

**Joint Report of the Cabinet Members for  
Adults and Vulnerable People & Next Generation Services**

**Cabinet – 15 December 2016**

**SOCIAL SERVICES CHARGING POLICY  
IN-YEAR REVIEW OF CHARGES**

<b>Purpose:</b>	a) To update on the findings and progress of the in-year charging review task and finish group  b) To outline the Business Case for the pre-deputyship support charge
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, City and County of Swansea Charging Policy (Social Services), Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal, Sustainable Swansea.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  a) The findings and progress of the in-year group are acknowledged  b) The Pre-deputyship support charge is approved
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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2016, referred to in this report as the “Act”, came into force on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016. It will radically transform the way Social Services are delivered in Wales to meet the needs of the individual and make sustainable services for the future.
- 1.2 Under the requirements of the Act and associated codes of practice, the Social Services Charging Policy has been designed and a working group has been established to oversee the implementation and governance. The terms of reference of this group can be found in **Appendix A**
- 1.3 The task and finish group is split into three project teams and this report will briefly outline the work of the “in-year review of charges” group. In the

main however, this report will outline a business case which will recommend the introduction of charges outside of the annual review cycle, or referred to as “in-year increases”. The full business case documents are attached as **Appendix B**

## **2. Progress Update**

2.1 The “in-year” project is being led by Lee Morgan/Andrew Hopkins of the Commercial & Commissioning Unit and the scope of the project covers:

- Review of all care and support services provided and where CCOS has the discretion to impose a charge
- Services provided by other Local Authorities in order to perform a comparison
- Examples of other charging policies to enhance the robustness of our Social Services Charging Policy
- Scoping of a uniform process to table opportunities to amend fees and charges “in-year”
- Drafting of business cases to support “in-year” increases and support the implementation of any chosen options

2.2 The team has worked jointly alongside Social Services colleagues to produce proposals for consideration. Where business cases have been drafted, these have focused on other opportunities besides fee increases. A holistic view of the service has been taken and has focused on business efficiencies, commissioning options in future.

2.3 Corporate support has allowed for opportunities to focus on the priorities for the Council in the future such as alignment to our transformation programme Sustainable Swansea, and the themes contained within, such as our ICT strategy and commercialism.

2.4 Due to the timescales involved with developing proposals, some opportunities will fall into the annual process cycle, the product of which is a report to be tabled and considered as part of the annual budget setting process.

## **3. Findings**

3.1 Besides the business case included in this report, the scope of the project has allowed the project team to implement aspects of commercial thinking into its work and to make recommendations as to what information should be presented to review various opportunities.

3.2 This ethos has therefore allowed the charging policy group to understand aspects such as full-cost recovery, demand management, promotion and signposting of services and pricing structures.

- 3.3 The task group has also linked in with the group looking at processes, the outputs of which have identified anomalies with the consistency of how charges are applied for our care and support services.

#### Charges

- 3.4 The group have identified the pre-deputyship support as a potential area where a charge could be introduced in-year and where there is a rationale to do. This is included in this report and recommended for implementation.
- 3.5 Other services where we have the discretion to charge have also been reviewed. Outputs from this exercise are included within the annual review of charges as timescales around an implementation plan and consultation are required.

#### Comparison

- 3.6 Guidance within the “Act” and associated codes of practice encourage Local Authorities to compare charges for care and support services. Where information has been made available, comparisons have been made.
- 3.7 The main outputs from this exercise reveal that all other Council’s consulted charge for day services, direct payments and certain aspects of the Lifeline and Telecare services. A piece of work is being undertaken to establish whether a business case is viable to charge for day services within the existing service model. N.B this is a separate exercise to the work ongoing as part of the commissioning review for day services.

#### Other Charging Policies

- 3.8 The “Act” places a responsibility on Local Authorities to produce a Social Services charging policy to be made readily accessible in the public domain. Research has shown that:
- There is no standard policy format and the information contained can appear disjointed
  - There is no guidance to establish uniformity around the financial assessment process
  - Not all Authorities have produced a Social Services charging policy in the public domain
  - There is guidance in the Code of Practice for Councils to work regionally to produce and implement a charging policy.

Process to review in-year charges

- 3.9 The task group has also reviewed the process by which responsible officers can review existing charges and working practices and produce business cases for review “in-year.”
- 3.10 Going forward, further support will be given to responsible officers to review services based on checklists and toolkits to embed commercial thinking.

**4. Proposals in Summary**

- 4.1 The proposal outlined in this report refers to the service provided by our Client Property & Finance Unit.
- 4.2 The business case in detail for these new charges is included in **Appendix B** but is outlined in summary below.

**Pre-deputyship support charge**

- 1. To introduce a monthly charge to service users to reflect the support given prior to obtaining a Court Deputyship Order

**5. Equalities and Engagement Implications**

- 5.1 The proposal has completed an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Form and it was deemed not necessary for a full EIA report.
- 5.2 The EIA screening form is attached within the business case report in **Appendix B**

**6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report

**7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 There are legal implications associated with the proposal, please refer to the business case report in **Appendix B**.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:**

<b>Appendix A</b>	Terms of Reference – Finance & Charging Policy Working Group
<b>Appendix B</b>	Business Case – Client Property & Finance Unit