

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting9th February 2017

1. Title of Item/Report

Care Act Policy Review Update

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that provided the details of the outcome of the charging review consultation, which took place as part of a review of the Charging Policy, in line with the Cabinet agreement on 4th December 2015.

With the introduction of the Care Act 2014 and in assessing the requirements of the charging regulations and guidance, it was agreed that the Council's existing charging framework met the requirements as set out in the Act, subject to some minor modifications.

The minor changes that had already been made to the Charging Policy ensured that it was consistent with the Care Act.

It was identified that there were a number of discretionary areas in regulations that provided the opportunity to reconsider the Council's charging policy. It was agreed by Cabinet to consult on these areas, to inform this initial review of the Charging Policy.

It was noted that the Department of Health revised Charging Regulations had not yet been published, but were expected to be implemented in April 2018.

A consultation plan was designed to ensure that the residents of the Borough were informed and consulted on the discretionary areas of the charging policy.

3328 surveys were sent out, 4 public events arranged and letters were sent to 1889 clients offering them home visits.

Only 103 surveys responses were received over the 12 week consultation period and many of the comments reflected a lack of understanding of the questions being asked or had used the opportunity to question national policy around social care.

In terms of the 4 public awareness sessions, only 11 people attended, none of whom were affected by any of the proposed changes.

Of those directly written to only 12 had requested a home visit. These visits lasted approximately 45 minutes and involved providing information and responding to specific questions. Points about value for money in relation to the services provided were made and these had been dealt with by commissioners.

The Consultation questions were detailed within the report.

Details of responses to the consultation were attached to the report. Given the consultation feedback, it was recommended that the percentage of 60% applied in 2001 remained, with the Grade of home amended to Grade 1, reflecting the residential care home market. This would increase the maximum charge, currently to 279.00 per week and result in additional income of £34,000 per annum. Many of the consultation responses were general in nature, making reference to charging and activity outside of adult social care. Therefore, although there was a general response from the consultation that the Council showed not implement these discretionary areas of the policy, it was felt that it was appropriate to recommend that all areas were approved for implementation for new clients from 1st April 2017.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The report be received and the progress that has been made following the public consultation on the proposed changes to the current charging policy be noted.
2. The following changes to the existing Charging Policy be approved with effect from April 2017:
 - a) The maximum amount payable towards care and support at home is increased to 60% of the cost of Grade 1 Residential Care Home rate.
 - b) The extension of the deferred payment scheme to new clients who do not meet the mandatory criteria, where it is appropriate to do so.
 - c) The introduction of administration fees is implemented for new clients of the deferred payments scheme: £563.00 for the set up costs and £50.00 annually for administration of the scheme. These fee rates to be reviewed annually.
 - d) The level of interest rates for the deferred payment scheme is implemented and set at the rate prescribed by the Office for Budget Responsibility plus 0.15%, as per Care Act guidance, for new clients.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To provide Cabinet with the outcome of the consultation outcome, following agreement to review the existing charging policy and to seek approval for the recommendations.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight, 17 February 2017

Proper Officer
13 February 2017