

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

Informing our approach to fairness

Proposal: Maximum contribution to adult social care costs

Date of assessment: November 2023

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Portfolio: Healthy, Caring City

Version: 1

Planned review date: January 2024

Section A: Current service

1. What does the service / function / policy do?

Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities are given duties setting out what support they must provide for adults who have a need for care and support.

Alongside these duties, local authorities are given powers to charge for many of the adult social care services they offer.

The Care Act 2014 sets a national standard for what is fair and reasonable when it comes to charging for adult social care. For example:

- Explaining which services local authorities can charge for.
- Setting rules for how local authorities ensure charges are affordable.
- Detailing how local authorities should manage financial transactions for people who ask for this to be done on their behalf.

In Newcastle, we have a [charging and financial assessment policy](#) which is a publicly available document setting out how we apply the national rules in the city.

National rules say that we may put a charge in place which covers the true cost of arranging care and support. However, in Newcastle, we have capped the amount that any person will pay towards the costs of care in their home at £400 per week.

2. Who do we deliver this service / function / policy for?

Everyone who is assessed as having eligible adult social care needs is covered by the council's charging and financial assessment policy.

The £400 maximum weekly charge only affects people who access care and support in their home and who have been assessed as being able to pay the maximum charge for their care. The £400 maximum weekly charge does not apply to residential care (care delivered within care homes).

At the end of September 2023, there were 278 people who were accessing care in their own home who were financially assessed as being able to pay the full cost of that care.

Of those 278 people, 34 people had care packages which cost more than the £400 maximum weekly charge. Those 34 people therefore benefitted from the £400 maximum weekly charge that is in place.

The number of people accessing adult social care changes at any given time so the number of people who benefit from the £400 maximum weekly charge can vary.

3. Why do we deliver this service / function / policy?

Section 14 of the Care Act gives local authorities the power to charge people for providing services that meet their eligible social care needs.

When a local authority exercises this power, it must do so according to the rules set out in Section 17 of the Care Act 2014, the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014, and the care and support statutory guidance published by the Department of Health and Social Care.

We are required to follow this legislation and guidance, and to publish a policy on charging and financial assessment that sets out how we meet the legislative requirements as well as any local policy that is more generous than is required by law.

4. How much do we currently spend on this service / function / policy?

Gross budget: £136,309

Net budget: £136,309

Comments: Gross and net expenditure is based on the staffing costs for those posts already wholly or largely focused on charging (3.8 FTE) plus management contributions. This team undertakes calculating and charging for care contributions.

5. How many people do we employ to deliver this service / function / policy?

Number of posts: 7

Number of full-time equivalent officers: 3.8 FTE

Comments: This is the number of posts whose work is wholly or largely related to charging for care contributions.

Section B: Proposal for future service

1. How do we propose to change the service / function / policy?

We propose to increase the adult social care maximum charge from £400 per week to £440 per week from 1 April 2024.

Although we have the power to recover the full cost of arranging care and support, we will continue to use our discretion to protect people from the full costs of care by maintaining a maximum charge of £440 per week.

2. What evidence have we used to inform this proposal?

We have had a maximum weekly charge in place for non-residential services since before the Care Act came into force in 2014. Although the Care Act allows local authorities to recover all care costs from those people who have been financially assessed as being able to afford it, we have chosen to maintain a maximum charge.

Many of our regional neighbours have already removed their maximum charge, and those who have not have a higher charge than the revised amount of £440 per week.

3. What will be the financial impact of this proposal?

This proposal will generate additional income of approximately £52,000 per year, based on the current levels of care and support being provided.

4. What will be the impact upon our employees of this proposal?

Number of FTE: 0 FTE

% of workforce: Not applicable.

Comments: There will be no impact on our employees as a result of this proposal.

Section C: Consultation

1. Who did we engage with to develop this proposal?

Who we have engaged with to develop this proposal: colleagues within adult social care finance-related functions.

When / how: during October 2023 as part of the budget development process.

Main issues raised: this proposal would require an update to the existing charging policy and clear communication with those individuals impacted.

2. Who do we want / need to engage with during consultation?

Who do we want to engage with during consultation: people who use care and support in the city who are impacted by the existing maximum charge.

When / how: between December 2023 to January 2024 as part of the council-wide Let's Talk budget consultation process. We will also write directly to those impacted to raise awareness of the proposal and meet with them as needed.

3. Who provided feedback during the consultation process? (to be completed post-consultation)

Who provided feedback in the consultation process: to be completed post-consultation.

When / how: to be completed post-consultation.

Main issues raised: to be completed post-consultation.

Section D: Impact assessment

The section below sets out actual or potential disadvantages or benefits that may arise from implementing this proposal. This assessment is set out for people with characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 and other broader areas of potential impact.

People with protected characteristics

Age

Type of impact: Potential disadvantage.

Detail of impact: Currently, 75% of those who this affects are over 65 years old. Decisions related to charging are based on ability to pay and assets that an individual holds. These are all checked through a financial assessment process.

How will this be addressed or mitigated? We will continue to operate a charging and financial assessment policy that only requires people to pay a fair contribution based on their ability to pay. We are continuing to keep a maximum charge in place which is a mitigation that many other areas do not currently provide.

Disability

Type of impact: Potential disadvantage.

Detail of impact: Disabled people are more likely to require care and support and may need to pay a contribution.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: We will continue to operate a charging and financial assessment policy that only requires people to pay a fair contribution based on their ability to pay. We are continuing to keep a maximum charge in place which is a mitigation that many other areas do not currently provide.

Gender reassignment

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Sex

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Marriage and civil partnership

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Pregnancy and maternity

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Race and ethnicity

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Religion and belief

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Sexual orientation

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Other potential impacts

Unpaid carers

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

People vulnerable to socio-economic impacts

Type of impact: None – people vulnerable to socio-economic impacts as people will have been fairly financially assessed based on the charging and financial assessment policy

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Businesses

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Geography

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Community cohesion

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Community safety

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Public Health

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.

Climate

Type of impact: None.

Detail of impact: Not applicable.

How will this be addressed or mitigated?: Not applicable.