



Date of Meeting: 25th June 2019

Lead Member: Cllr Laura Miller – Lead Member for Adult Social Care & Health

Lead Officer: Mathew Kendall

Executive Summary:

The predecessor Dorset County Council Cabinet reviewed its charging policy in 2015 to support the implementation of the Care Act. It was agreed that the predecessor Dorset County Council would charge the full cost of putting in place the arrangements for meeting needs, in accordance with the person's ability to pay as determined by a financial assessment in accordance with the Care Act and Charging Regulations.

The policy was reviewed again in 2017, following which some changes were made to the treatment of disability-related income in the financial means-test. There were public consultations to support both previous reviews.

The remaining element of the policy to be implemented is in respect of contributions required towards the cost of Day Care and Transport. (It should be noted that the changes detailed in this report were implemented for new users accessing services from 1st January 2019). It is proposed that the changes would take effect from 8th September 2019. This will give enough time to communicate and support those affected through the changes and provide enough time to make the system changes required.

Based upon the current cohort the implementation of the policy to those in receipt of a service prior to 1st January 2019 will mean an increase in contributions for 112 people; 65 of these are self-funders.

The key impact to consider is that of the 112 whose contribution will increase. It is therefore important to engage and communicate what is happening, why and when. It is proposed to speak directly with each service user impacted to offer support and guidance. Further details on the proposed engagement plan are in the main body of the report and the attached plan. A further mitigation is to implement the increases in day care contributions in two stages.

The People (Adults) budget has a savings target in 2019/20 of £5m. One element of that is £500k additional income based upon the full implementation of the policy. Clearly, if the recommendations for full implementation are not agreed this additional saving would need to be found from elsewhere. Implementation from 8th September, will in itself result in a shortfall in this savings target for 19/20 of approximately £200k-£250k that will need to be made up elsewhere.

All contributions under the policy are based upon the ability of the service user to pay following a Financial Assessment. Therefore, any increase in contributions does not necessarily imply hardship. This would be mitigated by offering each individual a new

Financial Assessment to take account any changes in circumstances and ensure that their income from benefits was maximised.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

N/A – this report relates to the implementation of a previously agreed policy change

Budget:

The People (Adults) budget has a savings target in 2019/20 of £5m. One element of that is £500k additional income based upon the full implementation of the agreed Fairer Charging policy. Clearly if the full implantation is not agreed this additional saving would need to be found from elsewhere.

Based upon the current cohort the implementation of this policy change will yield in the region of £540k

Risk Assessment:

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: MEDIUM

Residual Risk LOW

Other Implications:

None

Recommendation:

The Cabinet agrees:

That the current policy is fully implemented and that all service users are asked to contribute the full cost of putting in place the arrangements for meeting needs, based on their assessed income and savings, and

That these changes would take effect;

- for transport provided from 8th September 2019, and
- for the day care element, to be increased in two stages; 50% for care provided from 8th September, followed by full cost to be payable for care received from 6th October 2019. The stepped increase provides some mitigation for the move towards the full assessed contribution for meeting care costs.

Reason for Recommendation:

The policy with regards to full cost charging was previously agreed by the predecessor Dorset County Council. The proposed implementation date of 8th September gives enough time for appropriate communications and support for those that will be affected by the changes.

The stepped increase for day care contributions provides some mitigation for the move towards the full assessed contribution to meet care costs.

Appendices:

Communications and engagement plan.

Background Papers:

1. Predecessor Dorset County Council Cabinet Report 13th May 2015 - The Outcomes of the Consultation on Financial Policies to Implement the Care Act in Dorset
<https://dorset.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=137&MeetingId=497&DF=13%2f05%2f2015&Ver=2>
2. Current charges

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1. Introduction

The predecessor Dorset County Council Cabinet reviewed its charging policy in 2015 to support the implementation of the Care Act. It was agreed that the predecessor Dorset County Council would charge the full cost of putting in place the arrangements for meeting needs, in accordance with the person's ability to pay as determined by a financial assessment in accordance with the Care Act and Charging Regulations.

The policy was reviewed again in 2017, following which some changes were made to the treatment of disability-related income in the financial means-test. There were public consultations to support both previous reviews.

The remaining element of the policy to be implemented is in respect of contributions required towards the cost of Day Care and Transport. (It should be noted that the changes detailed in this report were implemented for new users accessing services from 1st January 2019). It is proposed that these changes (for all those in receipt of care or transport pre-1st January 2019) would take effect; for transport provided from 8th September 2019; and for the day care element, to be increased in two stages; 50% for care provided from 8th September, followed by full cost to be payable for care received from 6th October 2019. The stepped increase provides some mitigation for the move towards the full assessed contribution for meeting care costs.

2. Background

All contributions under the policy are based upon the ability of the service user to pay following a financial assessment. Therefore, an increase in contributions does not imply hardship.

There are currently 744 service users who receive day care with or without transport (that is not a Direct Payments or Individual Service Funds). Of these, 192 (26%) have been assessed as having £nil ability to pay and 66 (9%) have been assessed as self-funders. The changes proposed will affect contributions for day care and transport to day care.

Day Care is primarily provided through Tricuro. Day Care contributions are £12.63 per half day sessions or £25.26 for a full day. The true cost of day care (as per Tricuro rates) is higher and is based on the level of complexity of the individual's needs, expressed as low, medium, or high complexity: low £48 per day, medium £57 per day and high £95 per day. It is proposed to increase contribution levels to the current true costs.

Transport to day care opportunities can be via the in-house fleet or external taxi service. The offer of transport is differentiated between standard and concessionary. Concessionary transport contribution is applicable to those in receipt of mobility benefit – a benefit that is not included in the financial assessment calculations – or to self-funders. The current contributions are £2.76 per journey for standard transport and £4.51 plus 55p per mile over 5 miles for concessionary transport. It is proposed to move to a standard charge of £10 per journey across the board.

The combined increase in day care and travel rates could result in additional income of £540k per annum as shown in the following table:

| Contribution type | Number | Additional Contribution (£k) |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Nil cost | 192 | 0 |
| Part Cost | 486 | 120 |
| Self-funding | 66 | 420 |
| Total | 744 | 540 |

The table below shows that of those who contribute in part, or full cost, 112 will contribute more.

| Contribution impact: | Part Cost | Self-funded | Total |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Decreased Charge | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| No change | 435 | 1 | 436 |
| Increased Charge | 47 | 65 | 112 |
| TOTAL | 486 | 66 | 552 |

This table shows the weekly impact:

| Of those with an increased contribution: | Part Cost | Self-funder |
|---|------------------|--------------------|
| <£10 per week | 5 | 0 |
| £10 - £20 per week | 4 | 0 |
| £20 - £30 per week | 10 | 2 |
| £30 - £40 per week | 5 | 7 |
| £40 - £50 per week | 10 | 4 |
| £50 - £75 per week | 7 | 13 |
| £75 - £100 per week | 2 | 6 |
| £100 - £150 per week | 1 | 17 |
| £150 - £200 per week | 1 | 5 |
| >£200 per week | 2 | 11 |
| TOTAL | 47 | 65 |

These are the top 5 weekly increases:

| Top 5 weekly increases for each type | Part Cost (£pw) | Self-funder (£pw) |
|---|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 269.22 | 448.70 |
| 2 | 224.19 | 448.70 |
| 3 | 155.22 | 361.90 |
| 4 | 134.21 | 358.96 |
| 5 | 92.44 | 278.96 |

The locality areas for those affected is:

| Increased contribution amount | Number | Area |
|-------------------------------|------------|---|
| All | 112 | Blandford (6), Bridport (11), Dorchester (5), Ferndown (21), Weymouth & Portland (24), Purbeck (19), Shaftesbury (2), Sherborne (3), Sturminster (5), Swanage (9), Verwood (7) |
| £50 - £75 per week | 20 | Blandford (3), Bridport (3), Dorchester (1), Ferndown (4), Weymouth & Portland (5), Purbeck (1), Swanage (3) |
| £75 - £100 per week | 8 | Bridport (2), Weymouth & Portland (3), Purbeck (1), Shaftesbury (1), Swanage (1) |
| £100 - £150 per week | 18 | Blandford (2), Dorchester (1), Ferndown (6), Weymouth & Portland (1), Purbeck (4), Swanage (3), Verwood (1) |
| £150 - £200 per week | 6 | Ferndown (3), Weymouth & Portland (1), Purbeck (2) |
| >£200 per week | 13 | Ferndown (4), Weymouth & Portland (4), Purbeck (2), Sturminster (1), Verwood (2) |

This is the breakdown by Primary Support Reason (PSR)

| PSR of service users with an increased charge | Part Cost | Self-funder |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| Learning Disability Support | 12 | 4 |
| Mental Health Support | 1 | 0 |
| Physical Support | 15 | 26 |
| Social Support | 13 | 25 |
| Support with Memory & Cognition | 6 | 10 |
| Total | 47 | 65 |

3. Engagement & Communications

The key impact to consider is that of the 112 whose contribution will increase. It is therefore important to engage and communicate what is happening, why and when. It is proposed to speak directly with each service user and their families (where appropriate) affected to offer support, guidance, information and consider the impact for them and any potential alternatives

Work in relation to this will include:

- Direct contact by a Social Worker with all affected including the offer of a Care Package and/or financial assessment review
- Help-line hosted by the Adult Access Team
- FAQ page on Dorsetforyou
- Communications to elected members
- Appropriate internal communications.

A more detailed plan is attached to this report.