

Impact assessment of: _Changes to the Fairer Charging Policy and its associated consultation.

Responsible service/ directorate: Adult Social Care

Date of assessment: A number of meetings held in October 2008

Summary of service/ policy that was assessed:

The Fairer Charging Policy.

Since 1st April 2003, Councils have had to follow Government guidance about the way that they charge people for services which they receive to help them stay at home. Local Authorities have discretionary power to charge adult recipients for non-residential services and make such charges as they consider reasonable. The Fairer Charging Policy sets out the arrangements for Leeds.

Summary of Actions arising from Assessment

(include all actions arising from sections 2,5,6,7,8 and 9 and ensure that these are included in your service or business plans)

Actions	Responsibility	Timescale
Information on the Fairer Charging Assessment process to be available in easy read and different formats (such as pictorial) and different languages	Ann Hill	Prior to implementation of the revised policy in April 2009.
Guidance to Officers undertaking Fairer Charging Assessments on how to treat disposable income.	Ann Hill Julie Knight Financial Assessment Team Manager	Prior to 1 st April 2009
Additional training for staff involved in undertaking financial assessments on how to treat disposable income.	Ann Hill	Prior to 1 st April 2009
Additional training for staff involved in undertaking financial assessments in communicating with service users re: recognition of their abilities, anxieties, communication needs; also about not re-enforcing stereotypes and assumptions about people.	Ann Hill	Prior to 1 st April 2009

Appointments to complete the financial assessment to be available outside of traditional working hours to meet the needs of working carers.	Ann Hill	No definitive timescale – part of looking at staff working flexible hours – change to working arrangements.
The Council to consider phased implementation so that the effect of the revised policy will not be too harsh for people.	Ann Hill Executive Board members	Issue has been suggested to Executive Board – decision will be made by 27 th February
Post implementation monitoring of the impact of the policy on service users	Ann Hill	On-going post 1 st April 2009

Contact person for the assessment: Janet Somers

Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service
	Alliance of Service Users and Carers	Service User/Carer
	Independent Disability Council (Leeds)	Service User/Carer
	Older People's Reference Group	Service User/Carer
	Leeds Learning Disability Service User Reference Group	Service User/Carer
	Leeds Local Involvement Network Preparatory Group	Service User/Carer
Janet Somers	Adult Social Care	Involvement Lead
Ann Hill	Adult Social Care	Head of Finance
Julie Knight	Adult Social Care	Finance Manager – Adult Services
Shaun Kelly	Adult Social Care	Finance Manager – Welfare benefits
Neil Main	Adult Social Care	

1. Aims of the service or policy

The Policy sets out Leeds City Council's approach to charging for non-residential services. The policy was originally implemented on 1st April 2003 and was in need of review. The aim of the review was to address inconsistencies around fairness and equity in the original policy and to seek to obtain additional finance to invest in services.

2. Fact finding
 Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment; including previous consultation, involvement, research, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.
 Make a note of any gaps in the information and how this will be gathered.

National Context of Fairer Charging
 Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005)
 The Race Relations Act 1976 (and as amended 2000)
 Previous consultation undertaken on this subject in 2002 and 2006
 Information obtained by the Council from fairer charging assessments
 Benchmarking work undertaken with other local authorities in relation to their charging policies
 Information held on current service users and their financial contribution details.

3. Involvement
 Have you involved appropriate community groups in the assessment? Please list here who was involved.
 If community groups were not involved in the assessment please explain your decision here.

As you will note from the above, members of the assessment team were Service User and carer representatives of a number of user and carer led organisations and forums, specifically:
 Alliance of Service Users and Carer
 The Independent Disability Council (Leeds)
 Older People's Reference Group.
 Leeds Local Involvement Network Preparatory Group
 Learning Disability Service User Reference Group

4. Adverse affects
 Summarise here any adverse affects identified from your fact finding and assessment team meetings.

Barrier	Adverse affect	Who does this impact on	Why
Information and communication	People may not understand the Financial Assessment process	People whose first language is not English or require communications in different formats and languages.	There is currently information available in a standard format and not in easy read or other formats (such as pictorial)
Information and Communication	The Financial Assessment may not reflect the needs of the individual	People whose disposable income will be taken into account for the Financial Assessment	Officers may treat the use of disposable income differently and to the detriment of the Service User.
Customer Care and Staff Training	The Financial Assessment may not reflect the needs of the	People whose disposable income will be taken into account for the	Officers may treat the use of disposable income differently and to

	individual	Financial Assessment	the detriment of the Service User.
Customer Care and Staff Training	The Financial Assessment may not reflect the needs of the individual	Potentially all people in receipt of a financial assessment	Officers undertaking financial assessments may not know how to take into account during the process, people's abilities (communication and understanding), their anxieties and their communication needs).
Timing	The right people to help the Service User during the process may not be in attendance. The Financial Assessment may not reflect the needs of the individual	People who need assistance or support during the Financial Assessment process; people whose Carers look after financial issues.	The information required may not be available; the Service User may not be fully able to complete the Financial Assessment with Officers without the assistance and/or support.
Stereotypes and assumptions	Non relevant assumptions and stereotyping potentially influence the financial assessment to the detriment of the service user	Potentially all people going through the financial assessment process	It may affect the 'view' that Officers take in terms of Service Users' use of disposable income, or in their approach to people with a disability, who are elderly etc.
Cost	People with needs will cease to use services because of the perceived/real effect on them financially. However, it should be noted that vulnerable people will not be left without a service because of financial issues/concerns	Potentially anybody in receipt of services who will be assessed as contributing towards the cost of their services	

<p>Cost</p>	<p>Some people may incur a very high increase in the contributions that they make towards the cost of their services.</p>	<p>Whilst we cannot yet identify these people (until a financial assessment), potentially the group of service users it will affect will be those with a high level of service, a high level of savings and/or high level of income.</p>	<p>People with high levels of savings (please refer to thresholds detailed in the Executive Board Report) and/or high levels of income will have to pay higher contribution towards the cost of their services.</p>
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5. Barriers and actions needed

For each barrier, give some details of the current position in relation to the service/ policy and identify the actions needed, who is responsible for taking the actions forward, when by, any resource implications and who needs to be involved in implementation of the actions.

If a barrier is not applicable to the service/policy, please explain why in the current position box.

A. Built Environment				
<p>Current Position: For example number of buildings open to the public or maintained by the service Not applicable as the policy does not relate to a service but to what we take into account when we assess people's financial contribution towards the social care services that they receive.</p>				
Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Who should be involved in the implementation?

B. Location				
<p>Current Position: For example where is the service delivered from, is it office based or in a community setting. Not applicable as the policy does not relate to a service but to what we take into account when we assess people's financial contribution towards the social care services that they receive.</p>				
Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Who should be involved in the implementation?

C. Information and communication

Current Position: For example what information is provided about the service/ policy and who is this aimed at?
 Information is provided to Service Users and/or Carers on the Fairer Charging Assessment process and what finances will be taken into account in assessing their contribution to the services that they receive.
 In terms of the consultation a questionnaire with information and guidance was sent to all current Service Users, voluntary, community and faith organisations, members of staff, internal and external providers of non-residential social care services and Elected Members. The documentation was written in easy read and pictorial versions were also sent out to people who may benefit from this.

Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Who should be involved in the implementation?
Information relating to consultation readily available in appropriate languages and formats.	Janet Somers	Already in place	Translation services	Janet Somers, Translation Service
Assistance to people in understanding the proposed changes and assistance with the completion of the questionnaire as required.	Janet Somers	Already in place – FAB team to go out to visit service users and carers on request; freephone help line set up.	Officers time to go on visits Freephone help line Answerphone	FAB team Person supporting the process on the helpline. Members of the Project Team
Information available on the Fairer Charging Assessment Process to be in easy read and different formats (such as pictorial) and different languages.	Ann Hill	Prior to implementation of the revised policy.	Finance	Translation services and Leeds Advocacy for pictorial versions
Guidance to Officers undertaking Fairer Charging Assessments on how to treat disposable income	Ann Hill	Prior to implementation of the revised policy		Ann Hill Julie Knight FAB team Manager

D. Customer care and staff training

Current Position: For example what training do you provide for your staff in relation to the service/ policy?
 FAB team are trained in undertaking financial assessments, on welfare benefit issues.

Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Who should be involved in the implementation?
Additional training for staff involved in undertaking financial assessments on how to treat disposable income	Ann Hill	Prior to implementation of the revised policy	Staff Time	Ann Hill Julie Knight Janet Somers FAB Team Representatives from the Service User and Carer Reference Group
Additional training for staff involved in undertaking financial assessments in communicating with service users re: recognition of their abilities, anxieties, communication needs.	Ann Hill	Prior to the implementation of the revised policy	Staff time Finance to pay for Service User involvement Training pack	Ann Hill Julie Knight Janet Somers FAB Team Representatives from the Service User and Carer Reference Group

E. Timing

Current Position: For example is the service based round traditional working hours.

The undertaking of a Financial Assessment is based around traditional working hours. Arrangements to undertake these assessments are made approximately one week in advance and whilst these arrangements can be altered the Service User and Carer involved in undertaking the EIA felt that this did not always work in practice.

Additionally, the issue of timing was looked at in terms of the timing of the consultation (takes place during school's half term break) and the proposed timetable for the implementation of the revised policy.

Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Who should be involved in the implementation?
Appointments to complete the financial assessment to be available outside of traditional working hours to meet the needs of working carers.	Ann Hill	At the earliest opportunity – no definitive timescale requested as the resolution of this issue includes looking at staff working flexible hours and therefore requires a HR (and possibly Union) input as it is a change to people's working arrangements		Ann Hill Julie Knight FAB Team HR Unions?
Consultation extended until the end of October 2008. Also, will keep the timescale for including returned questionnaires open until the end of the second week in November.	Ann Hill and Janet Somers	immediately	No new resources required	Janet Somers Helpline Quality Performance and Review

Make Executive Board aware that Service Users and Carers are concerned that the revised policy will be implemented in a declining economic climate where the cost of daily living is high.	Ann Hill	To be included in the report to Executive Board in February 2009	No resources required	Ann Hill Director or Adult Social Care Elected Members
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F. Stereotypes and assumptions				
Current Position: For example is the service or policy aimed at one community or a particular type of family unit? The policy is aimed at all adults who receive non-residential social care services that are chargeable.				
Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Who should be involved in the implementation?
Alternatives to the written word available to people during the consultation process for people who cannot read.	Janet Somers	Already in place	Helpline FAB Team Officer time for visiting people in their own home	Janet Somers FAB Team Helpline Officer
In order to ensure that officers undertaking financial assessments do not make assumptions about people's abilities etc based on their age and disability, reinforce their training.	Ann Hill	This will be included in the training identified in part D above.	Staff time Finance to pay for Service User involvement Training pack	Ann Hill Julie Knight Janet Somers FAB Team Representatives from the Service User and Carer Reference Group

G. Cost

Current Position: For example do people have to pay to use the service, will the policy change the way the council charges for its service.

People are financially assessed to determine their level of contribution towards the cost of the services that they receive. Not all people contribute towards the cost of their services (currently 63%). The policy will change the way the Council charges. Some people who currently do not pay a contribution the cost of their services will contribute in the future, some others will contribute more. However, a significant number of people will continue to receive a free service.

Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Who should be involved in the implementation?
<p>The Council to consider phased implementation so that the effect of the revised policy will not be too hard in one go for some people.</p>	<p>Ann Hill</p>	<p>Partly implemented – part of the survey includes asking people what they think about a phased implementation. It should be noted that as of December 2008, Officers in discussion with Cllr Harrand have recommended a phased implementation of the revised policy.</p>	<p>None required</p>	<p>Ann Hill Director of Adult Social Care Elected Members – Executive Board</p>
<p>Post implementation monitoring of the impact of the policy on service users</p>	<p>Janet Somers Ann Hill</p>	<p>3 and 6 months after implementation of the policy.</p>	<p>Officers time</p>	<p>Janet Somers Ann Hill Julie Knight Care Manager FAB Team</p>
<p>Review of financial assessment on request.</p>	<p>Ann Hill</p>	<p>Already in place</p>	<p>No new resources required</p>	<p>Julie Knight FAB Team</p>

<p>Training for FAB team on the service users' flexible use of their disposable income based on their individual circumstances. Staff trained in good/best practice</p>	<p>Ann Hill</p>	<p>This will be included in the training identified in part D above.</p>	<p>Staff time Finance to pay for Service User involvement Training pack</p>	<p>Ann Hill Julie Knight Janet Somers FAB Team Representatives from the Service User and Carer Reference Group</p>
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H. Consultation and involvement

Current Position: For example what consultation is carried out by the service or what involvement are you planning to implement the policy?

Attached in the consultation plan for Income Review. The outcomes of consultation will be reported to Executive Board in order to assist them in reaching a decision about the revised policy.

Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Who should be involved in the implementation?
Policy not to be implemented without a new financial assessment of each service user.	Ann Hill	Each service user will be re-assessed and then the revised policy will implemented for them. This arrangement is already in place.	No new resources required.	FAB Team
Service User and Carer Reference Group to produce their own report on the feedback from the survey (the qualitative information not the quantitative) This will go with the Executive Report in February	Service User and Carer Reference Group	For the February report	No new resources required	Janet Somers Ann Hill

I. Any other barriers specific to the service/ policy

Current Position: For example are there any other barriers that haven't been covered such as partnership working and any statutory limitations or obligations?

Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Who should be involved in the implementation?

6. Which communities may perceive the impact on them differently?

It is important to look at the potential impact of the service or policy on different sectors of the community and community relations. The impact could be negative in that one or more groups are disadvantaged by the service or policy or positive, in that one group may receive greater benefit from the service or policy than do other groups. For example if a grant fund is aimed at one community how will other communities perceive this?

The table below may be useful in focussing on specific aspects, if there are a number of areas to be considered.

Aspect of service/ policy	Negative impact	Positive Impact	Action needed or justification for decision
All of the revised charging options	People with high levels of service (need) and high levels of income or savings will have to pay more.	People with an average income will not have to make a higher percentage contribution than people with a significantly higher level of income or savings (see Executive Board Report for the details).	In terms of equity and fairness, currently people on middle incomes currently pay a higher percentage of their income than people who have a high level of savings and income (contributions currently capped at £88 per week). However, it should be noted that people will only pay what they can afford to pay.

7. Community Relations

What is the impact of this service or policy on community relations? How can this service or policy be used to promote good/better community relations and what actions do you need to put in place to make this happen?

For example providing opportunities for people from different backgrounds or communities to meet.

Impact	Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale
People's trust in the Council will increase if they can see that the outcomes from the consultation have been listened to and	Ensure that the lessons learned from the consultation (through to feedback and decision making) forms part of ASC	Janet Somers	Proposals for new standards and ways of involving people were approved by ASC DMT in January 2009. An action plan will be

have influenced policy	Involvement Standards and Best Practice		produced from this for DMT to approve and then the actions can be implemented – at the earliest by 1 st April 2009. However, advice will be provided to ASC Officers undertaking consultation and/or involvement with immediate effect.
People and communities will be consulted and involved on issues and in ways that are appropriate to their needs and wishes	As above	As above	As above
8. Community Safety What is the impact of this policy, service or function on community safety and what actions do you need to put in place to make this happen? For example what is the potential for the service/policy to reduce crime or disorder?			
Impact	Action needed	Responsibility	Timescale

9. Governance and ownership Who needs to agree the actions identified by this assessment and ensure progress is made? How will this be monitored? For example a report to senior management team or the project board responsible for the policy.
This assessment has been agreed by the ASC head of Finance and will form part of the Executive Board Report, so final approval for actions will lie with Executive Board Members. However, it should be noted that a number of the required actions were already in place or were planned. Additionally, a report will be taken to Scrutiny Board on the review of the consultation, which will include details of communities' needs and wishes in terms of consultation and involvement. Adult Social Care DMT has approved proposals that include some of the lessons learned and the good practice that has come out of the consultation on Income Review. In the near future they will be asked to approve an Action Plan that will lead to their implementation.

10. Approved by

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from your impact assessment. This may be your senior management team, your director or Board.

The Project Board.

11. Summary form completed and passed to the Equality Team.

Who by: Janet Somers

Date: 21st January 2009