

Shared Lives Payments Carers Consultation 2021

Summary of findings V1

Anna King, Corporate Consultation Officer



Walsall Council

PROUD OF OUR PAST OUR PRESENT AND FOR OUR FUTURE

Background and methodology

After looking at other Shared Lives (SL) schemes around the country, taking on board recommended best practice from Shared Lives Plus and reflecting on feedback from carers, a draft payment and fee scheme has been drafted for consultation. The scheme puts forward a set of changes that would see Shared Lives fees and payments apportioned in a different way.

On 7 May 2021, 83 shared lives (SL) carers were emailed information and a link to an online questionnaire. The questionnaire asked for views on aspects of the proposed SL payments scheme.

To boost the number of responses, the closing date was extended by 1 week and carers contacted and encouraged to respond.

By the final closing date of 13 June 2021, 45 carers had responded, a response rate of 54%.

Demographics; questions collected a range of equality characteristics and will be used in the EqlA.

Results

Most respondents (24) have been a SL carer for 5 or more years, with 7 having performed the role for 3-4 years and 8 for 1-2 years. 4 respondents had been in the role for less than 12 months and 2 were not currently an SL carer.

Most had long term / permanent placements (20) with 16 providing day support and 13 short term / short breaks / respite.

8 respondents have been a foster carer in the past and 7 are current foster carers.

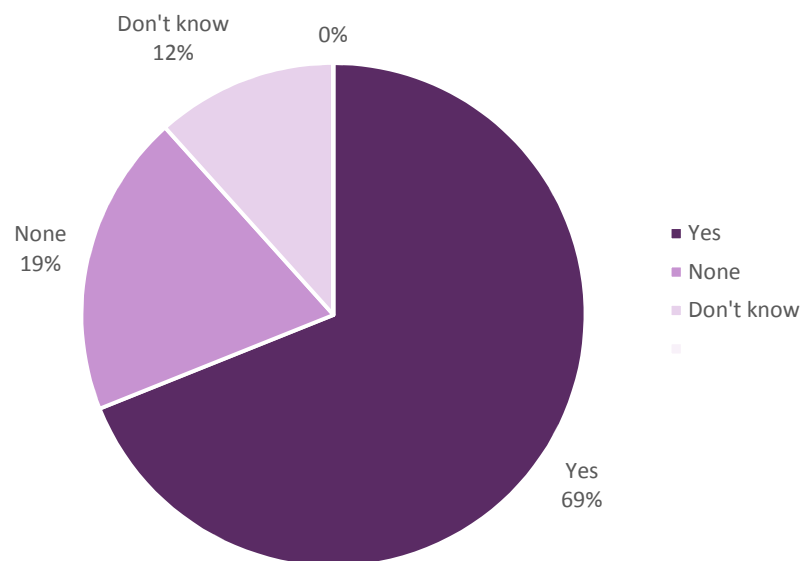


Most support the need for change

Most respondents (30, 71%) support the need to change the current SL payment arrangements to create a clearer, fairer and more transparent payment structure.

4 do not support the change and 9 'don't know'.

Support the need to change the current SL payment arrangements



Base: 45.

Reasons for supporting

Pay needs to reflect the needs off the service user, hence it should be tiered according to needs.

System of payment is unclear.

The current payments does not provide a fair wage for those of us who do not have more than two clients on a daily basis. We cannot earn a decent weekly wage because the day care rates do not even meet the minimum wage.

Each service user has individual needs, it's not a one size fits all case.

Some clients need greater support than others.

Currently the pay is not of an adequate level if worked out hourly for day support it is far less than minimum wage which is not right.

The more in depth work one does and the time involved in looking after individuals should be rewarded.

I think the pay is very low compared to the rest of the country and does really reflect the work we do to support vulnerable people especially if they need night support.

Reasons for not supporting

Could be a step to cut payments to carers that do a demanding, worthwhile and important job . Without these carers many who use the shared lives may find a shortage in placements in the future

I prefer to leave payments as they are. Separate petrol allowance is a great help.

I offer 1:1 care with 1 adult (Level 3) for 36 hours 3 out of 4 weekends, so for 24 hours care I'm earning £2.45 an hour, If you consider 6 hours sleep even though you're on alert for every noise as they are epileptic 18 hours I'm earning £3.27 an hour, this covers personal care for showering as they cannot be left alone, it really is laughable and worth me considering if I really want all the hassle for this pittance.

Reasons for don't know if support

I do not fully understand how it will work. Is mileage included in the hourly rate? Also why has the first nightly rate been halved? It would not be worth doing overnight stays.

Only if carers do not end up with less money than they already earn. To reduce a person's wage but expect them to carry out the same work would be unfair.

I'm concerned on out a pay drop which we feel would not be fair as the person we support has extremely high needs and is two to one.

Because I look after three people with complex special needs, One more so with physical disabilities, one with physiological and personality issues and one with a great deal of medical issues and incontinence problems. I would hope that the review of the payment system would take into account the enormity of the work required to care for these people properly.

My young persons health has changed & deteriorated extremely. In a way that was never expected creating extra pressure on us as a family & our commitments.



Most support a banded payment model

Most respondents (31, 69%) support the use of a banded payment model. 4 do not support the change and 9 'don't know'.

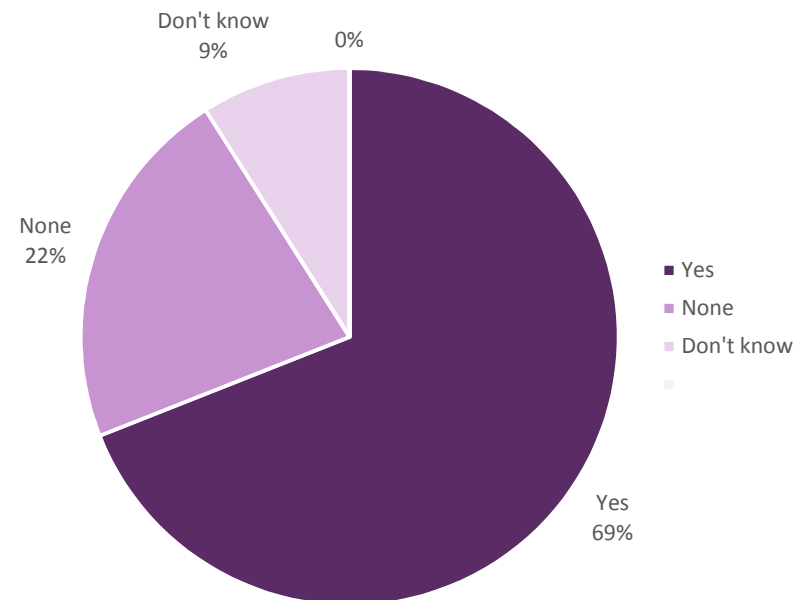
Reasons for not using bands included;

“Treat all carers exactly the same regardless of situations.”

“I agree there is room for improvement as a pay scale in line with government guidelines calculated payments on dependency level might work.”

“Feel that not enough information has been given before the scheme would be introduced.”

Support for a banded payment model



Why prefer 4 bands and don't know

Why prefer 4 bands;

"Clients have a vast range of different needs."

"Because there could be a service user that displays some but not all of the complex or behavioural needs so a 4th banding allows the differentiation between someone meeting partial criteria for 3rd banding and full in 4th."

"Because there is further breakdown so all carers should understand what is required and will in turn understand payments."

"Those with severe disabilities or issues that require much more carer support, the carer should be paid for their expertise and work load."

Don't know how many bandings;

"We Would like this explanation of banding before we comment."

"Do not appear to be much difference to the old and new rate if it does not include mileage?"

"Because we are not sure how we would be affected."

4 bands are preferred over 3

18 of the 45 respondents (40%) prefer a 4 banded model, whereas 14 (31%) prefer 3 bands. 11 don't know and 2 respondents said they did not want bandings introduced.

Why prefer 3 bands;

"Simpler to understand and more consistent than challenging the next tier up."

"In line with other shared lives schemes."

"3 should be sufficient."

"I believe it should be medium, complex and very complex."

"I believe the four band system will take the route of putting people who are borderline complex into a medium grouping, depending on evaluation and who defines complex and very complex as the nature of the individuals we support daily changes and assessments will only be set on a specific date."

"More streamlined."

Other support that needs to be take into account

It is proposed that physical, emotional and behavioural support needs are taken into account when deciding a service user's banding. Respondents were asked if they felt any other support needs should be taken into account.

Many comments mentioned the need to take into account personal care needs and medical needs as well as mental health needs.

“The amount of personal care each client needs.

“Incontinence and amount of extra working involved with this issue. Number of medical appointments, amount of prescribed medication that needs be administered.”

“Medical needs for those who need to be given medication whilst in our care. Personal care needs also.”

Some wanted family circumstances / issues to be take into account and whether care was 24hr or not. Others mentioned autism and cognitive behaviour needs, as well as communication and faith / cultural needs.

Include payments for mandatory training

20 respondents (44%) agree that payment for attending / completing mandatory training is included in the overall payment for all SL carers. 16 disagreed and 9 did not know.

Fairness is important to SL carers as the reasons given for not wanting training payments show;

“Mandatory training should be paid for when it is completed. Some carers may need respite whilst they are on training and due to circumstances of the adult placement need may not be able to attend mandatory training on a fixed date.”

“Not all cares may be able to attend on the given day, commitments may clash, have to leave training early to collect placement from school/ college.”

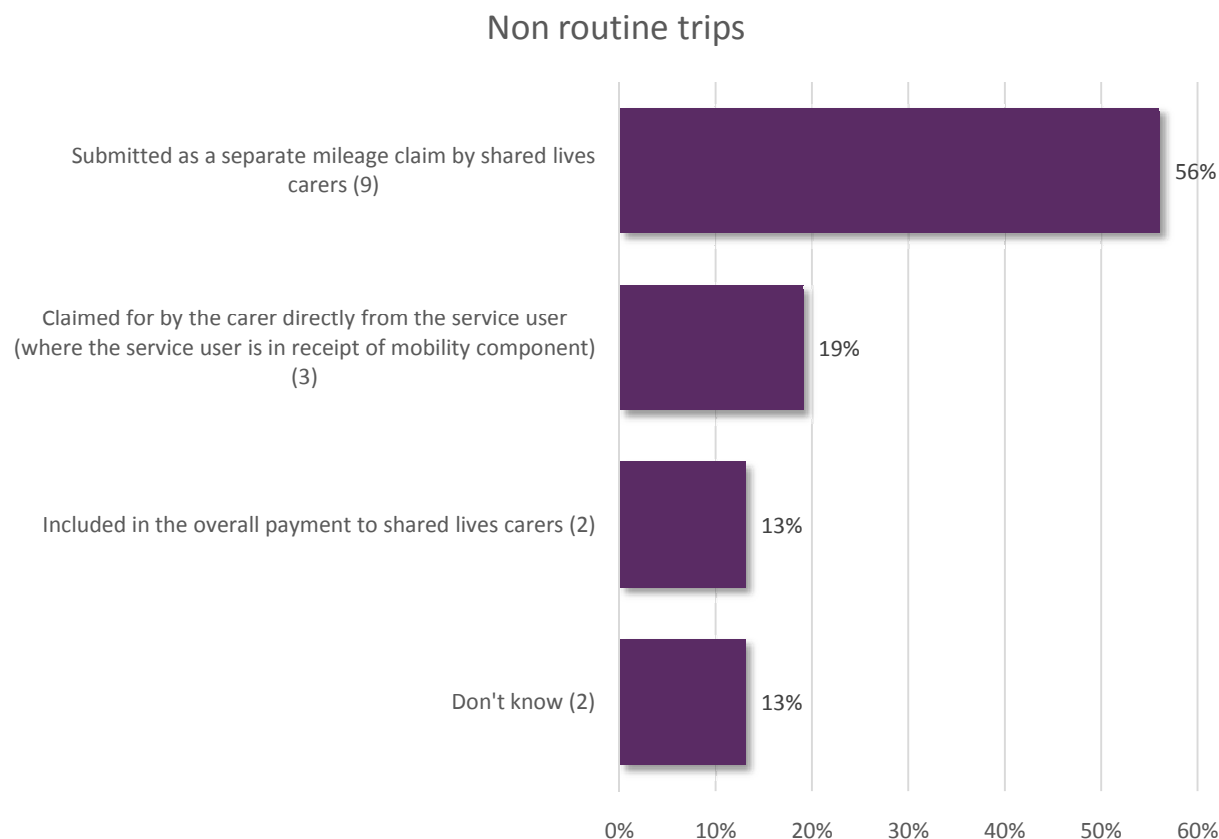
“I attend 95% of meetings and training courses, you can count on your fingers the number of carers that turn up for meetings or training, the only time I've seen lots of people turn up is when payments were being discussed.”

“As the training is mandatory it should be reimbursed separately from care.”

“My other work colleagues were able to claim thus I was never allowed.”

Travel and mileage

Most, 12 out of the 16 respondents who answered the question, disagree that payment for routine travel and mileage should be included in the overall payment for all SL carers. 3 thought that it should and 1 person did not know.



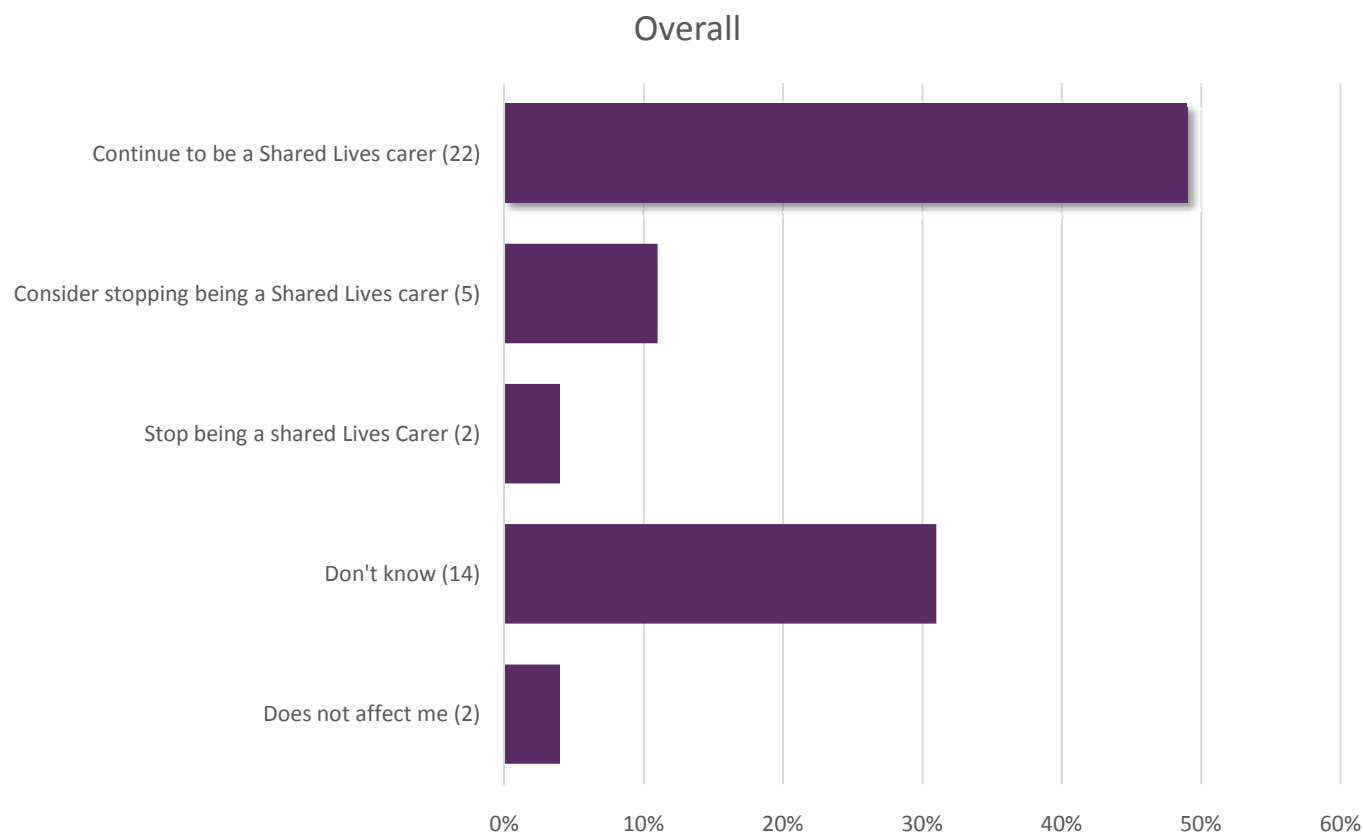
Most respondents (9 out of 16 respondents) think that the costs incurred for non routine journey's should be submitted as a separate mileage claim by shared lives carers.

3 felt it should be claimed for from the service user and 2 included in the overall payment.

Base: 16.

Overall most will continue to be a SL carer

Most respondents (22 out of 45) plan to continue being a SL carer if the new payment arrangements are approved. However a total of 12 could potentially stop (2 say they would stop if it was introduced) and a further 14 said they don't know.



Base: 45.

Impact of proposed payment scheme (continue)

Well it would improve quality of life and enhance enthusiasm.

In my case it would be better and paid for what you actually do.

As long as it is fair it would positively impact me by making me more happy in the discharge of my duties.

As previously stated the person we take care of is two to one and we it has been statemented that the persons needs are extremely high and needs 24 care with continuous monitoring . We are worried that the payment we receive will change and will not reflect the amount of support needed .

Not sure at present depending on what band I would be working with.

Impact of proposed payment scheme (consider)

Its hard to work out whether or not I would personally be better or worse off due to the HIDDEN deductions from the predicted rates but after working on the same agreed rate for nearly 10 years a decrease will not be acceptable in fact an insult.

Having been furloughed because of the pandemic I have coped financially, the shared lives money is useful but it has proved I don't need it to survive.

If day carers are not provided with more than one suited clients, then whatever they receive in payments would impact on them.

Impact of proposed payment scheme (stop)

I provide respite care for 2 young adults and day care for just the one. It will not affect me greatly with my one adult I care for, both her respite and day care money wouldn't change dramatically I don't think! But with the second adult it will literally make my wages disappear and therefore make it impossible for me to continue with the scheme. I've been a shared lives carer for 10 years, I love my job but I have to be realistic I can't live on fresh air so I would be forced to find employment elsewhere and this could potentially jeopardise the young adults current long term placement too as its with my family, we all work in the scheme together. If I stop providing support for them this change will probably force my parents to retire too and 2 young adults out of a loving family home they've known for over 25 years!

If the scheme means I am paid less than what I receive now I will resign from shared lives. I have spent considerable amount of money adapting my home to accommodate a service user, so the service user can be independent, confident and have a good quality of life. i.e. amongst many adaptations I have installed sensor lights in communal areas, toilet as the user has cognitive difficulties. I have installed automated appliances to support independence. I pay full council tax £1408 because due to the unfair council tax legislation the service user is counted as a council tax payer, so I will not be further out of pocket financially.

Impact of proposed payment scheme (don't know)

I am not sure yet until the payment rates and bands of my clients have been decided.

If the remuneration was reduced, then I would have to consider whether I could carry on doing the job.

I think the proposed payment scheme will impact me in particular as I have a mileage allowance and it should be kept separate .if our hourly rate is above minimum wage then fair enough.

It's 24/7 whoever you look after there is no time off and in my opinion the pay is low for the hours worked.

It depends whether overall I would be worse off under the proposed scheme. If I was going to be earning less then I would probably look for something else.

All areas of change should be considered individually ... added pressure of financial change could affect a long term family placement in many ways.

As day/evening support at the moment it can sometimes feel as if you are undervalued in relation to long term carers, any system that provides fairness and the importance of all staff within the scheme would be preferable, especially for the continuation of our provision as carers within the scheme.

Not sure at present depending on what band I would be working with.