

Changes to charging for adult social care services



Southend-on-Sea Borough Council want to find out what you think about the possible changes to the draft **Adult Social Care Charging Policy**.



The Charging Policy for Adult Social Care explains the way the council will work with you to fill in the financial assessment. It tells you which types of service free and which services are **means tested**.

Means tested means that only certain people can access a service.



The changes are made with the future in mind. They are made so that future changes are easier to make.



The changes aim to improve the way that the Council works out how much some people pay for the cost of their adult social care services.

Background



The current Adult Social Care Charging Policy was written in 2009.

It was updated in 2015 when the Care Act was introduced.



A working group checked the current policy and picked out areas to change.

A **working group** is a group of experts who work together to reach a goal.



All changes have been suggested with the UK's charging issues, laws, and recent decisions on similar issues in mind.



The impact on people's money has been kept in mind as well as the impact on the Council's money.



All possible changes to the Adult Social Care Charging Policy meet the laws set out in the Care Act of 2014.

Principles



The changes will help the council ensure we continue to give a **sustainable** social care service. Your views will help us to decide whether this is something the public want.

Sustainable means meeting our needs now without hurting people's needs in the future.



The following ideas are guiding the change:

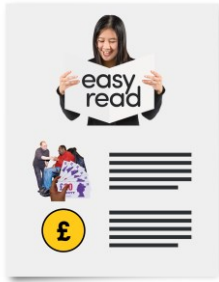
- We will start to use a simple, well-planned, and low-cost financial assessment and income collection process.



- People will not be charged more than they can afford.



- The charging rules will continue to be fair to all.



- People will be given clear information about charges and how their contribution has been worked out.



- Advice on how to get welfare benefits will be made available to people and carers.



- The charging plans will reflect the actual cost of services.



- The policy will contribute to the sustainability of Adult Social Care in Southend-on-Sea.



We want to find out your views on the following 4 areas of suggested change:

1. Full Cost Recovery



This possible change recommends that the Council carry out **full cost recovery**. This means the Council will look to **recharge** people at the same rates it pays to care providers.

Recharge means you pay money so that you can continue to use a service.



Making this change would mean that some people would see an increase in the amount they are charged. But this would never be more than they could afford.



Under the current policy, the Council does not charge people who receive care at the same rates as it pays care providers.



Making this change could save the Council around £219,000 per year, to reinvest back into Adult Social Care services in Southend-on-Sea.



Mr D has Parkinson's disease and has carers who visit him two times a day. They visit him for 30 minutes each visit. He goes to a day centre two times a week.



Mr D pays £19 per hour for his carers and £50 a day to go to a day centre. He pays a total of £233 per week.



The actual cost to the Council is £19 an hour for Mr D's carers and £70 a day for Mr D to go to a day centre making a total of £273 per week.

2. Disability Related Expenditure



This possible change recommends that people will need to give evidence of their Disability Related Expenditure. This will make sure that people are not getting money for items which are **general living costs**.

General living costs means things like laundry, clothing, and bedding.



The Council asks the person or a person who represents them to fill in a money form. This form includes details of costs related to their disability. At the moment, this does not ask for any evidence.



This is an example of what this could mean for people:
Ms G is 32 and lives alone in her own home.



Ms G has a mental health problem and goes to a community gardening project twice per week.



Ms G pays £20 a week to the Council to go the gardening project. This is based on her assessment charge.



The actual cost to the Council is £70 a week.



In Ms G's financial assessment £5 a week is counted as her Disability Related Expenditure.



In this example, Ms G would be asked to provide some evidence of this expenditure and would be no worse off.

3. Arrangement Fees



This possible change recommends the introduction of fees for new and current people receiving non-residential care who have savings over a certain amount.

The Care Act 2014 allows the council to do this.



- The Care Act allows the council to charge these fees for:
 - People with certain level of needs,
 - People who have **assets** above £23,250
 - People who ask the council to arrange their non-residential care services.

Assets means savings.



The cost to the Council is around £150. After the first year, £65 a year will be charged for regular costs which relate to billing. These costs will be passed onto people getting care.



Introducing fees to cover these costs would lead to an additional sum of around £39,000 a year for the adult social care services.



About 193 people who currently receive care would see an increase of £65 per year.



This is an example of what this could mean for people:
Mrs F is 82 and lives with her husband in their own home.



Mrs F has more than £23,250 in savings and receives her state and private pension.



Mrs F has Multiple Sclerosis and receives a home care service where two carers visit her four times a day. They visit her for 30 minutes each visit.



She pays £19 an hour for the home care service which makes her charge be a total of £532 per week.

4 Minimum Income Guarantee



This change recommends that the Council should not increase the Minimum Income Guarantee and should continue to follow the Care Act 2014 guidance until this law is changed.



The non-residential assessment includes an allowance for standard living costs, known as the Minimum Income Guarantee. It is based on costs set by the Department of Health and Social Care.



A recent decision was made against Norfolk County Council which has led to many Councils reviewing their charging policies around the Minimum Income Guarantee.



The working group looked at options which involved increasing the Minimum Income Guarantee but found that this would mean the Council would be spending more money, between £270k to over £1m, depending on the option chosen.



This is an example of what this could mean for people:
Mr C is 42 and lives alone in his own home.



Mr C has a learning disability and receives a direct payment to pay for a personal assistant for 21 hours a week.



Mr C pays £10 a week to the council based on his charge following a financial assessment.



The actual cost to the Council is £399 a week.



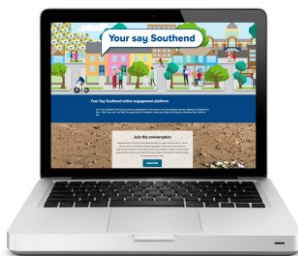
In this example, as the Council has not changed the Minimum Income Guarantee, there would be no change to what Mr C pays.



We want to hear your views on these suggested changes



You have until Monday 8th August 2022 to give your views.



To give your views:

- Log onto Your Say Southend where you can find an electronic survey.



- Call 01702 215934 to talk to the Charging Policy comment line.

This line is open between 10am and 12pm, Monday to Fridays.



- Send your response by email to: financepolicyconsultation@southend.gov.uk.



- Take part in the Public Consultation Meeting on: Wednesday 8th June 2022 between 10am to 12pm.



- Write a letter to:
 - Charging Consultation, Community Services Department, Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6ER.



There will also be a chance to share your comments publicly for others to view and respond to if you wish to.



Your views and replies are confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this consultation.