

**Direct Payments and Individual Service Funds (ISFs) Indicative Rates Briefing
April 1st 2025 to 31st March 2026**

Sent to: ACS Operational social care teams, 0-25 together teams, HPFT

DIRECT PAYMENTS

WHAT OUR HOLDERS SAY

I RECEIVE SUPPORT TO VOLUNTEER FOR JOBS I AM INTERESTED IN

DIRECT PAYMENTS HAVE PROVIDED EMPOWERMENT AND CHOICE

I CAN EMPLOY PAS THAT UNDERSTAND MY RELIGION AND CULTURE

I CAN LIVE IN MY OWN HOME BY MYSELF

ALLOWS ME TO JOIN A CRAFT CLUB

DIRECTOR OF MY SUPPORT IN MY LIFE

ENABLING

WITHOUT DIRECT PAYMENTS I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO LIVE AN INDEPENDENT LIFE

I GO OUT IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND MEET OTHER PEOPLE

DIRECT PAYMENTS GAVE ME CONTROL OF MY LIFE

DIRECT PAYMENTS HELP WITH ACTIVITIES AND MY MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

CONSISTENCY

MY QUALITY OF LIFE IS SO MUCH BETTER AND THIS HELPS ME BE A BETTER PARENT.

WITHOUT DIRECT PAYMENTS I WOULD MISS OUT ON LIFE EXPERIENCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

CREATIVITY

PERSONALISED

RECEIVE HELP TO DO THE THINGS THAT MATTER

FLEXIBILITY

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

MEETING MY FRIENDS

Hertfordshire

As of 1 April 2025 existing Direct Payment and Individual Service Fund (ISF) rates will be increased by 5%, we will also apply this inflationary increase to our indicative rates in this document. Existing Direct Payments and Individual Service Funds will be increased automatically to a person’s care and support plan through controcc.

Summary of action required: Heads of Service and Managers to ensure staff are made aware of this briefing and share within team meetings for discussion and assurance that staff understand this content.

Introduction:

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is committed to giving greater choice and control to people to fulfil their eligible wellbeing outcomes as stated in their care plans. Direct Payments and [Individual Service Funds](#) are two ways a person can receive their personal budget for self-directed support. Self-directed support is the most effective way to promote choice and control, enabling people to make their own arrangements to meet assessed, eligible care and support needs and agreed, wellbeing [outcomes](#). A personal budget must be based on the cost of meeting a person's eligible needs and wellbeing [outcomes](#) following a social care assessment or review/re-assessment.

Where a care provider increases their fees by more than 5% and this is funded via an ongoing Direct Payment or ISF HCC will only increase the Direct Payment or ISF amount by 5%. Any additional increase must be considered as part of a review of care and support needs and an understanding of any contracted rates HCC pays to the same provider (if they have a contract with HCC). If it is determined the existing Direct Payment or ISF is sufficient to meet the person eligible needs and wellbeing [outcomes](#), then the individual will need to be supported to discuss with the provider or seek alternate support.

Personal Budgets, Direct Payments and ISF transparency:

Transparency will enable an individual choice and control to arrange a care and support plan that meets their eligible needs and wellbeing [outcomes](#). This approach can be supported by:

- A consistent application of Direct Payments and ISFs across all operational teams and services to support a person's care and support planning, enabling them to choose how their eligible needs and wellbeing outcomes are met.
- Consistent application of care and support costs that meet eligible needs and wellbeing outcomes.
- Consistency on the application of the [Care Act](#) and [Connected Lives assessment and review practice principles](#) to agree eligible needs and wellbeing [outcomes](#).

Why apply Direct Payment and ISF indicative rates consistently:

- Enable ACS operational staff to understand and apply a consistent application of indicative Direct Payment and ISF rates
- Help frame conversations with people who draw on support and their carers on the approximate amount they should expect to pay for the type of care and support they are purchasing
- Improve consistency of application and equity in indicative personal budget calculations
- Improve transparency when care providers are charging more than any contracted rate, they already have with HCC
- Help people who draw on support and their carers have better informed conversations with providers about the care and support they can purchase with their allocated personal budget.

The indicative rates set out below will apply from 1st April 2025 and should be applied to all new Direct Payments and ISFs. The 5% uplift will be automatically applied to all existing Direct Payments and ISFs. Where the indicative rate does not specify it is for all adults.

The rates below are not an exclusive list and should not be interpreted as the only way a Direct Payment or ISF can be spent to meet agreed personal [outcomes](#).

Care and support planning should be focussed on achieving agreed personal outcomes and the Direct Payment or ISF being a way to support doing so. Please read guidance on [how a personal budget can be used via a Direct Payment or Individual Service Fund](#)

Method to meet agreed outcome(s)	Frequency	Indicative rate 01/04/25 to 31/03/26
Personal Assistant (inclusive of any employer costs e.g. employers liability insurance and payroll)	1 hour	£18.92
	45 Mins	£15.14
	30 Mins	£11.36
ADS - Respite Care (18-65 years)	Week	£1329.20
ADS - Respite Care with Nursing (18-65 years)	Week	£2215.34
OP – Respite Care 65 years and over	Week	£731.42
OP – Respite Care 65 years and over with Dementia and /or Mental Ill Health	Week	£842.53
OP – Respite Care with Nursing 65 years and over	Week	£781.74 (excludes FNC)
OP – Respite Care with Nursing 65 years and over with Dementia and /or Mental Ill Health	Week	£878.61 (excludes FNC)

Home Care	1 hour	£27.28
Home Care	45 minutes	£21.84
Home Care	30 minutes	£16.37
Live-in Home Care	Week	£1107.32
Community Opportunities (Building/Land 1:1 staff ratio)	1 hour	£26.09
Community Opportunities (Building/Land 1:2 staff ratio)	1 hour	£13.04
Community Opportunities (Building/Land 1:3 staff ratio)	1 hour	£8.70
Community Opportunities (Community/Virtual 1:1 staff ratio)	1 hour	£21.52
Community Opportunities (Community/Virtual 1:2 staff ratio)	1 hour	£10.77
Community Opportunities (Community/Virtual 1:3 staff ratio)	1 hour	£7.17
Independent Brokerage	1 hour	£29.52
Sleep In Night PA	1 hour	£11.09

Personal Budget, Direct Payments and ISF considerations:

A person with support needs and their carers should be advised of these indicative rates when support planning and as part of the process of developing a personal budget, enabling them to make appropriate choices over how their eligible needs and outcomes are met:

- Practitioners should give people information, support and guidance about where people can find out about where to buy support, enabling them to achieve their eligible wellbeing outcomes.
- **Indicative rates may need to increase** in circumstances where HCC / the person drawing on support or their carer cannot obtain support to meet the eligible needs within these indicative rates and following an assessment/re-assessment.
- HCC will adopt a flexible, personalised approach to ensure eligible needs are met in such exceptional circumstances and decisions should be based on

eligible needs, wellbeing [outcomes](#) and value for money, rather than financially motivated.

- A person with support needs and their families should not be asked to top up the difference between a provider rate and the agreed Direct Payment/ISF rate when it can be demonstrated the council cannot commission the same support at that price.
- When a person could have used their Direct Payment/ISF to source support to meet their eligible needs and they chose to use a more expensive provider, they will need to top up their Direct Payment/ISF to receive this support.
- When a person decides to buy additional support over and above their agreed outcomes, they would be expected to pay for this additional support themselves via a top up. For example, a Direct Payment/ISF allows a person to buy 10 hours personal assistant support which achieves their eligible outcomes in their care and support plan. However, the person decides they want 12 hours personal assistant hours to meet non-eligible outcomes so would be expected to top up for the extra 2 hours themselves.

Further resources:

PA recruitment and independent brokerage please visit [Home - Hertfordshire Direct Payment Support Service - Direct Payments - Disability Support \(herts-dpss.co.uk\)](#)

Micro-providers who support Direct Payment Holders, self-funders and ISF holders please visit [Hertfordshire | Small Good Stuff - communitycatalysts.co.uk](#) Community catalyst project is contracted by HCC to develop micro-providers in order to link people who need support with local people who might help.

Find local services, organisations and events in Hertfordshire for adults, children and families. From childcare and adult care to things to do in Herts. [Home | Hertfordshire Directory](#)

For further information or support with anything in this briefing please contact sam.wood-edde@hertfordshire.gov.uk