

## CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

### Question 1

What aspects of the current ILF worked well and what elements did not work so well?

**Worked well:** The choice, control and flexibility for individuals on how ILF awards are used to achieve independent living outcomes; which now also can be achieved by Direct Payments, Self-directed Support and Personalisation. The ILF also enabled some individuals to access additional resource to the local authority. It has meant people have sought and discovered local alternative solutions, very much in keeping with the more assets based or personalised approach. We have found this is particularly so in rural communities where it is difficult to attract the economies of scale to attract independent providers who often struggle to provide low cost services in such circumstances.

**Not Worked So Well:** This additional resource has compounded an inequity of opportunity for independent living between existing ILF users and others who are supported solely through the council. A historical inequity existed between those who had successfully applied for top up funds from ILF and those who had not.

Geographical inequalities have developed across Argyll and Bute and indeed throughout Scotland in the uptake of awards. The complex system of application and monitoring has not assisted in the maintenance of awards appropriately.

The process through which ILF funding was secured is not a user-centred approach and, because people's needs change over time, this impacts on the ability of local authorities to be consistent in how they help meet the care needs of all disabled people in their population.

### Question 2

Should the money that becomes available after existing ILF recipients no longer need it be used in the same way for others in the future? If so, why? If not, how else might the money be used?

When existing ILF recipients no longer need to use the money awarded then that resource should be utilised to assist other people to live independently.

A fairer more equitable access to the available limited resources must be pursued. A pooling of resource with adult social care resources, aligned with self-directed support outcomes would provide a clearer and more consistent pathway and ensure resources are targeted to meet independent living support needs.

The ILF should be incorporated within local authority social care budgets for administrative efficiency and effectiveness and to remove the "additionality" for some service users which produced the inequality in distribution. The ILF should not continue as a separate fund as it is insufficient to meet future need and promulgates an artificial separation from the overall personalisation or holistic approach which SDS is expected to achieve.

### Question 3

If the available resource is simply that which is transferred from the Treasury, how would you like to see it used if it was not to be a continuation of the existing approach?

This Council concurs with Scottish Government that current recipients of ILF funding should not have this fund removed from them unless their personal circumstances change or they become ineligible through the established two-yearly review cycle. If this does not occur the fund should still be aligned to mainstream social work funding. This would enable those who are eligible, to exercise choice and control over how their care is provided. A single funding stream would facilitate an overall holistic approach to assessing individual needs and help meet their independent living outcomes.

### Question 4

What innovative ways might there be for increasing the overall amount of money in the pot?

We agree with COSLA that if ILF resources are used to augment personal budgets, it would optimally support independent living and self-determination. As the Self-Directed Support legislation is implemented, principles such as shared supports, collective approaches, individual and community assets, co-production, and working in partnership with other organisations are expected to mature into standard practice. This will lead to the development of support packages which, whilst meeting the care and support needs of disabled people, will demonstrate better value and as a result effectively increase the share of money available to support other independent living outcomes.

### Question 5

With any available resource, where is the most effective area to target resources which can have the biggest impact on an individual's ability to live more independently?

The move toward personalisation is expected to make a significant impact for an individual to help them meet their personal independent living outcomes, so any resource targeted at this we would expect to support our population with a disability more sustainably and effectively.

### Question 6

Once funding has been devolved to the Scottish Government, which option do you think will be most appropriate for Scotland?

The strongest support is expressed for Councils having responsibility for the administration of ILF funding, in line with their broader duties to support people with disabilities. It appears that the three options set out in the consultation would require additional resource and bureaucracy in co-ordination of organisations and in efforts to reduce the inequality of access and distribution that has occurred with the historic ILF.

The local authority option will minimise administration costs as they already have much of the infrastructure in place, including staff members who are skilled and experienced in assessment and care management, financial assessment, income maximisation and administration. Councils also have experience in awarding direct payments to individual people to help meet their needs for care and independent living and this is further extended by the SDS options. However, we also think that it will be important to pass on administration funding to councils.

Of the ILF recipients in Argyll and Bute that have expressed a view to us, around 50% have said that they don't mind how the money is administered as long as their support is not reduced, and 50% have said that they would prefer it to be administered outwith the council; it is cited that this is because they believe it would be seen as an easy target for making cuts.

COSLA has suggested a need for clear national operating criteria for administering ILF monies (similar to those accompanying the Scottish Welfare Fund) in order that local authorities can be confident that they can meet the demands placed on these monies consistently across Scottish councils, and this view is supported by us.

### **Question 7**

To assist with our partial Equality Impact Assessment in relation to the future development of a sustainable Fund to support disabled people in Scotland to live independently, please describe any equality issues (in relation to age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership) that you feel may arise and suggest ways in which these could be addressed.

The ILF has historically effected a discrimination against disabled people aged 65 years and over; yet they have similar needs for independent living to the needs of younger disabled adults. However, extending ILF support to older people would require a much greater scale of resource, which is understood not to be under consideration.

Similarly, previously mentioned inequalities have been perhaps unintentionally introduced during the life-time of the ILF as it has been distributed. However, the fund closure and recycling of resources is an opportunity to re-calibrate the purpose and target for the support it provides. There are a number of issues which might usefully be considered in working toward a solution:

- Making an eligibility criteria framework which is consistently applied;
- Mitigation of the impact on those who no longer have an entitlement to ILF through routine review;
- Awardees must be fully involved in transitional planning;
- Need to assess and mitigate the potential impact of change on carers;
- Commitment made to personalisation, inclusion, choice and control;
- The principles of coproduction involving disabled people and third sector partner organisations, users, families, carers and representatives are used.