

Wiltshire Council

Health Select Committee

7th March 2017

Adult Care Charging Policy – Review of implementation

Executive summary

This paper is to update the Committee on the work to review the implementation of the Adult Care Charging Policy the policy can be accessed [here](#)

Proposal

That the Committee notes the information contained in this report and requests a further report on the implementation of the Charging Policy once the review is complete.

Reason for proposal

To inform the Committee of the review

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Adult Care Charging Policy – Review of Implementation

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the work to review the implementation of the Adult Care Charging Policy

Background

2. Cabinet approved a new Charging Policy for Adult Social Care in July 2016. The policy was developed in response to requirements of the Care Act 2014 and involved extensive support from legal representatives to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation. A full equalities impact assessment was completed. A period of public consultation was completed between 8th March and 6th June 2016, involving public meetings, a survey and feedback from key stakeholders. The consultation was conducted to assess the impact these proposals could have on people in Wiltshire.
3. In summary, the new Charging Policy brought Wiltshire in line with many other local authorities by
 - a. Taking into account one hundred percent of an adult's disposable income when calculating the contributions for care and support
 - b. Taking into account the full amount of any Attendance Allowance received
 - c. Assessing contributions for respite care in the same way as other non residential services
 - d. Updating the list of allowable Disability Related Expenses in accordance with the Care Act.
4. Health Select Committee (HASC) was engaged throughout the consultation process and had an opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Report in July 2016. On 21st June 2016, HASC resolved
 - To express concern at the reported level of response to the consultation and ask Cabinet to consider whether it provides a sufficient basis from which to implement changes
 - If Cabinet implement changes to the charges, to receive an update on their impact, six months after implementation.

Main considerations for the committee

5. The Council began implementing the new policy for new customers from August 2016, following the Cabinet decision, and, shortly after that, began re-assessing the charges for existing customers. As at the beginning of February 2017, 463 new assessments and 188 re-assessments have been completed under the new policy.

6. All assessments and re-assessments are based on a person's individual circumstances and ensure that only eligible income is being taken into account when calculating contributions. All individuals who are financially assessed under the policy are also offered a benefits check so as to ensure that individuals are in receipt of, and claiming all benefits that they are eligible to receive.
7. Based on the re-assessments and assessments completed under this policy to date there is no evidence to suggest the equalities impact of this policy are significantly different than what was identified in the original equalities impact assessment. However, the Council has received a small, but significant, number of complaints and concerns from customers and their families, and have also received feedback from some voluntary sector organisations, and from Healthwatch Wiltshire, that the impact of the new Policy is greater than they had expected.
8. On this basis, the Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Public Health and Public Protection has commissioned Healthwatch Wiltshire to undertake a more thorough investigation into the impact of the implementation of the new Policy, including to understand what further practical support could be offered to individuals who are being reassessed. This work will involve meetings with customer groups and with voluntary sector, user-led and advocacy organisations. Following this work, a full report will be made available to the Committee and to Cabinet.
9. Whilst this review is underway, the Council will continue to implement the new Policy, and will investigate any specific concerns raised. Officers will reassess anyone who thinks that the new policy is not being correctly applied, and will offer individual support to anyone who has specific needs.

Environmental impact of the proposal

10. There are no specific environmental implications of the proposal

Equality and diversity impact of the proposal

11. A full Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the original policy development process.

Risk assessment

12. A more in-depth review of the implementation of the new Charging Policy, facilitated by Healthwatch Wiltshire, will support the fair application of the Policy and minimise any risk of misunderstanding or misapplication for individuals.

Financial implications

13. There should be no financial risk to the additional contributions identified through the application of the new policy, on the basis that the Council will continue to implement the Policy during this period of review.

Legal implications

14. Legal have been fully engaged in the development of the new Policy.

Conclusion

15. The Committee is requested to note the information contained in this report and that a further update will be provided once a full review of implementation has been completed.

Background papers

None