

Proposed Changes to the Non Residential Adult Social Care Charging Policy

Introduction

The Council has discretionary power to levy contributions towards the costs of non residential care provided these are in line with national guidance. An officer led review of the current policy was completed in October 2012. This was undertaken to ensure the policy met revised national guidance, supported the development of personalisation in adult social care, was equitable and fair and maximised income from those assessed as being able to afford to pay to ensure future sustainability of services given the increasing demands due to demographic changes.

An extensive consultation exercise was undertaken led by an independent facilitator. This commenced on 8th October 2012 and ended on 11th January 2013. Although satisfied that a full and appropriate consultation was undertaken that meets both national guidance and the Council's policy, a deferral of the decision was undertaken to allow further consultation with groups on specific areas of concern. The further period of consultation ran from 22nd February 2013 to 2nd April 2013, although verbal comments were able to be made up to the date of the Cabinet decision.

As a result of the consultation two changes are suggested to the original proposals.

As a result of the initial phase of the consultation it is suggested the proposal to ask those who could afford to do so to contribute up to the full economic cost of day service provision should be introduced once a 2 year period, with a maximum contribution for 2013/2014 being £22. This is suggested to allow time for individual to adjust to change in spending. It is felt that to do otherwise would impact on individual care arrangements, potentially increase pressure on family carers and would destabilise the market.

Having regard to national charging guidance legal advice is that there is no justification for giving a rent allowance to the specific group of customers who currently receive it. However it is recognised that this has been paid to this limited group of individuals for some time and spending and care decision have been based on the receipt of this allowance. It is therefore proposed to phase the removal of the allowance to ameliorate the impact.

A Local Authority Circular: Charging for Residential Accommodation and non Residential Care was received on 15th October 2012. This states that Councils cannot take account of purchasing function or the cost of operating the charging system when setting rates. For this reason the original proposals

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have been created to remove the proposed overhead costs from maximum rate.

The final proposals after consultation are detailed below;

1. To change the title of the policy to “non residential care contributions policy”.
2. To offer annualised Individual Budgets as required.
3. To introduce a capital limit in line with Charging for Residential Accommodation Guidance (CRAG) excluding capital in the home the individual is currently resident.
4. To take 100% of disposable income into account in determining individual contributions towards the costs of non residential care.
5. To require a contribution of up to the actual cost of providing domiciliary care (Note this will not increase contributions as the current maximum contribution equates to the actual cost of provision)
6. To require a contribution of up to £22 for day services in 2013/2014 and to increase this to the actual cost of providing day care in 2014/2015.
7. To require a contribution of up to the actual cost of overnight care and 24 hour care.
8. To take benefits related to night time care into account in the financial assessment of individuals receiving overnight care.
9. To require a contribution of up to the actual cost of 2 carer packages of care.
10. To delegate to the Executive Director for Adult Social Care the authority to determine which one off services should be included in charging and the scale of fees for these services.
11. To treat services directly accessed by carers as non chargeable.
12. To reduce the rent allowance previously given to a number of individuals living at home to £20 in 2013/2014 and to remove this allowance from April 2014.
13. To assess individuals arranging their own residential respite under the NRC policy.
14. To ratify the current approach of annualising contributions for day services commissioned by the Council taking account of the level of closure for public holiday.
15. To ratify the current practice of offering a choice of financial assessment as a couple or individual.
16. To discontinue the collection of income in situations where the individual is assessed as regularly requiring to contribute less than £3 per month.
17. To backdate changes to contributions to the date the individuals assessed contribution changes.

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18. After individual review of care arrangements to ensure best value and equity in spend to take account of the additional contributions individuals receiving Independent Living Fund are required to make when setting individual contributions.
19. To ratify the current approach of requiring those receiving care and support under a Guardianship Order to contribute towards the costs of their care.
20. To work with other Councils to maximise contributions from those awarded compensation to meet care needs.
21. To end the practice of taking debt into account when determining contributions.
22. To endorse the policy on allowances for Disability Related Expenses.