

Consultation on fair charges for the cost of care

Consultation timescale - Monday 29th October to Monday 21st January 2019.

North Yorkshire County Council wants your views on some proposals for changes to the way we charge for adult social care.

We are consulting on proposals about how people who use adult social care services contribute to their costs. The consultation covers two main areas:

- The cost of transport to places where people may receive a service;
- How the total cost of care is calculated.

Background

In England, adult social care services (sometimes known as “*care and support*”) are not free. Many people have to pay something towards their care. In some cases they may have to pay the whole cost. People who have to pay the whole cost are often referred to as “*self-funding*”.

Like other local authorities, the Council may pay some or all of the cost. The council works out how much it will give towards the cost by completing a means-tested financial assessment with the person. The amount anyone is asked to pay depends on how much money they have, and how much care and support they need.

There are other services we provide which are not classed as “care and support”. Councils are allowed to charge people the full cost of these services. This includes transport to places where people receive support, or meals they have there. In North Yorkshire we do not pass on the full cost of these services to people, but we do ask for a contribution.

This consultation is about proposals which would result in some changes to our “Charging Policy for Community-Based Services” – which can be found at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/paying-care-home>. It is this document which sets out the services people may have to make a contribution towards (and in some cases, how much that is).

The proposals may result in a change to how much the Council pays and how much individuals pay towards the costs of their services. We are keen to ensure that we hear the views of people who access social care support, service providers and other residents of North Yorkshire.

Why are we considering these proposals?

The Council is facing severe budget pressures. The Government grant to the Council has reduced by 49% between 2010 and 2018. Between 2011 and 2022, we estimate that the Council’s annual budget will need to make £190m of savings.

The Council has prioritised spending on Adult Social Care during this period. We want to keep supporting people, and the number of people who need support is growing. Additional funding has been found to help with the increasing pressures on the service, but we need to use the limited money we have as efficiently as possible. We have made lots of changes to help us do this, but we need to find more ways to save money.

The other reason for the proposals is about fairness. We want to make sure that the way we calculate charges is reasonable, and strikes the right balance between what the individual is asked to pay and what the council pays.

Proposals

1. Contributing to the Cost of Transport

The first issue deals with the cost of transport to a person's social care service (such as a day centre). Some people have their transport arranged by the council. At the moment, the council does not pass on the full cost for this.

We currently provide transport to around 500 people.

The average cost of someone using our buses is over £18 per person for each journey. At the moment the council only charges £2.70 per person each day regardless of the number of trips or distance travelled.

This means it costs the Council over £2.2 million annually to provide transport with just £100,000 coming from contributions from those people who are using the transport.

We are not proposing to pass on the full cost of transport to people.

The council will still use money raised from Council Tax and other sources to help pay for this, but we are proposing that people contribute more to the cost. This would allow the council to use the money saved to continue to provide this service and other important services.

In coming up with a revised charge, we have looked at what other councils do and also at what the cost of private-provided transport (such as the public bus service or taxis) in the county is. We have considered introducing a charge based on the distance people may have to travel, but feel that is not fair in a rural county like North Yorkshire. More information on these costs can be found in the Executive Member report which can be found here: [Link](#).

Although we do not take transport costs into account when carrying out a means-tested financial assessment, we are committed to making sure that we consider the impact of any increase in charges on the amount of money a person has left to live on. We have done this by looking at the government's Minimum Income Guarantee and any allowances that people may be paid to assist with mobility costs.

Our proposal is to increase the amount that people will have to pay to a flat rate of £7.50 per journey. However we will put a limit on that to ensure that the most anyone will have to pay will be £40 per week.

Assuming that there are no changes in the number of people who use transport, this is likely to mean that the council will pay around £1.8 million annually for transport with contributions from people being approximately £650,000. The actual split of costs will depend on how many people are limited by the £40 per week cap.

For individuals, this would mean that if you have two journeys per week, you would now pay £15 (rather than £2.70, assuming both of those journeys were on the same day. The table below illustrates this:

Number of journeys per week (each journey is one-way)	Charge
1	£7.50
2	£15.00
3	£22.50
4	£30.00
5	£37.50
6 or more	£40.00

2. Contributing to the Cost of Care

The second issue deals with the cost of care and how it is calculated. We are proposing that the entire cost of a care package is included in the financial contributions calculation. This is important because it may affect how much people are asked to pay towards their care.

At the moment, we do not include the entire cost of a care package when we calculate how much a person should pay towards the cost of their care.

Currently, if a person has two care workers at the same time, we only include the cost of one care worker.

If someone has two care workers, but at different times (for example one person in the morning and one person in the evening), we include the cost of both care workers.

We do not think this is reasonable and this is why we are proposing to change it. Other councils have already made this change. We would use the money saved to continue to provide this and other important services.

It is important to state however that anyone's actual contribution will only change if the amount they are able to pay is currently more than what they actually pay. **If someone is already paying the maximum they can afford, there will be no increase to them.** A few examples are shown below which help to explain this proposal.

Mr A is currently supported by two carers for an hour per day at the same time (e.g. 10am-11am). The cost for providing this care is £50 per day or £250 per week. However in calculating his contribution, £125 of this is included as he pays for one carer. His financial assessment shows that the maximum he is expected to pay is £100 per week. The proposed change in how we make the calculation makes no difference to this and he will still be asked to contribute £100 per week.

Mrs B currently is currently supported by two carers for an hour per day at the same time (e.g. 10am – 11am). The cost for providing this care is £50 per day or £250 per week. However in calculating her contribution, £125 of this is included. Her financial assessment shows that the maximum she is expected to pay is £175 per week. The proposed change in how we make the calculation means that she will be asked to pay £175 per week in future, but not the full cost.

Mr C is currently supported by two carers for an hour per day at the same time (e.g. 10am -11am). The cost for providing this care is £50 per day or £250 per week. However in calculating his contribution, £125 of this is included. Mr C is “self-funding” and a financial assessment shows that he would be able to pay the full £250. He will in future be asked to pay this amount.

Miss D is currently supported by two carers for an hour each per day at different times. One attends 10-11am and the other at 1pm-2pm). The cost for providing this care is £50 per day or £250 per week. In calculating her contribution, the full £250 is included. Miss D is “self-funding” and a financial assessment shows that she would be able to pay the full £250. The proposed change in how we make the calculation makes no difference to this and she will still be asked to pay the full £250.

Information about our equality impact assessment

We have carried out an equality impact assessment to check if the proposals will affect one group of people more than another. We think the proposals will affect disabled people most of all, but the financial assessment and the cap on transport charges will reduce the impact. The equality impact assessment will be reviewed after the consultation, and we welcome your views on our draft. It is available online with the other consultation documents.

Who are we consulting?

We are consulting with all those people who may be directly affected by these proposals.

We are also taking steps to make sure that people who receive any adult social care service are aware and have the opportunity to take part even if they are not likely to be personally affected.

We will also notify providers of social care in the county of our proposals.

Finally, as this is an issue which impacts on all council tax payers in North Yorkshire we will make this consultation known to the wider public and encourage them to respond.

Why are we consulting?

We are seeking your views on our proposals before we take any final decisions in 2019. Your views will be fed back to county councillors so they are made aware of what you think, before they take any decisions. Decisions have not yet been made.

What is the timescale?

We are consulting for 12 weeks (90 days), starting on Monday 29th October to Monday 21st January 2019.

Once the consultation has closed, we will review all of the responses and prepare a report for county councillors. They will consider the results of the consultation and any proposals to change our Charging Policy and the amounts charged. They will make a decision early in 2019. If there are any changes, they will not take effect before 1st April, 2019.

How can you have your say?

We have held a number of informal sessions over recent months with providers and service users as we have developed our proposals. These groups included Disability Forums, Independent Sector Partnership Group and the Knaresborough Self-Advocacy Group.

The proposed consultation has also been approved by the Council's Executive Member for Adult Services and Health Integration

We would like to hear your views about our proposals and any other ideas and suggestions you might have. You can tell us what you think by completing a survey available on the council's website. We will also provide paper copies and an 'easy read' version, and other formats will be provided on request. We will also hold events around the county to talk about the consultation.

We are also planning to talk to community engagement forums such as the North Yorkshire Disability Forum, North Yorkshire Learning Partnership Board and North Yorkshire Forum for Older People.

Completing the survey

Please give your feedback on the proposals outlined by filling in our online survey, at www.northyorks.gov.uk/consultations

If you would like a paper copy of the survey, please call our customer service centre on 01609 780780. You can also call into your local library or to Health and Adult Services offices to collect a copy. Call 01609 780780 for more information about locations.

To return a completed paper copy of the survey please send to:
Health and Adult Services
County Hall,
Northallerton
North Yorkshire
DL7 8DD

Events

We are also holding a number of events where the council will explain the proposals and ask people what they think. The dates and locations of the events are as below:

- 13 November 2018 at 9.30am. The Council Chambers, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AD
- 14 November 2018 at 2:00pm. Main Function Room, Richmond Cricket Club, Hurgill Road, Richmond, DL10 4AR
- 15 November 2018 at 1:00pm. The Council Chambers, Civic Centre, St Lukes Avenue, Harrogate, HG1 2AE
- 19 November 2018 at 10:00am. The Council Chambers, Ryedale District Council, Ryedale House, Old Malton, Malton, YO17 7HH
- 27 November 2018 at 10.30am. Hall B, The Street, 12 Lower Clark Street, Scarborough, YO12 7PW
- 04 December 2018 at 12.30pm. Community House Selby, Community House, Portholme Road, Selby YO8 4QQ
- 07 December 2018 at 10:00am. Civic Suite, Craven District Council, 1 Belle Vue Square, Broughton Road, Skipton BD23 1FJ

All venues have wheelchair access. There will be BSL interpreters at the events in Harrogate, Scarborough and Selby.

If you have any questions about the events or the consultation, you can call us on 01609 780780 or email us at HASConsultation@northyorks.gov.uk