

**ADULT CARE COMMUNITY BASED CARE CHARGING SCHEME UPDATE 2011/12**

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## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

The Council implemented a new charging scheme for Community Based Care Services on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. As the assessment phase of the implementation has progressed and service users have been charged for their care, the Department has monitored the assessment outcomes and, over the last couple of months, has completed a review of the scheme to ensure that it continues to satisfy the Department's requirements that it be reasonable, fair and equitable.

## **2.0 DETAIL**

During the review of the scheme, a number of issues were raised and the following three were investigated:

- The amount of a client's partner's earnings from employment which were included in the client's financial assessment;
- The treatment of disability benefits paid to a client's partner and included in the client's financial assessment where the client's partner does not receive services or funding for social care from the Council, and;
- The level of charges for care and support which some clients were being asked to pay and whether they were reasonable.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES 2012/13**

#### **3.1**

In responding to these areas of concern, Community Services recommend the following changes to the Community Based Care Charging scheme for financial year 2012/13:

##### **3.1.1**

50% of a client's partner's earnings from employment are disregarded in the assessment instead of the current £20 per week;

##### **3.1.2**

Disability benefits paid to a client's partner are disregarded in the assessment where the partner does not receive social care services, or funding for social care services, from the Council and;

##### **3.1.3**

a new maximum weekly charge for care and support charges be implemented at the rate of £100 per week.

\*Please note that this will apply only to those services which are charged for under the schemes means test (i.e. homecare, supported living, day care, employment support, sleepovers and waking nights). Services which are charged for at a flat rate such as meals on wheels, transport, lunch clubs and telecare are excluded and therefore some clients may still pay a total charge exceeding £100 per week.

#### **3.2**

Community Services identified 15 Service Users who were affected by the above changes. Using the management discretion within the scheme, Finance Services has recalculated each of the Service User's assessments and has written to them to inform them of the changes and the impact on their charge. Adjustments have been processed on each Service User's account and credit notes and/or refund cheques have been issued as appropriate. The above recommendations would confirm these adjustments on a permanent basis.

### 3.3

The total cost of these amendments to the scheme has resulted in a reduction of approximately £ 70,000. This shortfall in income has been met by a matching reduction in expenditure giving no adverse impact on the overall position of the Adult Care budget.

## 4.0 CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1

Area Committee are asked to note the content of this report and the intention of Adult Care managers to update the Community Based Care charging scheme with the intention of implementing the changes identified in section 3.

### 4.2

Area Committee note a further visit to Area Committee is planned for February 2012 to update members on progress in relation to the implementation and review of the above scheme. This will involve a short presentation to Elected Members followed by a questions and answer session to clarify any issues relating to the session.

### 4.3

Area Committee note this report has been considered and endorsed at the Council Budget Working Group on 17/1/2012.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| <b><i>Policy:</i></b>              | Review completed as per standard procedure                       |
| <b><i>Financial:</i></b>           | Changes will make charging more equitable                        |
| <b><i>Legal:</i></b>               | None   |
| <b><i>Personnel:</i></b>           | None   |
| <b><i>Equal Opportunities:</i></b> | The proposals will improve the equity within the charging scheme |

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