.

- Payroll

The Council provides Clients with the choice of accessing payroll services from the Direct Payments Service Support provider, from an alternative payroll provider or to support them to run their own payroll if chosen. When the Direct Payments Service Provider is chosen, they must offer a comprehensive Payroll Service to Clients.

- Managed Accounts

By way of background, the Council may make a Direct Payment (i) directly to the Direct Payment Client who pays his/her appointed Personal Assistant or agency, or (ii) to a third party nominated by the Direct Payment Client, (such a third party may be the Council's appointed Provider is nominated by the individual Client), and the third party pays the Client's appointed Personal Assistant or agency on behalf of the Client. The Council recognises that some Clients may require some support and assistance with regard to the managing the financial aspect of their Direct Payment arrangements. Hence, as part of the Services, the Provider will be required to provide financial support where the individual Client has requested such support and has elected to receive such support from the Provider.

Where the Client has chosen for the provider to supply a Managed Accounts service, the Provider must set up a dedicated managed account for each Client, including access to the account by the provider and the appropriate oversight from finance officers in the Council.

- Employer Setup

Where the Direct Payment Client has chosen to seek support to employ one or more of their own Personal Assistants, the provider will deliver support, advice and practical assistance to enable the Client to set up the necessary processes in line with UK legislation. This will include advising Clients on contracts of employment and on being a good employer to include supervision, training, health and safety, risk assessments to

include manual handling, employer and public liability insurance, contingency planning to cover disruption of normal arrangements and all the responsibilities of being an employer.

- Recruitment

When a Client has chosen to employ a personal assistant or multiple personal assistants, an initial recruitment round will have been agreed with the Case Manager to cover the Client's care and support needs, this will be valid for up to 3 personal assistants. After successful completion of the first recruitment round, any subsequent additions to the package will need to be agreed and charged individually per personal assistant.

The provider delivers a core support service for each Direct Payment client and additional support tailored to each service users' needs, which can include help with employing a PA, payroll services and managed banking support.

The purpose of the support service is to ensure that adequate advice, information and assistance is available to all clients, carers and their families, as well as to potential clients and to enable the client to effectively use their Direct Payment to enhance their quality of life.

Micro Enterprises have proven to be a valuable addition to the choice and flexibility service users can access to meet their care and support needs. The Direct Payments Support Service provider will work with the Council to develop and grow the micro enterprise provision in Cardiff.

The Council is seeking to understand the potential marketplace of organisations that are currently, or have experience of delivering, a Direct Payments Support Service. Specifically we are looking for interest from those organisations that are currently of have experience of, providing the model of service and all its elements as outlined above.

Total value (estimated)

- £3,599,998 excluding VAT
- £3,600,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 26 January 2026 to 6 April 2026
- 2 months, 12 days

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 85000000 - Health and social work services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

19 January 2026

Engagement process description

The Council is seeking to understand the potential marketplace of organisations that are currently, or have experience of delivering, a Direct Payments Support Service. Specifically we are looking for interest from those organisations that are currently of have experience of, providing the model of service and all its elements as outlined above.

Please provide a brief outline (no more than 2 sides of A4) of your experience of

delivering services that include the essential elements in the description above.

Please note: This will not form part of any formal tender process.

This information request is purely for the Council to understand the market position and we welcome expressions of interest by 12-noon Monday 19/01/2026 .

To register your interest in this opportunity and to provide us with the information requested above, please visit the Sell2Wales Web Site at <https://www.sell2wales.gov.wales/>

Participation

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
- Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

19 January 2026

Procedure

Special regime

Light touch

Contracting authority

Cardiff Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PVHP-5769-YHRQ

County Hall

Cardiff

CF10 4UW

United Kingdom

Contact name: Samantha Harry

Email: Sharry@cardiff.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.cardiff.gov.uk>

Region: UKL22 - Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Wales