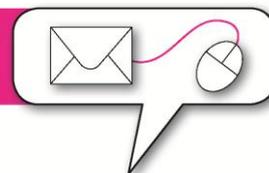


# Have your say ...



## Proposed changes to Fairer Contributions and Charging Policy Consultation document

If you have any questions, would like an easy-read version of this document, or would like help to understand this document, please contact:

By e-mail: [comments.adultsocialcare@poole.gov.uk](mailto:comments.adultsocialcare@poole.gov.uk)

Our helpline: open 10am to 12pm Monday to Friday on Tel: 01202 261046

Or you can write to: Gary McCann, Adult Social Care, Civic Centre, Poole, Dorset BH15 2RU

## Introduction

The Council is considering making changes to the way in which we:

- ask adults of all ages to contribute towards the cost of their non-residential care
- ask adults of all ages to pay a charge towards the cost of meals and refreshments in day centres

## Why are we consulting?

The Council only has limited funds, and therefore has to make difficult decisions about how to make the best use of the resources we have. We can then continue to safeguard the most vulnerable members of the community. Also, the policies we are proposing to change have not been changed for some time. The proposals outlined here would impact on those who have care commissioned by the Borough of Poole, as well as those who receive a Direct Payment.

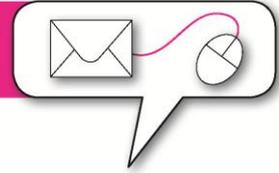
## How to have your say

What we are proposing is outlined in more detail below. We think the proposals are fair and reasonable, but before we reach a final decision, we would like to hear your views on how these might impact on you, and how we could help people if they were affected. **We need your views by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014.**

We would like to hear from service users and their carers who may be directly affected. We would also like to hear from voluntary organisations and providers who currently work with our service users.

Once the consultation feedback has been analysed, the results will be presented to the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2015, prior to members making further decisions about the policy, and with a view to introducing any changes to policy from April 2015.

# Have your say ...



## Proposal 1 – To revise the Disability Related Expenditure policy

### Background information

When the Council financially assesses people, an allowance is made for additional, assessed living costs that people with a disability may be faced with. This is known as Disability Related Expenditure, or 'DRE'. Living costs which we currently consider include things like extra costs of laundry and washing powder, extra costs of specially tailored clothing and footwear, and the extra costs of holidays. DRE is not a payment. Once we have assessed someone's DRE, we then don't count it as income in their financial assessment, so that it can be kept and used to finance disability related items or services.

Because the Council counts disability benefits as income when we financially assess people, we are legally obliged to assess someone's DRE when we assess how much someone can pay towards their care.

#### **We currently individually assess people for this expenditure.**

The more living costs associated with a disability that are considered as part of the financial assessment, the less someone will contribute towards their care costs.

The way in which we assess someone's DRE has not changed since 2004.

### The changes being proposed

#### **There are two proposed changes:**

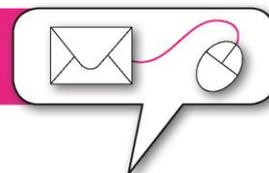
- **Reviewing the current list of items and services which we consider as Disability Related Expenditure (please see Annex 1 for more detail)**

This is the list of items and services which is used when we individually assess people for their DRE. We are reviewing it because we want to make our policy fairer and clearer for everyone. The Council believes that some of the items and services we currently make an allowance for are general living costs, or can be considered a lifestyle choice, rather than disability related expenditure.

- **If someone does not want an individual assessment, we can make an allowance for DRE at a set rate, which will depend on the disability benefit someone gets, such as Attendance Allowance.**

Higher rate disability benefits are awarded where care is required both day and night, and so for those people their expenditure is in most cases higher. We feel that this may therefore more fairly represent the additional costs that are related to someone's disability. Making an allowance for DRE based on someone's disability benefits would not affect assistance with mobility cars or decisions made by the Department for Work and Pensions.

# Have your say ...



Set rates for DRE would be allowed as follows:

£ per week allowed as Disability Related Expenditure (to cover all disability related expenses)	Receipt of disability related benefit
£0	In receipt of no disability related benefits
£5	In receipt of low rate Disability Living Allowance (DLA) (Care Component)
£10	In receipt of middle rate DLA (Care Component), low rate Attendance Allowance (AA) or standard rate Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
£15	In receipt of high rate DLA (Care Component), high rate AA or enhanced rate PIP

Anyone affected could also request a new financial assessment to make sure they were still able to afford the contribution they are being asked to make.

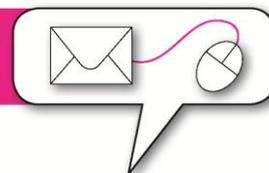
If the changes are approved, it may mean that some people have to pay more towards the cost of their care. No one will pay more than they are assessed as being able to contribute however, based on our Fairer Contributions Policy.

## Proposal 2 - To change the way we calculate the costs of care so this represents the true costs of providing it

When we carry out a financial assessment for someone, we use the assessed costs of their care package, which includes home care costs, to see how much someone can afford to pay. The costs of home care are calculated using an hourly rate, which is currently set at £13.34. The hourly rate is used even when home care visits are less than an hour, and where they should be calculated using a proportionately higher rate. For example, a 15 minute home care visit currently costs the Council £4.10 to provide. If someone receives four, 15 minute visits per day, this in fact costs the Council £16.40 to provide.

We are therefore proposing that the way the costs of home care are calculated reflects the real cost to the Council of providing that care. This would mean that some people may have to contribute more towards the costs of their care. **If the proposal is approved, it will still be the case that no one will pay more than they are assessed as being able to contribute, in line with our Fairer Contributions Policy.**

# Have your say ...



## Proposal 3 - To remove the maximum charge for service users for home care, currently set at £450 per week

At the moment, the Council has a maximum amount that it asks people to pay towards their care costs. This only applies to people who are assessed as having enough money with which to pay all of these costs. This means that the Council is sometimes subsidising those with the most money more than other service users who have lower incomes.

We are therefore proposing that this maximum amount is removed, so that those who can afford to pay more do so. People will still be assessed financially in line with our Fairer Contributions Policy, and no one will pay more than they are assessed as being able to afford.

## Proposal 4 - To introduce a more realistic pricing structure for day centre meals

The price of meals and refreshments in Poole and Sea View Day Centres has not risen since 2010. A hot meal at either centre currently costs £2.65. A dessert costs £0.65, tea £0.35 and coffee £0.45. A light meal (for example a roll, jacket potato or a salad) currently costs £1.95.

The Council is proposing to introduce a 'meal deal' price of £6. This price would be for a meal, dessert and 3 served drinks. All of these items would still be able to be bought separately. We are also proposing to increase the price of these individual items, as below:

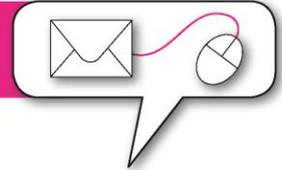
Main meal	£4.00
Dessert	£1.00
Drink	£0.60
Light meal (including a roll, salad or jacket potato)	£2.90

We believe that the 'meal deal' price of £6 is still very good value compared to the average cost of 'meals on wheels' prices. Anyone attending a day centre would still be able to take a packed lunch if they wish. If someone wanted to buy items separately, a meal, dessert and drink would cost £5.60. A light meal, dessert and drink would cost £4.50. A meal and a dessert would cost £5.00.

## When we plan to introduce the changes

If the proposals were approved, the Council plans to implement these **from April 2015**. We would like to hear your views around this, and understand how we could help someone if they were assessed as needing to contribute more towards their care costs.

# Have your say ...



## Question and Answer sessions

The Council is holding two consultation events during October, where any questions about the proposals can be put forward. If you would like to attend either of these events, please book a place by phoning the telephone helpline number given above, between 10am and 12pm, Monday to Friday. You will need to book a place before the 10<sup>th</sup> October for the first event, and before the 13<sup>th</sup> October for the second event. Spaces will be limited therefore it would be advisable to book early.

### **Consultation Question and Answer Session 1**

**Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

**10am to 12 noon**

Cattistock Room, Civic Centre

Park Road

Poole, BH15 2RU

### **Consultation Question and Answer Session 2**

**Monday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

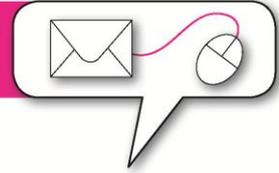
**10am to 12 noon**

Cattistock Room, Civic Centre

Park Road

Poole, BH15 2RU

# Have your say ...



## Annex 1

### **Proposed changes to the list of items and services which we consider as Disability Related Expenditure**

**The following items and services would no longer be considered a disability related expense when we financially assess someone**

#### **a) privately arranged care, including respite care**

This is because the Council will meet the assessed needs of someone's care, including respite care, as part of their care plan. Following the introduction of Direct Payments, service users are also able to use these to arrange their own care or respite.

#### **b) private domestic help, including cleaning, window cleaning and gardening**

We are proposing that, whilst desirable, these services are not an essential area which we are able to make an allowance for any longer. The Council has limited funds and therefore has to make some difficult decisions about what we can and cannot allow. However, should it be assessed that there may be a risk to someone's health or safety should any of these services not be provided, or it means someone is made unduly vulnerable, we will still be able to look at cases individually.

#### **c) the costs of privately bought equipment, (including repair, maintenance and insurance), including, but not limited to:**

##### **Manual wheelchair, powered wheelchair, powered bed, turning bed, powered reclining chair, stair lift, and hoist**

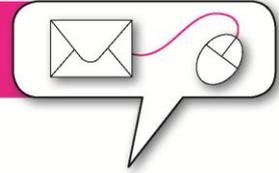
If these items have been provided by the Council following an assessed need, or by the NHS, these costs will be met by these organisations or through their providers. The Council cannot pay for the purchase cost, repair, maintenance or insurance of these items if they have been bought privately.

Sometimes we also make an allowance for other items of equipment, such as pressure cushions or walking sticks. The Council would not longer be able to make an allowance for these items of equipment. Any items which the Council assesses as necessary will be provided as part of someone's care plan.

#### **d) the extra costs of communications**

We are proposing to no longer allow for the costs of entertainment and media, which includes the costs of a television (including digital TV reception), telephone costs (including mobile phones), internet and broadband, computing and gaming hardware and software, as a disability related expense. We think that these services are everyday living expenses, which other households who may have a low income have to pay for themselves. There have also been significant improvements in the availability of, for example, free digital television services across the region, and the costs of many of these services is now much more competitive. We believe this is fair, as we would still be able to look at individual cases should it be assessed that a need was genuinely related to disability.

# Have your say ...



## **e) the extra costs of holidays**

The current policy makes an allowance for someone to meet the additional costs of holidays. This might be for a carer to attend. However, the Council currently pays an allowance to carers for holidays, and we therefore believe it is fair to no longer consider these costs as a disability related expense.

## **f) extra costs of incontinence pads**

Incontinence pads should be provided by the NHS. As with all the proposals, we would still be able to look at cases individually if it was assessed that a need was genuinely related to disability.

**A maximum amount would be introduced for the following items and services, including:**

## **a) chiropody, up to a maximum of £3 per week, or up to £156 per year**

The Council acknowledges that chiropody services, whilst free to some people, are not free to others, and can help prevent other health issues. The maximum amount proposed covers the average cost of up to £26 for a chiropody home visit once every two months.

## **b) the costs of prescriptions for essential, prescribed medication, up to a maximum of the cost of a yearly prepayment certificate, or £2 per week, or £104 per year**

Prescription costs will still be considered up to the cost of a yearly prepayment certificate, but only if someone has already attempted to get help with these costs from the NHS and has not been successful.

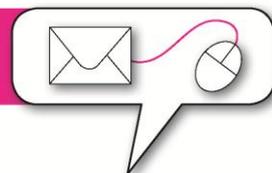
## **c) costs of extra bedding, up to a maximum of £2.48 per week, or £129 per year.**

The current policy considers the costs of extra bedding, but with no maximum amount allowed. The maximum being proposed would allow for replacement of bedding 3 times per year. It is important to remember that these are standard amounts. We may be able to consider a higher amount if you are able to show that it is required.

## **d) extra costs of special clothing and footwear, but up to a maximum of £3.56 per week, or £185 per year.**

The current policy enables the Council to use discretion when considering the costs of any special clothing or footwear, particularly if they can only be bought at a higher than usual market cost. We propose to continue allowing for these extra costs, but with a maximum amount applied. This takes into account the costs of purchasing a range of specially tailored clothes and footwear over the course of a year.

## Have your say ...



### **e) the extra costs of travel to visit a spouse in a care home, up to a maximum of £10 per week, or £520 per year**

If these changes are approved, we would only be able to consider the extra costs of visits to see a spouse in a care home. This would be for costs incurred which are in excess of any mobility payments someone receives. This is because these trips are not considered when assessing care needs and there is no allowance for them as part of a financial assessment.

Costs of shopping trips, visiting friends, visiting hospital or GPs would no longer be allowed. This is because the Council currently pays mileage expenses to carers to enable service users to go shopping or for other essential journeys. Also, people might be able to get help with transport costs to appointments for NHS treatment if they are on a low income. A service user may be visited at home by their GP should they be unable to get to the surgery and the GP believes there is a medical need for a home visit. Again, we may be able to consider a higher amount if you are able to show that it is required.

### **f) the extra costs of a key safe and its installation, up to a maximum of £50 as a one off cost, and £24 as a one off cost, for locked medicine storage equipment**

This would be a one-off cost when calculating someone's contribution. It would be allowed for any assessed need for these items which has not already been met. The Council acknowledges that these items are important to enable care to be undertaken effectively. It is therefore proposed that these two items of equipment alone continue to be considered as a disability related expense.

## **No change would occur to how we consider the costs of some items and services**

**a) the extra costs of laundry and washing powder** (in line with National Association of Financial Assessment Officers guidance for 2015/16).

### **b) the extra costs of a special diet**

A special diet must be recommended by a Doctor or Nutritionist, and be noted in someone's care plan. There must be evidence of purchase available and it must not be provided free by the NHS.

### **c) the costs of a community alarm system**

We will continue to consider the full costs of a community alarm system, providing this is not already being provided by a Sheltered Housing Provider or by the Council's Crisis Payment Scheme, and purchase can be evidenced.