Personal Assistant Scheme
(INFORMATION SHEET FOR EMPLOYERS OF PERSONAL ASSISTANTS)

What is a Personal Assistant?
A Personal Assistant (PA) is:

- Someone who is employed directly by the person they are providing support to.
- Someone who will work to meet someone’s individual needs as described in their support plan.

The hours of work, roles and tasks are unique to each employment opportunity but may include things such as assisting with personal care, tenancy support, support to live full, included and connected lives and support with education. Working as a PA offers a flexible and rewarding job opportunity.

Someone can be employed as a Personal Assistant if:

- The individual employing them is in receipt of a Direct Payment from Social Work.
- They are the successful candidate as chosen by the person they will be working for.

No matter the duties in the job description or the workplace environment, it is important to maintain respectful and professional boundaries between employee and employer.

What is the Personal Assistant Scheme?

Midlothian Council understands the difficulties people have when starting their journey into Social Work funded support, particularly when opting for Direct Payments.

It can be daunting looking to employ staff, and safe recruitment is paramount. Some people may already have a potential employee in mind but many others do not. This poses the question, where do they start?

Midlothian Council is inviting all existing and yet to be employed PAs to join the Personal Assistant Scheme. This is a public directory which allows the PA to provide details of the services they can provide, share their experiences and their availability.
for work. In addition to this they will also be asked to provide an optional photograph of themselves.

The criteria of joining the Personal Assistant Scheme is that the person must be a member of the PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) scheme and be able to provide Midlothian Council with a PVG reference number. Midlothian do not quality assure or assess potential candidates. It is up to the employer to ensure these checks have been carried out.

The scheme cannot guarantee the successful recruitment to PA posts. It will, however, help to connect people and increases the chances of both employers and PAs finding the right person to work for or employ.

**How do I use the Personal Assistant Scheme?**

It can be found on the Self Directed Support section of the Midlothian Council Website. If you do not have access to a computer a paper copy of the directory can be requested through our contact centre on 0131 271 3900.

Midlothian recommends that prospective employers use the directory to choose potential employees they would like to interview and then to progress the recruitment of any PA by undertaking their own checks including PVG Checks.

Support with all aspects of managing a Direct Payment including the recruitment of PAs is available through our partner agency The Lothian centre for Inclusive Living (LCIL). It is also possible to advertise directly for staff through the PA Vacancies section of their website.

More local information regarding Direct Payments and Personal Assistants can be found on the Midlothian Webpage and via the Independent Living Support section of the LCIL webpage.