



Option 2 – Directing Your Support

Directing your support means you have choice and control over the support you get without having to take on the responsibility of managing or administering the money. You are in control and make all decisions relating to how and when you will be supported. You will decide on the goods, activities and services you want to access and these will be paid for on your behalf.

Your practitioner will explore the available choices within option 2 and help you make an informed decision about what best meets your support needs. The 2 choices are:

- A) Aberdeen City Council administers the budget on your behalf
- B) A 3rd party Individual Service Fund (ISF) administers your personal budget



What is an Individual Service Fund?

An Individual Service Fund (ISF) is a different way to purchase goods, activities and services; Aberdeen City Council or a 3rd party can administer your personal budget. You **cannot** employ a personal assistant, self-employed carer or self-employed worker when you choose option 2.



'Your' Personal Budget

The public purse becomes your personal budget to be spent to meet your agreed outcomes and support needs. Whilst this is 'your personal budget', the money remains the public purse and must be accounted for and audited in line with statutory responsibilities. This is one of the reasons that receipts, invoices and bank statements (vouchers) must be kept by the 3rd party administrator.

Your personal budget may vary based on your outcome-focused assessment, support plan and changes in personal circumstances.



"I know what goods, activities and services I want"

Where you know of the goods, activities and services you wish to access now is the time to begin to make contact and enquire about the cost and availability of services, this is called 'shopping for your support'. Remember it is up to you who you would like to support you, and how and when, to meet your needs. For further guidance see Table 1: *Questions that will help your decision making* (page 2).



"I don't know where to start"

If you are unsure how to start this process your practitioner will give you advice and guidance. Remember it is up to you to decide who you would like to support you, and how and when, to meet your needs. First steps could include visiting the MyLife Web



Portal at <https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk> where some goods, activities and services are listed, speaking to friends, family and colleagues and having further conversations with your practitioner.

Remember it is up to you to decide who you would like to support you, how and when. See Table 1: *Questions that will help your decision making (below)* to guide your thinking.

'Shopping' for your support

Questions that will help your decision making (this list is not exhaustive):	
Paying for services, activities and support Negotiation must take place with providers to ensure that the cost is not excessive.	
Goods, Activities and Services	3rd Party ISF Administrators (For a list of ISF providers click here)
Questions to think about when approaching providers:	Questions to think about when approaching 3 rd Party ISF administrators:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This is my weekly budget what can you supply for this? ✓ What are the costs for this activity, can this be negotiated? ✓ What will I get for this amount? ✓ How can I pay you? ✓ How can I cancel? ✓ How will you support me? ✓ How often will you support me? ✓ Can I be involved in interviewing a suitable person to support me? ✓ Can I meet the people to see if I think they are suitable to support me? ✓ These are the times I want to be supported, can you make this happen? ✓ Tell them where, when and how you want to be supported. ✓ How will they ensure your choices are always listened to? ✓ How can you raise concerns and issues when you are not happy? ✓ How can you let them know that you are happy with the services? ✓ What happens if the goods, activities or services are not meeting expectations? ✓ What happens if the goods, activities and services are no longer suitable for you? ✓ How will you ensure the invoices have the correct information on them e.g. hours of support, costs and who will you contact when these are not correct? ✓ What happens when things go wrong? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What services will they provide you? ✓ How will they ensure your choices are always listened to? ✓ What are the costs? ✓ How are the costs broken down? ✓ How often will they meet you? ✓ When and where will they meet you? ✓ Who will organise these meetings? ✓ What financial information will they provide to you and the council? ✓ How often will you meet with the 3rd party ISF administrator and your allocated practitioner? ✓ Who will ensure the invoices have the correct information on them e.g. hours of support / cost and who will you contact when these are wrong? ✓ How often will they give you the financial or other information? ✓ Is this suitable for you? ✓ What happens when things go wrong? ✓ What do you need to do (your responsibilities)? ✓ What are their responsibilities?
Table 1: Shopping for goods, activities and services and 3rd party ISF administrators	



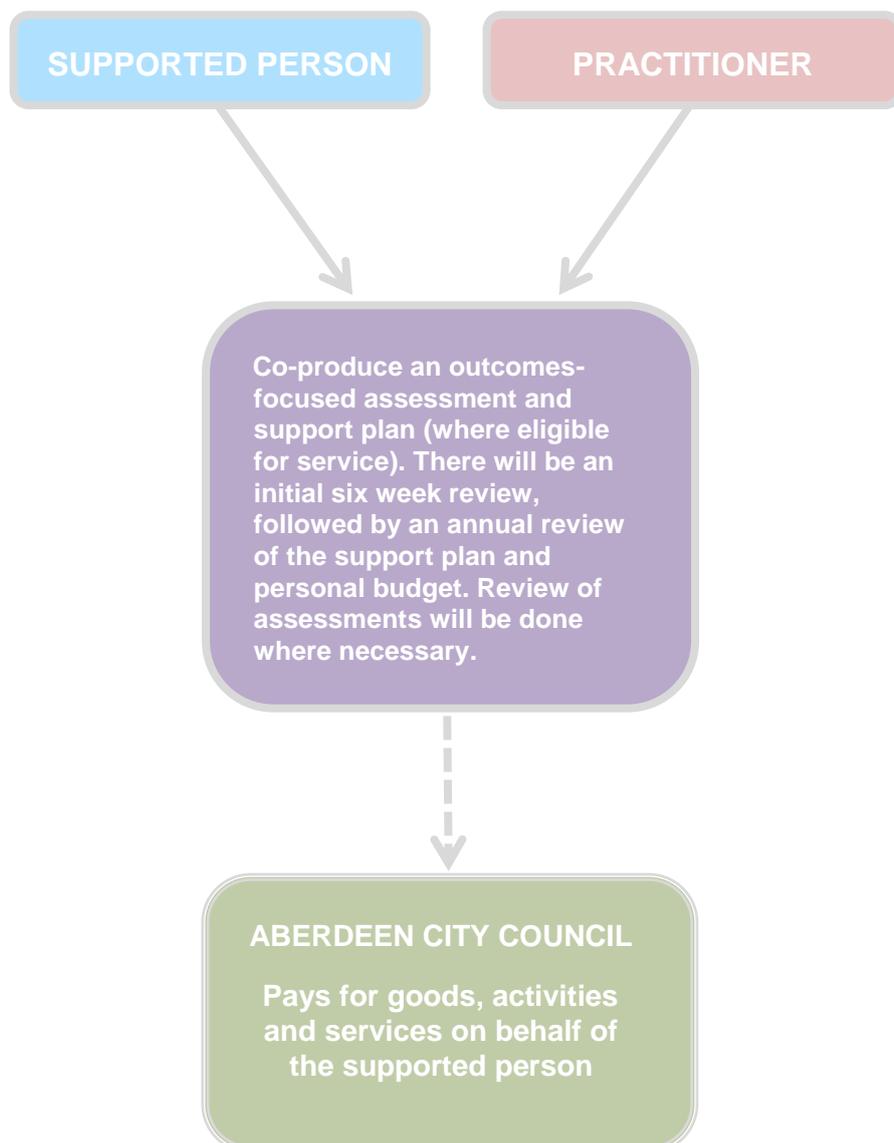
Choice A: Aberdeen City Council administers your budget on your behalf

- You have already decided what goods, activities and services you wish to access...

What are the steps?	
1	<p>You have a conversation with your practitioner and decide which outcomes are most important to you for the year ahead (all outcomes may not be met each year depending on the decisions you make).</p> <p>You agree your Outcome-focused assessment with your practitioner.</p>
2	<p>You and your practitioner develop a support plan and agree how your personal outcomes will be met. You can invite others to this meeting. You will talk about what support would be best for you.</p> <p>You will consider your circles of support, what unpaid and paid support you have and need. This is called co-producing your support plan. The co-produced support plan will form the basis of your six-weekly and annual reviews to ensure that your outcomes are being met.</p> <p>The support plan will be shared with whomever you wish and can be shared with your chosen provider.</p>
3	<p>Your practitioner will guide you to the MyLife Portal where you can find information to assist you with accessing goods, activities and services (this section is regularly updated) The MyLife Portal web address is: https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk/home/.</p> <p>Your practitioner will guide you on how to plan and source goods, activities and services (this is called 'signposting').</p>
4	<p>You 'shop for your support' (see <i>Table 1, page 2</i>) and choose what goods, activities and services you would like to meet your outcomes and support needs. You have the opportunity to negotiate with providers.</p>
5	<p>Contributing To Your Support:</p> <p>Where you are assessed as being eligible to contribute to your support we will pay your personal budget minus your contribution, this is called being paid your personal budget net rate. You will pay your contribution to the supplier(s) directly. See page 9: <i>Contributing To Your Support</i>.</p>
6	<p>Payments can be recurring or one-off payments. Aberdeen City Council will pay the invoices on your behalf. These are sent directly to the Council (your practitioner will advise you on the process to get your goods, activities and services paid). This can include a unique one-off payment as explained on page 5.</p>



7	<p>At six weeks you will have a conversation with your practitioner to ensure your support needs are being met. This is known as a 6-week review.</p> <p>You decide who will be invited. The review is to talk about how your personal budget is being spent, to consider your support plan and to give you the opportunity to talk about what is working, what is not and what you may want done differently.</p> <p>You can discuss any proposed changes with your practitioner and the provider you have chosen. Your support plan will then be amended to reflect those changes.</p>
8	<p>You and your practitioner will then review the support plan annually to ensure that personal outcomes are being met.</p>



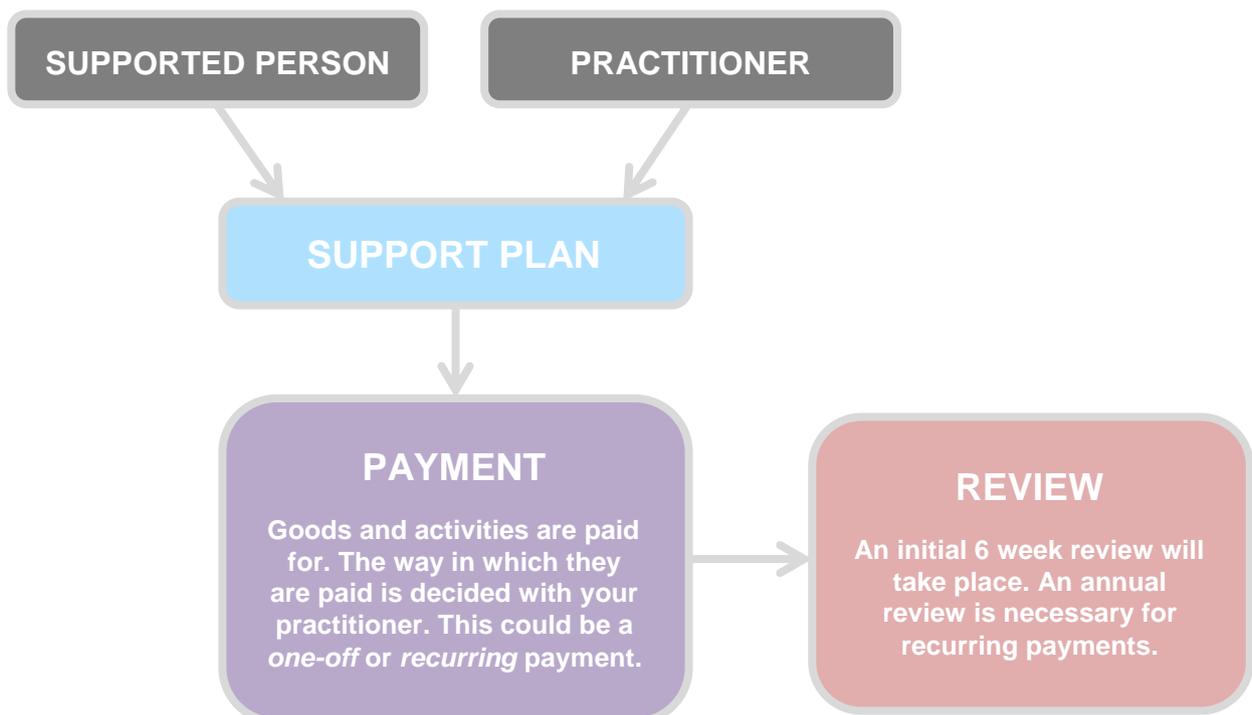


One-off Payments

This type of payment enables the payment of goods, activities or services. One-off payments are only considered in exceptional circumstances when all other options have been explored, and found to be unsuitable. As with all personal budgets any expenditure must be linked to an assessed outcome and meet your identified support needs. A one-off payment cannot exceed £1,000 per annum.

There may be specific circumstances where a one-off payment will not be considered. If this is the case, your practitioner will discuss this with you.

What are the steps?	
1	You have a conversation with your practitioner and decide which outcomes are most important to you for the year ahead (all outcomes may not be met each year depending on the decisions you make). You agree your outcome-focused assessment with your practitioner.
2	The way in which goods, activities or services are paid for will be decided with your practitioner. How your payment will be made will be reflected in your support plan.
3	An initial 6 week review will take place to ensure that the money has been spent to meet your assessed outcomes.





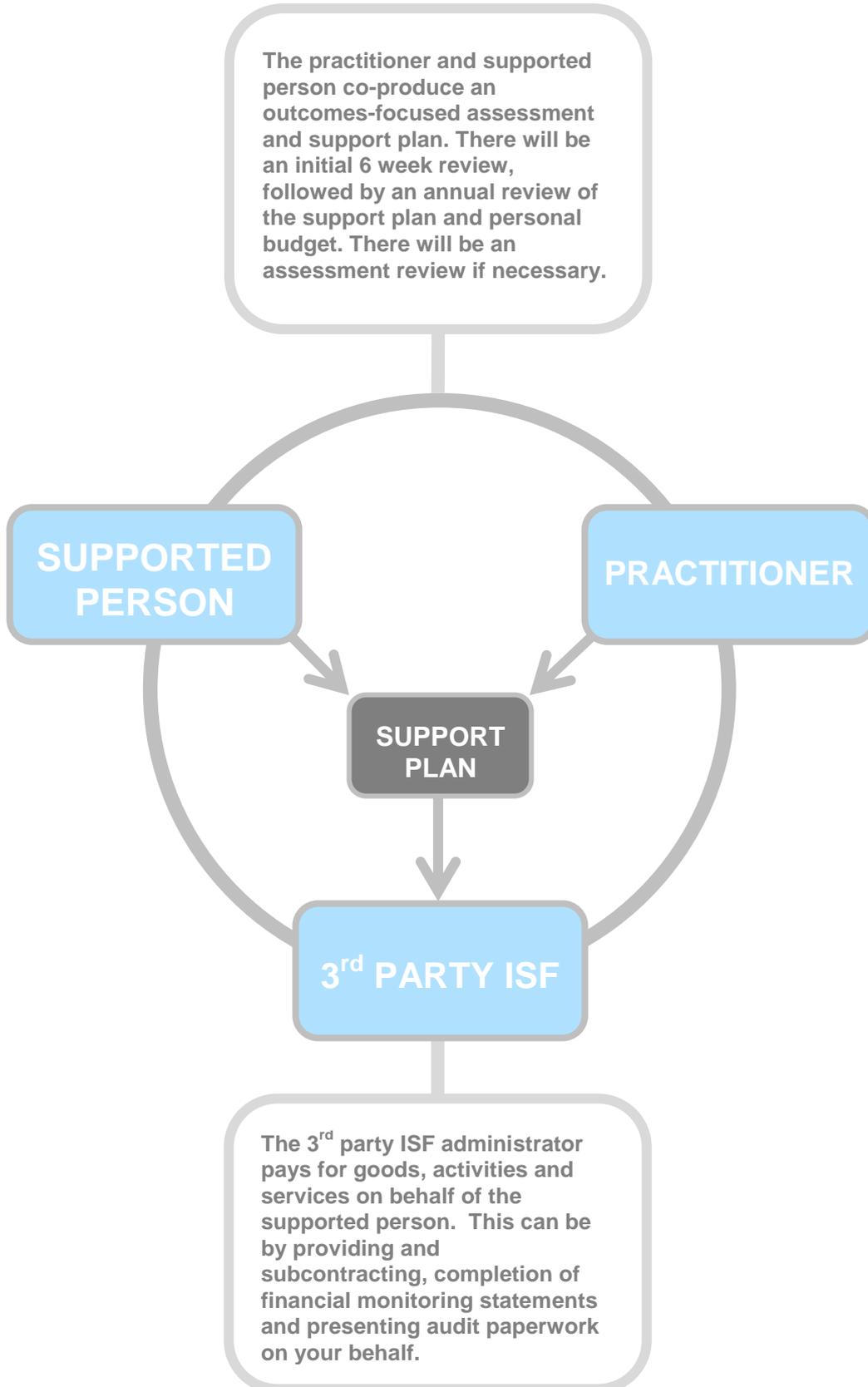
Choice B: Third party ISF administers your personal budget

You are unsure how to get your support needs met or which services are relevant to your support needs and you would like support from **out with** the council.

What are the steps?	
1	<p>You have a conversation with your practitioner and decide which outcomes are most important to you for the year ahead (all outcomes may not be met each year depending on the decisions you make).</p> <p>You agree your outcome-focused assessment with your practitioner.</p>
2	<p><i>You want more information about 3rd party ISF administrators and what their role is and you want support to shop for goods, activities and services.</i></p> <p>Your practitioner will advise you about 3rd party administrators and how they can support you.</p> <p>The MyLife Portal (goods, activities and services section) has information about 3rd party ISF administrators in Aberdeen and associated costs. Contact them for more information regarding costs (there is a cost for the services of a 3rd party ISF administrator) and to find out what support and services they can offer you.</p> <p>The 3rd party ISF administrator must direct you to goods, activities and services out with their organisation too. It is good practice to speak to more than one 3rd party ISF administrator. Remember you are in control; it is about what you want and need not what the 3rd party ISF administrator thinks is best for you. See Table 1, page 2 for questions to consider when talking to 3rd Party ISF administrators.</p>
3	<p>You, the council and the 3rd Party administrator enter into an ISF Agreement for the provider to support you to find services.</p>
4	<p>You, your practitioner and 3rd party ISF administrator will then meet to develop a support plan and work out and agree how your personal outcomes will be met. You can invite others to this meeting.</p> <p>This is called co-producing your support plan. The support plan will be shared with whomever you wish, usually with those who will be supporting you.</p>
5	<p>The 3rd party ISF administrator will support you to locate and shop for goods, activities and services. They will assist in any negotiations regarding the support you will receive to meet your identified outcomes and support needs.</p> <p>Negotiation must take place with providers to ensure that the cost is not excessive and can be met within your allocated budget.</p>



6	<p>The co- produced support plan will form the contract between you and the 3rd party ISF administrator of your choice and will be the basis of your six-weekly and annual reviews to ensure that your outcomes are being achieved.</p> <p><u>You</u> must decide if you want the 3rd party ISF to administer your budget.</p>
7	<p>Contributing To Your Support</p> <p>Where you are assessed as being eligible to contribute to your support we will pay your personal budget minus the contribution you are to make. You and the 3rd Party Provider will agree how you will pay your contribution to them.</p> <p>See page 9, Contributing To Your Support.</p>
8	<p>You enter into a triparty agreement with the council and the 3rd Party ISF administrator.</p> <p>The 3rd party ISF administers your personal budget on your behalf and your practitioner will explain your responsibilities and the responsibilities of the 3rd party ISF administrator.</p>
9	<p>At six weeks you will have a conversation with your practitioner to ensure your support needs are being met. This is known as a 6-week review. You decide who will be invited. At the review you will discuss how your personal budget is being spent, consider your support plan and you will have the opportunity to talk about what is working, what is not and what you may want done differently.</p> <p>You can discuss any proposed changes with your practitioner and the 3rd party ISF administrator. Your support plan will then be amended to reflect those changes.</p> <p>Where your support plan is not meeting your needs or changes to the support plan are required, you will discuss this with the 3rd party and your practitioner.</p>
10	<p>You, your practitioner and the 3rd party ISF administrator will review the support plan annually to ensure that personal outcomes are being met.</p>





Contributing to Your Support

Financial Assessment

A non-residential financial assessment will be completed with you where appropriate to find out if you are in a position to make a financial contribution towards your support. Your practitioner will support you to complete the initial financial assessment. This is known as 'Contributing to Your Support'.

Payment of your contribution (if applicable) is your responsibility. Where the council are paying for goods, activities and services on your behalf the **net rate** will be paid, you must pay your financial contribution personally.

Where you are using the services of a 3rd party ISF administrator you must pay your financial contribution directly to them. This will ensure your goods, activities and services are paid. An individual agreement must be reached between you the 3rd party ISF administrator as to how this will be managed and paid.

Financial Monitoring and Audit

Monitoring

The 3rd party ISF administrator will be responsible for the completion and return of financial monitoring statements to the council. It is a joint responsibility between you and the 3rd party ISF administrator to keep all receipts as per the option 2 agreement to support the completion of financial monitoring returns to the council.

You must ensure that the invoices are correct and that the support you have received is reflected in the invoices. Where these are not correct you must speak to the company or organisation that sent you the invoice.

Audit

The council will write and advise the 3rd party administrator when your audit is due, the letter will be sent 28 days in advance of the audit date.

Issues and risks

Where you have any queries about your support and you have an allocated practitioner or you are allocated to a team, please contact them in the first instance.

Is the support meeting your needs? Do adjustments need to be talked about? Where you are not happy with any aspect of your support or services you are receiving it is important to talk about it with your practitioner.

Your practitioner will be able to provide you with further information about SDS and the 4 options.