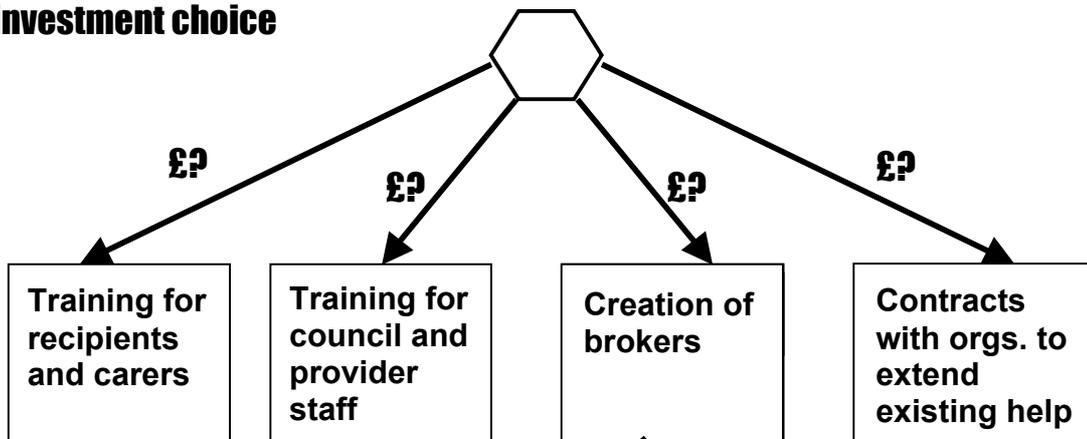


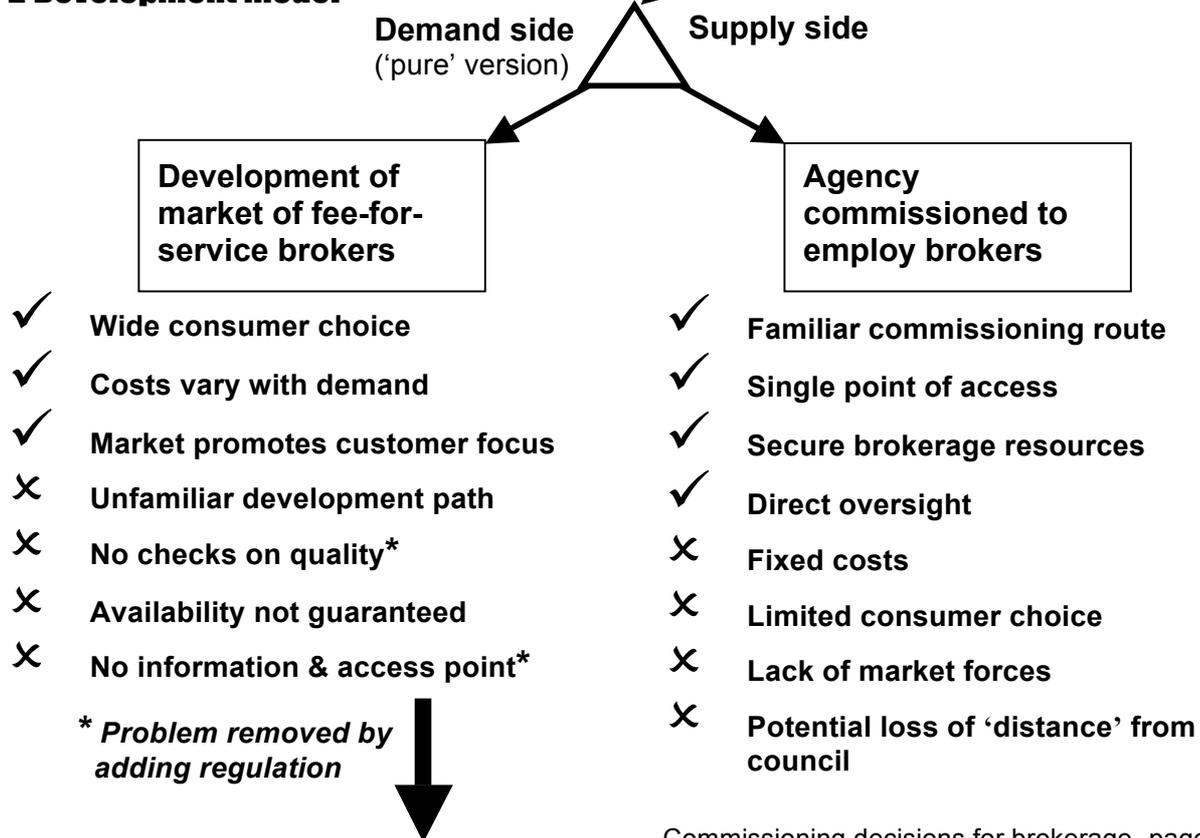
Developing independent broker resources: decision points and options

These notes have been prepared to accompany the workshop presented by Steve Dowson. They outline the decisions that councils will need to make once it has been recognised that the implementation of Personal Budgets must be supported by the provision of assistance with the tasks of brokerage. The pathway shown below follows the route to independent brokers. It should be added that the decisions will, of course, change with, or be assisted by, the development of training provision and clearer national policies, particularly on accreditation.

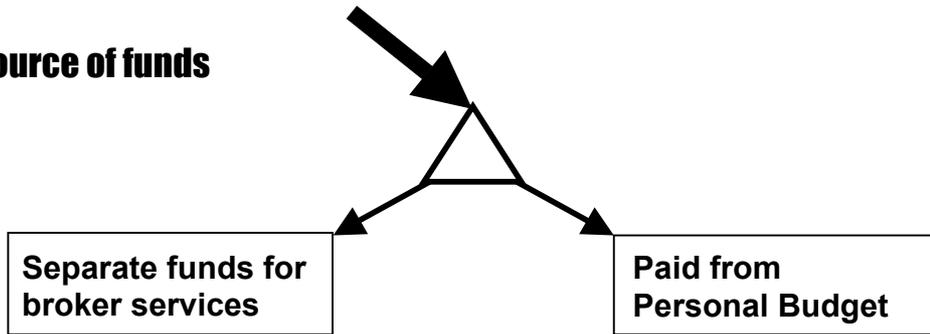
1 Relative investment choice



2 Development model



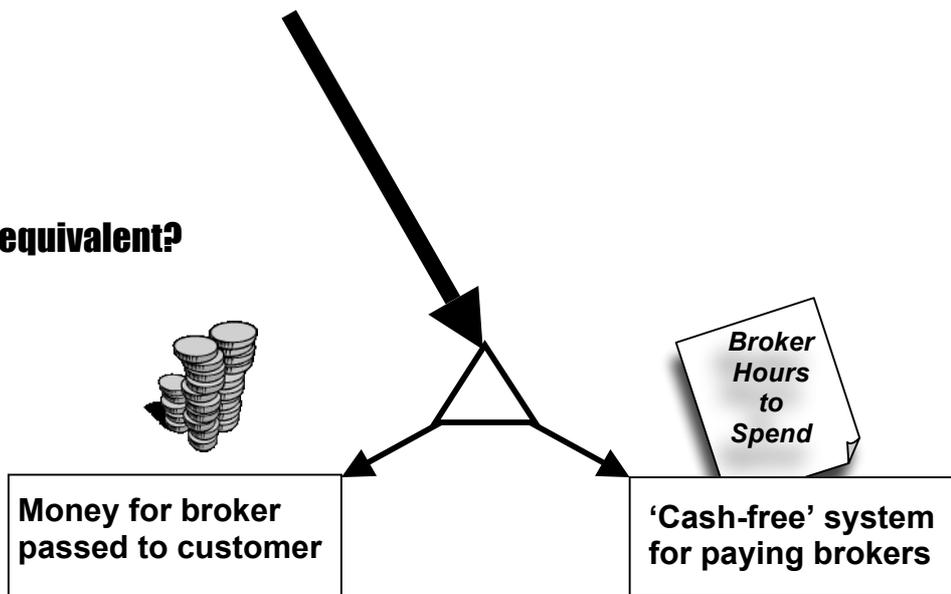
3 Budget source of funds



- ✓ Encourages people to use a broker when they need one
- ✗ May encourage people to use broker when they don't need one.
- ✗ Requires a system for rationing hours/funds
- ✗ Payment system *could* undermine customer relationship

- ✓ Maximises choice
- ✓ No system required to allocate brokers hours/costs
- ✗ Likely to discourage people from using a broker.
- ✗ Need to pay broker before sign-off of Support Plan creates 'chicken and egg' problem

4 Cash or equivalent?



- ✓ Underlines customer status
- ✗ In contrast to Personal Budgets, assumes everyone wants and can manage a Direct Payment.
- ✗ Complex admin. systems required for relatively small amounts of money.

- ✓ Allows full customer choice
- ✓ Can be used to ensure approved brokers are used.
- ✓ Simple admin. processes
- ✓ Supports monitoring of broker usage.
- ✗ Weakens the principle that the person is the customer.

5 Additional decisions

5a Broker allocation and payments

- How many hours? How calculated?
- Resources and procedures for payment

5b Information

- Broker profiles - availability and format
- Customer awareness of broker service as option - both PB holders and self-funders?
- Role understood and conveyed accurately by care managers etc.?
- Profiles available on Website (which site?)
- Alternative paper-based profiles available.
- Information to recruit brokers – where and how widely, message

5c Setting and maintaining standards

- Who will accredit (in the short and long term)?
- Available User-Led Organisation?
- *problematic links with primary or secondary support services provision?*
- Available, independent, and sufficiently expert local broker support?
- Requirements for accreditation – values, competence, independence
- Availability of training – commissioning of training; cost to participants;
- Criteria for access to training.
- Code of practice agreed and enforceable?
- Commitment and understanding inside council management to support integrity of broker role.

Steve Dowson