

Direct Payments Strategy 2025-2030

Contents

1. Summary	2
2. Introduction	2
3. About Direct Payments	3
4. Strategy and Vision	4
5. The Challenge	5
6. Hampshire's Co-produced Approach.....	8
7. Recent Direct Payments Activity	9
8. Future Direction	11
9. Key Strategy Areas	11
Appendix A: History of Direct Payments in Hampshire	17
Appendix B: Measuring Success.....	18
Appendix C: Activity Plan	19

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1. Summary

- 1.1 This strategy confirms the shared commitment of Hampshire County Council (HCC) Adults' Health and Care (AHC) and Children's Services' Directorates (CSD) to improving outcomes, services, and support for those who receive a direct payment to manage their care and support needs. The strategy looks to provide a vision and outline a pathway for improvement.
- 1.2 The strategy has been co-produced with the support of recipients of direct payments (DPs) and their carers, AHC and CSD operational staff, service providers, voluntary organisations, and the Direct Payment Support Service (DPSS), representing groups such as Hampshire Direct Payments Framework Partnership, Hampshire Personalisation Expert Panel (PEP), Hampshire Autism Partnership Board, Hampshire Carers Partnership Board, Hampshire Learning Disability Partnership, Hampshire Older Adults' Partnership and Hampshire Autism Voice.
- 1.3 It has been developed in line with national guidance on the provision of direct payments including key priorities for delivering best practice as defined by Think Local Act Personal (TLAP). The strategy will:
 - Offer the opportunity to outline how direct payments will be delivered by HCC to assist staff and the public
 - Provide an overarching approach and the scope of activities to promote direct payments
 - Define the focus for the activities needed to deliver change
 - Define the relationships required to scrutinise and advise on direct payment policies and procedures as the Care Act recommends use of external organisations to support the provision of direct payments
 - Align the expectations of those involved in the co-production process
 - Clarify what individuals can expect when receiving a direct payment in Hampshire
- 1.4 The Strategy sets out the shared vision / aims of partners and service users / carers for the future provision of DPs in Hampshire.
- 1.5 Successful delivery of this Direct Payments Strategy in Hampshire requires strength-based best practice, a viable personal assistant and provider market, support with queries from direct payments recipients and practitioners alike, and well-defined engagement and co-production, to ensure the relevance and suitability of the changes being delivered. It will use the combined experience of best practice from both Adults' and Children's Directorates to deliver strategic change.

2. Introduction

This strategy covers those assessed as eligible for social care and support by HCC, and should be read in conjunction with other strategies

which provide more detail in certain areas, which can be found here: [Adults' Health and Care policy, strategies and Market Position Statements](#)

- 2.1 The five-year strategy includes a commitment to increasing the number of individuals using direct payments as a means of taking greater control and organising their own social care.
- 2.2 This Direct Payments Strategy will be delivered through the development of a direct payments activity plan. The activity plan has been created in co-production with the Hampshire Personal Assistants in Care Direct Payments Framework Partnership co-production group, and through co-produced workshops with direct payments recipients, their carers and other key partners.

3. About Direct Payments

What Are Direct Payments?

- 3.1 Direct payments are a key component of personalising care and support services and empowering individuals to have more control over how their social care needs are met.
- 3.2 Instead of receiving services arranged by HCC or care providers, individuals eligible for social care support can choose to receive direct payments, enabling them to arrange and manage their care independently
- 3.3 To receive a direct payment, an individual must first undergo an assessment by HCC, which will determine an individual's eligible care and support needs. If the individual meets the criteria, the council will calculate a personal budget — the cost to the local authority to meet an individual's eligible care and support needs.
- 3.4 A personal budget is calculated considering the person's assessed needs and outcomes with reference to local social care market conditions to ensure the personal budget is sufficient to meet the assessed needs
- 3.5 The direct payment is provided as a monetary resource by HCC, directly to the individual or individual's representative, enabling them to arrange and pay for the individual's own care and support services

Who can receive Direct Payments?

3.6 Direct payments can be received by:

- Adults (over 18) with eligible care and support needs
- Disabled children aged 16 or 17
- Disabled parents needing support for their children
- Carers, including those responsible for a disabled child and
- An authorised person nominated to manage direct payments on behalf of someone else who lacks the capacity to request a direct payment

3.7 Those who cannot receive direct payments include prisoners, and individuals receiving treatment for drug or alcohol dependency.

What can you buy with Direct Payments?

3.8 Anything relevant to the assessed eligible care and support need of the direct payment recipient can be bought with direct payments. Some of the most common ways to spend a direct payment are recruiting a personal assistant (PA in Care), purchasing services from a care agency, and paying for activities or equipment that support wellbeing as specified in the individual's care plan, other than equipment items which are already provided to individuals for free through Hampshire Equipment Services under existing legislation.

3.9 A full list of exclusions can be found in the [Personal Budgets Policy](#).

4. Strategy and Vision

A Vision for Hampshire Direct Payments

- 4.1 HCC is adopting a shared services approach for direct payments, which seeks to align the direct payments activities of the Adults' Health and Care and Children's Services (CSD) Directorates, and build on areas where existing shared service funding exists, such as Direct Payments Support Service (DPSS) and Virtual Wallet.
- 4.2 This one organisational approach will provide a lifecycle from child to adulthood, providing continuity of care and support planning, reducing the likelihood of crisis care, whilst mitigating cost changes as the individual moves from children's to adults' provision. Shared benefits include the opportunity to deliver joint messaging to practitioners, aligned training, procedures and guidance, providing a single cohesive approach to partnering with Health, and joint procurement opportunities.
- 4.3 The direct payments vision is informed by, and supports the aims of, the Adults' Health and Care (AHC) Strategy within the context of the wider HCC strategy, to define a common direction for County Council activities.

- 4.4 The HCC Strategy states the aim “to improve lives today and for tomorrow”, which is reflected within the AHC Vision:

“Adults’ Health and Care encourages and enables you, your family and community to stay well and live independently. Where you need support, we will help you to identify the best solutions. If you have needs but are not able to arrange your own care, the support we agree with you will help you to live the best life you can with the help you have around you. By doing this, our limited resources can be used to help the growing number of people who need our direct support and reduce inequalities.”

- 4.5 These principles cascade through this strategy by outlining how Adults’ Health and Care and Children’s Services will strive to meet the challenge of improving direct payments in Hampshire by defining the aim and approach and the four key strategy areas in the direct payments vision:

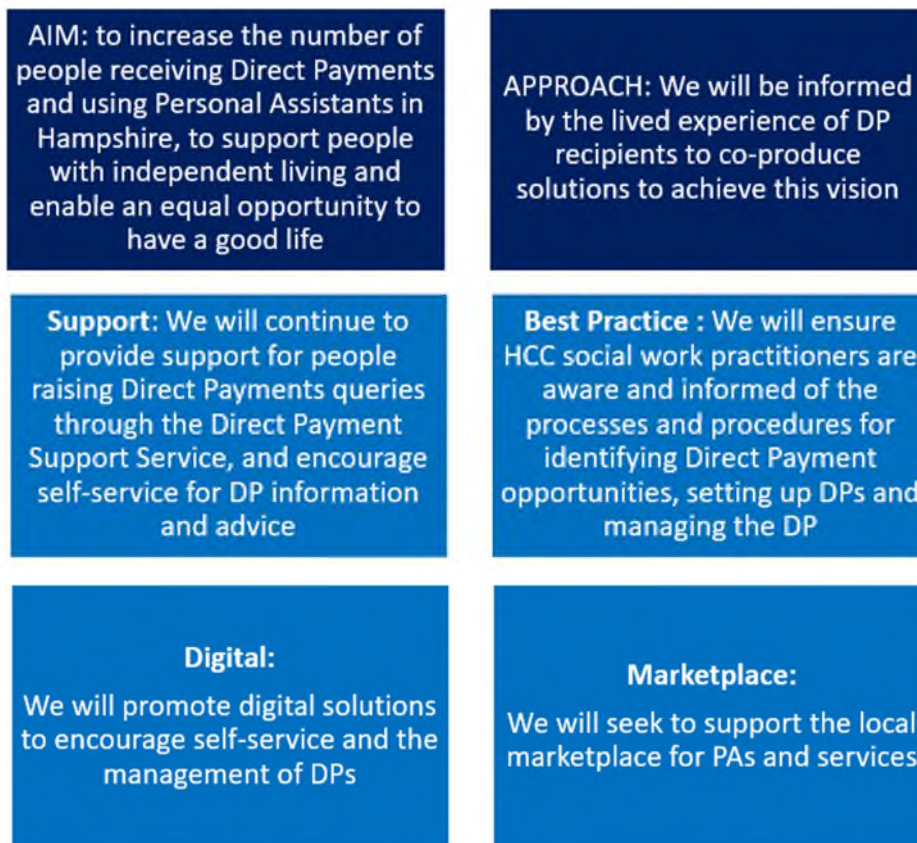


Fig 1: Direct Payments Key Strategy Areas

5. The Challenge

- 5.1 The business case for direct payments is based on the principle that if an individual employs a personal assistant in care, they will be responsible for that person's direct pay and employment-related costs. However, they would not incur the same operational overheads as a care providing company, meaning that in almost every case, employing a personal assistant in care is more cost-effective than using a domiciliary care

agency. Direct payments also offer the individual more choice, provided there is a marketplace of services for them to purchase from, including PAs in Care.

- 5.2 Not offering direct payments means people may not be as independent as they could be, with their needs not being met in the best way for them. Individuals might not be getting the most suitable support, or that support might not be focused on the strengths-based approach delivered by HCC. Due to the way traditional services are commissioned, this will also often mean the cost to the council of providing the service is higher.
- 5.3 Direct payments are explicitly encouraged in the Care Act 2014, and of benefit to people accessing care to support their independent living and enable an equal opportunity to have a good life.
- 5.4 The direct payments strategic aim is to increase the number of people receiving direct payments and using a PA in Care in Hampshire, to support people with independent living and enable an equal opportunity to have a good life. This should be viewed in the context of current national and local direct payments trends.

National and Local Trends

- 5.5 The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) figures for HCC in 2023/24 showed “Proportion of people using Social Care who receive direct payments”, (ASCOF 3D2a) for those aged 18 and over to be 22.2%. The proportion for the South East of England was 25.0%, and 25.5% nationally, with Hampshire ranking 91st of 153 councils.
- 5.6 Hampshire performance for 2024/25, calculated using the new national Client Level Data return, shows the ASCOF performance reduced further to 19.5%. Currently no national or regional comparator performance is available for 2024/25.
- 5.7 Whilst ASCOF is a helpful measure, when comparing performance with other local authorities it is important to remember that it is a snapshot of performance as of the 31 March each year.
- 5.8 As the ASCOF measure is only a count of direct payments open on the last day of the year, it does not reflect the total number of people that benefitted from a direct payment throughout the year. It will not include clients who would have been in receipt of a payment earlier in the year and had their direct payment end because it was either one off, no longer required or the client moved to alternative services. Overall, in 2024/25 2,579 clients received a direct payment from HCC, 58 fewer clients than in 2023/24.
- 5.9 HCC figures indicate there were 579 direct payments made to parents of approximately 300 children in early October 2025. There is no national data available for Children’s direct payments.

5.10 ASCOF data since 2016 shows a downward trend in numbers of direct payments nationally and in the South East, as well as Hampshire.

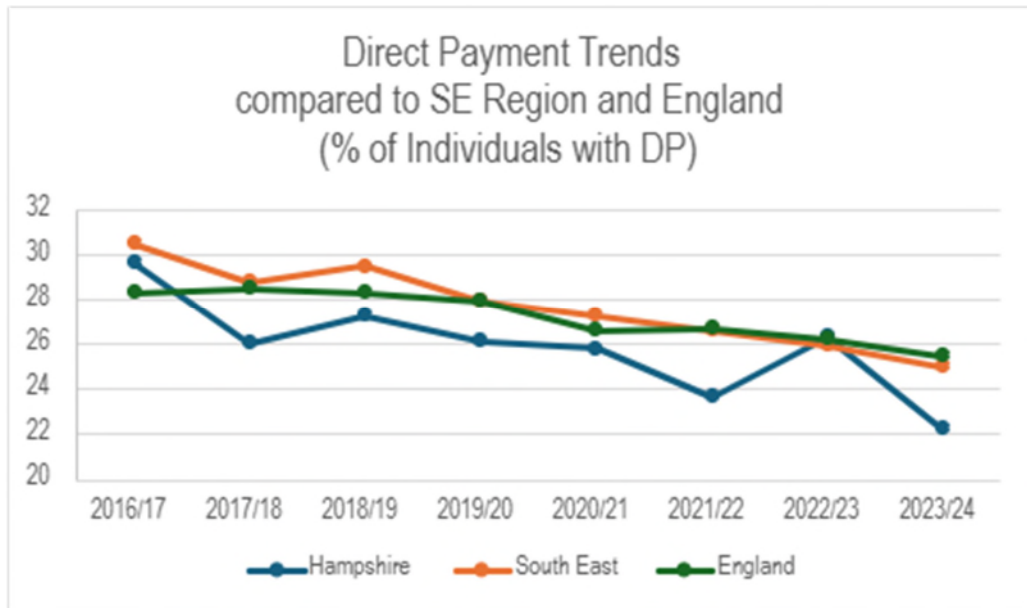


Fig 2: Direct payment trends since 2016/17 (ASCOF)

	Hampshire	South East	England
2016/17	29.6	30.5	28.3
2017/18	26.0	28.8	28.5
2018/19	27.3	29.5	28.3
2019/20	26.1	27.9	27.9
2020/21	25.8	27.3	26.6
2021/22	23.7	26.6	26.7
2022/23	26.3	25.9	26.2
2023/24	22.2	25	25.5

Fig 3: Percentage of people who receive services who use direct payments (ASCOF 1C2A)

Care Group	Count	Percentage
Older Adults	420	19.7
Physical Disability	538	25.2
Learning Disability	908	42.6
Mental Health	31	1.5

Carer	237	11.1
Total	2133	100

Fig 4: Split by Care Group type (AHC June 2025)

6. Hampshire’s Co-produced Approach

- 6.1 The strategic approach taken in Hampshire will be implemented and delivered via co-production - we will be informed by the lived experience of direct payments recipients to co-produce solutions to achieve our goals.
- 6.2 Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) indicates that without co-production and lived experience feedback it is far more difficult to identify if direct payments change activity is correctly focused and improving the situation for recipients.
- 6.3 There is an existing governance structure in place within Hampshire for direct payments co-production, with a framework partnership meeting overarching sub-groups for communications, a functions sub-group to identify technical issues or improvements to existing information platforms, and a direct payments user peer sub-group. These co-produced groups and sub-groups will provide direct payments assurance, check and feedback, capture queries and identify requests for change

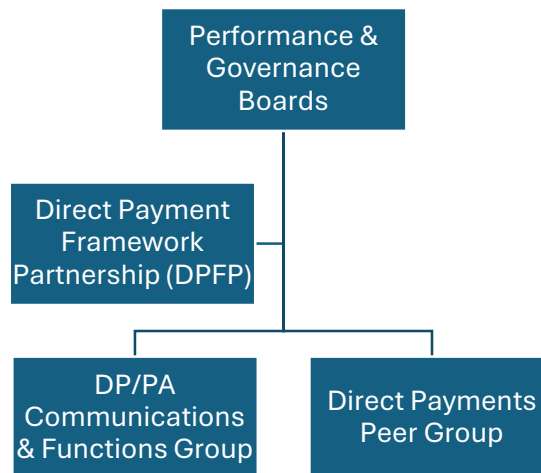


Fig 5: Co-production Governance Structure

Hampshire Direct Payment Framework Partnership

- 6.4 The Framework Partnership provides senior management oversight for Personal Assistants in care development and direct payments across Hampshire. The partnership meeting is held every 6 weeks and is co-chaired by an experienced direct payments user and a HCC operational lead. It aims to design and develop a sustainable approach to direct payments for eligible Hampshire residents, ensuring cross-system and cross-directorate focus.

Peer Support Sub-Group

- 6.5 This sub-group provides those with lived experience a forum to discuss their experiences with direct payments and feed back into the other meetings.

DP/PA Communications Sub-Group

- 6.6 This sub-group aims to raise the profile of personal assistants in care and improve communication to direct payment users. Recent campaigns have increased social media followers and promoted the PA Finder website at recruitment events. The sub-group members co-produce the Direct Payments Newsletter, which launched in March 2022 and is distributed quarterly. It covers various direct payments and PA in Care topics, seeking input from DP recipients regarding content.

Functions Sub-Group

- 6.7 This sub-group supports the development of functional solutions and alternative payment mechanisms and has recently overseen an update to the Hampshire PA Finder website including refreshed information and advice for PA in Care employers.
- 6.8 This group has recently amalgamated with the Communications Sub-Group to improve the efficiency of meetings and make them more convenient for attendees.

7. Recent Direct Payments Activity

- 7.1 Improvement actions taken since 2021:

- Initial Direct Payment Action Plan created
- HCC Audit of Action Plan process
- Creation of Direct Payment Support Service within HCC
- Framework Partnership and subgroups relaunched
- Direct payments calculator relaunched
- Introduction of Virtual Wallet
- Refresh of Hampshire PA Finder website functionality
- Addition of PA in Care Employer information to PA Finder

- 7.2 Recent Direct Payments Support Service activity in the four strategy areas is outlined below.

Support

- 7.3 The Direct Payments Support Service (DPSS) was set up in late 2023. DPSS assists clients with queries about their direct payments, which includes helping them understand how to use their personal budgets, offering guidance on financial management, and ensuring they have the necessary information to make informed decisions.

- 7.4 DPSS also encourages and facilitates peer-to-peer support among direct payment recipients and manages invitations to the co-production meetings and sub-groups which helps individuals share their experiences, offer advice, and support each other in managing their direct payments.

Best Practice

- 7.5 Since the end of 2023 DPSS has supported HCC (HCC) practitioners in recommending and setting up direct payments. This involves providing input into training and attending meetings with practitioners to ensure they can effectively support individuals in using direct payments.
- 7.6 DPSS is responsible for creating and maintaining information resources related to direct payments for practitioners, providing content for internal communications to colleagues about direct payments, and articles for Direct Payments Newsletter subscribers.

Digital

- 7.7 To support self-service and access to direct payments information outside working hours, direct payments content is being produced to update the HCC website. DPSS has also overseen a recent update to the content of the Hampshire PA Finder website, to support employers with key information.
- 7.8 Recent work across operational practice to gather email addresses for individuals intended will enable quicker processing of information already in a digital format and potentially more effective and quicker digital communication with those digitally enabled. The use of electronic signatures is currently being discussed to ensure legal compliance alongside the reduction in paper communications.
- 7.9 Capturing personal assistant data operationally as part of the support planning process is being considered, requiring the activation of recent test changes to the social care system, to facilitate data capture.

Marketplace

- 7.10 From their involvement in direct payments support calls, DPSS can identify if there is a specific type of information or service needed in a particular area, which can be used by commissioning to consider the level of marketplace service provision. The team also maintains information on PA Finder, which helps individuals match with available personal assistants in care as well as providing information to PA in Care employers. The DP/PA Comms group raises the profile of a personal assistant in care to improve understanding and encourage people to consider it as a career.

8. Future Direction

Local Government Reorganisation

8.1 The Government plans to replace the current two-tier system of counties and district councils with unitary councils across the country. This re-organisation will include:

- Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils
- Isle of Wight Council
- Hampshire County, District and Borough Councils

and is intended to make services easier to access, more joined-up, and better value for money, all while protecting what matters most to local people.

8.2 An overarching document which defines the strategic direction of direct payments in the Hampshire area will help manage the challenge of maintaining cohesive service delivery during the local government reorganisation period.

Living Wage

8.3 The living wage will inevitably impact on the attractiveness of the proposed rates for indicative personal assistant rates determined by HCC's AHC and CSD commissioning team and will continue to be reviewed annually as part of the uplift process.

Digital Direction

8.4 The future development of services towards the HCC strategic goal of being digital by default can be found in the Developing Digital section below.

9. Key Strategy Areas

9.1 These key strategy areas have been developed from a combination of existing best practice guidance, the vision for direct payments within Hampshire, co-production oversight, and recent activities, to address the challenges of delivering direct payments and to deliver the strategic aim of growing the numbers of direct payments and personal assistants within Hampshire.

A: Providing Support

9.2 Information for managing and understanding direct payments can be complex for new recipients and existing service users alike, especially where personal assistant employment information is required.

9.3 To support the growth of direct payments, it is important that there is support available to existing direct payments recipients to resolve queries

and help maintain use of direct payments. Following a review of available support in 2022, HCC now offers a specialised Direct Payments Support Service (DPSS), which responds to queries and addresses concerns during standard weekday working hours. DPSS have a preventative and enabling role, ensuring queries are resolved so that individuals can maintain their direct payments.

- 9.4 As well as providing information, advice and support for people raising queries about direct payments, DPSS must also have the capacity to review and check the accuracy of the information they provide and ensure it is current and relevant.
- 9.5 There is currently only a small amount of the information shared by DPSS directly available online. To date, direct payments recipients have been unable to access DPSS information without first raising a query with the service.
- 9.6 To improve the level of support available to direct payments recipients, the following key activity areas will be developed:
 - Provision of a cohesive and comprehensive Hampshire information offer for direct payments
 - Provision of a query response service for direct payments
 - Provision of clear, accurate, timely and accessible supporting information about direct payments recipients online, and where queries are raised
 - Maintenance of direct payments and personal assistant employer information
 - Consistency of information online with query responses via DPSS
 - Promotion of DPSS and online information to ensure direct payments recipients are aware of the support available
 - Promotion of Virtual Wallet as the preferred direct payment management system
 - Resource review to facilitate key direct payment support activities

B: Delivering Best Practice

- 9.7 HCC practitioners must be confident of when and how to offer direct payments (including the details of employing a personal assistant or managing a direct payment via Virtual Wallet), to ensure they are offering those services to the extent they should be and not restricting the number of people able to benefit from them.
- 9.8 Without regular training and communications about DP, PAs and Virtual Wallet, and best practice guidance, social care practitioners might not feel informed enough to propose DPs, as the process of agreeing a direct payment may be thought to be complicated. There may be differences in how direct payments are processed between Adults' Health and Care and

Children's Services, requiring more support from the Direct Payments Support Service due to a greater variety of queries.

- 9.9 Accurate information and clear expectations of the process must be conveyed to the direct payment recipient by a practitioner comfortable with the personal budget setting process, who is clear on what a direct payment can be used for, and able to balance the individual's choice and safety. It is also necessary to keep the direct payment set up time as short as possible, to reduce the possibility of debt accruing whilst the process completes, or opportunities for using the direct payment being missed. As far as is possible this should reflect the same process for direct payments in Adults' Health and Care and Children's Services.
- 9.10 The Hampshire & Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board (HIOW ICB) is also looking to increase the number of people with greater control over their care. Working together to understand how individuals move between HCC and the HIOW ICB in each direction will help deliver jointly produced guidance for operational staff and streamline the referral process between the organisations for direct payment and personal health budget recipients.
- 9.11 To ensure best practice from Adults' and Children's social care practitioners, the following key areas will be developed:
- Review and provision of clear, accurate and timely direct payments policy, procedure and guidance documents for practitioners
 - Maintain and develop feedback mechanism for direct payments for practitioners through practice excellence channels
 - Promotion of initiatives, updated practice and preferred approaches to practitioners
 - Promotion of refresher training to practitioners
 - Alignment of Adults' and Children's practitioners' understanding and implementation of direct payments
 - Identify frequent queries and co-production group feedback to advise and inform practitioner training content
 - Review of financial processes for managing under- and over-payments for individuals not using Virtual Wallet
 - Coordinated management of payment and service transfer processes between health and social care services

C: Developing Digital

Virtual Wallet

- 9.12 A key digital development within HCC in the past few years has been the delivery of a virtual wallet for direct payment recipients to manage their funds. PPL's Virtual Wallet is now the preferred method of managing direct payment funds in Adults' and Children's social care.

- 9.13 Use of Virtual Wallet to manage direct payments includes the transparency that funds and expenditure can be seen by both the direct payment recipient and the supporting social care practitioner. This encourages more focused conversations about direct payments spending on outcomes, helps prevent over and under-payments creating debt situations and reduces the risk of financial mismanagement.
- 9.14 Individuals keeping their direct payments in traditional designated bank accounts do not have a tool to track payments to their personal assistants and Virtual Wallet also provides the opportunity to temporarily delegate to PPL to pay bills in the event of illness.
- 9.15 Determining the direct payment spending is a more difficult process with designated accounts, and it can be more time-consuming to gain information, which can lead to the accumulation of payments in accounts in a way prevented by the transparency of Virtual Wallet. Virtual Wallet information is also more timely when it comes to decision making such as recommending uplift rates based upon management information and is currently the best source of information about levels of personal assistant employment available to HCC.
- 9.16 For these reasons, expanding the use of Virtual Wallet in direct payments is a key direction for HCC. As it is a digital tool, the contract management is via HCC's IT, and the business case for extending the use of Virtual Wallet is being presented to HCC IT early 2026. This would, if approved, provide the opportunity to extend Virtual Wallet use at an increased pace. Using Virtual Wallet is not mandatory for direct payments in HCC. In April 2025, 320 individuals were using Virtual Wallet.

Other digital activities

- 9.17 Adding the information and advice on direct payments and employing personal assistants are key digital channel shifts towards self-service online, as identified in the "support" section. This will be supported by refreshed maintenance processes and the opportunity to review analytics of website performance to support the site user experience.
- 9.18 The co-produced digital Direct Payments Newsletter provides a variety of key information to subscribers and signposting to existing HCC and community content, including important reminders about PA employer responsibilities. This will continue to be created and promoted through co-production.
- 9.19 HCC is reviewing its processes of digital data capture from individuals to improve the volume of communications which can be processed digitally, which will underpin an increase in digital communications and future automation. Changes to the social care system are being considered for operational staff to capture and reporting on information such as number of PAs employed, information which is currently captured through an annual survey.

9.20 A review of new direct payment end data provided by the Adults' Health and Care Performance and Improvement team offers the opportunity to identify if there is any way to identify and potentially influence avoidable endings of direct payments, directly supporting the aim of growing direct payments use.

9.21 The following key digital activities will be undertaken:

- Adding direct payment support information online to support self-service
- Business case for Virtual Wallet growth
- Co-production of the Direct Payments Newsletter
- Promotion of the Direct Payments Newsletter
- Capture and maintenance of contact emails via refreshed operational procedures
- Increased use of analytics to review website performance
- Growth in the use of digital communications
- Data analysis of direct payment end reasons
- Consider AI opportunities in providing support information and query routing
- Consideration of enhanced data capture to support operational funding decisions
- Capture of electronic signatures on direct payments forms

D: Maintaining the Marketplace

9.22 Maintaining a marketplace for services in Hampshire is essential to supporting those with direct payments to have choice, particularly for direct payment recipients with personal assistants. Consideration of direct payment calculations and indicative personal assistant rates, legal obligations and the external market are all required to support the services which can be purchased using a direct payment.

9.23 Not having enough personal assistants in the marketplace to support the level of demand from direct payment users could result in support needs not being met, or less than ideal support relationships, which could discourage people from managing their own care and support. To grow numbers of direct payments recipients and prevent individuals choosing commissioned services instead, direct payment users need to have options for their care so it can best meet their needs and aspirations.

9.24 Activities in supporting and maintaining the marketplace for direct payments will include:

- Development of direct payments data capture to support market shaping decisions
- Engagement with local colleges and universities to promote personal assistant in care as a career
- Training for personal assistant employers and potential employers

- Indicative rates for PAs will remain under review
- Using thematic data from DPSS to influence market development
- Review of payment mechanisms
- Hampshire PA Finder website functionality and access
- Promotion of personal assistant tools and resources
- Monitoring the impact of micro-providers
- Developing peer support relationships and signposting

9.25 The activities within each strategy area will be refined through the co-produced governance of the Hampshire Direct Payments Framework Partnership and the related sub-groups, to oversee the progress and direction of direct payments activity. They will be supported and delivered by a dynamic activity plan which will evolve with circumstances and changing priorities, to deliver the strategic aim of growing the numbers of direct payments and personal assistants within Hampshire.

Appendix A

The History of Direct Payments in Hampshire

Hampshire has a long-standing commitment to empowering individuals with care needs through choice, control, and independence. This commitment is deeply rooted in our history and continues to shape our strategic direction.

Our journey began in the early 1980s with Project 81, a pioneering initiative led by young disabled people determined to move out of institutional care and live independently in the community. Supported by Personal Assistants and indirectly funded by HCC before direct payments had a formal legal basis, this project laid the groundwork for user-controlled care. Influential figures such as John Evans, a leader in the disability rights movement, were instrumental in advocating for independent living.

The legal foundation for direct payments was established with the Community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996, and Hampshire began offering direct payments in 1997. This marked a significant step in formalising our approach to personalised care.

In the early 2000s, eligibility for direct payments expanded to include older people and carers, and Hampshire quickly became a national leader in uptake. This success was underpinned by strong partnerships with user-led organisations, which provided essential local support and advocacy. Children became eligible for direct payments in the UK following the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000, which allowed parents of disabled children to receive direct payments to manage their child's care and disabled young people aged 16 and 17 to receive direct payments.

In the 2020s, Hampshire introduced a series of innovations to enhance the accessibility and flexibility of direct payments. These included the rollout of prepaid card systems and Virtual Wallet, designed to simplify financial management for individuals and families. Following a co-production process that identified some limitations in external support contracts, Hampshire established an internal Direct Payments Support Service to better meet the needs of our communities.

These developments reflect our ongoing strategic aim: to ensure direct payments are inclusive, easy to use, and responsive to the diverse needs of all care groups. As we look to the future, Hampshire remains committed to co-producing solutions with the people we support, ensuring that our direct payments offer continues to evolve in line with their aspirations.

Appendix B: Measuring Success

The changes delivered through the strategic activity plan will be evaluated using the following metrics:

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase in numbers of individuals starting direct payments
- Reduction in numbers of individuals ending direct payments
- Increase in number of Virtual Wallet users
- Proportion of new direct payment recipients using Virtual Wallet
- Improve funding meeting data capture of whether DP was offered
- Annual reduction in avoidable terminations of direct payments
- Improvement in DP end reason data quality
- Reduce number of practitioners requesting zero direct payments
- Value of average direct payment package
- Online information engagement metrics
- Training completion rates for practitioners
- Hampshire PA registrations
- Hampshire PA Finder matches
- Value of Virtual Wallet-led managed funding returns
- Qualitative feedback from co-production, service users and carers
- Number of DP-related queries received by DPSS
- Number of complaints per DP user

Monitoring Tools

The following methods will be used to measure the success of the changes:

- Virtual Wallet Power BI reporting
- Targeted Performance Improvement Team data
- Web analytics
- DPSS query tracker and reporting
- Training attendance records
- PA Finder usage statistics
- Co-production group feedback

Appendix C: DP Strategy Co-produced Activity Plan

The following activities will be delivered as business as usual through continuous improvement, with the focus initially on the activities which build capacity for DPSS to maintain the query response service for direct payments recipients and social care practitioners (*). Delivery of the action plan will be led by DPSS but supported by Information and Advice, Commissioning, HCC Operational teams, Framework Partnership, Policy and Procedure, IT, Data and Performance teams, CPPS, Children’s Services, and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board (ICB).

Theme	Activity
Support	Continue to provide a query response service
	Promote the query response service and information online*
	Provide a comprehensive and cohesive Hampshire information offer*
	Update and maintain information (Website, PA Finder, info sheets)*
	More support/information for PA employers*
	Produce “Becoming an Employer” checklist*
	Welcome videos for new DP users and PA employers*
	Simple training offer for new DP users / PA employers
	Promote DP Newsletter in HCC Newsletter*
	Promote growth of Virtual Wallet (VW)
	Develop skills within DPSS for Easy Read creation*
Best Practice	Promote DP Framework Partnership and Sub Group attendance
	Update and maintain Social Care Practice Manual*
	Gather feedback on practitioner difficulties and inform training
	Promote Virtual Wallet to HCC operational staff including outside the review process
	Align AHC/CSD promotion of Virtual Wallet
	Deliver best practice via clear processes and direct payments training
	Promote attendance of Practitioner DP Training refresher
	Identify differences between Health and Social Care services to support individuals moving between health and social care
	Comms to promote joint referrals procedure
	Update guidance and training for Personal Health Budget, Continuing Health Care/Adults’ Health and Care/Children’s Services transfers
	Produce Joint Health and Social Care video training
	Promote DP Newsletter sign-up during reviews and Virtual Wallet sign-up
	Update guidance/training re: DWP involvement and designated accounts
	Consider contingency planning for PA unavailability
	Produce clear Virtual Wallet literature for practitioners and users
	Review finance processes for over / underpayments
	Address under/overpayments in designated accounts
	Progress return of overpayment funds
	Produce Business Continuity Plan for DP (PPL tech and DPSS)
	Prepare people for differences in offer between Children’s and Adults’
Maintaining Co-production	
Increase Children’s representation at meetings	
Provide assurance, feedback, capture queries and identify requests for change	
Digital	Put DP support information online
	Promote DP Newsletter to all users with validated email address
	Update DP Newsletter sign-up form in SAP Marketing tool
	Capture DP email addresses for digital info
	Confirm DP Bank Form change and email capture impact
	Review HCC site user activity via Google Analytics

	Implement Virtual Wallet Single Sign-On
	Add Virtual Wallet info to DP Newsletter
	Report Virtual Wallet performance indicators
	Business case for migration of Virtual Wallet
	Review approach to improve PA data capture
	Standardise an electronic signature process for DP Agreement form
	Explore AI opportunities for support info
	Investigate query routing for DPSS
Marketplace	Mandatory training for employers (peer support, colleges, etc.)
	Develop and oversee service marketplace
	Data-led decisions on paid rates
	Update Care Director social care system to capture PA info
	Update assessment/business process to capture PA info
	Improve use of PA Finder to match PAs with employers
	Reminder messages for PAs to refresh PA Finder listings
	Monitor PA request data and costs from funding groups
	Peer chat suggestions for PA recruitment
	Peer support for PA employers in rural areas
	Encourage peer support to prevent DP dropouts*
	Refresh signposting to PA tools/sites*
	Collaborate with other LAs/ICBs to raise PA profile
	Ongoing monitoring of micro-providers

For more information about
Adults' Health and Care and
Children's Services, visit:

hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth

