



## **Adult Social Care Non Residential Charging Policy Consultation**

This consultation document sets out the proposals for changes to the Adult Social Care Charging Policy for non-residential care and support.

This document provides summary information on:

- What the consultation is about
- The background and purpose of the policy
- Details of the proposed changes to the policy
- How you can feedback your views

To read the full proposed policy please visit:

[www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/ChargingPolicyConsultation](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/ChargingPolicyConsultation)

## **What is this consultation about?**

Cheshire West and Chester Council are seeking views on proposed changes to the Council's Adult Social Care Non Residential Charging Policy. This consultation is open to all but we are particularly interested to hear the views of residents who receive adult social care and support services.

The consultation sets out the key changes proposed to the way Cheshire West and Chester Council charge for care and support services, such as care received at home or within an extra care or shared lives facility, Council transport and support to manage finances provided by the Council.

## **What is the Adult Social Care Non Residential Charging Policy?**

The Adult Social Care Non Residential Charging Policy describes how the Council assesses service users' finances, to find out how much, if anything, they should be contributing towards the cost of their care.

The aim of this policy is to provide a consistent and fair framework for charging service users who receive care and support, following an assessment of their individual needs and financial circumstances.

The Care Act 2014 is the national legislation that sets out how councils charge adults for the care and support they receive to meet their needs. These needs are sometimes referred to as 'identified or assessed needs'.

The Adult Social Care Non Residential Charging Policy ensures that Cheshire West and Chester Council are following the charging principles set out in the Care Act:

- The amount service users pay towards the cost of their care will be determined by looking at the cost of the service, their capital, expenditure and the income they receive.
- An individual financial assessment will be undertaken to ensure people are charged what they can reasonably afford to pay.
- Contributions towards the cost of care will be transparent and fair.
- Service users will not be charged more than the amount the service has cost the Council.
- Service users have sufficient money to meet their housing costs and any other disability related expenditure.
- After service users have paid their contribution, they will retain a basic minimum income, this is known as the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG).

## **What does the policy apply to?**

The policy applies to all adults' non-residential care and support services, including:

### **Care at Home**

This is also known as domiciliary care and is usually delivered in a person's own home.

### **Supported Living**

Supported living is a service designed to help people who live in group housing with a wide range of support needs in their own home. People in supported living have their own tenancy and are responsible for their own bills and cost of living.

### **Extra Care Housing**

Extra Care Housing is housing designed with the needs of vulnerable people in mind and with varying levels of care and support available on site. People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self-contained homes with their own front doors. Extra Care Housing is also known as 'very sheltered housing', 'assisted living', or simply as 'housing with care'.

### **Shared Lives Services**

Shared Lives schemes support adults with learning disabilities, mental health problems or other needs that make it difficult for them to live on their own. The schemes match people who need care with an approved carer who offers a placement in their own home.

### **Day Care Services**

Adult Day Care is a planned program of activities in a professional care setting, designed for adults who require supervised care during the day, or those who are isolated and lonely. Adult day care centres enable people to socialise and enjoy planned activities in a group setting. This also allows carers to receive a regular break from their caring role.

### **Transport**

Transport provided by the Council enables adults who would otherwise have no means of suitable transport, to travel within the borough and also supports adults to attend day care facilities.

### **Telecare**

Telecare is an electronic monitoring service that offers remote support to elderly, disabled and vulnerable people who live alone in their own homes. A range of equipment, such as pendants, fall detectors and medication dispensers are available to support people to live independently.

### **Direct Payments**

A Direct Payment allows a person to receive a cash payment instead of care services. This allows much more flexibility and greater control for a person to arrange their own care.

### **Maintenance Care provided by the Council's reablement services**

Reablement is a Council led service that currently offers people a period of free care for up to 6 weeks. The service supports people to regain their skills following a period of ill health, for example after being discharged from hospital.

### **Administration fees for money management**

Most councils provide a money management service for people who are not able to manage their own finances and do not have another suitable person to support them. The Council offers a money management service in which they act as either appointee or deputy on behalf of a person, to manage their finances on a day-to-day basis. The service is only available to a person who receives social care funded by the Council and who lacks capacity to manage their own financial affairs or is vulnerable to financial abuse.

### **Joint funded services**

A joint package of health and social care is an arrangement between the Local Authority and the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to:

1. Work together to arrange, manage and review a person's support and services; and
2. Share the cost of those services; when
3. A person has complex health needs; but
4. Does not meet the threshold for NHS Continuing Healthcare funding.

### **The policy does not apply to:**

- Residential or Nursing Home Care
- Respite and short stays in residential /nursing homes
- Continuing Health Care (CHC) funded packages (this is a service funded by the NHS)

## **Why are the proposed changes to the policy needed?**

Following the introduction of the Care Act in 2014, the Adult Social Care Non Residential Charging Policy was reviewed and updated to meet the recommendations suggested within the Care Act. Further reviews also took place in January 2017 and November 2019.

These reviews have identified a number of proposed changes to the policy to make the procedure for being financially assessed and charged for services fairer and easier to understand, as well as to ensure the long-term sustainability of care and support services.

The demand for services is set to increase significantly over the coming years due to our ageing population, as is the number of people with complex needs. Therefore we need to ensure that everyone pays the appropriate amount for the care and support that they receive, based on their needs and their ability to pay, to help ensure the long-term sustainability of care and support services provided by the Council. We also need to make the policy easier for people to understand and for us to administer. We are therefore proposing some changes to the policy.

## **What are the proposed changes to the policy and how will they impact me or someone I care for?**

Although the proposed changes are designed to make the policy fairer and easier to understand, some of the changes will have an impact on the amount service users will be required to contribute towards the cost of their care. Depending on the care and support services received and the financial assessment, some service users may have to pay more for their care, whilst others may see a reduction in the charges they may incur, this would be determined on a case by case basis.

The purpose of this consultation is to listen to your views on the proposed changes, to help improve the proposed policy. The policy will be reviewed by the Council's Cabinet alongside the findings of this consultation, to make a decision about whether to implement the policy. If the policy is agreed, any changes will be implemented from April 2021.

The proposed changes will affect the way in which we charge for the services listed below:

1. Extra Care Housing
2. Day Care
3. Care at Home and Supported Living
4. Transport
5. Shared Lives Services
6. Managing your money

The following summaries may assist you in understanding how the proposed policy changes may affect you or someone you care for.

**1. Extra Care Housing** - Housing designed with the needs of vulnerable people in mind and with varying levels of care and support available on site.

The proposed changes are:

- 1a Changes to how charging for emergency response services will be applied to service users **with** Care Act eligible care needs, as the financial assessment will calculate the charge applied for all services reflected in the care and support plan, inclusive of the charge for the emergency response services.
- 1b Service users will be charged for the total amount of care hours agreed in the care and support plan, instead of the midpoint of their assessed band.
- 1c The full cost of care agreed in the care and support plan will be charged for if the care call is cancelled or ended earlier than planned, unless 1 week's prior notice is given to the care provider.
- 1d Those receiving services arranged by the Council to meet Care Act eligible needs will be required to give a minimum of 1 week's notice to cancel or suspend a service, otherwise the full financial charge based on the financial assessment will still apply.
- 1e The removal of free support which has previously been provided for up to 6 weeks for those who need additional support on a temporary basis. Charges will be applied to these services based on a financial assessment.

**What this will mean:**

**Proposal 1a**

**What happens now**

Service users **with** Care Act eligible needs living in Extra Care Housing are charged separately for an emergency response service provided by the care provider.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

A financial assessment will calculate all charges for care provided, inclusive of the emergency response service provided by the care provider.

**Proposal 1b**

**What happens now**

Service users living in Extra Care facilities are assessed before admission and allocated a 'banding' which determines their level of need. This band ranges from Band 1 (lowest need) to Band 5 (highest need).

Currently charges for services for those **with** Care Act eligible needs are based on the midpoint of their assessed need.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

Service users with care act eligible needs will be charged for the total amount of care hours agreed in their care and support plan, rather than the midpoint of their

assessed band, to better reflect the true cost of care provided and create a fairer, more transparent charging mechanism.

### **Proposal 1c**

#### **What happens now**

Service users who cancel a care call or end a care call earlier than planned are charged only for the care they actually received and not the total amount of care agreed in their care and support plan.

#### **What will change as a result of the proposal**

If a service user cancels a care call or ends a care call earlier than is planned, the full assessed financial charge for care agreed in the care and support plan will apply, unless one week's prior notice is given. For example, if a care call is agreed at 30 minutes, and you send the care provider away after 15 minutes, you will still be charged for the full 30 minutes of care, as this is what has been assessed and agreed with you in order to meet your needs.

### **Proposal 1d**

#### **What happens now**

If a service user does not give the care provider notice to cancel or suspend their care, no charge is applied and they are charged only for the actual care delivered.

#### **What will change as a result of the proposal**

Unless a minimum of one week's prior notice is given to the care provider to cancel or suspend care, service users will be charged for the total amount of care hours agreed in their care and support plan.

### **Proposal 1e**

#### **What happens now**

Service users can currently receive a period of care free of charge for up to 6 weeks.

#### **What will change as a result of the proposal**

If a service user requires a temporary support package, or a temporary increase to their support package, they will be charged for all care that is delivered to meet their needs. Charges will be based on a financial assessment. This will be recorded in their care and support plan.

**2. Day Care** - A planned program of activities in a professional care setting designed for adults who require supervised care during the day, those who are isolated and lonely, or to give a carer a break from their caring role.

The proposed changes are:

2a To apply the full assessed financial charge for Day Care for up to 4 weeks, if a service user with Care Act eligible needs does not attend, or does not give 1 week's prior notice.

2b Day Care allocation will be cancelled if a service user is unable to attend for 4 consecutive weeks. In such circumstances, an assessment will be required to ensure that a service user's needs are being met and that risk to the service user is minimal.

2c One week's prior notice is required if a service user is unable to attend Day Care. If 1 week's prior notice is not given, the full assessed financial charge for that week will still apply.

2d No charge will be applied if the day centre is closed, for example on a bank holiday.

**What this will mean:**

**Proposals 2a and 2b**

**What happens now**

If a service user does not attend their planned Day Care, their place is held open for 6 weeks and no charge is applied for this period.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

If a service user does not attend their planned Day Care, the Day Care place will be held open for 4 weeks. After this period it will be cancelled and the full assessed financial charge will apply for the full 4 week period, unless one week's prior notice is given.

**Proposal 2c**

**What happens now**

No charge is applied when a service user cannot attend their planned Day Care.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

When a service user cannot attend their planned Day Care, the full assessed financial charge will be applied, unless one week's prior notice is given.

**Proposal 2d**

**What happens now**

If the day centre is closed, for example on a bank holiday, the service user is not charged.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

Nothing will change and no charge will be applied.

3. **Care at Home and Supported Living** - Care usually delivered in a person's own home or a group home setting.

The proposed changes are:

- 3a Service users with Care Act eligible care needs will be subject to a financial assessment. The financial assessment will determine how much the service user will contribute towards the cost of their care. Charges will be based on the number of hours agreed in the care plan, unless a service user gives one week's prior notice of any changes to requirements.
- 3b If a service user cancels a care call, or ends their care call earlier than planned without giving one week's prior notice, the full assessed financial charge will still apply.
- 3c If a service user cancels or suspends their care service without giving one week's prior notice, the full assessed financial charge will still apply.
- 3d If a carer does not turn up as planned the assessed financial charge will not be applied.

**What this will mean:**

#### **Proposal 3a**

##### **What happens now**

When the care and support plan is agreed with a service user, a financial assessment determines how much a service user will have to contribute towards the cost of their care. The service user currently only pays a contribution towards the number of hours of care they actually use, not the total number of hours of care agreed in the care and support plan.

##### **What will change as a result of the proposal**

The total number of hours of care agreed in the care plan will be charged for, unless a service user gives one week's prior notice to the care provider of any change in requirements.

#### **Proposal 3b**

##### **What happens now**

If a service user cancels or ends their care call earlier than planned, service users are only charged for the care they have actually received and not the amount of care agreed in the care and support plan.

##### **What will change as a result of the proposal**

If a service user cancels or ends their care call earlier than is planned as set out in the agreed care and support plan, the full assessed financial charge for the care call will apply, unless one week's prior notice is given to the care provider.

For example, if your care call is agreed at 30 minutes, and you send the care provider away after 15 minutes, you will still be charged the full 30 minutes of care, as this is what has been assessed and agreed in order to meet your needs.

If care calls are reduced or cancelled on a regular basis, the care provider will request the Council to review the service user's needs.

### **Proposal 3c**

#### **What happens now**

If a service user does not give the care provider notice to cancel or suspend their care, no charge is applied and they are charged only for the actual care delivered.

#### **What will change as a result of the proposal**

Unless a minimum of one week's prior notice is given to the care provider to cancel or suspend care, service users will be charged for the total amount of care hours agreed in their care and support plan.

### **Proposal 3d**

#### **What happens now**

If a carer does not turn up for a planned care call the service user is not charged for this call.

#### **What will change as a result of the proposal**

Nothing will change and no charge will be applied. However, we would request that the service user notifies the care provider along with their allocated social care worker, so an investigation can take place as to why the carer did not turn up.

- 4. Transport** - Transport provided by the Council to enable adults, who would otherwise have no means of suitable transport, to travel within the borough. It also supports adults to attend Day Care facilities

The proposed changes are:

- 4a Service users with transport shown as a Care Act eligible care need will be subject to a charge for the transport services provided. A financial assessment will be carried out to determine the charge for transport.
- 4b Service users for whom the Council provides, or commissions transport will be subject to a charge for the transport service provided. These charges will be subject to a financial assessment.
- 4c One week's prior notice will be required to cancel a journey. If notice is not provided the service user will be charged the full assessed amount for transport.
- 4d Where the Council signposts service users to community transport or a public bus, when other personal forms of transport are not available, individuals will continue to be charged a fare, which they are required to pay directly to the transport provider. These charges are not subject to a financial assessment.

**What this will mean:**

**Proposal 4a**

**What happens now**

Service users with transport shown as a Care Act eligible need are not charged for transport services.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

Service users with transport shown as a Care Act eligible need will be subject to a charge for their transport service. A financial assessment will be carried out to determine the charge for transport.

**Proposal 4b**

**What happens now**

Where there are no accessible forms of transport available to the service user the council either directly provides or commissions transport for the individual and does not currently charge for this service.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

Service users for whom the Council provides, or commissions transport will be subject to a charge for the transport service provided. These charges will be subject to a financial assessment.

**Proposal 4c**

**What happens now**

No charge is applied when a service user **with** Care Act eligible needs, or for whom the Council provides or arranges transport cancels their transport without a notice period.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

One week's prior notice will be required to cancel a journey. If notice is not provided the service user will be charged the full assessed amount for transport.

**Proposal 4d****What happens now**

Where the Council signposts service users to community transport or a public bus, when other personal forms of transport are not available, individuals are charged a fare for using this form of transport which they are required to pay directly to the service provider. These charges are not subject to a financial assessment and are paid directly to the transport provider.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

No change.

**5. Shared lives** - Shared Lives schemes support adults with learning disabilities, mental health problems or other needs that make it difficult for them to live on their own. The schemes match people who need care with an approved carer who can offer a placement in their home.

The proposed changes are:

5a Where a service user **with** Care Act eligible needs lives permanently in a Shared Lives placement, steps will be taken to secure a tenancy agreement with the Shared Lives carer.

5b As a result housing costs will be claimed by the Shared Lives carer through benefits such as Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. The Shared Lives carer will not have the rental income they receive from Housing Benefit or Universal Credit deducted from their payment for care services.

5c Service users living in permanent Shared Lives placements will need to contribute towards the cost of food and utilities. Any specialist requirements will be identified in the care and support plan. The amount to be contributed will be determined following a financial assessment but will be within an agreed budget.

**What this will mean:**

**Proposals 5a, b and c**

**What happens now**

Those service users who live permanently in a Shared Lives placement are financially assessed to calculate how much they need to pay towards the cost of their placement.

Charges have varied greatly, as some service users have a tenancy agreement with the carer, whereas others pay a contribution towards their placement and care costs. The application of charges are discussed with the service user on a case by case basis.

This varied approach is inequitable and not fit for purpose.

**What will change as a result of the proposal**

For those living permanently in a Shared Lives placement steps will be taken to secure a tenancy agreement with the Shared Lives carer.

As a result housing costs will be claimed by the Shared Lives carer through benefits such as Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

The Shared Lives carer will not have the rental income they receive from Housing Benefit or Universal Credit deducted from their payment for care services. Overall this will cost the Council more, but it will provide greater transparency for the service user.

Service users will be charged directly by the Shared Lives carer for standard food and utility costs - this will be within an agreed budget. This will allow the carer the ability to buy food and budget for utilities, providing greater choice and freedom.

6. **Managing your money** - The Council provides a money management service for people who are not able to manage their own finances and do not have another suitable person to support them with their finances. This applies to services users living in their own home, in the community, or in a residential establishment.

The proposed changes are:

- 6a To introduce a weekly charge to act as an Appointee (provide a money management service) to services users who have capital in excess of £1000.  
6b The charge for those living in residential care will be £4.50 per week whilst the charge for those living in the community will be £9 per week. The difference in the charges relates directly to the volume of work required for the two types of appointeeship (money management).

### **What this will mean:**

#### **Proposal 6a**

##### **What happens now**

No charges are applied to service users to support them in managing their finances regardless of capital.

##### **What will change as a result of the proposal**

A charge will be applied to service users who have capital in excess of £1000.

#### **Proposal 6b**

##### **What happens now**

No charge is applied to service users to support them in managing their finances.

##### **What will change as a result of the proposal**

The proposal is to charge service users living in residential establishments £4.50 per week and those living in the community £9 per week, to support them to manage their finances.

### **How can I feedback my views?**

There are a number of ways you can take part in the consultation listed below:

- Complete a paper copy and return it to us in the pre-paid envelope provided.
- Complete a questionnaire online at:  
[www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/ChargingPolicyConsultation](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/ChargingPolicyConsultation)

- Easy read versions can also be completed online at [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/ChargingPolicyConsultation](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/ChargingPolicyConsultation) or requested by calling the Council's Contact Centre on 0300 123 8123. Please quote 'Charging Policy Consultation'.
- Email your views to: [ChargingPolicyConsultation@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:ChargingPolicyConsultation@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)
- Write to us at: Charging Policy Consultation, Insight and Intelligence, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Council Offices, 4 Civic Way, Ellesmere Port, CH65 0BE
- COVID-19 restrictions prohibit face to face engagement at this time. However, you can telephone the Council's Contact Centre to share your views, or to arrange to speak to someone about the proposals outlined in this consultation document. Please call 0300 123 8123 and quote 'Charging Policy Consultation'.

**The deadline for responses is Sunday 18th October 2020**

#### **Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services.**

Council information is also available in Audio, Braille, Large Print or other formats.

If you would like a copy in a different format, in another language  
or require a BSL interpreter, please email us at:

**[equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)**

**Telephone:** 0300 123 8 123

**Textphone:** 18001 01606 275757

**Email:** [equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**Web:** [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)