



Executive Advisory Panel for Pathways to Independence

Extract from the minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 24 February 2017.

'Making Chargers Fairer' for Adult Social Care

5 Members considered a draft report for the Cabinet which presented an analysis of the outcomes of the consultation that had been held to examine the impact of phasing in some more policy changes designed to promote equity and other principles as set out in the Care Act. The report showed that a wide range of views was expressed and strong support was given for most of the proposals that were consulted on.

The review also considered the levels of fees and charges for non-residential care and recommended an increase of up to 5% alongside work to ensure that individual personal budgets more accurately reflected actual costs. It was noted that the same rate had been held for past 5 years.

In respect of the key proposal to stop giving the 25% discretionary disregard of disability-related income there was divided opinion.

Cllr Jill Haynes, as the Cabinet Member for Adult Health, Care and Independence, explained to members the proposal to backdate non-residential care charges in appropriate cases and highlighted the importance of informing people beforehand.

The Service Manager for Welfare Reform, Finance and Income Generation noted that further work needed to be undertaken around the information and advice that was given/made available for people.

The Senior Exchequer Services Manager advised that circulating information to surgeries and libraries and targeting those people in receipt of social care informing them that advice on welfare benefits was available would help to raise this profile. Cllr Haynes felt it would be helpful to also include Town and Parish Councils in this regard.

One member felt it was important to also provide telephone contact numbers on information literature as there were still a high number of people that either did not have access to a computer or were not computer literate.

The Assistant Director - Early Help and Community Services felt it would be useful to include more of the EQIA information in the report before it was presented to the Cabinet in order to give more visibility of the decision making process.

Resolved

1. That the Panel supported the recommendations going forward to Cabinet.
2. That the Interim Director for Adult and Community Services undertakes further work to investigate the source of financial advice and information which people make use of and to signpost people more effectively, particularly self-funders, to appropriate sources of financial advice and information.

Reason for Decisions

To help secure a sustainable approach to the County Council's corporate plan aims that people in Dorset be safe, healthy, independent and prosperous.