



Report of the Cabinet Member for Care, Health & Ageing Well

Cabinet – 15 November 2018

Annual Review of Charging (Social Services) 2018/19

(Charges to apply in 2019/20)

Purpose:	This report is the Director of Social Services' Annual Review of charging (social services) 2018/19. The report sets out the Council's list of charges for social services 2019/20 to come into effect on 1 st April 2019.
Policy Framework:	Corporate Charging (Social Services) Policy. https://www.swansea.gov.uk/payingforsocialservices
Consultation:	Social Services Finance and Charging group, Legal, Finance, Access to Services.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that Cabinet: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Notes the Annual Review of Charges (Social Services) report by the Director of Social Services 2018/19.2. Approves the proposed 2019/20 List of Charges outlined within the Report.
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1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Social Service and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (The Act) came into effect in April 2016, and set out a statutory requirement for each Local Authority to publish their charges for social services.
- 1.2 The Act was intended to be 'cost neutral' when implemented, and Part 5 regulations and codes of practice set out a common national framework for charging for care and support services, including the national thresholds for charging (also reviewed annually by Welsh Government). Among the key drivers behind this national framework is to have one set of financial assessment and charging arrangements and to ensure greater clarity and transparency within these arrangements.

The latest requirements are summarised in main report (Appendix 1):

- 1.3 In working towards sustainable social care, Welsh Local Authorities are given some discretion in how charges are applied, and for generating income within the Part 5 code of practice. Under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, 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
- 1.4 Swansea's approach, as set out in the charging policy, is aimed at minimising the impact of charging upon care and support recipients with low financial means, while obtaining, where appropriate, a fair and reasonable contribution towards the costs of care and support to ensure its continued provision.
- 1.5 Swansea Council's Charging Policy (social services) was approved by Cabinet in April 2016. A Social Services Finance and Charging working group, chaired by the Director of Social Services is tasked with the implementation of the policy, to support the implementation and to apply an annual reviewing cycle for fees and charges. The charging policy was reviewed and revised, in March 2018 and a full EIA was completed to address the changes proposed.
- 1.7 The Director of Social Services is providing this report as the annual review of charges (social services), under Part 5 of the Social Services and well-being (Wales) Act. This report provides a summary of the main findings, with a set of recommendations.
- 1.8 The full report of the *Annual review of charges -social services 2018/19* is appended to this report (Appendix 1). This report provides Cabinet with an opportunity to consider the annual review, the charging policy and the list of charges for social services to apply in 2019/20.

2. Annual Review of Charges

- 2.1 This second annual review of charges report (Appendix 1) provides some analysis of how current charges are working, by considering the current situation, charging within the main categories of service, together with a proposed response, including the potential for an annual uplift and full cost recovery, and comes up with a clear summary and recommendations.

See Appendix 1: Director of Social Services Annual Review of charges (social services) report 2018/19

3. Other Issues

None

4. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 4.2 Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) screening form has been completed; with the agreed outcome, a full EIA assessment was not required at this stage. A full EIA was undertaken last year when new services, such as day services and respite at home were being introduced as new charges, as well as above inflationary increases in hourly charges for domiciliary care.
- 4.3 The Director of Social Services' report on the annual review of charges 2018/19 (social services), and proposal within the report, are to apply an inflationary increase to the list of charges from April 2019, and the EIA screening has determined that this does not have a significant impact upon equality issues, or the local population with protected characteristics.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Charging policy (social services) applies the corporate principle of full cost recovery. In reality, charges can only recover some or all of the costs of services from citizens, as there is a national framework of caps and thresholds set. The income generated can reduce the costs of services to Council tax payers and can also be used to achieve Swansea Council's Corporate Plan strategic

objective to safeguard our most vulnerable citizens. A decision to charge for or to subsidise the costs of services needs to be based on analysis and fair access, and this annual review helps to support this process.

- 5.2 The proposals also support the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan objectives assumes that any additional general fund income generated through the changes to charges proposed within this report will help to meet additional cost pressures within the service.

6. Legal Implications

The legislation relating to the Council's ability to charge for services and the requirement to publicise those charges are set out in the report and Appendix 1.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: Appendix 1 - Annual Review of Swansea Council Charging Policy (Social Services) - 2018-2019.