

Following Report to:	EXECUTIVE CABINET
Date:	24 January 2024
Executive Member:	Councillor John Taylor – Executive Member (Adult Social Care, Homelessness and Inclusivity)
Reporting Officer:	Stephanie Butterworth – Director of Adult Services
Subject:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE CHARGING PHASE 2
Report Summary:	<p>This report sets out a request for approval to consult on a second phase of alignment of charges to the fee paid by the Council for care and support provided, the adoption of a revised Transport and Travel Policy, see Appendix 1, along with the introduction of charges for some areas that are currently not charged for. The consultation covers the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Service charges; • Transport charges and revised Transport and Travel Policy; • Supported Living charges; • Respite Care – Learning Disability; • Removal of the maximum weekly charge for non-residential services; • Discretionary Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pet Care; ▪ Key Safes; ▪ Replacement costs for pre-payment cards; <p>Costs of providing payroll and managed accounts for Direct Payments</p>
Recommendations:	<p>That Executive Cabinet be recommended to approve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultation with the public on a second phase of alignment of charges in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Service • Supported Living • Respite Care – Learning Disability • Payroll and Managed Accounts for Direct Payments 2. Consultation on a revised Transport and Travel Policy including proposed charges. 3. Consultation on the introduction of charges for discretionary services that are currently not charged for. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pet Care • Key Safes • Replacement costs for pre-payment cards 4. Consultation on the removal of the maximum weekly charge for non-residential services.
Corporate Plan:	<p>The service links into the Council's priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help people to live independent lifestyles supported by responsible communities. • Improve Health and wellbeing of residents • Protect the most vulnerable

Also links to the Public Health Plan – Building Back Fairer, Equalities Strategy, Anti-Poverty Strategy, Corporate Housing Strategy.

Policy Implications:

The proposal aligns with the Living Well, Working Well and Ageing Well programmes for action

Financial Implications:

**(Authorised by the statutory
Section 151 Officer & Chief
Finance Officer)**

Recommendation 1 of this report seeks approval to commence consultation on the existing Adult services charging policy to align the charge to the service user to either the fee paid by the Council for the care and support provided via an external organisation or the actual cost of the internal provision (details within Appendix 2).

The 2023/24 Adult Social Care client income contributions budget for Non-Residential care provisions total £ 8.318m. The 2023/24 Period 7 forecast for Non-Residential care client income contributions totalled £5.985m. This equates to a £2.333m under achievement in Non-Residential Client Income to budget for the financial year.

There are currently 2,325 Non-Residential clients in the Financial Assessment system of which 609 (26%) have been assessed as being able to pay the full cost of their care package. The average client contribution towards a Non-residential Care package currently equates to 36% of the total cost of the care package.

Any increase in service user charges will result in additional income to the Council to fund the care provided. However, this would only effect full cost payers as all other service users have already been financially assessed in the current year.

The value of the estimated additional income that the Council will realise will be dependent on individual financial circumstances for the care provisions provided in Appendix 2. However, as a guide the table below provides a high-level summary of the estimated additional income based on a full year at 2023/24 values. The 2024/25 values are dependent on the level of approved provider fee rates payable by the Council, which is subject to a separate report.

	Full Year £m
Estimated Additional Income (Lower Value)	0.040
Estimated Additional Income (Higher Value)	0.090

There is a risk that these estimated income values could reduce if existing full cost paying service users request a financial re-assessment on their ability to continue paying the full cost charge of care provided.

Recommendation 2 of the report seeks approval for consultation regarding the current Transport and Travel Policy including proposed charges.

The 2023/24 Adult Social Care expenditure budget for Service User transport provision totals £ 0.768m. The 2023/24 Period 7 forecast for Service User transport provision totalled £0.853m. This equates to a £0.085 over spend on Service User transport provision to budget for the financial year.

The no. of service users accessing Transport on Taxi routes in

2023/24 currently totals 153 at a total weekly cost of £0.021m.

Based on the proposed rates for consultation below, the estimated weekly cost for 153 services users at an average route distance of 5 - 10.99 Miles per day would total £0.011m. This would equate to an estimated weekly cost reduction of £0.010m.

Transport Required (no. of days per Week)	
No. of Miles:	Daily Provision Rate (Rate per Annum)
0 - 1.99 Miles	£144
2 - 4.99 Miles	£351
5 - 10.99 Miles	£772
11 - 15.99 Miles	£1,123
16 miles or further	£1,334

Recommendation 3 of the report seeks approval for consultation on the introduction of charges for discretionary services that are currently not charged for.

- Pet Care
- Key Safes
- Replacement costs for pre-payment cards

The current forecast spend on the above in 2023/24 is circa £0.015m. The value of the estimated additional income that the Council will realise will be dependent on individual financial circumstances. However, based on the current average client contribution of 36% this would equate to £0.005m.

Recommendation 4 of the report seeks approval for consultation on the removal of the maximum weekly charge for non-residential services.

There are currently 29 service users who pay a reduced contribution towards their care package due to the maximum weekly charge limit. Removal of the maximum weekly charge could result in additional weekly income of £0.005m, £0.261m annually.

There is a risk that these estimated income values could reduce if existing full cost paying service users request a financial re-assessment on their ability to continue paying the full cost charge of care provided.

Legal Implications:

The report provides an accurate account of the legislation to which the Council is subject to in relation to charging for adult social care services. The report seeks approval to consult upon a second wave of proposed charges as detailed in the report. The recommendations proposed in the report are supported to ensure that any final decision upon the charges proposed is taken having regard to and informed by relevant feedback from the consultation and the equality impact assessment. This would form part of a robust decision-making process in the ultimate setting of the charges, the subject of the consultations and any equality impact assessment.

Risk Management:

The key risks relate to people's ability to pay the charges that they are assessed for and the need to have robust financial monitoring and swift reactions between Resources and Adult Services to ensure that if people are struggling to pay that as much help and support is available so that people are either not left with adequate

weekly income or without the correct level of care and support.

Currently the cost of the Council Fleet minibuses is split between Adult Social Care and Children's Services based on the number of passengers. These are fixed costs and if the number of Adult Social Care users reduced this would increase costs for Children's Services.

There are currently 30 routes for Adult Social Care using private hire vehicles and minibuses. These often transport more than one user and on some routes escorts are required. Depending on the number of users of the vehicle a Personal Transport budget (PTB) may not always offer better value. The contracts for these routes end in July 2025 and a 30 day notice period is required if the route is to be stopped.

Background Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Tracey Harrison Assistant Executive Director - Adults.



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Care Act 2014 (the Act) placed a number of duties and responsibilities on local councils when considering charging for adult social care services including residential and non-residential care (such as homecare, day care and respite care). The Act continues to allow councils some discretion as to what services they can charge for and what income, savings and assets can be taken into account when calculating a person's ability to pay for their care.
- 1.2 In terms of the elements of the Act that relate to charging for services, the Department of Health published two key sets of regulations that embody the statutory requirements of the Act as well as indicating the discretionary elements that are open to local interpretation and decisions.
- 1.3 The key regulations are:
 - The Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014
 - The Care and Support (Deferred Payment) Regulations 2014
- 1.4 In December 2023, Executive Cabinet approved the revised Charging Policy, which combined non-residential and residential charges into a single Policy which simplifies and explains more clearly how the Council charges for adult social care.
- 1.5 Furthermore, Executive Cabinet also approved aligning the cost of delivery to the current charges, in line with the fees currently paid for the following areas:
 - Direct Payments
 - Support at Home – hourly rate
 - Standard Homecare – hourly rate
 - Extra care
 - Residential & Nursing Care
- 1.6 This report sets out a request for approval to consult on a second phase of alignment of charges to the fee paid by the Council for care and support provided, the adoption of a revised Transport and Travel Policy, see Appendix 1, along with the introduction of charges for some areas that are currently not charged for. The consultation covers the following areas:
 - Day Service charges;
 - Transport charges and revised Transport and Travel Policy;
 - Supported Living charges;
 - Respite Care – Learning Disability;
 - Removal of the maximum weekly charge for non-residential services;
 - Discretionary Services
 - Pet Care;
 - Key Safes;
 - Replacement costs for pre-payment cards;
 - Costs of providing payroll and managed accounts for Direct Payments;
- 1.7 Further details about these proposals are outlined in Section 4 of this report.
- 1.8 The proposals outline the key principles to ensure it is fair, equitable and sustainable for the Council in the long term by reflecting the true cost of care and support services and ensures consistency in applying charges and collecting income.

2. POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Care Act 2014 was implemented on 1 April 2015. Crucially, part 1 of the Act focussed on the assessment and eligibility of people who receive social care and support and the acknowledgement that people who have the ability to pay, should indeed pay for those services that they are assessed as requiring. This principle of financial assessment and payment for

services has been well established within statute over the years and until the Care Act, had been encompassed within the Fairer Charging Policy and the Charging for Residential Accommodation Guide (CRAG).

2.2 The Act repealed both these sets of regulations and replaced them with the Government's expectations of what councils must charge for or may want to charge for.

2.3 The following are key to the Council's duty and powers when determining how it charges for care and support:

- Council's power to charge for services arises from Section 14 of the Care Act 2014.
- Section 78(1) of the Care Act 2014 provides that Local Authorities should act under The Care and Support Statutory Guidance.
- The regulations made under the Care Act 2014 are the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014 ("The Regulations").
- The MIG (minimum income guarantee) is set by Regulation 7 of the Regulations.
- Under the regulations when assessing the level of charge the Council is prohibited from taking into account the following:
 - Earnings from employment or self-employment (Regulation 14)
 - Housing-related costs (Regulation 15(1) and Schedule 1 para 2)
 - The mobility element of PIP (but not the daily living element of PIP) (Regulation 15(1) and Schedule 1 para 8)
 - Any disability related expenditure ("DRE") paid for with disability benefits (Regulation 15(1) and Schedule 1 para 4).
- Otherwise, Regulation 15(2) gives the Council a discretion about what it will or will not take into account when means-testing the person to be charged for Council services.

3. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The Council relies significantly on income from charging for adult social care services. Table 1 provides the analysis of the 2023/24 budget together with the forecast outturn income as at 31 October 2023 (Period 7).

Table 1

Care Provision	2023/24 Income Budget £m	2023/24 Income Forecast £m	2023/24 Variation £m
Residential and Nursing	10.297	12.731	2.434
Non-Residential Services	8.318	5.985	(2.333)
Total	18.615	18.716	0.101
% to Total Gross Expenditure	13.6%	12.6%	

If the Council did not charge fees for these services, an equivalent level of efficiency savings from the Adult Social Care revenue budget would need to be made, which would significantly reduce the level of services provided in future years.

3.2 The review of the current policies and charging approaches has also involved benchmarking against other Councils' policies and charging approaches to assess the most common approach.

3.3 As noted Executive Cabinet in December 2023 approved aligning the cost of delivery to the current charges, in line with the fees currently paid for the following areas:

- Direct Payments
- Support at Home – hourly rate

- Standard Homecare – hourly rate
- Extra care
- Residential & Nursing Care

- 3.4 It has been identified there is a significant gap between the cost of delivering services and the charge made to people who use our services in the following areas which therefore does not demonstrate best value for the Council;
- Day Services;
 - Transport;
 - Supported Living;
 - Respite Care (Learning Disability);
- 3.5 There is currently a maximum charge that can be made in relation the weekly charge for non-residential services. This again does not demonstrate best value for the Council and is not consistent with charges for residential services, so the proposal is therefore to remove this maximum weekly charge.
- 3.6 Further it is clear that the Council is paying for services that are not being charged for. It is therefore proposed that charges are introduced in the following areas:
- Pet Care;
 - Key Safes;
 - Replacement costs for pre-payment cards;
 - Costs of providing payroll and managed accounts for Direct Payments;
- 3.7 A moderate increase in income from some charges is anticipated if the proposals following consultation are approved. The extent of this increase depends on the future uptake by people of the disability-related expenses options and the financial assessment as permitted by Section 17 of the Care Act 2014.
- 3.8 Ongoing changes in the demographics of the borough, particularly increasing number of older people and younger adults with disabilities and life limiting health conditions, adds further pressure to the Adult Services budget.
- 3.9 Given the changes in the demographics, it is important that all aspects of budgets are scrutinised to ensure that services can be protected and maintained as much as possible and to that end, charging for services continues to be a crucial element of the management of the total budget.

4. PROPOSED CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The proposed consultation see Appendix 2 will focus on a number of key areas:
- The further alignment of charges to people who use services, with the fee paid by the Council for care and support provided, within the context of the national means test
 - The removal of a maximum weekly charge for non-residential services
 - Introduction of new charges for discretionary non-eligible services
- 4.2 In addition, the public will be asked for general feedback on the draft Transport and Travel Policy and the simplified format that makes it easier for the public to access information relevant to them.
- 4.3 It should be stressed that any changes to charges are subject to the national means test and people will not be asked to pay for care that they cannot afford. Regardless of any charges, people will undergo a financial assessment to establish their financial contribution to the total cost of their care. As a result, some people may be required to:
- Pay the full cost of their care (self-funders)

- Pay a partial contribution
- Not pay at all.

4.4 The consultation will run for four weeks, commencing on Monday 29 January 2024 and closing on Sunday 25 February 2024 and will be available in a range of opportunities to contribute:

- Completing this online survey via The Big Conversation
- Completing a paper version of this survey.
- By telephone
- By e-mail
- In writing

4.5 The following sections explain the key elements of the consultation exercise in more detail:

4.6 **Alignment of charges with the fees paid by the Council**

Day Service Charges - The Council does not currently charge people the full amount it costs to deliver the day service and the aim is to review the charges to reflect the fees paid by the Council. Over the years, the Council has looked to protect people from rising costs and the charging rates have only ever risen by inflation (which have in fact fallen significantly behind the cost the Council pays to providers).

	Provider fee/cost of delivery per day	Current charge to people per day
Commissioned Day Service via Active Tameside (Attendance - per day)	£64.10	£3.00
In-house Day Service for people with complex needs (Attendance - per day)	£114.30	£3.00

In addition, the Council does not directly provide, or commission providers to offer, meals and drinks as part of the day service for people. It is proposed that any charge that has related to meals and drinks historically is removed completely.

Transport - the Council currently arranges transport as part of a person's package of care and has only charged a small amount as a contribution towards cost. Benchmarking work has shown other Council's generally charge more for the transport it provides. The Council in arranging transport where this cannot be done via family, friends and/or carers, delivers this in several ways including provision by its own minibuses and commissioning taxis.

Where people have an assessed need in relation to transport and travel, the proposal is to base charges on the full cost either directly or via a "Personal Transport Budget" (PTB) which would be given as a Direct Payment.

Based on the consultation work being done in relation to young people, Adult Services is proposing to introduce the following in relation to the provision of transport and associated charging.

It is proposed that where people are eligible for transport the Council offer will be:

- Council Fleet Minibus – where an individual requires an escort and will be charged at full cost.
- Provision of a Personal Transport Budget where no escort is required will be provided as a Direct Payment – The value of this will be based on the following:

Transport Required (no. of days per Week)	
No. of Miles:	PTB Daily Provision Rate (Rate per Annum)
0 - 1.99 Miles	£144
2 - 4.99 Miles	£351
5 - 10.99 Miles	£772
11 - 15.99 Miles	£1,123
16 miles or further	£1,334

The Council does not have a published Adult Social Care Transport Policy at present, though there are criteria applied at a person's assessment to establish a need for transport that the Council must meet. With this in mind an Adult Social Care Transport and Travel Policy has been drafted which will be included in the proposed consultation.

A consultation on the 16–19 Home to School Transport Policy for young people with an education health care plan (EHCP) is due to be completed by the end of January 2024. The proposal being consulted on is to provide every eligible young person with a "Personal Transport Budget" to enable families to commission their own transport support to meet their individual needs. This proposal has been considered when developing the draft "Adult Social Care Transport and Travel Policy", which it is believed ensures that the principles are aligned for young people to have a seamless transition to adulthood in respect of their transport.

There is also likely to be an impact for the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) within Place Directorate and it is therefore proposed to consult in more detail with colleagues alongside the public consultation.

Supported Living – The Council currently provides 24 hour supported living services for its Adult population.

These services are provided by either:

- The Councils in-house service - who generally provide support to people with a learning disability with the most complex needs, or;
- Commissioned by the Council with independent providers - who deliver support people with a learning disability, mental health need and/or physical disability.

The proposal in relation to charging for Supported Living Services is to move from the existing complicated charging on the basis of hourly rates to an individual placement cost which reflects the cost the Council pays – this will introduce rates for in-house, and independent provision.

	Provider fee/cost of delivery per day	Current charge to people per hour of support	Proposed charge to people per day
Supported Living – In-House	£249.90	£17.20	£249.90
Supported Living – Commissioned	£188.00	£17.20	£188.00
Supported Living – Commissioned Intensive Support Service	£260.20	£17.20	£262.20
Supported Living – Commissioned Mental Health	£62.20	£17.20	£62.20

Learning Disability Respite Support - The Councils respite support for people with a learning disability is currently provided at Cumberland Street which is a 24 hour/7 day a week building based support service.

The table below shows the current cost of service delivery alongside the current charge to people who use it.

	Provider fee/cost of delivery per day	Current charge to people per day
Respite support for people with a learning disability	£215.10	£14.30

- 4.7 **Proposal to remove the maximum weekly charge for non-residential services** - Currently, there is a maximum weekly charge to people of £521.20 per week for non-residential services such as home care or day services. In residential care there is no such maximum weekly charge.

The proposal is to align the charges with the approach in residential charging and therefore remove the current weekly maximum charge for non-residential services completely. This means that people will be charged for the total cost of their care and there will be no cap. The financial assessment process will not change.

- 4.8 **Charging for Discretionary Services** - the Council must take into account its long-term financial sustainability so must consider what additional services can be charged for whilst acting in a lawful and equitable way. This proposal seeks to consider additional services that can be charged for at discretion to the Council. Under consideration are the following areas:
- Charges for pet care
 - Charges for key safes
 - Charges for replacement pre-paid cards

Charges for Pet Care – The Council has a duty of care for a person’s belongings; this includes arranging care for a person’s pet(s) in the event that the person goes into hospital or to a care home for example. Currently, the Council does not charge for this service.

The proposal is to recover the actual cost of pet care when this is required. The Council will always ask whether a member of the family, a friend or a charity could take care of the pet first to avoid incurring costs for the pet’s owner. However in some cases, where this is not possible, a paid service is required.

Charges for Key Safes – These provide safe access to a person’s property in case of an emergency. Having a key safe prevents forced entry if nominated contacts cannot be reached. The keys can only be accessed by entering a PIN into the key safe. Currently, the Council does not charge for the installation of key safes where people have eligible needs.

The current costs to the Council are as follows:

Delivery Options	Cost of Delivery	Cost of Key Safe	Installation Cost	Total Cost (key safe + installation + delivery)
Standard – 4 Days:	£20	£42.46	£10	£72.46
Premium – 2 Days:	£28	£42.46	£10	£80.46
Urgent – Next Day (5pm Cut-Off):	£40	£42.46	£10	£92.46
Emergency – Within 4 Hours (4pm cut-off)	£75	£42.46	£10	£127.46

The proposal is to fully charge for costs incurred by the Council to install and deliver key safes if you have an assessed need. The financial assessment process will not change.

Charges for Replacement Pre-Paid cards - Currently, the Council provides pre-payment cards for Appointeeships for people living in the community. The cost of the initial pre-payment card is currently included in the Appointeeship charge, however the Council currently does not charge for replacement cards. It is proposed to introduce a charge of £5 for any replacement cards only. This is to cover the charge to the Council to replace them.

Payroll and Managed Accounts for Direct Payments - The Council currently has a contract in place to deliver a Payroll and Managed Account Service to support people who have taken a Direct Payment to organise their own care needs which are as follows:

- **A Managed Account Service**– This is where the provider manages the financial side of the Direct Payment. The managed account service will for example pay invoices to agencies, pay the Personal Assistants wages and any associated HMRC bills etc.
- **A Standard Payroll Service** - If a Personal Assistant is directly employed, they may have to pay tax and national insurance on their wages. The Standard Payroll service will work this out and send a payslip so individuals know how much to pay the Personal Assistant.

The cost of the service provision is not currently reflected via any charge to the individual in receipt of a Direct Payment and the current costs of providing these services are as follows:

	Current monthly costs from 1/4/23	Current Monthly Charge	Proposed Weekly Charge
Managed Account Service Fee Rate (Month) with or without Payroll including year-end fee	£30.58	£30 (£7.5 x 4wk)	£7.32
Standard Account Service Fee Rate (Month) per PA including year-end fee	£9.28	£0	£2.40
NEST Pension Set Up (One off cost)	£12.01	£0	£12.01 (one off cost)

It costs the Council £7.32 per week for the Managed Account, £2.40 for the Standard Account and a one off fee of £12.01 for the pension set up costs. The proposal is to fully charge what it costs to deliver the Payroll Services for a Direct Payment.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The table below outlines the key risks and mitigations associated with the content of this report.

Risk	Consequence	Likelihood	Impact	Action to Mitigate Risk
The Charging Policy is not equitable	Challenge to the Council regarding the equity of the Policy. Financial and reputational damage.	1	4	Legal advice has been sought on revised policy, consideration has been taken of Norfolk Judgement and Regulations and Care Act 2014 have been followed. Where there is increased risk of legal challenge full consultation is advised and these areas will therefore be subject to a separate report see 5.3 of this report.

People are unable to afford the charges	Either they would decide not to receive the care or get into debt.	2	4	Full financial assessment of all people who use our services and clear determination of an ability to pay will be established. If someone cannot afford to pay then further assessment may be required to ascertain the situation. The Policy should not leave people without adequate funds for daily living.
People accrue large debts once a charge has been set	Added anxiety to service user and family. Council unable to receive the full amount of the charge	2	4	Close scrutiny of the debts being accrued by client finance team and early warning system to be in place between Resources and Adult Services Directorates so that early intervention and support can be put in place
Non-payment of charges	Council's budget negatively affected and services may need to be stopped	2	4	Effective debt recovery in line with the Council's policy will be in place together with an early alert system allowing Adult Services to intervene and ensure that the person is aware of the consequences of non-payment and also is able to afford the charges.
People refuse to pay the charges	Potential for services to be stopped	1	4	Importance of explaining the Charging Policy from the start of the assessment process so that people are aware that they will be charged, following consultation new leaflets are being produced to leave with people who use our services. The website will be updated with clear information and the policy. Charges will be based upon an ability to pay and so if they are correct and the person refuses to pay then the consequences will be explained and inevitable services may need to be withdrawn.
Withholding or giving incorrect financial information	This could lead to an inaccurate financial assessment and the wrong charge being calculated	2	3	Clear explanation given to the user from the start of the assessment process explaining the consequences of withholding or giving inaccurate financial information.
Impact on the Council's financial position	Revised charges would provide a moderate increase in income	4	2	The maximum charge for non-residential services requires full consultation and therefore isn't part of this policy update. The extent of the increase income under the proposed policy depends on the future uptake by people who use our services.
	Phased approach to implementation could lay the Council open to potential legal	2	4	Clear explanation given to people who use our services from the start of the assessment process on the policy and current charges. Website to contain clear information, the policy and copy of

	challenge or settlement from new people who use our services given a two tiered charging approach			explanatory leaflets Paying for Care (tameside.gov.uk)
	Increased the potential risk for human error when selecting the correct charge for people who use our services during the implementation phase.	2	4	Training and additional quality assurance oversight to be in place for the phased implementation period.
Impact on delivery from ITU	Contract clauses and potential reductions – fleet and escorts Taxi contract			

6 EQUALITIES

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is currently being undertaken which takes into account the proposed changes to the previous Charging Policy. The Council recognises that whilst charging for services does inevitably have an impact on people as it reduces their income there is a recognition that the way that charges are made should be equitable for everyone whether they are working, unable to work or have a severe disability.
- 6.2 The EIA will be completed on closure of the consultation when the final proposals are put to Executive Cabinet for approval.
- 6.3 The key foundation of any Charging Policy is that it is transparent and fair in that it takes into account the true cost of the care being provided, the charges applied to the person drawing on care and support and their ability to pay for that care.
- 6.4 The proposed changes are in line with these key principles, and will treat people equitably.
- 6.5 The charging for adult social care services is based on a person's ability to pay and a full financial assessment is carried out on anyone assessed as needing a social care service. If the savings and assets an individual has means that they are able to pay the full cost of their care then this would be appropriate and fair. If, on the other hand, a person is unable to pay for their care then it is right and proper that the Council pays all or a proportion of the cost of the care so that everyone is able to receive the correct level of care and support that has been assessed as being needed to meet their needs.

7. FUTURE POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Government 10 Year Strategy - People at the Heart of Care included an intention to introduce a cap on care costs and a more generous means test to further protect people

against unpredictable and potentially unlimited care costs, however this proposal was formally delayed by Government until at least 2025.

- 7.2 The provision for an annual review of the policy and associated charges for care and support funded by the Council ensures the Council can be responsive to any future national policy changes.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Every effort has been made to ensure people that could potentially be impacted by these proposals have had the opportunity to feed into the consultation during 2024.
- 8.2 It is estimated that the proposed changes outlined in section 4 of this report will generate a moderate increase in income for the Council. In addition, it will simplify the Adult Social Care Charging Policy and explain more clearly, the way the service charges for care.
- 8.3 Furthermore if approved, this report makes provision for a further phase of consultation where it has been determined that changes may have a more significant impact on individuals for the charges referenced in section 3.3 of this report. Should it be approved, Adult Services will ensure consultation during 2024 to bring forward recommendations for subsequent changes at the earliest opportunity.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 As set out at the front of the report.