

## **NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES CABINET MEMBER**

#### **ANNUAL INCREASE OF SERVICE USER CONTRIBUTION RATES**

##### **1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To propose the usual annual increases to service user contributions which form an integral part of the Adult Social Services revenue budget for 2011-2012 financial year.
- 1.2 To propose that where contributions from service users are raised, they are in line with inflation and still represent excellent value for money.

##### **2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The council is able to financially assess service users and require them to make a contribution towards the cost of the care and support provisions it makes for them (including those in care homes, those receiving community services or who have a direct payment).
- 2.2 The service user contribution policy sets out the principles that apply to the assessment of a person's contribution to their care and support. It is based on determining their means, which is their overall income less various disregards. The person's contribution is then calculated by comparing their means to the cost of their care and support package. The policy ensures that all service users are financially assessed to contribute towards the cost of their services and that when they are assessed to make a contribution it is fair and according to their means.
- 2.3 Various charges and standard rates that are used in determining service user contributions are updated annually. The income generated forms an integral part of the Adult Social Services revenue budget for the 2011-2012 financial year. These rates are detailed at Appendix A.
- 2.4 It is therefore proposed that all charges and contribution rates be increased from 11th April 2011 to coincide with the increase in benefit rates.

### **3 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **Option 1**

3.1 Approve the proposals detailed in this report.

#### **Option 2**

3.2 The proposals are not agreed

### **4 ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

#### **Option 1** Approve the proposals

4.1 The up rating of the contribution rates is necessary to maintain income levels assumed in the Adult Social Services revenue budget for 2011-2012 financial year.

#### **Option 2**

4.4 If these proposals are not agreed, the revenue budget for Adult Social Services for 2011/12 will not be achieved without savings being found elsewhere due to the shortfall in income.

### **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

#### *5.1 Financial implications*

The effect of the proposed changes will be to increase the income achieved from service user contributions in line with income expectations built into the 2011/12 revenue budget for Adult Social Services.

#### *5.2 Staffing implications – None*

#### *5.3 Property implications – None*

#### *5.4 IT implications. – None.*

### **6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

6.1 *Statutory implications* – The proposals comply with the council's own policies and all relevant guidance.

6.2 *Environmental implications* – None

6.3 *Diversity implications* – the Fairer Contributions Policy will be consistent across all service user groups. It reflects national guidance and good practice in relation to ensuring that people are not forced into hardship by the charges or into declining services because they feel they cannot afford the charges. In exceptional circumstances, if a service user would be placed in financial jeopardy due to their assessed contribution for social services, the council would consider their position under its severe hardship policy.

6.4 *Section 17 – Crime and Disorder implications* - None

6.5 *Risk and other implications* – None

## 7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Department of Health undertook extensive consultation with service users, carers national pressure groups and charities and accordingly drafted the 'Fairer Contributions Guidance'. Locally consultation has been limited to council staff and colleagues in other councils.

## 8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 Cabinet member is asked:

8.1.1 To approve the annual increases to contribution rates as detailed in Appendix A and agree that these are implemented from 11<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

SERVICE DIRECTOR ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

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### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report**

Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care and other non-residential Social Services (Department of Health 2001)

Fairer Contributions Guidance - Calculating an Individual's Contribution to their Personal Budget (Department of Health July 2009)

Charging for Residential Accommodation Guide (CRAG) in support of the National Assistance (Assessment of Resources) Regulations 1992.

North Lincolnshire Council Corporate Charging Framework.

APPENDIX A  
**SERVICE USER CONTRIBUTION SET RATES**

**1. Care Home Services**

- 1.1 Contributions for council funded care home residents are regulated by the Department of Health's 'Charging for Residential Accommodation Guidance' (CRAG). Since 1993 this has applied to all councils, it sets clear rules with limited scope for local interpretation.
- 1.2 Those with capital greater than the upper capital limit are not eligible for a council funded care home placement. The Department of Health Circular LAC (DH)(2011)1 Charging for Residential Accommodation sets the upper capital limit for 2011-12 at the current level of £23,250 (i.e. no change from 2010-11).

**2 Care Home Stays Over 8 Weeks**

- 2.1 The Service User Contribution Policy for care home stays over 8 weeks complies with the rules on financial assessment in CRAG.

**3 Care Home Stays Up to 8 Weeks**

- 3.1 The council's Service User Contribution Policy for care home stays up to 8 weeks uses the discretion given in CRAG to levy a standard contribution for up to 8 weeks. The rate is set at a level, which is representative of a typical contribution for a service user with home responsibilities.
- 3.2 The effect of the increase is shown below.

Weekly contribution	Current 2010-11	Proposed 2011-12
Capital over £23,250	Full cost of care	Full cost of care
Capital below £23,250	£118.32	£120.70

**4 Service User Contributions – Community services**

- 4.1 Service user contributions for community services are subject to directions contained in the Fairer Charging Guidance, which applied from 2003. This provides a framework for designing charging policies, which are reasonable and fair. The Fairer Contributions Guidance (2009) updates the guidance to reflect the creation of personal budgets.

## **5 Home Support (Domiciliary Care) users over 8 weeks duration**

- 5.1 It is North Lincolnshire Council policy that new service users, whose care needs are not stable, will routinely receive home support services from the in-house Community Support Team. To allow for these fluctuations in new care packages, the Service User Contribution Policy levies a standard contribution for up to 8 weeks. The rate is set at a level that is representative of the contribution a service user with typical benefits can afford. The level of contribution does not vary as the delivered hours increase or decrease during the initial phase.
- 5.2 Since April 2010 new home support service users have been required to contribute £33.25 per week (unless they are specifically exempted by other guidance or regulation from contributions) for up to the first eight weeks of a home care package.
- 5.3 It is recommended that for 2011/12 the flat rate weekly contribution be increased by £0.85 to £34.10 per week.

## **6 Home Support (Domiciliary Care) users over 8 weeks duration**

- 6.1 Since 2003 this assessed contribution has been calculated in accordance with the Fairer Charging Guidance (2001) reflecting the amount of service received (in hours) and the means to contribute. A nominal hourly rate is used as a figure for all home support contribution calculations.
- 6.2 For current contribution calculations, the nominal hourly rate is £12.54. It is proposed that for 2011-12 that there is no increase in the hourly home care rate in line with the proposed rate paid to Home Care providers.

## **7 Meals in the Home, Luncheon Clubs and Day Centres**

- 7.1 The charge for a midday meal is standard across all day services and the meals in the home service. This is a flat rate charge that is not subject to a financial assessment, usually collected in cash. The current charge for the provision of a midday meal is £3.40.
- 7.2 It is recommended that the flat rate contribution per meal be increased by £0.10 to £3.50 per meal.
- 7.3 The current charge for the sandwich delivery service is £1.55. It is recommended that the flat rate contribution per Sandwich delivery service be increased by £0.05 to £1.60.

## **8. Blue Badge**

- 8.1 Blue Badge fees will remain unchanged pending a review of the service by Department for Transport.

## **9. Services provided by Fresh Start**

- 7.4 The current charge for the Toenail Cutting Service is £6.50. It is proposed to increase this fee by £0.20 to £6.70.
- 7.5 The current charge for the Bathing Service is £7.00. It is proposed to increase this fee by £0.20 to £7.20.
- 7.6 The current contribution required from FreshStart customers who use transport organised by the council is £4.00. It is proposed to increase this fee by £0.10 to £4.10.