

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET5 December 2024Report by Chief Officer – Health and Social Care PartnershipHEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP
CHARGING FOR SERVICES 2025/26**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To update Cabinet on the proposed charges for the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) for 2025/26 including the implementation of charging for non-residential care from 1 April 2025.
2. Cabinet will recall that two charges were increased during this financial year, effective from 1 January 2025; Community Alarm charge increases to £4.90 per week (from £3.23) and the Bonnyton House charge increases to £960 per week (from £912.80), both subject to the ability to pay.

RECOMMENDATION

3. The Cabinet is asked to:
 - (a) Agree the proposed increase to existing charges for the HSCP for 2025/26
 - (b) Agree the implementation of charging for non-residential care for 2025/26

BACKGROUND

4. The legislation supporting the integration of health and social care determines that the authority and approval for setting charges for social care remains with the Council, this function is not delegated to the Integration Joint Board (IJB).
5. Cabinet received an update in October, on the work of the Income Generation Short Life Working Group (IGSLWG) that was established at the request of the IJB. This group was set up to explore the implementation of wider charging for non-residential care as well as a review of existing charges including those in-year increases approved by Cabinet on 3 October 2024.
6. The IJB considered the charging proposals for 2025/26 at its meeting on 20 November 2024 and endorsed the recommendations included in this. The IJB report is included for information at Appendix 1.
7. The 2024/25 budget for the HSCP includes an income target of £0.2 million income, with an increase in 2025/26 to £1.5 million. For 2024/25, the HSCP has achieved £0.058m so far from inflation and premises related income, with a further £0.050m from January 2025, Cabinet will recall the delay to the original timetable due to the general election. Whilst there is a shortfall in the current financial year this £0.2 million is fully achieved on a recurring basis for 2025/26.

8. All charges are linked to the ability to pay and this is confirmed through financial assessment. There is a risk that some people may choose not to engage in this process and potentially pay the full cost of care, or withdraw from engagement with the HSCP. Given the East Renfrewshire population dynamic some people may opt to engage in private arrangements entirely.
9. All charging proposals will be supported by the HSCP charging policy (this will be revised for non-residential care). This aligns with the “COSLA NATIONAL STRATEGY & GUIDANCE; Charges Applying to Social Care Support for people at home 2024/2025 guidance” which provides a recognised framework.

REPORT

10. The proposed charges for the HSCP for 2025/26 are set out in this report including the introduction of charges for non-residential care.
11. The existing HSCP charging policy needs to be revised to reflect the required changes, subject to Cabinet decision and a draft will follow on completion of the scheduled engagement events. This will be made available prior to the Cabinet meeting.
12. As we previously reported there have been a number of communication and engagement events with people who will be impacted by the proposals to charge for non-residential care. Four events have taken place on 22 and 23 October; two in-person events during the day at Barrhead and Thornliebank and two online sessions on the evening of each date. Around 225 people attended with robust discussion and a range of views. Appendix 1 of the IJB report of 20 November 2024 provides a summary of the feedback from these events. A further two events will take place on 25 November 2024.
13. A questionnaire has also been issued to those who wished to engage further to allow additional information to support the equalities fairness and rights impact assessment. This will be finalised following the last engagement events currently scheduled for 25 November 2024 and will also be made available prior to the Cabinet meeting.
14. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) continues to be revised reflecting questions raised.
15. A local petition has also been set up in relation to the proposed charging for non-residential care and support.
16. Since both the IJB and Cabinet last met the UK budget has been announced and whilst the indications are that some funding may flow through to health and social care in Scotland the impact is not yet known.
17. The Scottish Government budget announcement is expected on 4 December 2024 (the day before Cabinet will be asked to take the decision on charges for 2025/26) and whilst it will take time for the details of the Scottish Government budget to be analysed the initial announcement should indicate whether there are any significant changes to council funding. The supporting local government circular is expected around the 12th of December 2024 and this will provide initial information on funding allocations.

18. Given the financial challenges facing the HSCP, and despite some uncertainty as above, the IJB previously recommended, albeit recognising this is a reluctant decision, to introduce the charges for non-residential care. This is required to meet the £1.5 million income target for 2025/26.

19. The proposed charges for 2025/26 are therefore:

| Service | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------|
| | Current Charge | 2.3% Inflation | Other Increases | Rounding | Proposed Charge | Increase | |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | % |
| Community Alarms (per week)* | 4.9 | 0.11 | 1.22 | 0.07 | 6.30 | 1.40 | 29% |
| Lunch Club meals | 5.75 | 0.13 | | 0.02 | 5.90 | 0.15 | 3% |
| Room Hire (per day) | 8.15 | 0.19 | 4.075 | 0.59 | 13.00 | 4.85 | 60% |
| Blue Badges (per application) | 20 | | | | 20.00 | 0.00 | 0% |
| Bonnyton Residential Care (per week)* | 912.8 | 20.99 | 45.64 | 0.07 | 979.50 | 66.70 | 7% |
| Inclusive Support Holiday Programme (per day) | 44.6 | 1.03 | 2.23 | 0.04 | 47.90 | 3.30 | 7% |
| Proposed Charge for Care & Support (per hour) | | | 20 | | 20.00 | 20.00 | 100% |

* Charge as at 1 January 2025

20. The year on year increases are based on a 2.3% inflation increase, set by the council as part of the annual process for reviewing charges. The rationale for the other changes is set out below.

21. Community Alarms shows a £1.22 per week, increase and this reflects the additional cost to the HSCP from the changes away from analogue phone lines and equipment to digital. This is part of a national change. This means that whilst additional income of c£41k will be generated there will be an equal cost increase to the HSCP. This element will therefore have nil impact on income.

22. Lunch club meals are a long standing arrangement where meals are prepared within school kitchens and provided to community lunch clubs. The HSCP is the conduit where the catering costs are charged to and receipts of income are received. This is cost neutral to the HSCP.

23. As previously discussed room hire was set up as a nominal charge as the focus of our buildings was very much predicated on service and community use, not as a commercial venture in any way. Given this is a very low level contribution a 50% increase above inflation is proposed and in some cases there will be a relationship with grant funded activity that will need to be considered.

24. The fee for Blue Badge applications and administration is set nationally.

25. For Bonnyton House an increase of 5% above inflation is proposed to gradually increase fees closer to the costs of the service. IJB members will recall a 5% increase for part of 2024/25 becomes effective on 1 January 2025.

26. The inclusive support holiday programme has also been increased by 5% above inflation using the same rationale. The delivery model for this service is under review.

27. The expected increase in income for the existing charges, net of the additional £41k of costs for community alarms, is £166k for the coming year.
28. The proposed charge for care and support is set at £20 per hour and this is a contribution towards direct costs. The actual income that will be generated will depend on the actual financial assessments that would be required; the total income target for 2025/26 is set at £1.5 million.
29. The payment for the charges above, including the proposed charge for care and support is based on the ability to pay. A financial assessment looks at all income the person has, allows for a range of deductions recognising the costs of living incurred, identifies a “disposable amount” left over and then applies a taper to that disposable amount. A taper is used to determine the percentage of the disposable income the person should keep and the percentage that should go towards paying for their care. The IJB previously agreed the proposed taper should be set at 60% and this is reflected in the revised charging policy, subject to Cabinet decision.
30. The IGSLWG recommended that the taper for 2025/26 is set at 60%; this is the level our modeling assumptions showed is required to achieve the savings required. For context the highest level of taper we are aware of is 75%.
31. This financial assessment will allow a calculation to show the maximum amount someone would pay towards the cost of their care. It is important that we identify an appropriate level to ensure that those with the most complex needs, whose cost of care is normally higher, are not disproportionately disadvantaged; the revisions to the charging policy will address this.
32. There will also be certain circumstances where it is not appropriate to charge for a service and the existing Charging Policy sets this out.
33. The HSCP work closely with the council’s Money Advice and Rights Team and we will continue do so with a focus on income maximization for individuals.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

34. The proposed charges should generate income of c£1.5m for 2025/26.
35. Consideration needs to be given to the treatment of bad debt and any non-payment for services provided. Under the current arrangements the Chief Officer and Chief Financial Officer have the delegated authority to write off bad debt, although to date this has not been required at any material level.

CONSULTATION

36. The engagement activity has helped inform the Equalities, Fairness and Rights impact assessment.
37. The Chief Financial Officer has consulted with our partners and will continue to work in partnership with colleagues to develop and implement the expansion of non-residential charging, preparing for 2025/26 and subject to ERC Cabinet decisions.
38. The Council’s Money Advice and Rights and Debtors teams are aware of the proposals continue close working to ensure that future impact to workloads is fully considered.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

39. The setting of fees and charges remains a responsibility of East Renfrewshire Council under the legislation.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

40. The equalities, fairness and rights impact assessment has been completed reflecting information from engagement events.

41. There are no direct implications in relation to staffing, property, legal, sustainability or IT as part of this paper. However, it should be noted that Council are supporting the HSCP with Invest to Save funding for a fixed term post to support the implementation of non-residential charging for services.

42. There is a significant risk to the ability of the HSCP to meet the income target for the 2025/26 budget without these changes.

CONCLUSIONS

43. The Cabinet previously agreed in-year changes for Community Alarms and Bonnyton House at its meeting on 3 October. The proposed charges for 2025/26 are required to meet the £1.5 million income target required by the HSCP. The Charging Policy will be finalised to reflect the Cabinet decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

44. The Cabinet is asked to:

- (a) Agree the proposed increases to existing charges for the HSCP for 2025/26
- (b) Agree the implementation of charging for non-residential care for 2025/26

REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT

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Chief Officer, IJB: Julie Murray

15 November 2024

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet 03.10.2024: HSCP Charging for Services 2024/25 and Beyond

https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/10752/Item-05-HSCP-Charging-for-Services-in-2024-25-and-Beyond/pdf/Item_05_-_HSCP_-_Charging_for_Services_in_2024-25_and_Beyond.pdf?m=1726746630563



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|---|---|---|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Meeting of East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership | Integration Joint Board | | | | | | | | |
| Held on | 20 November 2024 | | | | | | | | |
| Agenda Item | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| Title | Charging for Services 2025/26 | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Summary</p> <p>To provide the Integration Joint Board (IJB) with an update on the proposed charging for 2025/26 including extending the scope for charging for non-residential services.</p> | | | | | | | | | |
| Presented by | Lesley Bairden, Head of Finance and Resources (Chief Financial Officer) | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Action Required</p> <p>The Integration Joint Board is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the update on the implementation of charging for non-residential care • recommend the proposed charges for 2025/26 to be considered by ERC Cabinet on 5 December | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Directions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Directions Required</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Directions to East Renfrewshire Council (ERC)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Directions to NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Directions to both ERC and NHSGGC</p> | <p>Implications</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Risk</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Policy</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Legal</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equalities</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Fairer Scotland Duty</td> </tr> </table> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Risk | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equalities | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairer Scotland Duty |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equalities | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairer Scotland Duty | | | | | | | | |

EAST RENFREWSHIRE INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

20 November 2024

Report by Chief Financial Officer

Charging for Services 2025/26

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide the Integration Joint Board with an update on the work to date on progressing charges for 2025/26 and in particular the proposed approach to introducing charges for non-residential care and support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Integration Joint Board is asked to:
 - note the update on the implementation of charging for non-residential care
 - recommend the proposed charges for 2025/26 to be considered by ERC Cabinet on 5 December

BACKGROUND

3. The Income Generation Short Life Working Group (IGSLWG) was set up to explore the implementation of wider charging for non-residential care.
4. Members of the IJB will recall the previously agreed increases to existing charges this year, approved by ERC Cabinet on 3 October:
 - Community Alarms to £4.90 per week, increased from £3.25
 - Bonnyton House to £960 per week, increased from £912.80
5. The increase in this financial year will come into effect on 1 January 2025.
6. The IJB will also recall the previous report discussed at the September meeting where a programme of engagement and communication was agreed for October.
7. ERC Cabinet will consider the proposal for inflation and all other increases and any new charges at its meeting on 5 December 2024. This is an annual meeting where charges across all council services are considered and per legislation, the Council has the statutory duty to set charges for the HSCP.
8. All charges are linked to the ability to pay and this is confirmed through financial assessment. There is a risk that some people may choose not to engage in this process and potentially pay the full cost of care, or withdraw from engagement with the HSCP. Given the East Renfrewshire population dynamic some people may opt to engage in private arrangements entirely.

9. All charging proposals are supported by our charging policy. This aligns with the “COSLA NATIONAL STRATEGY & GUIDANCE; Charges Applying to Social Care Support for people at home 2024/2025 guidance” which provides a recognised framework.

REPORT

10. The focus of this report is to provide an update from engagement work to date for the proposed introduction of charging for non-residential care and support. The report asks the IJB to recommend this, along with increases to existing charges for the council Cabinet to consider for 2025/26.
11. At the time of writing four engagement events have taken place on 22 and 23 October; two in-person events during the day at Barrhead and Thornliebank and two online sessions on the evening of each date. Around 225 people attended with robust discussion and a range of views. Appendix 1 to this report provides a summary of the feedback, grouped into themes.
12. Further engagement events are planned and a questionnaire has been issued to attendees who wished to engage further to allow additional information to be support the equalities fairness and rights impact assessment; this will be included in the report to ERC Cabinet.
13. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) continues to be revised reflecting questions raised.
14. A local petition has also been set up in relation to the proposed charging for non-residential care and support.
15. Since the IJB last met the UK budget has been announced and whilst the indications are that some funding may flow through to health and social care in Scotland the impact is not yet known.
16. The Scottish Government budget announcement is expected on 4 December 2024 (the day before ERC Cabinet will be asked to take the decision on charges for the coming financial year) and whilst it will take time for the details of the Scottish Government budget to be analysed the initial announcement should indicate whether there are any significant changes to council funding. The supporting local government circular is expected around the 12th of December and this will provide initial information on funding allocations.
17. Given the financial challenges facing the HSCP, and despite some uncertainty as above, the IJB is asked to recommend, albeit recognising this is a reluctant decision, to ERC Cabinet to introduce the charges as previously discussed for non-residential care.
18. The proposed charges for 2025/26 are therefore:

| Service | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------|
| | Current Charge | 2.3% Inflation | Other Increases | Rounding | Proposed Charge | Increase | |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | % |
| Community Alarms (per week)* | 4.9 | 0.11 | 1.22 | 0.07 | 6.30 | 1.40 | 29% |
| Lunch Club meals | 5.75 | 0.13 | | 0.02 | 5.90 | 0.15 | 3% |
| Room Hire (per day) | 8.15 | 0.19 | 4.075 | 0.59 | 13.00 | 4.85 | 60% |
| Blue Badges (per application) | 20 | | | | 20.00 | 0.00 | 0% |
| Bonnyton Residential Care (per week)* | 912.8 | 20.99 | 45.64 | 0.07 | 979.50 | 66.70 | 7% |
| Inclusive Support Holiday Programme (per day) | 44.6 | 1.03 | 2.23 | 0.04 | 47.90 | 3.30 | 7% |
| Proposed Charge for Care & Support (per hour) | | | 20 | | 20.00 | 20.00 | 100% |
| * Charge as at 1 January 2025 | | | | | | | |

19. The year on year increases are based on a 2.3% inflation increase, set by ERC as part of the annual process for reviewing charges. The rationale for the other changes is set out below.
20. Community Alarms shows a £1.22 increase and this reflects the additional cost to the HSCP from the changes away from analogue phone lines and equipment to digital. This is part of a national change. This means whilst additional income of c£41k will be generated from this increase there will be an equal cost increase to the HSCP. This element will therefore not generate additional income.
21. Lunch club meals are a long standing arrangement where meals are prepared within school kitchens and provided to community lunch clubs. The HSCP is the conduit where the catering costs are charged to and receipts of income are received. This is cost neutral to the HSCP.
22. As previously discussed room hire was set up as a nominal charge as the focus of our buildings was very much predicated on service and community use, not as a commercial venture in any way. Given this is a very low level contribution a 50% increase above inflation is proposed and in some cases there will be a relationship with grant funded activity that will need to be considered.
23. The fee for Blue Badge applications and administration is set nationally.
24. For Bonnyton House an increase of 5% above inflation is proposed to gradually increase fees closer to the costs of the service. IJB members will recall a 5% increase for part of 2024/25 becomes effective on 1 January 2025.
25. The inclusive support holiday programme has also been increased by 5% above inflation using the same rationale. The delivery model for this service is under review.
26. The expected increase in income for the existing charges, net of the additional £41k of costs for community alarms, is £166k for the year.
27. The proposed charge for care and support is set at £20 per hour and this is a contribution towards direct costs. The actual income that will be generated will depend on the actual financial assessments that would be required; the income target for 2025/26 is set at £1.5 million.

28. The ability to pay the any of the charges above, including the proposed charge for care and support is based on the ability to pay. A financial assessment looks at all income the person has, allows for a range of deductions recognising the costs of living incurred, identifies a “disposable amount” left over and then applies a taper to that disposable amount. A taper is used to determine the percentage of the disposable income the person should keep and the percentage that should go towards paying for their care. The IJB previously agreed the proposed taper should be set at 60% and this will be reflected in the supporting policy that will also be included in the report to the council Cabinet on 4 December.
29. This financial assessment will allow a calculation to show the maximum amount someone would pay towards the cost of their care. It is important that we identify an appropriate cap – a level which should not be exceeded – to ensure that those with the most complex needs, whose cost of care is normally higher, are not disproportionately disadvantaged.
30. There will also be certain circumstances where it is not appropriate to charge for a service and the existing Charging Policy for the IJB sets this out.

CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

31. The engagement activity will help inform the final report to ERC Cabinet and in particular the Equalities, Fairness and Rights impact assessment.
32. The Chief Financial Officer has consulted with our partners and will continue to work in partnership with colleagues to develop and implement the expansion of non-residential charging, preparing for 2025/26 and subject to ERC Cabinet decisions.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

Finance

33. The likely income level from non-residential charging will continue to be assessed as the work develops and the savings target for income is currently assumed at £1.5 million for 2025/26.
34. The income that would be realised from the increases to existing charges is expected to be £0.166 million.
35. Consideration needs to be given to the treatment of bad debt and any non-payment for services provided. Under the current arrangements the Chief Officer and Chief Financial Officer have the delegated authority to write off bad debt, although to date this has not been required at any material level.

Risk

36. If charging for non-residential services is not implemented then additional savings will be required to meet the targets required in 2025/26 and beyond.
37. The IJB recognises there will be cumulative impacts on individuals as a result of implementing new charges for non-residential care on top of other changes to care packages.

38. We may see a retraction from use of or engagement with statutory services.
39. There may be conflicts with Scottish Government policy intentions.
40. Managing the expectations of the people we support and their families may result in reputational damage. As reported above a petition has been launched in relation to the proposed introduction of charges for non-residential care.

Workforce

41. As previously reported there will be additional work involved relating to setting up and operating the processes for charging for services. This will need to be considered alongside the system and process changes resulting from the implementation of a new case recording system (MOSAIC) and associated finance module. The council is supporting the IJB with “invest to save” funding for a post to support the implementation of non-residential charging for a 12 month period.
42. It is hoped that some of the new work may be contained through the introduction of new processes for existing workflows. As we work towards implementation of the Mosaic system this will become clearer.
43. We need to assess the ongoing impact to other Council services and in particular the Money Advice and Rights Team (MART) and Debtors teams and the HSCP are in dialogue with colleagues.

Equalities

44. We will complete an equalities, fairness and rights impact assessment relating to the charging proposals following engagement with key stakeholders.
45. Engagement and communication needs to be mindful of multiple impacts on any group or individual following Supporting People reviews and / or other service changes.

DIRECTIONS

46. There are no specific directions at this time.

CONCLUSIONS

47. The previously proposed in-year increases for 2024/25 for Community Alarms and for Bonnyton House were subsequently agreed by ERC Cabinet on 3 October 2024.
48. A report, reflecting the recommendations from the IJB will be taken to ERC Cabinet on 4 December 2024 reflecting the position set out above, subject to any IJB revisions to the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

49. The Integration Joint Board is asked to:
 - note the update on the implementation of charging for non-residential care
 - recommend the proposed charges for 2025/26 to be considered by ERC Cabinet on 5 December

REPORT AUTHOR

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0141 451 0746

8 November 2024

Chief Officer, IJB: Julie Murray

BACKGROUND PAPERS

IJB 25.09.2024 – Charging for Services 2024/25 and beyond

https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/10723/IJB-Item-11-26-September-2024/pdf/IJB_Item_11_-_26_September_2024.pdf?m=1726591566693

IJB 16.08.2024 – Charging for Services 2024/25 and beyond

https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/10593/IJB-Item-13-14-August-2024/pdf/IJB_Item_13_14_August_2024.pdf?m=1722614081173

Proposal to introduce charging for non-residential care Summary of information events on 22 & 23 October 2024

Overview

The East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) hosted four information sessions (two in-person and two online) with people in receipt of a care package, their carers and family members on 22 & 23 October. People were invited to these events via a letter which was sent to all residents in receipt of a care package.

Around 225 people attended to hear about the proposals and share their views.

Two events were hosted by Raymond Prior, Chief Social Work Officer and two hosted by Tom Kelly, Head of Adult Services: Learning Disability and Recovery. Raymond and Tom were joined by HSCP Senior Social Work Manager, SDS Implementation Lead, Carers Lead and Finance Manager. A range of staff were present in order to be able to provide answers to a range of questions.

This summary provides an overview of the main themes, questions and concerns raised by attendees. It also outlines points raised that the HSCP has committed to investigating further and agreed actions.

A full FAQ document will follow. It will be shared by email to those that provided their email address for this purpose.

General feedback

- People are angry that the most vulnerable/people with disabilities, are once again being asked to fund the council's "black hole"
- There was a lot of comparisons made to the estimated saving and the spend on other council projects – attendees were upset that these projects were happening while charging was being proposed, particularly the council office renovations and bike lanes. A number of people also raised the amount of funding for schools v vulnerable people
- There is anger that this policy will strip older people of their dignity, and money. From people who have worked hard all their lives. Community Alarms costs just went up massively – when will it be enough
- It was highlighted that young adults with autism and other challenges have a low quality of life as it is. Very often their mental health is so poor and they're in burnout and unable to keep up personal care, so these proposals are life changing to real people
- People are worried that those who need social supports will become isolated
- There were concerns raised around some people paying and others not, making it an unfair system
- People wanted to know if other sources of income had been considered and they challenged the Council to reconsider these plans
- There was frustration about this happening right after people have had assessments and already had their care reduced
- While it was accepted that other areas charge for these services and the HSCP was applying the law, people told us that they feel this is discriminatory towards people requiring social care and the fact other HSCPs do this, does not excuse you doing it now

- People were upset that the decision to introduce charges had been made and this wasn't a true consultation
- People are concerned that £1.5m split between 600-1000 people is a lot of money for such a small number of people, all of whom are vulnerable
- There was anger around the short notice of the events and the way in which people were invited
- Some questioned the timing of this when the Scottish Government want to remove these charges in this term of parliament
- People asked why Elected Members who make these decisions weren't at the event to listen to people impacted directly
- Following these events [a change.org petition](#) has been set up – *“We propose that the money should be found from outwith the Health and Social Care budget.”*

Clarifying the proposals

- It was questioned whether it is in line with SDS guidelines for any kind of charging to take place. Our SDS reassured those present that it must be and all legislation and guidance will be followed
- There were other questions about SDS such as whether the policy would apply to care paid directly to providers and it was clarified that it would
- It was asked, for a young disabled adult who cannot work, what is their 'income' expected to be made up of? Officers explained benefits are included as income
- People wanted to understand if it was individuals or household income that would be assessed. Officers advised it would be the individual only except when it made sense to do otherwise, such as in the instance of a couple sharing care
- There were questions around care that is supplied by a provider, not the HSCP. It was clarified that the policy would not look at who provides the care, but who funds it. Attendees were also reassured the policy's aim was not to reduce care, but to charge for the applicable elements of care
- People who do not have a named social worker had concerns about how this would work but social work managers were able to provide clarity for individual situations
- There was the request to define what constitutes as personal care. Staff took the time to explain this and this link to the relevant section of the legislation was shared in the chat box during the online events - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2002/5/schedule/1>
- The definition of disposable income was also a featured topic. This was discussed and the [minimum income guarantee](#) set by the Scottish Government was highlighted. This has been set to ensure everyone in Scotland could secure a minimum acceptable standard of living and this would be included as expenditure in the financial assessment
- People were interested how the "ability to pay" will be determined and asked if disabled people would be forced to use savings similar to older people in care homes. Our finance manager outlined the proposed process but clarified a lot of detail could not be shared as this was still a proposal and processes would be determined if the policy is approved
- There were lots of questions around the proposed £20 per hour charge as people did not understand where the figure had come from. Staff explained this is not set in stone but it had been used in the modelling as it is less than our cheapest provider
- People asked if there will be an appeals process to the financial assessment and it was clarified there would be

Impact on carers

- Many of those present are family carers, there to advocate for their loved ones

- People raised concerns about the stress this is putting on carers and question if £1.5m (a “drop in the ocean for the council”) was really worth this
- Concerns it will actually end up costing the HSCP/council more money as it will be the last straw for carers who may “hand over” care of their loved one to the authority
- People expressed disappointment and frustration that carers/parents weren't involved sooner, for example as part of the IGSLWG
- There are lots of pressures and demands on parent carers. They expressed that short notice of these sessions shows no care for them or genuine desire for their input
- Some carers feel their finances have already taken a hit due to SPF as they are already paying for services they believe are critical for their loved one – such as feeding and repositioning - that SPF did not categorise as critical or substantial so this is creating another wave of anxiety around finances
- It was raised that this policy will push carers into poverty and depression and asked what was being done to combat this
- Carers told us they have been put through so much already and have so much on their shoulders that they just don't have the energy to keep fighting and want someone in their corner for once
- Carers feel they are being punished for keeping disabled adult children at home, as if they were in care this wouldn't apply
- It was asked what services are available to carers. Our carers lead outlined the right carers have to a support plan and the types of services available. He encouraged carers to reach out to the carers centre or himself for support
- It was expressed that no policy maker can walk in carers shoes, it's extremely difficult and they fear for their own wellbeing, and the wellbeing of the people they care for

Implementing the policy

- The cost of implementing this policy was questioned – how will the HSCP undertake such a large volume of financial reviews and the need to hire staff to deliver this was upsetting
- People highlighted they have already seen a strain on social work staff – long waiting times, no face to face meetings, delays with reviews, no named social worker – so questioned their capacity to deliver this
- It was raised that people have been on long waiting lists for other services – 6 months for a mental health assessment – so it's upsetting the HSCP is prioritising financial assessments, They asked if the impact this will have on other waiting lists been considered, particularly mental health
- A question that was raised a number of times was how the different elements of care would be split. HSCP staff advised that this would be down to the skill of social work staff to work with the people we support, their carers and families to establish how much of their support is personal care, and how much falls into the non-residential care. For example someone may get a 1 hour visit but of that 40 minutes is spent on personal care tasks and 20 on non-personal care tasks. It is those 20 minutes that would be in scope for charging
- People asked what the anticipated timeline for the major milestones leading up to implementation are
- One resident highlighted that when your family member has a very poor quality of life, the only thing that makes it any better is being able to do things using their "disposable" income. By taking 60% there will be a massive impact on quality of life
- Joint accounts were raised and people wanted to understand the impact this would have

- Adult mobility payments were raised a number of times and our finance manager advised these would be disregarded

Points requiring further consideration

- If people are charged for services, do they become a customer and therefore do they have different rights?
- If people are charged for an hour how will we ensure they get the full hours care – this was answered in part as our finance manager advised invoices would only be sent once information from providers on what they actually delivered was received. Although it was agreed this should be set out clearly in the policy
- Several participants asked the HSCP include people with lived experience in drafting the EQIA and Raymond made a commitment to do this. He advised that a version would need to be submitted to Cabinet for 5 December, but if approved we would work with people in the new year to develop the assessment which is a live/working document

Events

- There was a lot of frustration regarding the short notice for the events and that letters were sent to vulnerable people, rather than their carers. The partnership acknowledges this could have been done better, but it is a reflection of the pressure and the lack of resource available. However the learnings from these events will be applied for future engagement sessions
- Venues – parking at both venues (Thornliebank Resource Centre and Barrhead Foundry) was difficult for people attending
- Thornliebank resource centre is not set up for these type of events and both the visuals (presentation) and sound made it difficult. The Foundry was better as the space is designed for large meetings/events, there was a better screen and we borrowed a microphone from the Trust following the difficulties with people hearing the day before
- People have said they hope any policy takes on board on what has been said and that it is fair and not just a tick box exercise and people are looked at as individuals.

Other feedback

- Thank you for having this information meeting, you were able to answer our questions very satisfactorily. I look forward to further information on next steps. Thank you.
- Thanks for this discussion and for your time this evening - I appreciate it is very difficult to find a resolution to the budget shortfalls and still support those in our society who need help and let them live with purpose and dignity
- Thank you very much: I found this quite interesting and that many of the families share the same concerns. I will put forward my views/comments on the proposals