



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Response by the Portfolio Holder:

Thank you for your question regarding the payment of personal assistants and care staff who provide services via direct payments. I agree that care staff have been, and continue to undertake incredibly important work in our society and it is imperative that care staff, be they employed by the Council, by domiciliary care agencies, as micro-enterprises, or as personal assistants by direct payment recipients, are paid appropriately and in a timely manner.

The Council was advised by PeoplePlus that their payroll team had been badly affected by staff illness (COVID-19) at the end of December 2021 and this impacted upon the payroll service. The organisation advised that they followed their contingency plans and brought in agency staff and redeployed staff from other areas, but that some of these arrangements were further challenged by sickness. It is not anticipated, therefore, that this will happen again and PeoplePlus have assured the Council that this is the case. However, on this occasion 32 care staff were affected and received late payments. All the Direct Payment recipients who were adversely affected have been contacted and will receive an apology letter from PeoplePlus. By the 7th of January 2022 PeoplePlus advise that all normal payroll payments were made and up to date, with some other 'amendments' (where additional hours had been worked or other unusual payments) outstanding. These are also being fast-tracked to ensure they are paid as soon as possible.

The direct payments support service is currently being assessed with options being appraised to decide how to proceed with the service in the future. Service resilience will be an essential part of this options appraisal for future provision. The Council does not have the details of the personal assistants affected by this situation as they are employed by the service users directly. However, what happened on this occasion was not acceptable and for this both PeoplePlus and the Council apologise unreservedly.