

---

**MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL  
REPORT FOR RESOLUTION**

**REPORT TO:** Health and Well-being Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
**DATE:** 8 January 2009  
**SUBJECT:** Safeguarding Adults - Advocacy for Social Care Service Users  
**REPORT OF:** Caroline Marsh, Director of Adult Social Care

---

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

- To update the Committee on current work on mitigating the impact of Safeguarding on Individual Budgets
- To update the Committee on plans to develop services to support social care customers using individual budgets

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Committee is asked to:

- Note the report and the progress made to date.
- Consider and comment on the developments planned

**FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS**

There are no financial consequences arising out of this report.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

Deborah Russell, Head of Safeguarding (Interim), Adult Social Care

Email: [deborah.russell@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:deborah.russell@manchester.gov.uk)

Tel: 0161 234 1327

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

H&WB Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report 21 Jul 08 (Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Annual Report)

**WARDS AFFECTED**

All

**IMPLICATIONS FOR:**

<b>ANTI POVERTY</b>	<b>EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES</b>
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

## **1 Introduction**

Individual Budgets (IBs) are central to the personalisation of social care which gives customers greater choice and control; they are the mechanism which enables customers to use their budget in a way that best suits their own particular needs and meet these much more creatively through the support planning process.

Since 30 June 08, new customers and existing customers on their next annual assessment are being given an Individual Budget. The amount they receive depends on their overall level of needs, but for the first time customers are informed of the amount of money they have to spend on their needs and they can make their choice as to how best this should be spent. Customers can either take a Cash Individual Budget and arrange for their own care, or they can ask the Council to arrange services for them (Virtual), or a mix of the two to suit their preference. Our initial experience is that just over a quarter opt for the cash option, and nearly three quarters of people prefer the Council to arrange their services. A small but increasing proportion choose a mix of the two types to maximise the support they receive.

As noted in the Safeguarding Adults Annual Report, this presents challenges for ASC to minimise the risks for customers using Individual Budgets. The report details the progress made to mitigate the risks.

## **2 Key Progress**

At the end of November there were 2386 Adult Social Care customers in receipt of individual budgets, and this number is increasing by approximately 50 per week. Analysis of Individual Budgets and Support Plans indicates an increase in the take up of cash individual budgets and an increased use of personal assistants as expected. Although many people continue to use a virtual budget and to use services arranged by the council on their behalf, many older people are choosing a mixed budget to maximise the support they receive.

A number of initiatives have been introduced to support the personalisation agenda and to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place for service users.

### **2.1 Assessment and Monitoring Processes**

- Our new IT system (MiCare) went live on October 20th and built into the system are regular review timetables. Reviews are carried out with the customer by a care manager at the following intervals:
  1. Minimum 6 weeks after a new IB is put in place
  2. 13 weeks to ensure all is going well
  3. 12 months statutory annual review.
- Additional payroll and audit staff have been employed to ensure capacity to carry out quarterly audits for new customers on cash IB's and annual audits for those customers with a proven track record for completing effective audits of their fund.

- All audit procedures have been reviewed and training for auditors on a 'lighter touch' audit as recommended by the DH is being developed. In Manchester our approach is slightly firmer. We train our staff to adopt a "light touch but not soft touch" approach. Our audit procedures still require receipts for all major or routine purchases.

## **2.2 Risk Assessment**

- A risk management panel has been set up with senior managers in Adult Social Care to monitor high risk situations and identify customers choosing options that are unusual or where there are concerns that their choices do not meet their care needs. The group has issued guidance to care managers across the city on safe risk management processes.
- MiCare has embedded in the process, the requirement for all cash IB's to have a financial audit set. A new post of senior audit officer is being created to ensure appropriate oversight of this process.

## **2.3 Employing Personal Assistants**

- It is now a formal requirement that all customers receiving cash IBs, who wish to employ their own staff must first undertake a Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check on any potential staff member.
- To ensure that these checks are always carried out in practice, the Council meets the cost of the CRB check. A senior manager carries out the CRB check on the customer's behalf.
- Where convictions are disclosed, that pose a risk to the individual, ASC insists customers do not employ this person. In the unlikely event that a customer does not accept the advice at this point, staff are instructed to withdraw the offer of a Cash Individual Budget, and arrange to meet the person's care needs through the provision of services. We have not had to apply this contingency in any case to date.
- Information packs for Personal Assistants have been developed with Skills for Care, as well as for recipients of individual budgets, and these have been distributed to current Personal Assistants. This is linked to a training package for Personal Assistants over a 10-week period to ensure they are appropriately trained.

## **2.4 Information Provision**

MyManchesterServices (ASC's web-based information site) was launched in June 08 providing information about services and community groups citywide. Its search engine

allows customers to search by post code / ward to find what services are available in their local area. The site contains information about services that provides [advice](#) and information which will support customers in Support Planning where possible. The site also enables the council to have an overview of the services, support and information that people are accessing which will inform local needs appropriately.

### **3 Future Plans**

#### **3.1 Safeguarding Review**

As the personalisation agenda develops we recognise the importance of regular monitoring of systems to ensure that all necessary and appropriate safeguards are put in place to support the effective delivery of this agenda. To this end the Head of Safeguarding has agreed to conduct a "Safeguarding Review" of Personalisation in Manchester. The focus of the review will be to identify improvements in our procedures to give greater surety about Safeguarding in the changing world of personalisation. This review will consider the following issues and make recommendations, where necessary, regarding additional measures or safeguards to:

- avoid vulnerable people being put under duress to take cash IB's, by care managers, brokers, providers, families or friends.
- protect vulnerable people from unscrupulous agencies or personal assistants.
- protect vulnerable people from unscrupulous family members or friends
- improve our IB Audit procedures to protect the exploitation of vulnerable people.
- ensure employment and CRB checking of Personal Assistants.
- improve our current system of accredited providers and move to more customer focused recommended providers.

#### **3.2 Increasing Advocacy Provision**

ASC is engaging services and agencies working with vulnerable adults to ensure that ASC develops a comprehensive and citywide advocacy service, accessible to all customers. ASC has specifically recognised that advocacy services have the potential to play a key role in supporting people on cash IB's, providing valuable safeguards. ASC has carried out a review of advocacy services in Manchester exploring the range of advocacy services currently operating in the city, including the type of services they provide, and to which service user groups. Gaps in provision have been identified as well as the strengths and potential for development of some existing services. The review also noted a lack of clarity within some agencies regarding the difference between advice, information and advocacy.

A multi-agency working group has been convened to take forward work to develop the involvement of advocates in safeguarding work. This will include the involvement of advocates to work with people who are victims of abuse, to support them during

safeguarding investigations. It will also explore the potential involvement of advocates to support people who opt for cash IB's, to support them e.g. in recruiting personal assistants, or in making financial decisions. The working group will develop a toolkit for advocates which will also inform the quality standards, and an audit tool to monitor services providing advice and support, and make recommendations about specific training in their safeguarding role.