



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 25th February 2020

To the Chair and Members of Cabinet

Changes to the Council's arrangements for Adult Social Care Charges

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Rachael Blake Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care	All Wards	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Doncaster's key strategic plans for health and social care are geared towards a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents. This will be achieved, despite the current financial climate, through excellent community services and by maximising people's independence and making best use of their strengths and those of local communities. There will be more choice and opportunity, better technology and better services closer to where people actually live. This report and its recommendations are aimed squarely at achieving these goals, through more modern and equitable services that make best use of available resources, to deliver the outcomes and meet the needs of Doncaster's most vulnerable people.
2. The report proposes changes to a range of fees, charges and charging practices in adult social care. Current arrangements have remained unchanged for many years, in some cases they are inequitable for people and result in financial consequences for the council.
3. Five key principles for charging have been used to determine 9 proposals to change adult social care charges, making sure that proportionality and fairness is embedded in charging practice. Derived from the Doncaster Growing Together programme, the principles are directly aligned to the ethos of helping vulnerable people to have the right support and helping older and disabled people to live well and independently in their own homes, making the most of individual and community strengths. They are:
 - We will deliver value
 - We will keep it simple
 - We will be ambitious
 - We will do it together
 - We will expect everyone to do their bit

4. A comprehensive consultation exercise has been undertaken across the borough, working directly with The Consultation Institute, to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to have a say. This consultation has helped to shape the current proposals. If all responses to the 9 proposals are aggregated, then the result of the consultation was that 34% of people agreed with proposals, 32% did not agree with the proposals and 32% neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals. Throughout the consultation people were extremely positive about council services, taking the opportunity to praise their quality and value. A detailed consultation report is attached as Appendix A.
5. Councillors have also been engaged through direct communication, specific informal scrutiny sessions and a formal Overview and Scrutiny Management meeting on 21st February 2020.
6. Doing nothing is not considered an option, particularly in view of the increasing cost of social care and the impact on the council's overall financial position. This is a logical and sensible initiative to recover costs that the council incurs in the management, administration and provision of care and support, for people who have the means to pay for it themselves.
7. The wider scope for improving charging arrangements is consistent with Doncaster's strategic plans, through more sustainable services; improved choice for the customer; increased equity and fairness; simpler charging; better governance; greater independence; better use of people's strengths; better advice and guidance and; better equality.
8. The budget position and financial effects of the proposals are set out in the financial implications section of the report. The amount of funding that the Council receives from the government has reduced by around 50% in the last 10 years. At the same time the number of people needing adult social care in Doncaster is growing. This makes it harder to keep vital services running and make sure they are fit for the future. In order to protect and invest in services the Council has to consider how it can make the best use of the budget available, whilst still supporting people to live independent, happy and healthy lives.

EXEMPT REPORT

9. This report is not an exempt item.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - Considers the detailed outcome of the comprehensive consultation exercise undertaken in relation to the proposals contained within this report and set out in Appendix A.
 - Recognises that the proposals contained in the report are reasonable initiatives to safeguard/improve services and recover costs that the council incurs in the management, administration and provision of care and support (in line with the guiding principles).
 - Approves the 9 proposals to change adult social care charges set out in the "Individual Proposals" section of this report and summarised in paragraph 155.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

11. Meeting the needs of vulnerable people is the council's main priority.
12. No reductions in services are planned as a result of this report. The changes described will serve to protect services and are more likely to result in improvements, which will actually have a positive impact on outcomes for people.
13. The finances of vulnerable people will be protected by the financial assessment process, which supports their minimum income guarantee. Some people may have to contribute more for their care and support, but charges will be limited to levels that the Government judge people can afford. Their contributions will be fairly assessed in line with the principles within this report.
14. People will have more choice in their support from a wider range of improved services.
15. Individual, family and community capacity will improve and increase by promoting strengths and independence. This will in turn impact positively on a range of partnership priorities that help Doncaster to care together for its most vulnerable residents.
16. The financial impact on people of a variety of potential scenarios has been modelled and was set out as part of the consultation information available to all. It is attached as Appendix C.

BACKGROUND

17. The council's Corporate Plan, linked to the Doncaster Place Plan, sets out a range of priorities to help Doncaster and its people to thrive, despite continued budget constraints and domestic policy uncertainty. The proposals within this report will make sure that services can continue to operate and aid improvement that will help Doncaster to continue be a "borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents".
18. At the centre of the proposals and Doncaster's strategic plans, is the ethos that vulnerable families and individuals will have the appropriate support that meets their needs and that people can live well and independently in their own homes. People will be safe, healthy and independent, but require less health and social care.
19. Collectively the service changes contribute strongly to Doncaster's priorities by:
 - Protecting vital, but non-statutory services
 - Helping to better manage demand for services and making sure that the services provided are right first time for the residents who need them
 - Developing health and social care services so that they meet the needs of local people
 - Improving residents' experience of health and social care services
 - Protecting the most vulnerable people and supporting people to keep safe
20. Charging fairly is a priority because the council's arrangements have remained unchanged for many years. Current charging methodology is based on custom and practice and historical decisions that could have a negative impact on people and the council. It can restrict choice, be unfair to Doncaster people, put services at risk and increase bureaucracy. The council is now in a position where modernisation is being hampered and the costs associated with the services that are charged for, far outweigh the actual revenue generated from charging.

21. The council has a clear plan to manage its resources over the next 3 years, despite reducing funding, rising demand for services and increasing costs. The cost recovery propositions will make a significant contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which includes a commitment to review fees and charges. The MTFS currently highlights an overall council budget gap of £17.7m between 2020 and 2023.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF CHARGING

22. The council has adopted 5 guiding principles to make sure that charging is fair and equitable and that arrangements and governance are simple and effective. These principles are derived directly from those set out in the Doncaster Growing Together programme and have been used as part of the development of the proposals within this report. **We will:**

- **Deliver value**
 - Charges will contribute to council budgets and to keeping services running, but people will not be required to pay more than they can reasonably afford.
- **Keep it simple**
 - Charging methods and rates will be transparent and simple to understand, they will comply with the law and be based on the recovery of costs for the service provided.
- **Be ambitious**
 - Charges will support the continued development of high quality services so that people have choice and people will be helped to claim the full range of benefits that are available to them.
- **Do it together**
 - The safety of vulnerable people will always come first. Any new charges will be considered alongside existing charges and where necessary people will have their finances individually assessed.
- **Expect everyone to do their bit**
 - People will keep their independence in their own community by using their strengths to stay in their own homes for longer, needing less formal care. The money they pay towards their care will not make them suffer financial hardship.

23. At the centre of proposed future arrangements is the premise that vulnerable people will be protected. Council support to vulnerable people is valuable and effective and the primary consideration is that people are safe, receive the support that they need and are fairly treated financially. The changes set out in this report will make sure that services offer value for money and that they improve, modernise and can continue to be offered in the future.

BENCHMARKING

24. An exercise has been carried out to compare the proposals set out in the report with social care charging in other local authorities. Some of this information is readily available through websites and some is more difficult to obtain, mainly through individual conversations with the relevant councils.

25. The overall conclusion from the results of the exercise, is that the changes proposed are consistent with the approach taken by other councils. The relevant benchmarking information is set out in the Due Regard Statement (Appendix B).

INDIVIDUAL PROPOSALS

26. The individual proposed changes are described below, including the outcome of the consultation undertaken as a result. The proposals were developed by a range of professional officers, including staff from the specific services concerned and from Financial Assessments. They have been blended as a package that will contribute significantly to outcomes for people and to the council's financial strategy. Changes made as a result of the proposals will commence from 1st April 2020. **A comprehensive and detailed consultation report is attached as Appendix A.**

Proposal 1 – Home Alarm Service

Background

27. The Home Alarm Service provides 24 hour monitoring and response for 6,000 people across Doncaster, costing £1.5million a year to run. The service offers a pendant or wristwatch that is connected to a telephone line and is available to adults over 18 years of age, whatever their level of need or disability. The standard package gives access to an emergency responder and full maintenance of the equipment.

28. Extra items of assistive technology such as motion and falls sensors are available through the service to those people who are eligible for additional social care support.

Current Arrangement

29. The Service is currently charged at a standard weekly rate of £3.30 which has not changed significantly for a number of years. There are the following exceptions where people do not have to pay the charge:

30. People aged 65 and over who get housing benefit or Council Tax Support

31. People who are provided with assistive technology equipment as part of their assessed social care needs.

32. People who have reablement services (short term help to get their independence back for up to 6 weeks).

Issues with current arrangement

33. The Council's current approach to charging generates £0.5 million in income. This is just one third of the current cost of the service. The Council also has to continually invest to improve the service. An extra £350,000 of investment is committed this year to further improve call monitoring and response. Over time, especially with more demand from people with social care needs, this will become unaffordable. In light of this, it is hard to justify the charge remaining frozen. The cost of the service has increased over a number of years while the charge has not.

34. Having a one-size-fits all charge also feels too restrictive. Everybody using the service will benefit from the 24 hour monitoring, but people may want a choice about how any response is organised. This can be reflected in charges so that people who do not need a response from the Council (for example because their family are willing and able to respond if alerted) pay less than those who do.

35. It also does not seem fair to exempt some people aged 65 and over from charges, when people aged under 65 are not exempted in the same way. There should be exemptions for some people, but these should be on the basis of their needs rather than their age.

New Proposal

36. The proposal is to replace the current £3.30 per week charge with new charges that will cover more of the current costs and help towards improving the service; all people who can afford to would pay these charges. Two separate charges are proposed, one for the pendant alarm (which would be standard) and one for the response (which would be additional for those who wanted this).
37. New proposed Home Alarm Service rates based on choice and need
- Pendant alarm service £3.64 per week
 - Response Service £1.50 per week
38. The two separate charges give people a choice about which service would be best for them. For example, a person may just want the pendant alarm monitoring service with no response, costing £3.64 per week. Adding the response service to this would cost a total of £5.14 per week (£3.64+£1.50).
39. The proposed charges would be paid by everyone apart from people who:
- Qualify for care and support as part of their assessed social care needs, where assistive technology is used to meet a person's social care need.
 - Have time-limited "reablement" services to help to get their independence back, for up to a maximum of 6 weeks.

Impact

40. The Council's approach to charging in this area would become fairer and more consistent for the reasons already described.
41. People would have more choice of what level of service they receive and pay for.
42. This proposal would not cause a change in charging for approximately 1,000 people who are eligible for adult social care. Therefore people with eligible social care needs would be protected.
43. There are approximately 700 people who do not have eligible social care needs who do not currently pay a charge but who would be expected to if this proposal was agreed.
44. A further 3,500 people who do not have eligible social care needs and who currently pay a charge would see this charge increase.
45. This proposal would increase annual income by £356k which would support the continued sustainability of the service and its ability to improve support year-on-year for Doncaster people.

Consultation summary

46. Of the people who responded; 42% agreed with the proposal; 35% disagreed with the proposal, and; 23% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 46% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 40% thought it could have a negative impact on them.
47. A significant number of people praised the value of the Home Alarm Service.

Proposal after consideration of consultation

48. The consultation exercise has prompted a review of the number of people actually using the service. Actions have been taken to consolidate the customer database, which now shows that approximately 5,000 people are using the Home Alarm Service.

49. Although 7 people questioned the need for a tiered charging method, it is felt that splitting the charge between monitoring and response is the right way forward, as it provides more choice. People will still be able to choose monitoring and response as a package, but will also have the freedom to choose the cheaper option of monitoring only if they prefer to make their own response arrangements. This approach will provide a better balance of independence, resilience and support, using family, the community and public services.
50. Only 9 people indicated that they may cease using the service if the proposal is implemented, which is far fewer than anticipated. The council will monitor numbers of people leaving the service closely and work with them to make sure that their alternative arrangements continue to keep them safe.
51. No changes are proposed to the actual charging arrangements set out in the consultation proposal. Therefore the proposal is still to have 2 separate charges:
- Pendant alarm service £3.64 per week
 - Response Service £1.50 per week
52. The proposed charges would be paid by everyone apart from people who:
- Qualify for care and support as part of their assessed social care needs, where assistive technology is used to meet a person's social care need.
 - Have time-limited "reablement" services to help to get their independence back, for up to a maximum of 6 weeks.

Proposal 2: Care at home

Background

53. The Council uses the national Care Act guidance to assess how much individuals should be charged for care they receive in their own homes. However there is current inconsistency in the approach that the Council takes to this assessment. For some people the Council does not include all the costs of care when working out what they should pay.

Current Arrangement

54. Some people need two or more care workers to help them at the same time. However only the cost of one care worker is currently included in financial assessments, when care has been arranged by the Council. However, when people opt to take a Direct Payment and arrange their care themselves they are charged against all care workers.

Issues with current arrangement

55. Costs are the same however services are accessed, so the charges that people have to pay should be the same. People who have taken the decision to receive a Direct Payment so they have more freedom to purchase their own care could be financially disadvantaged if they have high care needs that require more than one care worker to visit at one time. Because of this, people may be less likely to choose to have Direct Payments, meaning they do not have access to the choice and control this option otherwise brings.

New Proposal

56. The proposal is to include the costs of all care workers attending and providing a service to a person in their financial assessment.

Impact

57. Everyone's financial assessment will be treated in the same way which will be much fairer.
58. People will only have to pay more if their financial assessment says they have enough money to pay for it. At the moment there are only about 10 people in Doncaster who would be likely to have to pay more.
59. Advances in new types of community equipment and assistive technology mean an increasing number of people can safely be supported without more than one care worker needing to visit at once. The Council is talking to people who currently have more than one care worker visiting at once, to better understand their circumstances and increase their privacy and dignity whilst reducing their costs.

Consultation summary

60. Of the people who responded; 44% agreed with the proposal; 29% disagreed with the proposal, and; 27% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 76% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 20% thought it could have a negative impact on them.
61. Feedback emphasised the need to get the number of paid carers right for people in order to avoid a detrimental effect on family or friends if they have to step in.

Proposal after consideration of consultation

62. Operational teams have worked hard to make sure that people have the optimal number of care workers to provide their support. Of the 250 original 2 care worker packages, 71 have been reviewed, making sure that resources are used in the most effective way possible to maximise benefits for people and increase value for money.
63. The adult social care service is now working much more closely with NHS colleagues, so that people leaving hospital after treatment, do so with the right number of care workers to meet their needs, without increasing their dependency on formal services.
64. In order to minimise the impact on people who would be affected by this proposal, it is now proposed to include the costs of all care workers attending and providing a service to a person in their financial assessment, for new customers only, starting from April 2020. The new initiatives highlighted above should naturally reduce the number of people requiring 2 carers in future, therefore fewer people will be affected by the proposal. The council will work closely with people who are affected, to make sure that they are safe and do not suffer financial hardship.

Proposal 3: Day Opportunities provided by the Council's SMILE service

Background

65. The Day services that the Council provides have changed significantly over the last few years, the new name for Doncaster Council day services is 'SMILE'. Many of the services are now in community buildings that are nearer to where people live, so that the 389 people who use them have the opportunity to be involved within communities, enjoying different activities and improving their wellbeing and independence. People who attend day services have a financial assessment to ensure that they only pay what they can afford. The Council also provides transport for some people to attend day services for which there is also a charge.

Current Arrangement

66. People are only charged for their day care if they can afford it after financial assessment. The current chargeable cost of day care is £31 per person per day. This is the maximum that the Council charge people who have been assessed as able to afford it. However it actually costs the Council £46 for moderate support and £76 for high level support to provide the service.

67. People are charged a flat rate for their transport to day care regardless of their assets. This is in line with national rules. The current charge for transport to day care is £3 per journey. The Council has worked hard to reduce transport costs, but it still costs an average of £10 per journey to provide the service.

Issue with current arrangement

68. The costs of providing day services rise every year and the Council needs to look at appropriate options to increase income and continue to provide high quality support.

New Proposal

69. To ensure longer term sustainability, SMILE day services will continue to modernise and look at alternative transport delivery options. While this is taking place, new charges for day care and for transport are proposed:-

70. Day Service:

- The proposal is to increase the day care charge to reflect the actual cost of providing the services. This will mean that the maximum current charge per day, will increase from £31 to £46 for moderate support and from £31 to £76 for high level support. This will remain subject to financial assessment so people will only pay what they can afford.

71. Transport:

- The proposal is to increase the charge for each journey from £3 to £4 from April 2020 and to further increase the cost by £1 a year after that, until the cost charged equals the actual cost of providing the transport. There are currently 150 people who still use Council transport. The relocation of day services to a range of community buildings across the borough has made it easier for the remaining 239 people to access them independently, avoiding the charge.

Impact

72. The new charge for day care was proposed to be introduced for new customers only from April 2020. People who attend day services will continue to have a financial assessment to ensure that they only pay what they can afford. The council will work with existing service users who currently pay for their day care as their needs change over time.

73. About 150 people use transport services and would pay more, which would increase income by £38,000 a year.

Consultation summary

74. Day service - Of the people who responded; 29% agreed with the proposal; 42% disagreed with the proposal, and; 29% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 76% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 23% thought it could have a negative impact on them. Some people suggested greater flexibility and more alternatives including a wider range of service providers.

75. Transport - Of the people who responded; 44% agreed with the proposal; 21%

disagreed with the proposal, and; 35% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 89% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 10% thought it could have a negative impact on them. The value of having care professionals on board for transport journeys was recognised in comparison to public transport.

Proposal after consideration of consultation

76. Day services:

- People have recognised the value of a better variety of day opportunities, with more alternatives to traditional day care. The council will therefore continue to progress innovative initiatives that offer more and better choices in communities and using the voluntary, community and faith sector as well as formal public services.
- It is likely, considering the profile of current people who use the SMILE service that a relatively small proportion of new people would be subject to these maximum costs. However consultation feedback reflects the concerns that people have about these headline rates. These concerns were also raised by Scrutiny Members at their informal meeting on 22nd January 2020.
- The Council is actively engaging in work to reduce loneliness and social isolation for Doncaster people, and making day services as accessible as possible is essential in light of this. Therefore it is proposed that the Council does not pursue the consultation proposal to increase the maximum current charge for the SMILE service to the levels proposed.
- The current maximum charge of £31 will instead be increased to £31.53 in reflection of inflation between 2019-20 and 2020-21.
- As part of work to reduce loneliness and social isolation the Council needs to do more to consider the part that SMILE services play, including the level of subsidy provided to this service compared to other options available. The current charging arrangement may be revisited in the context of that work.

77. Transport:

- Consultation with existing users of day care transport has been useful in reducing costs, which will in turn reduce the level of charges required to recover these costs. The plan is still to introduce the £1 per journey increase per annum, but it is now anticipated that fewer annual increases will be required before revenue from charges is equal to transport service expenditure.
- A small number of people indicated that they may not use the service in future if the price goes up. The council will work with these people to take all reasonable steps to avoid restricting their access to day opportunities.

Proposal 4: Safeguarding personal assets

Background

78. The Council's Safeguarding Adults Personal Assets Team (SAPAT) looks after financial, property and personal matters for some people who cannot do this for themselves or do not have family help. This is defined as either Deputyship, which is appointed by the Court of Protection, or Appointeeship, which is appointed by the Department of Work and Pensions.

79. Approximately 500 people are registered for this service.

Current Arrangements

80. The Council currently charges for Deputyship but it does not charge for Appointeeship.

81. The Council also does not charge for other aspects of the SAPAT service although it is allowed to by law. For example, protection of property and travel costs for Appointeeships and Deputyships.

Issues with current arrangement

82. The Council is not required to directly provide this service. If this service was not available from the Council then people would have to pay someone else to help them. The Council wishes to continue to provide this service for vulnerable people, but it is difficult to do this sustainably without charging where it is lawful and reasonable to do this.

New Proposal

83. The proposal is to introduce new charges that the Council has not taken up before although it is allowed:

- Appointeeship charge - It is proposed to bring in a new charge to make sure that people using the council to look after their money and property all pay the same, whether it is an Appointeeship or Deputyship. The monthly charge will be between £2.03 and £48 depending on the persons assets/money and residential situation (see table).

Total savings	Monthly charge to community based clients	Monthly tariff charge to residential care clients
£0 - £1,999	£2.03	£2.03
£2,000 - £2,999	£9.00	£6.00
£3,000 - £3,999	£12.00	£8.00
£4,000 - £4,999	£15.00	£10.00
£5,000 - £5,999	£18.00	£12.00
£6,000 - £6,999	£21.00	£14.00
£7,000 - £7,999	£24.00	£16.00
£8,000 - £8,999	£27.00	£18.00
£9,000 - £9,999	£30.00	£20.00
£10,000 - £10,999	£33.00	£22.00
£11,000 - £11,999	£36.00	£24.00
£12,000 - £12,999	£39.00	£26.00
£13,000 - £13,999	£42.00	£28.00
£14,000 - £14,999	£45.00	£30.00
£15,000 - £15,999*	£48.00	£32.00

*Above £15,999 will become Deputyship

- Protection of property fee – It is proposed to reclaim any money it costs the council for protecting the property of adults being cared for away from home. Charges will be for property searches (£70 per visit); weekly property checks (£10 per visit); storage of property (actual cost), and; boarding of animals (actual cost).
- Travel charge for client visits - The council proposes to charge a fixed rate of £40.00 per hour for travel costs when staff visit clients, which includes staff time and is what the Court of Protection allows.

Impact

84. 269 people are supported by Appointeeship and would pay the new charges.
85. The charges for protection of property and travel costs will apply to all people referred to the service.
86. This proposal would increase annual income by £165,000 which would make sure that the service can continue to support the vulnerable people who are not able to look after their own affairs.

Consultation summary

87. Appointeeship charge - Of the people who responded; 40% agreed with the proposal; 23% disagreed with the proposal, and; 37% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 86% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 11% thought it could have a negative impact on them.
88. Protection of property fee - Of the people who responded; 31% agreed with the proposal; 19% disagreed with the proposal, and; 50% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 90% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 6% thought it could have a negative impact on them.
89. Travel charge for client visits - Of the people who responded; 22% agreed with the proposal; 35% disagreed with the proposal, and; 43% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 80% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 18% thought it could have a negative impact on them.
90. Feedback recognised that Safeguarding Personal Assets is a highly valued service that could benefit from investment.

Proposal after consideration of consultation

91. Appointeeship - A monthly charge of between £2.68 (increased from £2.03 to take account of new bank charges) and £48 depending on the persons assets/money and residential situation is proposed.
92. Protection of property – The proposal is still to reclaim money it costs the council for protecting the property of adults being cared for away from home.
93. Travel charge for client visits – The plan to charge a fixed rate of £40.00 per hour for travel costs when staff visit clients remains, however annual charges will be capped at £120 per person.

Proposal 5: Arrangements for people who pay for their own care in full

Background

94. People who have over £23,250 (including investments/bonds but excluding the value of their home), are currently seen by the government as being able to pay for their own care and support. This amount is updated each year by the government.

Current arrangements

95. At the moment the council helps around 450 people in this group to arrange their care without charging them. The majority of people in this group make their own care arrangements using free information and advice that is available.

Issue with current arrangements

96. Arranging care means the Council has to incur administrative costs for a group of people who are regarded by national rules as having the means to fund their own care.

New Proposal

97. It is proposed that an annual charge is introduced to contribute to the costs of providing the services described above and to encourage people to arrange their own care where appropriate, using information and advice that the Council is already required to provide.
98. A yearly administration charge of £300 is proposed for people who pay for their own care.
99. The council is not allowed to charge for giving information and advice, or assessment of needs and so these costs are not included in the proposed administration fee. The cost covers the organisation, set up and paperwork costs.

Impact

100. There are 450 people who pay for their own care currently supported by the council who use both residential and home care services. This number is expected to reduce as more people are helped to arrange their own care.
101. This proposal would increase annual income by £135,000 which would contribute to the cost of providing the service, helping to keep it running and making sure money is available to continue to support the most vulnerable people.

Consultation summary

102. Of the people who responded; 29% agreed with the proposal; 34% disagreed with the proposal, and; 37% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 87% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 12% thought it could have a negative impact on them.
103. Some people felt that this could disproportionately penalise those who had planned ahead and saved for retirement and could deplete people's savings quicker, reducing the time before they need financial support from the state. Others felt that it would be better to pay the fee in instalments, rather than a lump sum.

Proposal after consideration of consultation

104. More attention will be focussed on making sure that signposting information and advice is effective, to reduce the need for council involvement in self-funded care arrangements. This is an expansion of work currently underway, which has significantly reduced the number of residential care self-funders seeking council administrative support.
105. A review of current processes will be undertaken with a view to reducing the amount of time it takes to identify self-funders. This will increase the ability to source alternative options to council administration and reduce the likelihood of attracting the charge.
106. The Council will fully take into account its safeguarding responsibilities with regard to all people, whatever their income, who are regarded as vulnerable to financial abuse.
107. An administration charge of £300 is proposed, but due to current legislation this would be restricted to non-residential services only. This would affect approximately 260 people and in view of the consultation feedback, this could be paid by monthly instalment if required.

Financial Assessment Procedure Changes (Proposals 6 to 9)

Background

108. After people's care needs have been assessed and an agreed care and support plan is in place, there is a financial assessment. This is where the Council asks about finances and income, to work out how much a person will contribute to their care in line with national guidance.
109. For some people the way Doncaster Council does a financial assessment is based on old rules and circumstances. So how Doncaster Council does financial assessments needs to be brought up to date, made more fair, more clear and easier to understand and use.
110. The changes to financial procedure rules are estimated to increase income collectively by approximately £1.7m. This money will contribute to making sure that the additional demand for social care can be supported.
111. The council is proposing four changes to the financial assessment as follows:

Proposal 6: Maximum weekly charge for non-residential services

Current Arrangement

112. No matter how much a home care and support package costs, the council will only charge those who are deemed able to afford to pay a maximum of £429.20 per week. For some people it costs more than this for their care and support package, but the council does not ask for more than the maximum amount.

Issue with current arrangement

113. The maximum charge does not have a clear justification.

New Proposal

114. The proposal is to take away the maximum amount and instead charge the full cost of the service provided to those people who can afford to pay.

Impact

115. The proposed change would only apply to people who exceed the current maximum in the future. This is to avoid a sudden large increase for people who are exceeding the current maximum now.
116. Financial assessment will determine the maximum amount people are able to pay. It is expected that fewer than 10 people at any one time will have to pay more than the current £429.20 per week limit.

Consultation summary

117. Of the people who responded; 27% agreed with the proposal; 38% disagreed with the proposal, and; 35% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 86% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 13% thought it could have a negative impact on them.
118. Some people felt that the proposal penalised those who had saved for retirement and that no limit could result in very high charges.

Proposal after consideration of consultation

119. The proposal is still to take away the maximum amount and instead charge the full cost of the service provided to those people who can afford to pay, in future. Effective social care and financial assessments will be used, to make sure that costs do not increase disproportionately and that people do not suffer financial hardship as a result.

Proposal 7: Enhanced daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Current Arrangement

120. When people are financially assessed their savings, income and money they need to pay out are all taken into account. The Department for Work and Pensions benefits paid to people with a long-term illness or disability are seen as part of a person's income. These benefits include Attendance Allowance (AA), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and the enhanced daily living component of Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

121. However, the enhanced rate of PIP is not currently taken into account. This is £28.95 a week more than the standard rate.

Issue with current arrangement

122. Many other Local Authorities take both components of PIP into account. There is no clear reason why it should be exempt as compared to other benefits paid to people with a long-term illness or disability.

New Proposal

123. The proposal is to move towards including all of the enhanced rate of PIP in financial assessments from April 2020. If a person receiving PIP can show that they pay for additional care at night, their night care costs will be looked at as part of the assessment.

Impact

124. This is likely to have an effect on around 261 people and would increase annual income by £290,000 when fully implemented. The people who would pay more are people without night care costs.

Consultation summary

125. Of the people who responded; 40% agreed with the proposal; 30% disagreed with the proposal, and; 30% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 75% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 25% thought it could have a negative impact on them.

126. There was a general feeling that all of a person's income should be considered in financial assessments. However, some people felt that the proposal penalised those with higher living costs and that competing demands on personal independence payments could result in difficult life choices having to be made.

Proposal after consideration of consultation

127. Prompt and more detailed conversations will be held during the financial assessment process, to help to make sure that all allowed expenses are included in financial assessments. Any additional expenses allowed (including night care costs) will help to offset reductions in the PIP disregard allowance.

128. The proposal is now to move towards including all of the enhanced rate of PIP

in financial assessments, by phasing in the change equally over 3 years from April 2020.

Proposal 8: Financial assessments for residential respite and short stay care

Current Arrangement

129. When people receive residential respite or short-term residential care (i.e. they receive their care away from home for a short period most often to give family carers a break), this arrangement is also subject to charging after a financial assessment. The Care Act allows options to carry out this financial assessment under residential or non-residential rules. Up to now, the Council has chosen non-residential rules.

Issue with current arrangement

130. It does not seem logical to charge a residential arrangement against non-residential rules.

New Proposal

131. Where the respite and short stay care is residential based, the proposal is that in future the financial assessment for this service would be carried out under the residential care rules.

Impact

132. This proposal will affect anyone that is entitled to respite or short stay accommodation. 395 people had residential respite care in 2018/19. It would increase annual income by £378,000 a year.

133. The residential care assessment includes options to take into account the extra household costs that a person might have to pay for their normal home whilst spending time in respite care. This household allowance is there to cover expenses such as rent, service charges, water rates or insurance premiums. People will still pay more, but the extra household allowance will protect more of a person's money.

Consultation summary

134. Of the people who responded; 27% agreed with the proposal; 29% disagreed with the proposal, and; 44% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 84% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 15% thought it could have a negative impact on them.

135. Some people felt that the definitions of "residential" and "non-residential" were not clear enough.

Proposal after consideration of consultation

136. The definitions of "residential" and "non-residential" care, will be re-defined and documented to prevent any ambiguity in financial assessments.

137. Using the new definitions - Where respite and short stay care is residential based, residential rules would be used in financial assessments. Where respite and short stay care is non-residential, then non-residential rules would be used in financial assessments.

138. Where residential rules are used, financial assessments will make sure that accurate household costs are included as expense allowances.

Proposal 9: The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG)

Current arrangement

139. When doing a financial assessment to work out how much a person can afford to pay towards the cost of their care, councils are given advice by the government on how much of a person's total weekly income should not be used towards care charges. The protected money is known as the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG). This is to make sure that people living in their own homes, who need social care, have enough money left to pay their everyday living costs once they have paid for their care.
140. Every year the government announces the amount of MIG that it recommends councils should use in financial assessments. At present the Council does not use these recommended amounts but uses its own MIG amounts, which are more generous than the government recommends. As an example, the government recommends using a MIG of £189 per week for a single person over pension age but the council uses a MIG rate of £209.06.
141. The government publishes different MIG rates to reflect people's different circumstances. These are updated every year.

Age	Government MIG	Doncaster MIG	Weekly MIG difference
18-24	£132.45	£136.31	£3.86
25-64	£151.45	£155.31	£3.86
65 years or older	£189.00	£209.06	£20.06

Issue with current arrangement

142. Many other Local Authorities use the government recommended Minimum Income Guarantee. The current Doncaster Minimum Income Guarantee rates limit the income that is available to support services for everybody who needs them.

New Proposal

143. From April 2020, the council is proposing to move towards the government set MIG rates and use these in financial assessments instead of working out its own rate.

Impact

144. Using the government set MIG rates will affect 1,658 people who currently receive services and would increase annual income by £1 million when fully implemented.
145. The change would be brought in over a period of time, which would mean that the council Minimum Income Guarantee rates would not change by more than 3% per annum. It is expected that the Minimum Income Guarantee Government rate will be increasing each year and that will be taken into account.
146. On the basis of current information, the proposal would mean that people in the above group would pay an increasing contribution until they are paying the following amounts more than they do today:
- 48% would pay no more than £3.86 extra per week
 - 3% would pay between £3.87 and £10 extra per week
 - 44% would pay between £10 and £20.06 extra per week

- 5% would pay between £20.07 and £40 extra per week

147. In extremely rare cases (1 person currently known) there would be a requirement to pay more than £40 extra.

148. The biggest impact of the Council adopting the national government rules would be on couples. The government advises councils not to assess couples on their joint money and instead to only take into account the money of the person receiving care.

149. There are currently 104 people affected and the council will work with them to ensure that both their and the cared-for person's financial wellbeing is appropriately taken into account.

Consultation summary

150. Of the people who responded; 32% agreed with the proposal; 44% disagreed with the proposal, and; 24% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of these people 64% said they would not be affected by the proposal and 34% thought it could have a negative impact on them.

151. Some people felt that Doncaster's MIG rate was fairer than the government's rate as it was locally calculated, whilst others were surprised that there was a difference and felt that it was fair to use the government rate, in line with neighbouring councils.

Proposal after consideration of consultation

152. To keep vital services running and make sure they are fit for the future, the proposal is still to move towards the Government MIG rates. Concerns about the financial impact have been considered and the proposal has been amended accordingly.

153. The proposal is to move towards the latest Government MIG rates, by reducing by a maximum of 3% per annum, until council and government rates are brought into line, starting from April 2020.

154. In addition, further measures would be introduced in order to avoid a major impact on people who have previously been assessed as part of a couple.

Summary of proposals for Cabinet consideration

155. The following is a summary of the proposals taking into account the results of consultation:

- **1. Home Alarm Service:**

- The consultation exercise has prompted a review of the number of people actually using the service. Actions have been taken to consolidate the customer database, which now shows that approximately 5,000 people are using the Home Alarm Service.
- Although 7 people questioned the need for a tiered charging method, it is felt that splitting the charge between monitoring and response is the right way forward, as it provides more choice. People will still be able to choose monitoring and response as a package, but will also have the freedom to choose the cheaper option of monitoring only if they prefer to make their own response arrangements. This approach will provide a better balance of independence, resilience and support, using family, the community and public services.
- Only 9 people indicated that they may cease using the service if the proposal is implemented, which is far fewer than anticipated. The

council will monitor numbers of people leaving the service closely and work with them to make sure that their alternative arrangements continue to keep them safe.

- No changes are proposed to the actual charging arrangements set out in the consultation proposal. Therefore the proposal is to have 2 separate charges:
 - Pendant alarm service £3.64 per week
 - Response Service £1.50 per week
- The proposed charges would be paid by everyone apart from people who:
 - Qualify for care and support as part of their assessed social care needs, where assistive technology is used to meet a person's social care need.
 - Have time-limited "reablement" services to help to get their independence back, for up to a maximum of 6 weeks.

- **2. Care at Home**

- Operational teams have worked hard to make sure that people have the optimal number of care workers to provide their support. Of the 250 original 2 care worker packages, 71 have been reviewed, making sure that resources are used in the most effective way possible to maximise benefits for people and increase value for money.
- The adult social care service is now working much more closely with NHS colleagues, so that people leaving hospital after treatment, do so with the right number of care workers to meet their needs, without increasing their dependency on formal services.
- In order to minimise the impact on people who would be affected by this proposal, it is now proposed to include the costs of all care workers attending and providing a service to a person in their financial assessment, for new customers only, starting from April 2020. The new initiatives highlighted above should naturally reduce the number of people requiring 2 carers in future, therefore fewer people will be affected by the proposal. The council will work closely with people who are affected, to make sure that they are safe and do not suffer financial hardship.

- **3. Day Opportunities provided by the Council's SMILE service**

Day services:

- People have recognised the value of a better variety of day opportunities, with more alternatives to traditional day care. The council will therefore continue to progress innovative initiatives that offer more and better choices in communities and using the voluntary, community and faith sector as well as formal public services.
- It is likely, considering the profile of current people who use the SMILE service that a relatively small proportion of new people would be subject to these maximum costs. However consultation feedback reflects the concerns that people have about these headline rates. These concerns were also raised by Scrutiny Members at their informal meeting on 22nd January 2020.
- The Council is actively engaging in work to reduce loneliness and social isolation for Doncaster people, and making day services as accessible as possible is essential in light of this. Therefore it is proposed that the

Council does not pursue the consultation proposal to increase the maximum current charge for the SMILE service to the levels proposed.

- The current maximum charge of £31 will instead be increased to £31.53 in reflection of inflation between 2019-20 and 2020-21.
- As part of work to reduce loneliness and social isolation the Council needs to do more to consider the part that SMILE services play, including the level of subsidy provided to this service compared to other options available. The current charging arrangement may be revisited in the context of that work.

Transport:

- Consultation with existing users of day care transport has been useful in reducing costs, which will in turn reduce the level of charges required to recover these costs. The plan is to introduce a £1 per journey increase per annum, but it is now anticipated that fewer annual increases will be required before revenue from charges is equal to transport service expenditure.
- A small number of people indicated that they may not use the service in future if the price goes up. The council will work with these people to take all reasonable steps to avoid restricting their access to day opportunities.

● **4. Safeguarding personal assets**

- Appointeeship - A monthly charge of between £2.68 and £48 depending on the persons assets/money and residential situation is proposed.
- Protection of property – The proposal is to reclaim money it costs the council for protecting the property of adults being cared for away from home.
- Travel charge for client visits – The plan is to charge a fixed rate of £40.00 per hour for travel costs when staff visit clients, however annual charges will be capped at £120 per person.

● **5. Arrangements for people who pay for their own care in full**

- More attention will be focussed on making sure that signposting information and advice is effective, to reduce the need for council involvement in self- funded care arrangements. This is an expansion of work currently underway, which has significantly reduced the number of residential care self-funders seeking council administrative support.
- A review of current processes will be undertaken with a view to reducing the amount of time it takes to identify self-funders. This will increase the ability to source alternative options to council administration and reduce the likelihood of attracting the charge.
- The Council will fully take into account its safeguarding responsibilities with regard to all people, whatever their income, who are regarded as vulnerable to financial abuse
- An administration charge of £300 is proposed, but due to current legislation this would be restricted to non-residential services only. In view of the consultation feedback, this could be paid by monthly instalment if required.

● **6. Maximum weekly charge for non-residential services**

- The proposal is to take away the maximum amount and instead charge the full cost of the service provided to those people who can afford to pay. Effective social care and financial assessments will be used, to

make sure that costs do not increase disproportionately and that people do not suffer financial hardship as a result.

- **7. Enhanced daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)**

- Prompt and more detailed conversations will be held during the financial assessment process, to help to make sure that all allowed expenses are included in financial assessments. Any additional expenses allowed (including night care costs) will help to offset reductions in the PIP disregard allowance.
- The proposal is to move towards including all of the enhanced rate of PIP in financial assessments, by phasing in the change equally over 3 years from April 2020.

- **8. Financial Assessments for Residential Respite & Short Stay Care**

- The definitions of “residential” and “non-residential” care, will be re-defined and documented to prevent any ambiguity in financial assessments.
- Using the new definitions - Where respite and short stay care is residential based, residential rules would be used in financial assessments. Where respite and short stay care is non-residential, then non-residential rules would be used in financial assessments.
- Where residential rules are used, financial assessments will make sure that accurate household costs are included as expense allowances.

- **9. The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG)**

- To keep vital services running and make sure they are fit for the future, the proposal is still to move towards the Government MIG rates. Concerns about the financial impact have been considered and the proposal has been amended accordingly.
- The proposal is to move towards the latest Government MIG rates, by reducing by a maximum of 3% per annum, until council and government rates are brought into line, starting from April 2020.
- In addition, further measures would be introduced in order to avoid a major impact on people who have previously been assessed as part of a couple.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

156.

- Implementation as set out in the report after consideration of the consultation. This is the recommended option as it would be a real change for the better, reducing dependency, modernising cost recovery and making sure that recharging is fair for the individual and for the council.
- Partial implementation. This is not recommended since it would add to the confusing nature of existing arrangements.
- Do nothing. This is not considered an option as the present charging methods and governance are not fair, consistent or effective and service costs are high.
- Cease to provide the services highlighted in the report and make savings from the corresponding reduction in resources required to provide them.

This is not recommended due to the value of the services to Doncaster's vulnerable people and the value for money offered by the fees and charges levied.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

157. The recommended option will improve equality and fairness and protect vital public services. It will drive and is consistent with the transformational changes that the council is making in order to modernise, improve and sustain services for vulnerable people.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

158.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	<p>Doncaster businesses will be supported through better signposting to providers</p>
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	<p>More people will be helped to continue to live in a good quality home</p>
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares 	<p>Independence and wellbeing will be improved, which will encourage adults to continue to learn and therefore lead more fulfilling lives</p>

	young people for the world of work	
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	<p>Services for vulnerable people will be sustained and/or improved in line with Doncaster Caring planned outcomes and objectives. This will increase the likelihood that they can continue to be independent and live well at home.</p>
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>The ability to operate within available resources will be increased, which in turn will improve value for money for the people of Doncaster.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

159. There is a risk that many of the services detailed in the report will no longer be able to operate effectively in future, if costs are not recovered appropriately or legally permitted new charges raised.
160. There is a risk that without increased income, the council will not be able to allocate sufficient funding to support the most vulnerable people.
161. There is a risk that continuing with current arrangements will reduce the effectiveness of the council's ethos of strengths based, community delivered services and therefore serve to increase dependency and costs. Outcomes for people could therefore suffer as a result.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials NC 22/01/20]

162. The Care Act 2014 obligates the Council to meet the eligible needs for care and support of its population in accommodation in a care home or by providing care and support to those individuals in their home or in the community.

Sections 14 and 17 of the Care Act 2014 and the supporting Statutory Guidance provide a legal framework for charging for adult social care and support.

The Act states that local authorities have the discretion to choose whether or not to charge under section 14 of the Care Act 2014 following a person's or carer's needs assessment.

Where a local authority decides to charge, it must follow the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014 and have regard to the guidance. A local authority may only charge up to the costs they incur when contracting for care.

A local authority may charge the adult except where it is required to arrange care and support free of charge. Regulation 3 specifies the services which are to be provided free of charge. Section 14(7) of the Act provides that a local authority may not make a charge for services under section 14(1) of the Act if the adult or carer's income would, after deduction of the amount of the charge, fall below the amount specified in regulations. The charges proposed within this report are consistent with the legislation and relevant Statutory Guidance.

In order to comply with the general duty on Councils to act fairly, a comprehensive public consultation exercise has been undertaken on the proposals considered by this report. This complied with the established principles of a lawful consultation exercise in that sufficient reasons were put forward for the proposals and adequate time (12 weeks) was provided to allow for intelligent consideration and response by relevant stakeholders and the public generally. In considering the proposals set out in this report elected members must now consciously take into account the product of the consultation exercise as set out above and in Appendix A before a final decision is made on the proposals.

In addition, given this area inevitably involves people with protected characteristics, in considering the proposals contained in this report, elected members must be aware of their obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which contains the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). It obliges public authorities, when exercising their functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to:

1.1 eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct which the Act prohibits;

1.2 advance equality of opportunity; and

1.3 foster good relations between people who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not.

The relevant protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Having due regard to advancing equality involves: -

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristic;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where they are different to the needs of other people; and

- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW/HR 05/02/20]

163. The 2019/20 Budget approved by Council on 4th March 2019 identified savings to be recovered through fees and charges of £630k in 19/20 and further annual savings of £520k per year in 20/21, 21/22 and 22/23. The initial 19/20 target of £630k has been met on a temporary basis in 19/20 and is therefore shown below as still to be met in 20/21. The 19/20 Budget also approved savings of £675k Day Care and Transport savings over 2019/20 and 2020/21. The financial impact of implementing the proposals within this report are based on a number of assumptions and are summarised below:

Assistive Technology

Doncaster currently has one standard charge for all elements of the Telecare service ie. Installation of equipment, call monitoring and the provision of a response service. The cost of this service is currently only funded from 40% client contribution. Under the current arrangements service users in receipt of council tax benefit, housing benefit or have a care plan in place do not pay for any of the services provided, this equates to circa 51% of current clients. The proposals in this report would mean that the only people that would not incur charges is those with an assessed need and a care plan in place, this therefore raises the potential number of clients paying for this service to 82%.

A benchmarking exercise has also been undertaken to compare charging policies with other Local Authorities and a common theme was found with regard to charging for separate elements of the service offered through a range of package options. Based on these findings a financial modelling exercise has been carried out based on service requirements and client data from the PNC8 system to review the cost of each element of the Telecare service.

The structure of the service has also been reviewed to ensure it is in line with future needs, increasing overall expenditure by £356k, this may need to be reviewed in light of the potential reduction of client income. The full cost of this increase is likely to be incurred over the next two years.

Using the current client data including how many pieces of equipment people have in their homes, assumptions have been made on how many clients could potentially fall into each of the package options, assumptions have also been made on potential drop off due to clients choosing to opt out of some or all of the services offered (15% and 25% for the Standard and Standard Plus Packages). An assumption has also been made that those clients with 5+ pieces of equipment in their homes (circa 9.5%) would not pay anything due to having more complex needs and would therefore probably have a care plan in place. Therefore based on the aforementioned assumptions it is estimated that increased client contributions of circa £356k, this will be dependent upon the number of service users and the level of service they opt for.

Fairer Financial Assessment of Service Package

There are estimated to be approximately 250 clients currently receiving commissioned homecare support which includes 2 carers. These people are currently financially assessed against the cost of only one of these carers. It is estimated that 10 clients have some surplus income and so would see an

increase up to the level of their disposable income or the full cost of their package of care, whichever is the lower.

If charging for a second carer was brought into effect it is estimated that this would result in excess of £73k additional client contributions being raised to cover the costs of the service. This figure assumes that the charge is applied to all existing clients receiving 2 carer packages, not just new packages of care.

It should be acknowledged that this is a theoretical figure and in reality it is likely to be lower since it is expected that some clients would elect to reduce the care they currently receive. This however would see a corresponding reduction in the cost of homecare currently paid for by the Council, and would complement another project currently being undertaken by the service to review the appropriateness of existing 2 carer packages.

Day care – Continuing Healthcare Recharges

The current fee of £31 per day is historic and does not cover the true cost of the service. The proposal therefore to increase to £46 per day for services users with moderate needs and £76 for service users with more complex needs. Based on current client numbers that have various proportions of their care needs being met by CCG, the proposed CHC charge of £76 per day for day care clients with complex needs is expected to increase recharge income by £125k per annum to cover the actual cost of provision.

Day Care – Financially Assessed Service User Charges

Day Care provided to individuals is currently based on a historic calculation of £31 per day. The cost of the service has been reviewed to cover the true cost of provision and is now expected to be £46 a day for clients with moderate needs and £76 for clients with more complex needs, however, following consultation the proposed increase in charges will only be at inflation rate thereby continuing to be a cost to the Authority.

Day Care – Transport

Transport provided to Day Care Centres is currently charged at £3 per journey. This is a heavily subsidised service and in 2018/19 the council was funding it at 80% of the actual cost of £15 per journey. Work has been undertaken to reduce costs by reviewing vehicle leases and administration costs and the cost of the service is now expected to be in the region of £8.50 to £10 per journey in 2019/20. Increasing charges to reflect the actual cost of transport will disadvantage some people financially, therefore work is continuing to consider alternative transport options to ensure efficiencies are made where possible, along with encouraging services users with mobility vehicles to utilise them.

Based on the current number of services users being transported by the Council the increase of £4 per journey would cover an additional £38k of cost of the service.

SAPAT – Appointeeship/Deputyships

There are currently 305 clients for whom the Council act as appointees. If we charged for performing this role then it is likely to generate approximately £52k per year, based on current clients and their level of savings, to cover the costs of the service. This has been benchmarked against other Local Authorities to ensure a reasonable charge. This will be applied on a sliding charging basis depending on whether the client is in residential or non-residential care and what level of

savings they have, and assumes that the charge will be applied against their savings. If the charge is applied against an individual's disposable income this amount may be lower.

It is also proposed to apply for Deputyship for clients with savings above £16k, and apply deputyships accordingly. It is estimated that this could raise a further £85k in charges on an annual basis, to cover the costs of the service.

SAPAT – Protection of Property

Two individual charges are proposed to be introduced, both based on the cost of the staffing required to deliver the related function. The initial Protection of Property visit when a person is cared for away from home would be charged at £70 per visit, and ongoing weekly property checks would be charged at £10 per visit. It is estimated that this would generate income of £10,400 per year to cover the costs of the service.

SAPAT – Travel costs for visits to clients

The Court of Protection Direction allows public authorities to charge a fixed rate of £40.00 per hour for travel costs. The Council does not currently apply this charge and it is proposed to introduce a charge of £40 per hour in line with the direction.

Adopting the travel charge across the whole appointeeship and deputyship service would generate an additional £18,440 based on the current caseload of 461 clients being visited once per year.

Administration of Direct Payments and Services to Self-Funders

An administration charge of £300 per year for self-funders would generate additional income of £78,000, based on the estimated 260 self funders in non-residential care currently receiving support from the Council.

The administration of Direct Payments will be reviewed during 2019/20, therefore there is no financial information available at this time on these proposals.

Financial Assessment Procedure Changes

The report recommends changes to the way that elements of the financial assessment of a client's contribution to the cost of their care is calculated. There are various elements and these are detailed in the report, but essentially the changes will either increase the cost of care assessed against, or the increase the amount of disposable income taken into account. It is currently estimated that these changes could potentially raise up to an additional £1.7m of income, detailed in the table below. It should be noted however that this is dependent on how/when the changes are implemented. This is based on initial estimates calculated on a small sample of individual clients, work is ongoing to further develop the accuracy of this figure.

Below is a summary of the financial impact from the initiatives identified:

Initiative	Associated budget strand	Estimated net cost reductions (£'000)	20/21 (£'000)	21/22 (£'000)	22/23 (£'000)
Assistive Tech (Investment in service delivery)		-356	-250	-106	
Assistive Tech (Additional income)		356	356		
Assistive Tech	Fees & Charges	0	106	-106	0
2 Carers charging	Fees & Charges	73	73		
Day Care - CHC	Day Opportunities	125	125		
Day Care - Transport	Day Opportunities	38	38		
SAPAT - Appointeeships/Deputyships	Fees & Charges	137	137		
SAPAT - Protection of property	Fees & Charges	10	10		
SAPAT - Travel costs	Fees & Charges	18	18		
Self funder admin	Fees & Charges	78	78		
Procedure changes	Fees & Charges				
1. Minimum Income Guarantee	Fees & Charges	1,017	339	339	339
2. 85% Rule	Fees & Charges	36	36		
3. Couples assessment	Fees & Charges	0	0	0	0
4. Personal Independence Payment	Fees & Charges	290	97	97	96
5. Respite assessments	Fees & Charges	378	378		
Overall Total		2,200	1,435	330	435
Sub-total Day Opportunities		58	58	0	0
Sub-total Fees & Charges		2,142	1,377	330	435
Targeted Saving		2,160	1,120	520	520

The net income generated by the proposals in this report is now estimated to be £2.2m, with £2.142m identified against the initial targeted increase of £2.160m. This is a small shortfall of £0.018m but the actual savings for 20/21 are forecast to be overachieved by £0.257m. The estimates for later years will be reviewed and reported on as part of subsequent budget planning.

The figures quoted above are indicative and are based on service users currently impacted by the various initiatives being discussed. Work is still ongoing to further refine the figures above and ensure that income is maximised whilst ensuring that individuals are not adversely impacted to an unreasonable level.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials AT 22/01/20]

164. There are no specific human resources implications to this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW 23/01/20]

165. There are no anticipated technology implications in relation to this decision. It is assumed that existing systems together with replacement systems being implemented as part of the Integrated People Solution Programme have the

functionality to accommodate the proposed changes to adult social care fees and charges.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials VJ 23/01/20]

166. Individual health and wellbeing can be supported by effective and affordable adult social care services. If these proposals are implemented as outlined, no individual will receive a reduced service offer, but charging policies will be more transparent and equitable. It is important to note that under the proposed service, some people may have to contribute slightly more for their care and support, but they will be people who can afford to pay and their contributions will be fairly assessed in line with the principles set out within the report. In addition the services should become more sustainable and able to continue to deliver health and wellbeing impacts. Careful implementation, monitoring and updating of the Due Regard Statement are essential. The project managers will need to report on the impacts and monitor the implications of the proposals during the course of their implementation.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials HM 17/01/20]

167. Decision makers must consider the Council's duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share that protected characteristic. Further details are set out in the Legal Implications within this report.

168. A due regard statement has been prepared in line with the report's recommendations and the Equality Act and is attached as Appendix B. The statement is a live document and will be continually improved and updated as progress is made on implementation of those specific fees and charge initiatives approved by Cabinet.

CONSULTATION

169. The council has worked closely with The Consultation Institute, a well-established not-for-profit best practice Institute, promoting high-quality public and stakeholder consultation in the public, private and voluntary sectors. This has made sure that a comprehensive, thorough and wide ranging consultation has taken place, from 14th October to 22nd December 2019. Over 7,000 Doncaster residents who are known to Adult Social Care have been directly written to, with full details of the proposals and how to have their say. Care providers also received correspondence setting out the proposals and consultation plans. The consultation was open to all Doncaster residents and full details of the proposals were available via the council website, leaflets and booklets. In addition, drop in sessions and focus groups were held throughout the borough and bespoke engagement sessions were held with a wide range of partners, including the voluntary and community sector.

170. The Consultation Institute has concluded that:

- "It is clear that Doncaster Council has a genuine desire to listen to the public and those mostly closely affected by the proposed changes, to both ensure that the right decisions are taken in what are in the end difficult financial circumstances, and also to adapt and mitigate the impact of your

proposals where possible on people affected through what you have found out through the consultation”.

- “That detailed efforts were made to reach the people affected, and provide opportunities for people to understand the potential impact on them, particularly through the drop-in sessions available to service users, and the more detailed focus groups”.

171. **A detailed report of the results from consultation is attached as Appendix A** and the results are summarised alongside the individual proposals within this report. The analysis methodology and the results were verified by Healthwatch Doncaster. In summary; 248 people completed an online or paper survey, providing almost 1,800 individual responses to the 9 proposals. When asked “what do you think about this proposal?” a total of 606 (34%) responses agreed with the proposals, 566 (32%) disagreed and 573 (32%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

172. A report containing every response to every question from the consultation has been produced and circulated to Cabinet Members and Directors. The report has not been made public at this stage for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) reasons.

173. All Councillors have had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the proposals. Every Councillor received a direct communication detailing the changes and highlighting key dates for decision making. In addition, 2 informal Overview and Scrutiny sessions have been held, one of which was open to all Councillors. Feedback from these sessions has been used to shape the final proposals. A formal Overview and Scrutiny Management meeting will discuss the proposals on 21st February 2020 and feedback will be communicated to Cabinet before decisions are made.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

174. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21-2022/23 (Cabinet 01/10/2019)
Revenue Budget 2020/21-2022/23 (Cabinet 11/02/2020)
Complete consultation responses report (contains every response received)

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