



Report of the Cabinet Member for Health & Well-being

Cabinet – 14 December 2017

Annual Review of Charges (Social Services) (to apply in 2018/19)

Purpose:	To seek permission to consult on proposed changes to charges for social services in 2018/19 as part of the established annual review process set out within the Social Services Charging Policy .
Policy Framework:	Social Services, in accordance with the detailed code of practice and regulations under Parts 4 & 5 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendations:	<p>1) Approval is given to consult on possible changes to charges for adult social care as part of the Council's wider budget consultation - to include consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Introduction of a charge for day services for older people○ Introduction of a charge for day services for younger adults○ Introduction of a charge for respite care at home○ An increased charge for domiciliary care○ An inflationary uplift for all other social care charges
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Swansea Council, under Parts 4 & 5 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, has to agree and publish a single social services charging policy framework, and list of charges to apply to Swansea citizens in the year ahead. Under the Act, a local authority can only charge:
- up to the cost of providing the service
 - what the person can afford to pay for an assessed for service
- 1.2 Swansea's Charging (social services) Policy was approved by Council in April 2016, and the first annual review was carried out last year. The current policy is available via the following link:

[Social Services Charging Policy.](#)

2. Main Report

- 2.1 Given the context of rising demand for social care, significant inflationary pressures that disproportionately impact on the cost of providing social care and a reduced overall level of funding available to the Council, it is necessary for the Council to review the charges currently levied for the provision of social care on an annual basis. The annual review must both consider whether the current levied charges properly reflect the cost of providing the service and whether charges should be introduced for any currently non charged for services. In conducting the annual review the Council will continue to strike a balance between maintaining charges at a level that remain fair and affordable for citizens whilst ensuring the Council continues to provide financially sustainable, high quality services and that individuals care and support needs remain well met.
- 2.2 Before making a decision to introduce any new charges or to apply an above inflationary increase to current charges, the Council must first consult with citizens as part of carrying out an equality impact assessment.
- 2.3 This year's annual review of charges process has identified that the Council should consider introducing new charges for:
- Day services for older adults.
 - Day services for younger adults.
 - Respite care at home services.
- 2.4 The review has also identified that the current charge for domiciliary care falls well below that charged by other Council's and in no way reflects the actual cost of providing domiciliary care. Therefore the review has determined that the Council should consider introducing an above inflationary increase to the charge for domiciliary care staggered over a number of years.
- 2.5 With regards all other service charges the review has determined that only an inflationary uplift is required to maintain charges at an appropriate level.

- 2.6 In order to conclude the review process and make recommendations to Cabinet it is necessary to consult with citizens about the possible introduction of new charges and any above inflationary increases to existing charges.

3. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 3.1 The Charging Policy (Social Services) is applied equally, in that all assessed needs for care and support services, where they are broadly the same, are treated as the same.
- 3.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment Screening Form has been completed, with the agreed outcome that a full EIA is required before any new charges or above inflationary increases to charges can be introduced. Full EIA's will incorporate the feedback from the planned consultation.
- 3.3 Consultation will be undertaken as part of the Council's wider budget consultation process to include that all citizens who may be affected by any changes to current charges will be written to and additional engagement events will be held.
- 3.4 A final set of proposed changes to charges for 2018/19 will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet and will include the feedback from the consultation and the final equality impact assessment.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Welsh Government has maintained a view that, within local authorities, implementing the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 should be seen as cost neutral. The Act grants further discretionary powers to local authorities, on what services can be charged for and the rates at which these are charged, provided that these do not exceed the cost of providing the service.
- 4.2 Swansea Council has a corporate charging policy based on the principles of full cost recovery.
- 4.3 The maximum charge arrangements (currently £70 per week) and the requirement to undertake a financial assessment of an individual's ability to pay, significantly limits the financial impact on individual citizens of any changes to charges for community services and the extent to which full cost recovery can be achieved.
- 4.4 If the Council were to introduce charges for days services and introduce a staggered above inflationary increase to domiciliary care charges this would bring the Council more in line with the majority of other Council's.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act, and the associated Regulations and Codes of Practice came into force on 6th April 2016, and

these set out how financial assessments and charging for social care services should be managed by local authorities. Whilst the Welsh Government retain the power to set caps and thresholds for charges, it is necessary for each Local Authority to publish their charging policy, and to establish a process to review, set and consult upon the list of charges to be applied.

- 5.2** Before deciding on the introduction of any new or above inflationary increases to charges for care and support services The Council must consult with citizens as part of undertaking an equalities impact assessment

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: None.