



Gloucestershire County Council

Section 17 – Access to Resources Panel

Information Booklet

DRAFT



Contents

Introduction 3

Financial Assistance 3

Criteria for S17 Financial Assistance 3

Take Up of the Two Year Old Entitlement 4

Take up of 30 hours entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds..... 5

Types of S17 Financial Assistance 6

Commissioned Services Directory..... 8

Access to Resources Panel 9

 What is the panel 9

 Process for panel..... 9

 Application Form..... 10

 Process for Auriga 11

DRAFT

Introduction

Text to follow

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance in terms of goods or services, or in exceptional circumstances cash, can be provided to a child, parent or carer under **Section 17(6)** Children Act 1989 to address identified needs to safeguard and promote a child's welfare where there is no other legitimate source of financial assistance.

The services provided by a local authority in the exercise of functions conferred on them by this section may include giving assistance in kind or in cash.

Assistance may be unconditional or subject to conditions as to the repayment of the assistance or of its value (in whole or in part).

Before giving any assistance or imposing any conditions, a local authority shall have regard to the means of the child concerned and of each of the child's parents.

No person shall be liable to make any repayment of assistance or of its value at any time when he is in receipt of income support. Part VII of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, of any element of child tax credit other than the family element; of working tax credit; of an income-based jobseeker's allowance or of an income-related employment and support allowance.

In order to appropriately and efficiently apply these responsibilities, this guidance outlines the Local Authorities expectations regarding practice and requires all staff who may request financial support from the S17 budget, to be fully aware of these expectations and be able to justify any application for resources accordingly.

The management of the budget and compliance, as well as the Local Authority financial regulations, within which this guidance operates, rests with the budget holder.

Social work staff shall be mindful of issues of risk and liability when purchasing goods.

Criteria for S17 Financial Assistance

The Criteria for S17 financial assistance are:

- The payment must be to support and promote the welfare of the child;
- An allocated worker should be actively involved with the family at least for the duration of the payments and if the financial assistance is more than one off emergency assistance, this must be assessed as part of an assessment or through the review of a child's plan.
- Expenditure will go to panel if costs exceed £150 per item (one week's rent/support costs per day)

All alternatives should be explored with the family to assist in accessing and utilising their existing resources to the best effect and support the family in becoming self-sustaining, prior to any application for funding.

- Payments should be made directly to the supplier or provider of services. Monies should not be given directly to the family or carers except in exceptional circumstances;
- At point of request for financial support it should be confirmed that there are no alternate sources of finance from the Benefits Agency, Housing Benefit family or friend contributions,

other agencies, charities. Evidence needs to be uploaded on Care Director as an attachment and recorded on the child's file under case notes. If theft is alleged, a crime number should be provided and recorded in case notes;

- All financial assistance is a one off payment. There may be exceptional circumstances where multiple payments are required; these are to be considered on a case by case basis at Access to Resources Panel and must be subject to review and be time-limited. The period for which funding has been agreed must be clearly communicated by the team worker to the person in receipt of the assistance.

It is Children and Family Services policy that financial support and assistance that is provided under the Children Act 1989 should be supplementary to the benefit system and not an alternative to it. Children's Services are not an income maintenance agency.

It is therefore vitally important that steps are taken to maximise benefit income and rectify administrative problems if these are giving rise to demand on Children and Family Services funds.

This would include use of, where appropriate:

- Crisis loans, budgeting grants and community care grants especially for families under stress;
- Income Support, JSA and Housing Benefit (on interim or statutory basis);
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit (including help with child care costs);
- Guardian's Allowance for people caring for bereaved children;
- Housing Benefit and/or discretionary housing payments;
- Council Tax benefit and discounts;
- Universal Credit
- National Insurance benefits (such as Incapacity Benefit and Maternity Allowance);
- Non-contributory benefits such as Child Benefit, Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance;
- Care to Learn funding;
- The appeal and review systems of all of the above.

Entitlement to all of the above can be established by contacting the Gloucestershire Benefits Team who can also provide initial advice on matters related to debt (such as use of bailiffs, administration orders, bankruptcy etc.)

Staff also need to be mindful as to whether the costs of the service required should rightly be met by the Health Authority or Educational Services.

Where the parent is receiving a service from Health or Education Services Children's Services should only consider requests for funding for some services which are required due to incapacity to parent.

Take Up of the Two Year Old Entitlement

The Department of Education has specified the entitlement criteria. Free places are to be targeted with a primary focus on economic disadvantage with the council having a statutory duty to secure

570 hours of free education for each eligible child. This equates to 15 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year.

A child will be entitled to the hours from the term after their 2nd birthday, if both of the following conditions are satisfied: (1) the child has attained the age of two (2) the child or parent meets the eligibility criteria if you live in England and get one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit – for places starting in the summer term of 2018 (on or after 1st April 2018), or any subsequent term, if a parent is entitled to Universal Credit they **must** have an annual net earned income equivalent to and not exceeding £15,400, assessed on up to three of the parent's most recent Universal Credit assessment periods
- Tax Credits and a parent has an annual income of under £16,190 before tax
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

A child can also get free early education and childcare if any of the following apply:

- they are looked after by a local council
- they have a current statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- they get Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- they have left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

Take up of 30 hours entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds

Universally **all** 3&4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours free early education and childcare that can be claimed to meet the needs of the child or parents. This is usually term time only however some settings will look to stretch this offer over the 48 weeks a year.

The Government has made childcare more affordable for working parents by increasing the early education and childcare offer from 15 to up to 30 hours per week and for 38 weeks of the year (or all the year round equivalent) for some 3 and 4 year old children.

Since September 2017 families with a 3 or 4 year old who meet the 16 hour employment criteria can receive up to an additional 15 hours of early education and childcare per week which is in addition to the current entitlement of 15 hours per week, which all 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to when they reach the qualifying age.

Types of S17 Financial Assistance

Type of Payment	Reason	Specific Guidance
One off payments	These should be used to overcome a crisis, following the best assessment that can be achieved in the following circumstances:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food - method of payment goods only, in exceptional circumstances cash; • Gas - method of payment direct payment only, in exceptional circumstances cash; • Electricity - method of payment direct payment only, in exceptional circumstances cash; • Clothing - one off payment, method of payment goods only, in no circumstances cash; • Toiletries - one off payment, method of payment goods only, in exceptional circumstances cash; • Nappies and baby milk should be given in appropriate amounts, no cash provided.
Clothing and Equipment	The provision of clothing, furniture, bedding or safety equipment can only be provided where an assessment determines items identified as essential to meet the needs of the child and/or prevent the child suffering Significant Harm or significant need and/or the need for the child to be looked after by the local authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessment should address where needs are identified what avenues the family have taken to address the issue themselves, including family members support, via benefits and how family resources are being utilised; • Access to community resources should be considered. Liaison with the benefits agency, advice agencies and charitable organisations locally that can be accessed and specific grants should be sought. • Submission for funding should include efforts undertaken to seek alternate sources of funding.
Travelling Expenses	<p>This provision is available to support the transport of children, parents, carers or extended family member to attend assessments, activities, appointments and support groups which are essential to a child's plan or to comply with court direction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment must ensure and agree that they could not reasonably be expected to travel using their own means due to medical, situational, financial or geographical reasons. This support is to be provided through bus tickets, train tickets or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP confirmation of medical conditions reported to impact upon capacity to travel or use public transport are to be provided to the Local Authority by the parent, carer, adult family member. • Reimbursement of petrol costs to be subject to driver and vehicle being appropriately licensed and insured. The rates of payment for fuel, has to be based upon average miles per gallon for the vehicle used for an agreed distance between home to meeting, the cost identified to be agreed prior to submission for approval. • Only council approved Taxi companies can be used for transportation. These can be accessed through the Transport Team.



	<p>reimbursement of own, family or friend's petrol costs. Taxis are not the first option to be explored and will not be approved unless all other avenues of travel have been exhausted and the cost of travel has been evaluated against the benefits to the child of the appointment.</p>	
Specialists Assessments and DNA/Hair Strand Testing	<p>If special assessments or testing is required prior to care proceedings (pre proceedings public law outline PLO) to ascertain if a child is at risk of harm then these need to be agreed by the Access to Resources Panel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Costs should be coded to Section 17;• Any agreement for the above needs to be via an Access to Resources Panel application
Interpreter and Translation Costs	<p>Where English is not the first language for children and carers, workers need to ascertain if the child and/or carer is able to understand and speak English to the level that they can complete their intervention in a meaningful way.</p> <p>If the child and/or carer is not able to understand or speak English to the required level then an interpreter will be required. Consideration is to be given to whether this could be an extended family member or family friend or community worker including teaching staff with the carers permission if it will not be detrimental to the intervention. It is important that any section 47 enquiries or disclosure interviews always have an independent professional interpreter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional Interpreters should always be used for assessments; Case Conferences; and court proceedings.

Commissioned Services Directory

Gloucestershire County Council already commissions a number of providers and services to help meet the needs that we have in Gloucestershire. Before looking at requesting something, please do consult this directory and see if we already have something that could meet your needs.

Provider Name	What it provides	Contract Manager Contact	Specific information	How to access this service
AA Global	Translation and Interpretation services	Vicky Townsend (Children and Families Commissioning Hub, GCC)	Children and Adult services can request support from this service	Text to follow
Auriga	Text to follow	Sarita Walker (Children and Families Commissioning Hub, GCC)		Text to follow
Drug and Alcohol	Drug and Alcohol	Steve O'Neil (Prevention and Wellbeing Commissioning Hub, GCC)		Text to follow
Integrated Transport Unit (GCC)	Transport	Tom Underwood (Business Manager Children's Social Care, GCC)		Text to follow
Barnardos	Advocacy (Childrens)	Tara Mackey (Children and Families Commissioning Hub, GCC)	All complex children, CIC, CIN, care leavers, private fostering, SEND and CwD.	Text to follow
PohWer	Advocacy (Adults)	Fiona Jones (Prevention and Wellbeing Commissioning Hub, GCC)		Text to follow

Access to Resources Panel

What is the panel

The purpose of the Resource Panel is to strengthen the management and access of financial assistance for children, young people and their families. The panel will provide a consistent and effective response to escalating need and ensure that effective interventions are available to meet the needs of these children.

The overall aim of the Resource Panel is to ensure that outcomes in each child and young person's care plan are addressed through appropriately commissioned services, in the most effective and efficient manner.

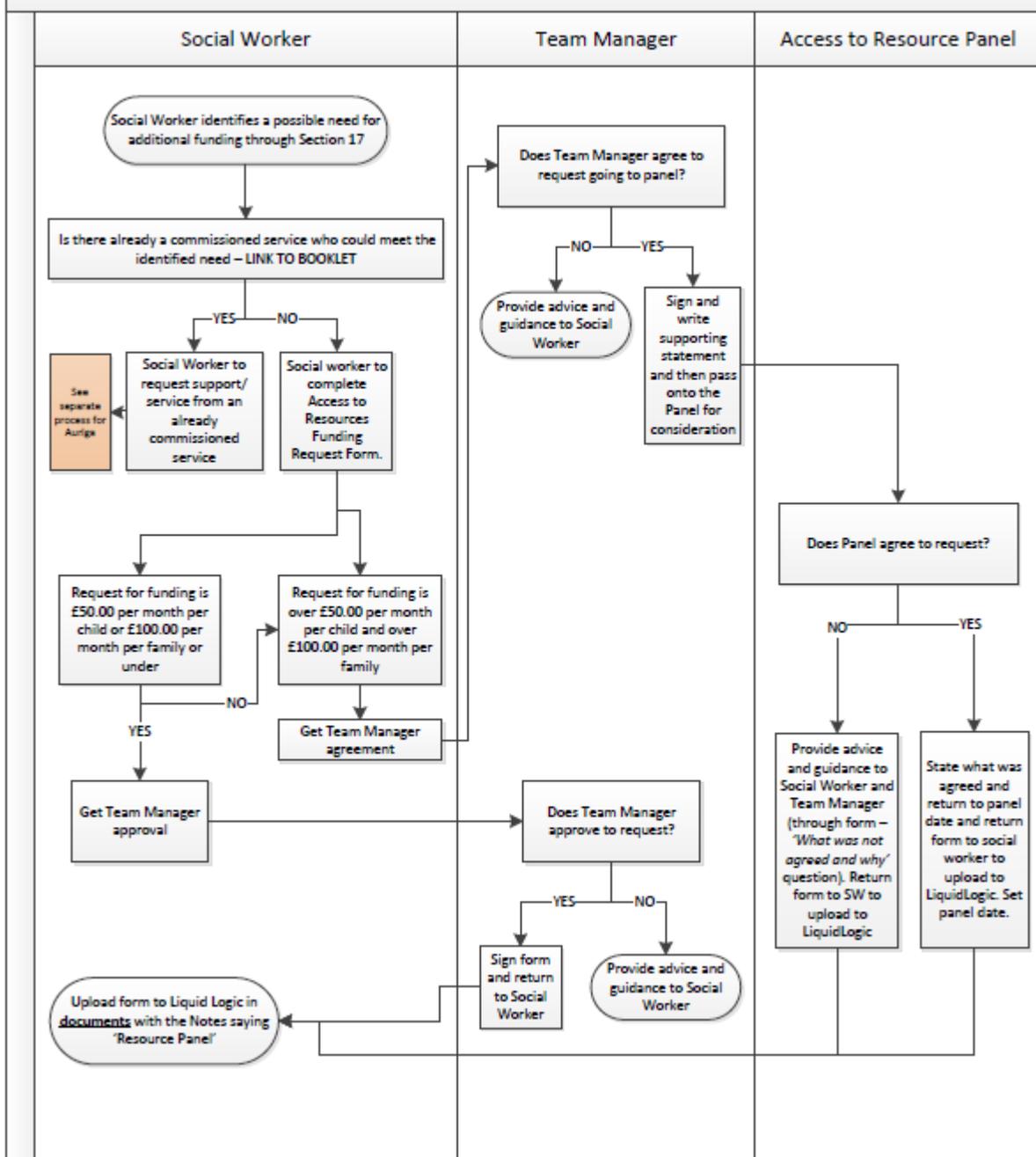
- The panel will develop frameworks for the commissioning of additional services and therapies to support children and their families, in line with need.
- The panel will support social workers in getting the right support in place for children and their families in a timely manner.
- The panel will monitor patterns of spend to inform future commissioning.
- The panel will put some control measures in place to ensure that spend is authorised appropriately and links to care planning.
- The panel will oversee joint commissioning decisions across social care, health and education.

Process for panel

The process for the panel can be found below



Section 17 – Access to Resources Panel Process



Application Form
Text to follow



Access to Resources Funding Request Form

Access to Resources Funding Request Form ADMIN USE ONLY

DATE OF REQUEST Click here to enter a date.

CHILD/Young Person Details

Name of Child/Young Person (also known as)

Date of Birth:

Gender (please tick): Male Female

Liquid Logic (LCS) Number:

Does this child have an ENCP? Yes No

Address and Postcode

Legal Status

Child in Need Child Protection

Child in Care (by a parent and non-Care Order) CLA Legal Status

Parental Child Leaving Care Home Return Child Leaving Care

Other (please specify)

Type of Placement

Independent Foster Care Independent Living Accommodation

In-house Foster Care Residential Care Placement

Residential Educational Placement Supported Living Accommodation

Other (please specify)

Education Provision

If this is for multiple children in the family, please provide the details here:

Name	Age	Gender	ENCP?
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Access to Resources Funding Request Form

REQUESTOR DETAILS

Social Worker / Lead Professional:

Team:

Contact Number:

DETAILS OF REQUEST

Details of Request (Please tick)

Expected Outcome: (Please tick)

Expected Timescale:

Have any alternative interventions been provided prior to this request?

Next significant date (this should be the next date of a significant event relating to the request, such as a court date, this date will be used to compare when the service should be provided)

Amount being requested and breakdown of costs

NE if the request is for a child under 16 and/or £100.00 per month per child or under £100.00 per month per child and over £100.00 per month per child, this will need to be broken down into monthly and one-off costs.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION Please only attach relevant up to date information that addresses the need for the child/young person.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Child Protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	CLA Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Care Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Court Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	CP Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sanctions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Child in Care Meeting Minutes	<input type="checkbox"/>	CLA Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other - please specify below
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pathway Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review of Arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk & Safeguarding Memo	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Access to Resources Funding Request Form

TEAM MANAGER AGREEMENT AND DECISION

Please do not submit for panel approval until you have received £100.00 per month per child or under £100.00 per month per child and over £100.00 per month per child.

Decision made by:

Date:

Person responsible for Concessions:

Services:

What was agreed:

What was not agreed and why:

TEAM MANAGER AGREEMENT FOR REQUESTS NEEDING TO GO TO PANEL

Do you agree for the request to come to panel? Yes No

Supporting comments:

For requests requiring panel approval, please send form to resources@gloucestershire.gov.uk

PANEL AGREEMENT AND DECISION

Please do not submit for £100.00 per month per child or under £100.00 per month per child and over £100.00 per month per child until you have received £100.00 per month per child or under £100.00 per month per child and over £100.00 per month per child.

Decision made by:

Date:

Person responsible for Concessions:

Services:

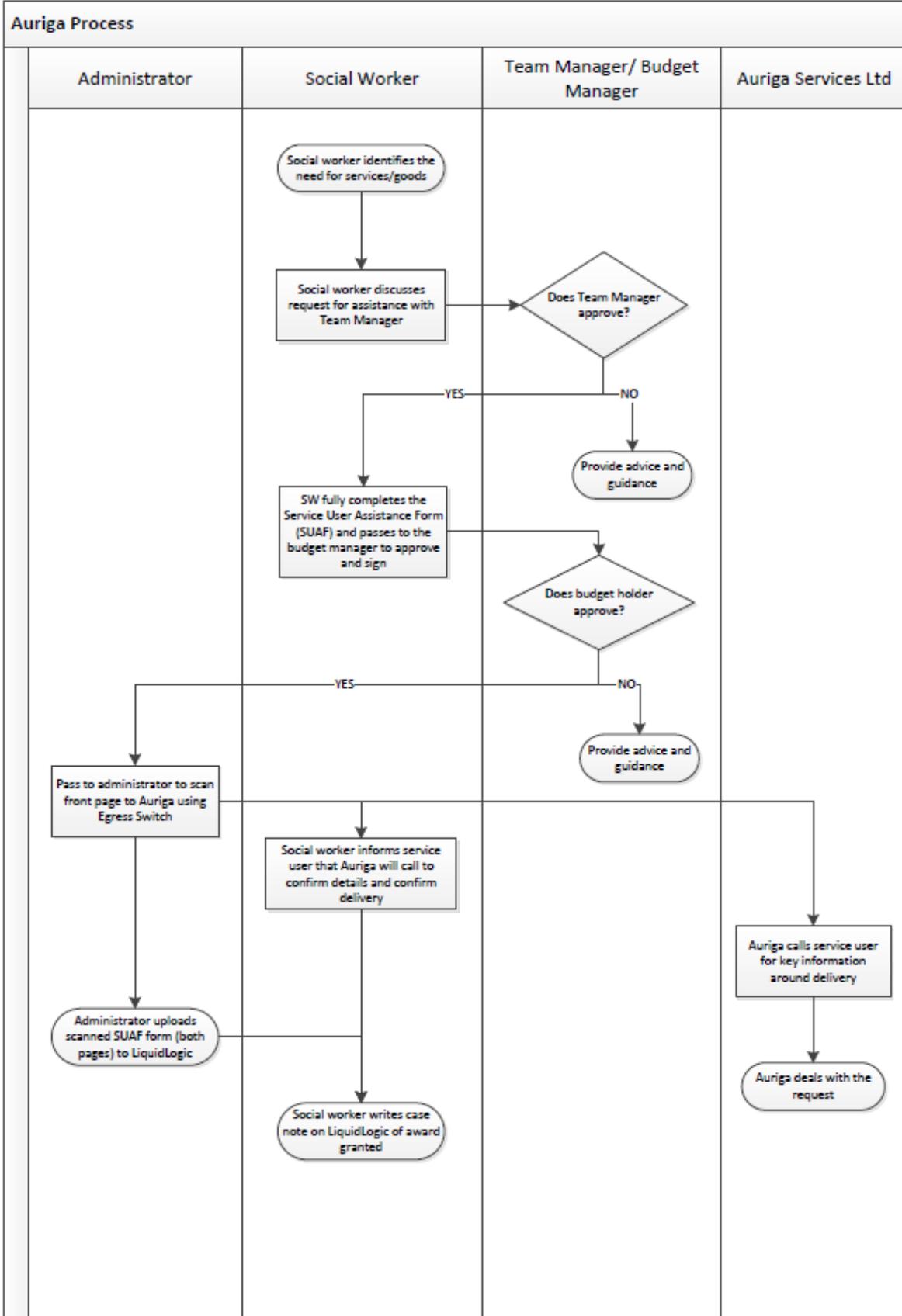
What was agreed:

What was not agreed and why:

Date to return to:

Copies to:

Process for Auriga
Text to follow





Preferred Provider Framework

DRAFT