

Good Practice in Commissioning for Self-Direction – 10 Top Tips

Just so you know a bit about me

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- Support worker
- Supported Living Manager
- Commissioner
- Working on ISFs nationally
- Chair of SDS Network England
- Programme Manager -
Neighbourhoods of Care Doncaster



Chris Watson

1. Help People Know Their Personal Budget

The Care Act statutory guidance says:

“Personal budgets are a key part of the government’s aspirations for a person-centred care and support system.”



“The personal budget enables the person to exercise greater choice and take control over how their care and support needs are met.”

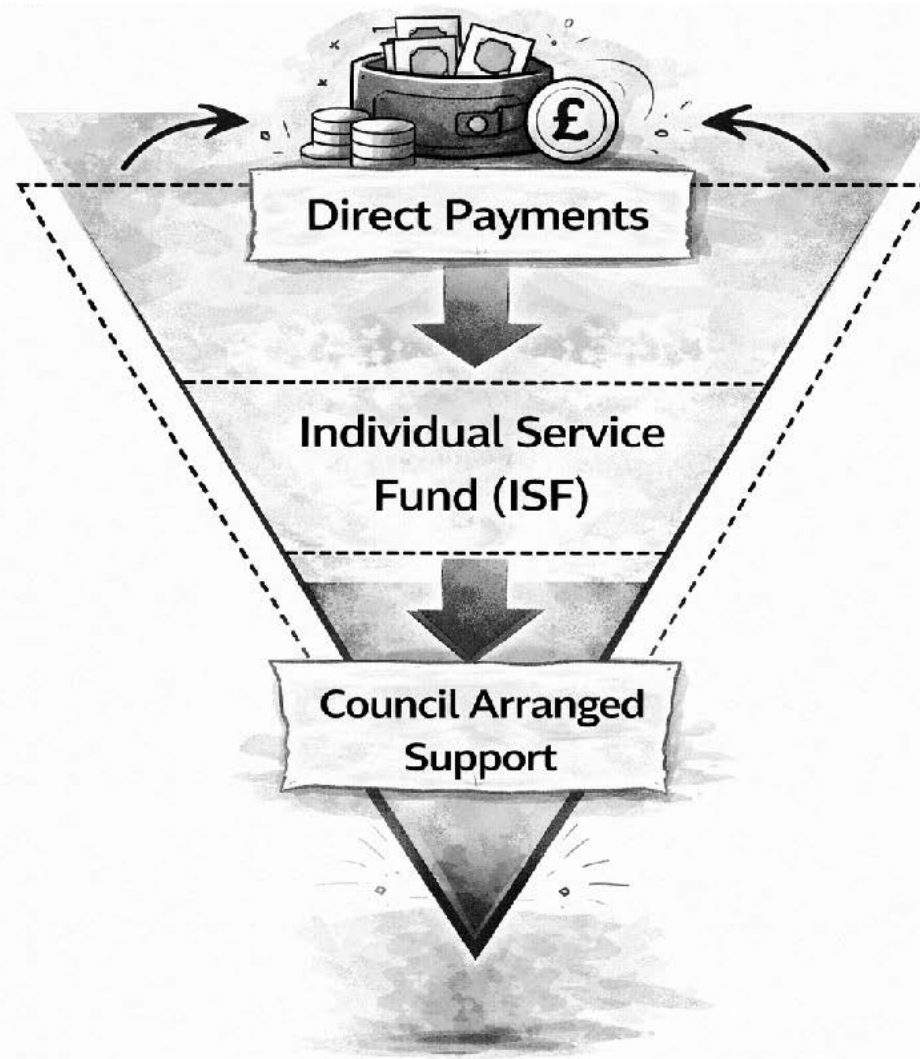


1.1 How this helps...

- People need to understand how much their care costs
- Gives people an opportunity to explore better ways of utilising their budget
- People are best place to decide how they are supported and how to use their resources

2. Set Self-Direction As Your Strategy

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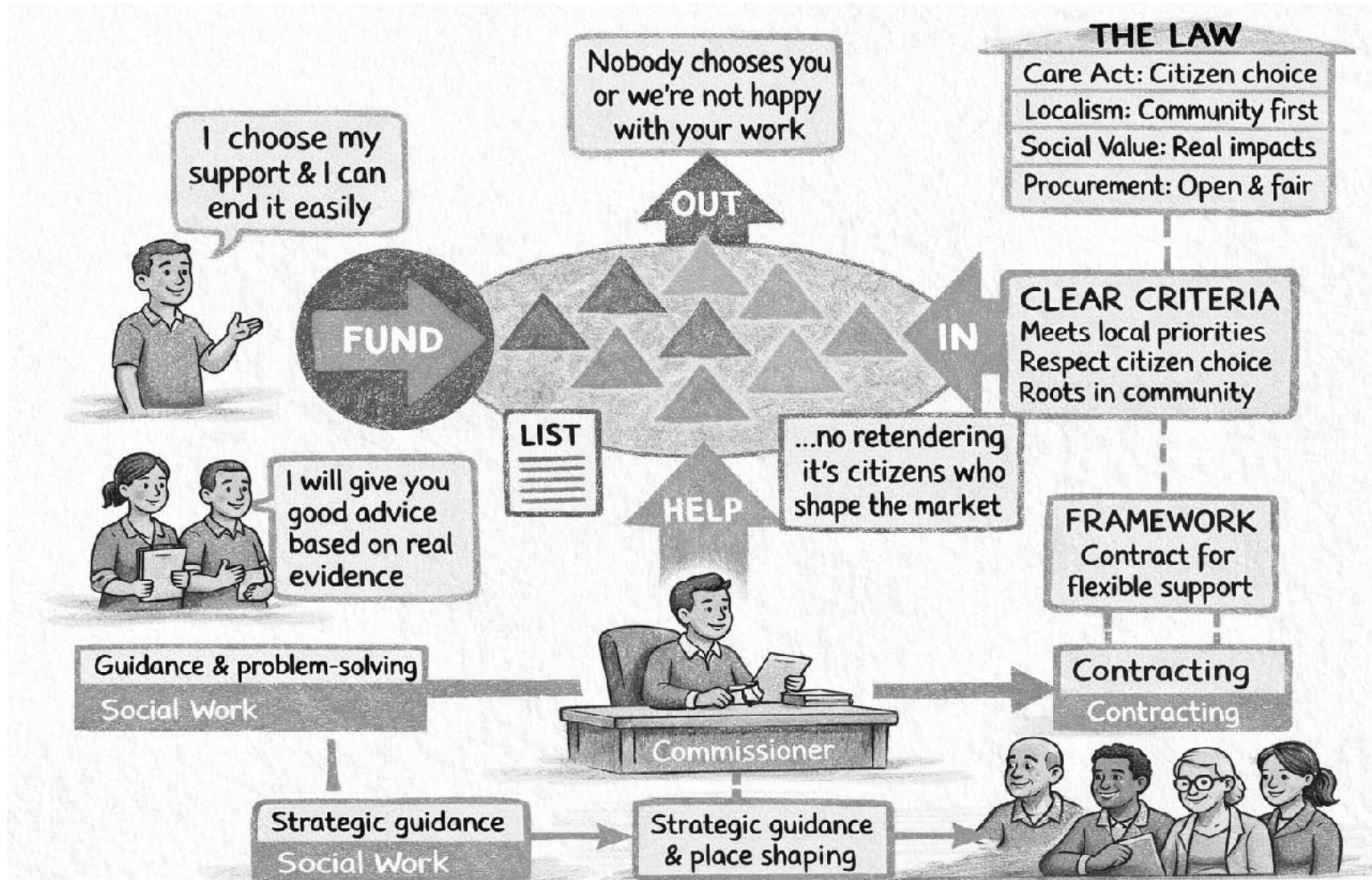




2.1 How this helps...

- SDS drives local innovation
- SDS offers better value for money for the public purse
- Direct Payments don't work for everybody but Individual Service Funds can

3. Citizens Shape Markets





3.1 How this helps...

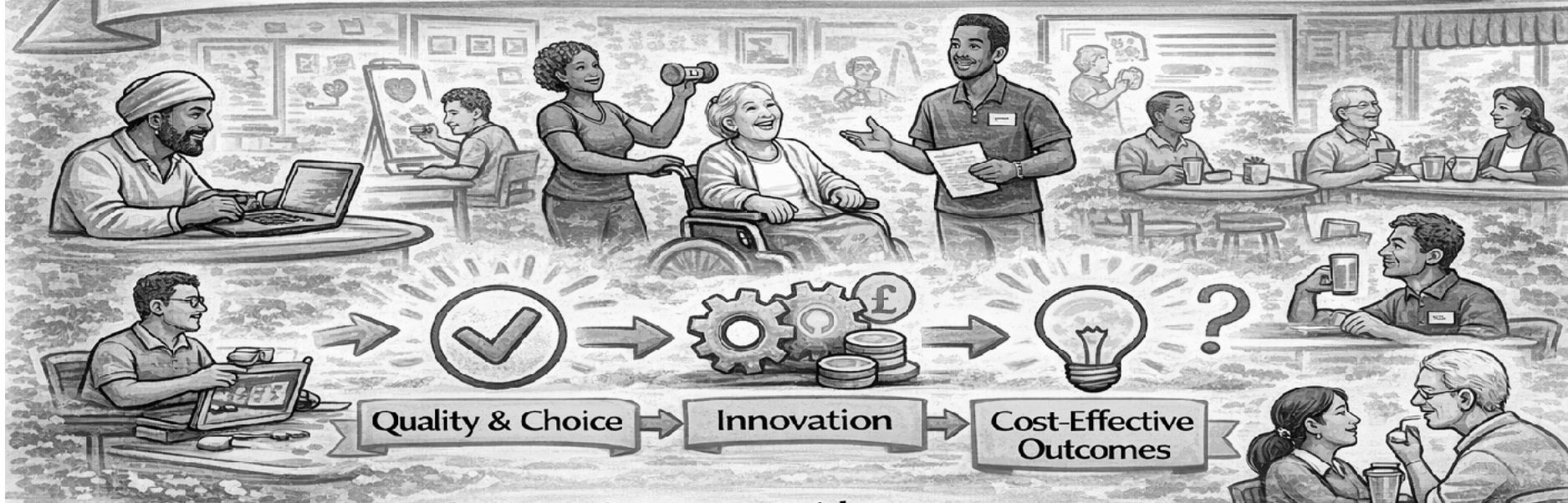
- People can choose and change their support provider/support option without friction
- Good options grow and thrive
- Poor support options leave the area

4. SDS Enables Continuous Improvement

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The ambition is for local authorities to influence and drive the pace of change for their whole market, leading to a sustainable and diverse range of care and support providers, continuously improving quality and choice, and delivering better, innovative and cost-effective outcomes that promote the wellbeing of people who need care and support.”

Care Act Statutory Guidance, para. 4.2





4.1 How this helps...

- Choice and competition drives innovation
- Marketing directly to citizens improves quality
- A broad range of support options means public funds are used cost effectively

5. Clarify who is delivering great support

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1 Great providers

- ✓ **People before profit**
Values-driven
 - Work in close partnership with the council
 - Deliver creative and person-centred support
 - Help people become more independent

2 Good providers

- Willing to learn and adapt
- Deliver safe and largely good services
- Open to improving and working with communities
- May need support to build new skills

3 Weak providers

- ✗ Primarily profit-driven
Not person-centred
- ✗ Not aligned with social value and council strategies
- ✗ Weak recruitment, high staff turnover
- ✗ People often let down by poor support

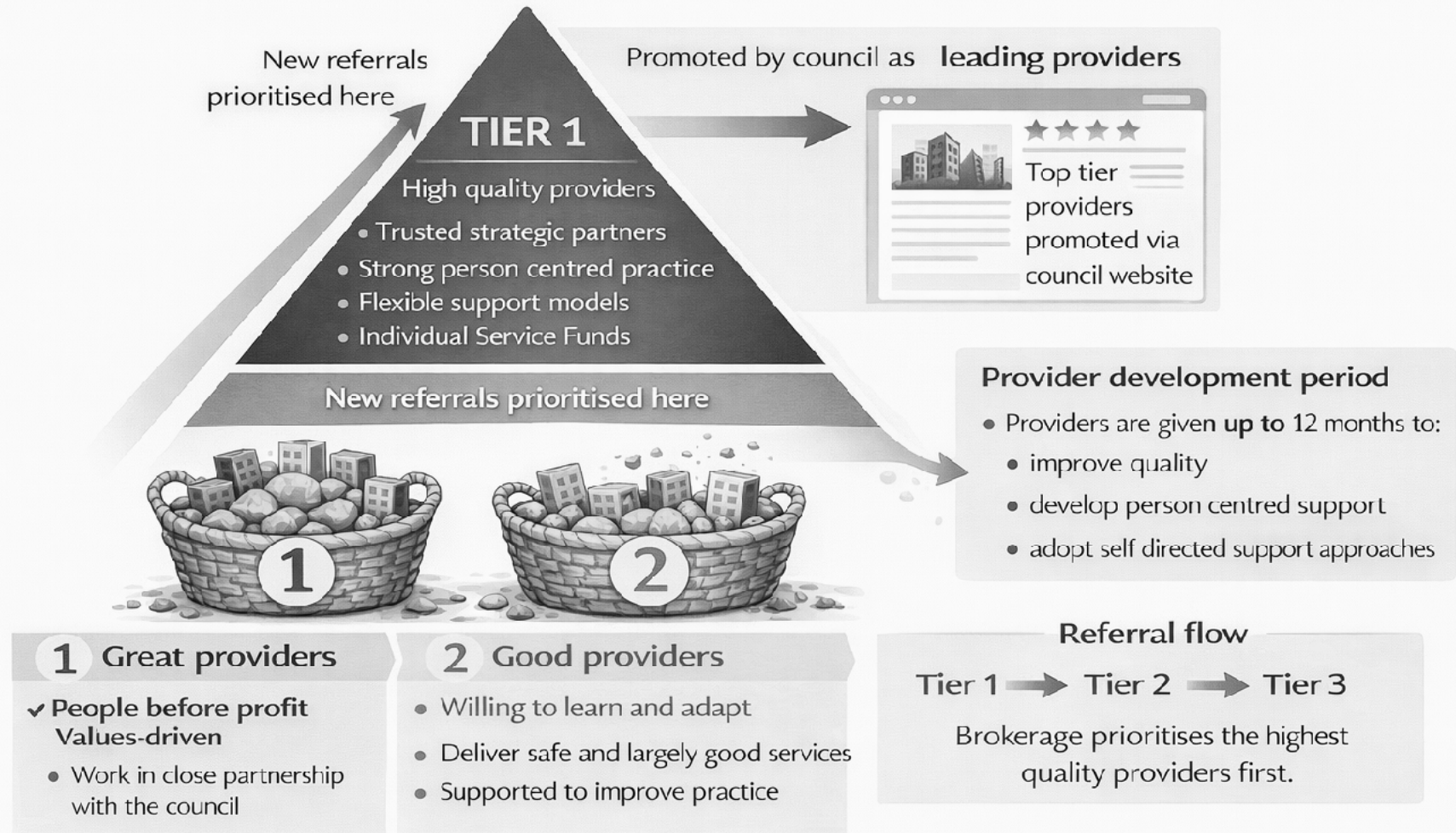


5.1 How this helps...

- Citizens and communities can set their local quality standards
- Understand where there are gaps in provision and quality
- Creates the opportunity to re shape local support options

6. Use tiered contracts to organise & reward

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The system rewards the best providers and gradually improves the whole market.

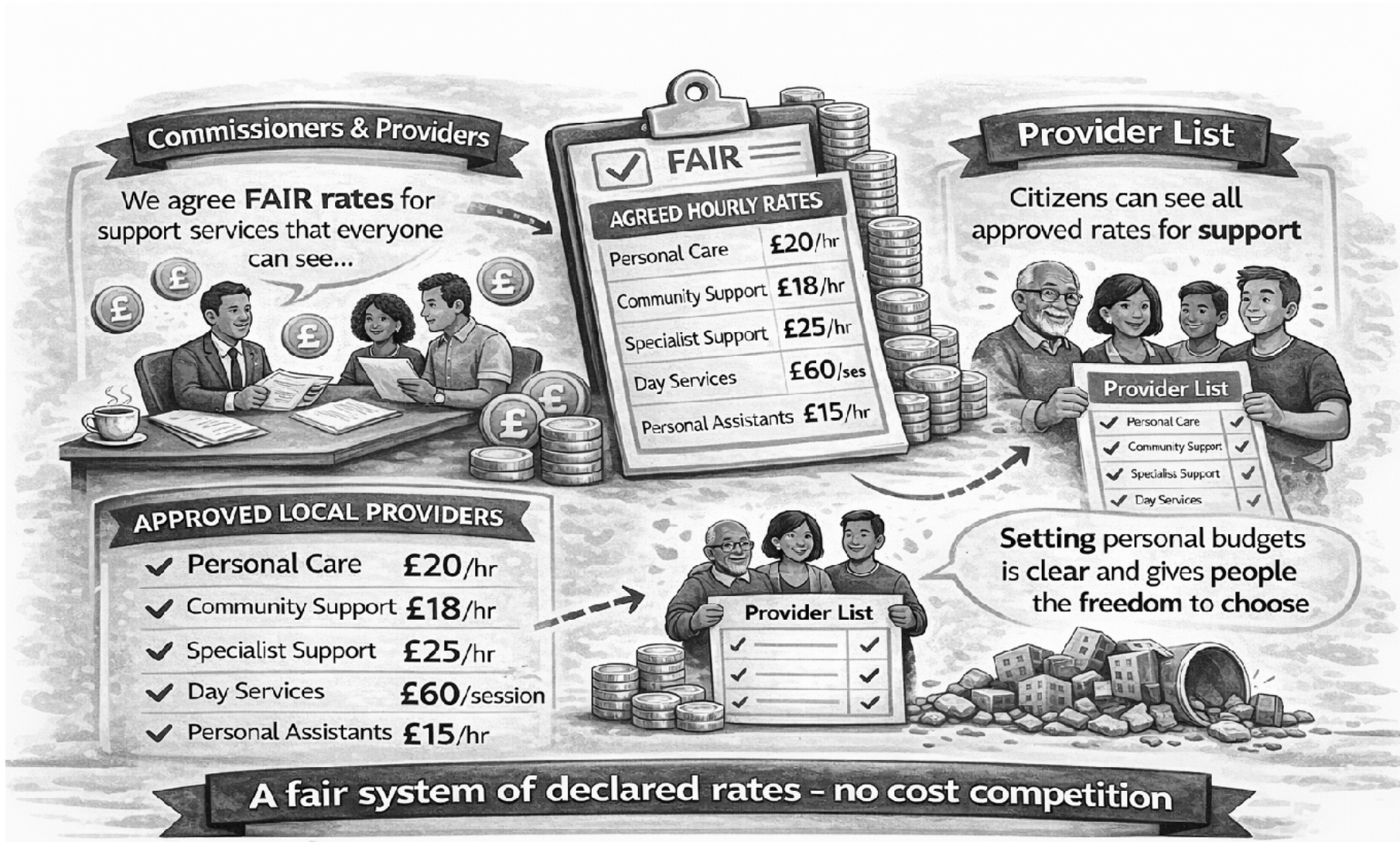


6.1 How this helps...

- Models the way to all organisations, encourages collaboration and drives up quality
- Helps the best and most values driven/innovative organisation grow
- By focusing on Social Value you can remove extractive organisations whos' main goal is shareholder profit from the area

7. Agree set rates with providers

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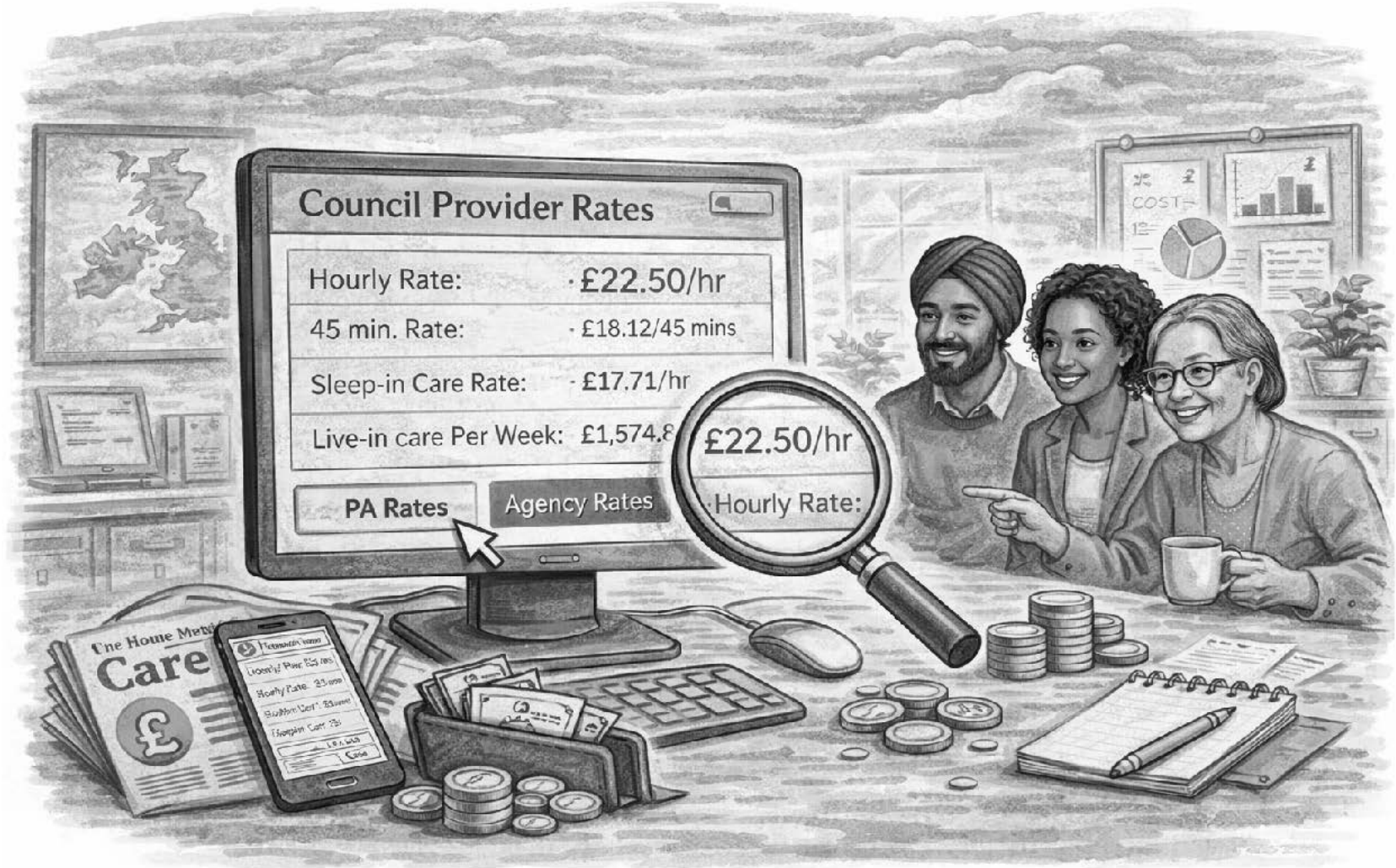


7.1 How this helps...

- Removes need for competitive tendering
- Enables people to have full choice around support provision
- Makes calculating personal budgets much easier for social work teams

8. Publish rates online

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8.1 How this helps...

- People can understand what they can expect as a personal budget
- This can drive uptake of Direct Payments and Individual Service Funds
- Local Authorities can let go of control knowing that that costs are re the same as they would directly commission

9. Offer Brokerage For Direct Payment/ISF Holders

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The Care Act guidance points toward councils offering practical help to people who want it, including people using Direct Payments or Individual Service Funds.

That should include:

- help to find suitable care and support
- help to compare different providers and options
- help to understand how Direct Payments and ISFs work
- help to recruit or arrange support where needed
- help to make effective choices, not just be given a budget and left alone

Choice and control includes the right to do it yourself — and the right to have help to do it.



Care Act statutory guidance supports this through the duties around information and advice, support to access systems and processes, micro-commissioning support for Direct Payment holders, and information/advice on how ISFs work. 🗨️

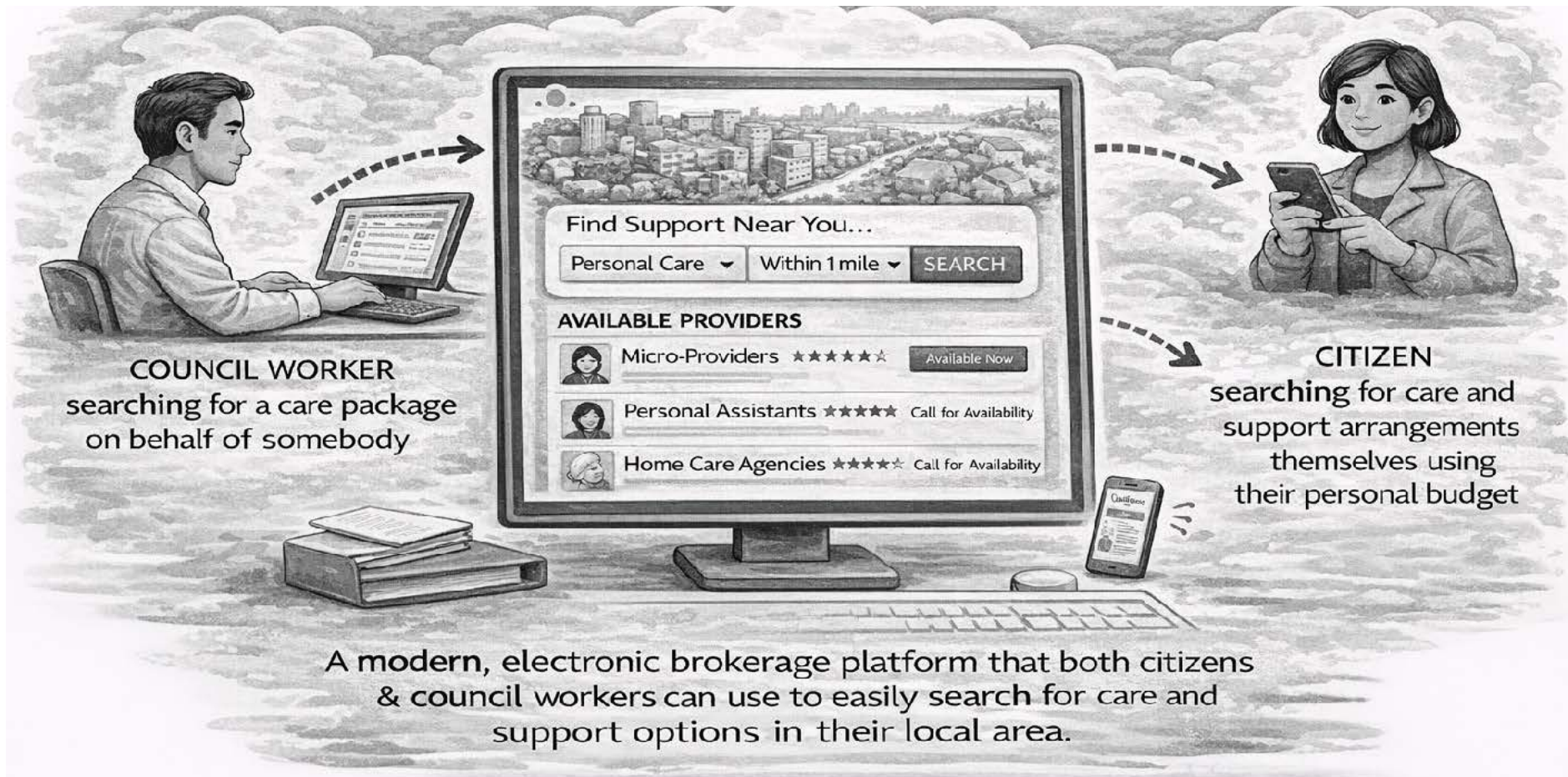


9.1 How this helps...

- Reduces friction for social workers
- Reduces friction for citizens
- Drives up DP numbers

10. Develop A Publicly Available Electronic Brokerage Platform

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10.1 How this helps...

- Makes it easier for everyone to find help locally
- Gives the local authority & citizens live up to date information on what is available at that moment
- Widens choice and gives people a range of options to explore (some of which may be better value)