



ADULT SERVICES AND HEALTH COMMISSION **11 September 2006**

Report of the Director of Corporate and Adult Social Services

Review of Home Care Services and Charges

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Commission is asked to:
 - Consider the request by the Council to review Home Care Services and Charges
 - Set a programme timetable for the review.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council passed a motion at its 19 July meeting requesting the Adult Services and Health Commission to “undertake a review and make recommendations about the scale and type of provision and financing of such provision that is appropriate for Derby”. This request was confirmed by the Council Cabinet at its 1 August meeting.
- 2.2 Local authorities with social services have a statutory duty to provide community care services for people who are assessed as requiring those services and meet the eligibility criteria. These services do not necessarily have to be directly provided by the Authority but can be delivered through an agency commissioned by the Council.
- 2.3 The policy and practice of charging for care services varied significantly between local authorities that in April 2003 the Government introduced Fairer Charging Guidance. This set out a framework to help councils ensure their charging policies were fair and operated consistently. The Guidance also allowed authorities the discretion not to charge for these service if they so wished.
- 2.4 After taking legal advice and conducting detailed consultations with the all the stakeholders including service users Derby City Council adopted a charging system which was compliant with the Fairer Charging Guidance. Under this charging regime service users were charged £4.84 per hour rising to a maximum of £33.88 per week for more than 6½ hours.

2.5 In September 2005 the Council Cabinet agreed abolish home care charges with effect from 1 October 2005. The reasons for changing the policy was to:

- ensure vulnerable people in need were not deterred by the charges from accessing the service
- Enable a higher number of services users to receive this service, maximising their independence, enabling them to remain in their homes and reducing the need for residential care
- Eliminate the differences in accessibility and to bring Derby in line Derbyshire where residents were receiving a free service

2.6 At the time when the Council Cabinet decided to abolish the home care charges there were 2,900 service users receiving home care services of which approximately 920 received free service and 260 paid the maximum charge. The impact this policy change on the budget was assessed as a loss of income net of savings in collection costs of £696,000 for the part year 2005/06 and £913,000 per annum from 2006/07 onwards.

2.7 The numbers of people receiving home care service has gradually declined. The table below shows there are currently 2541 people receiving internal (the majority by far) and external home care services whilst a further 221 access home care through Direct Payments. There very few people receiving Direct Payments in 2002.

Date	Number of people receiving home care services*
8 November 2002	3760
6 December 2003 (FC introduced)	3320
7 October 2004	3113
2 March 2005	3041
19 July 2006	2541

* The table does not include the number of people accessing Direct Payments which has been steadily increasing which was negligible to start with but is now quite significant.

2.8 Councils are required under the Government's Fair Access to Care Services framework to publish the eligibility criteria for accessing community care services. This criterion consists of four levels of need- Low, Moderate (high or low), Substantial and Critical. Authorities may decide for themselves which of the levels they can directly address based on their resources.

2.9 Derby has been meeting all four bands of eligibility and decided that to balance the increasing demands for services with limited resources and meet community needs, it will no longer meet the needs of people

in the low band from 3 April 2006. It is one of the last authorities to make this change.

2.10 The Council has recently carried out a Best Value Review of Home Care Services for Older People in accordance with the Councils toolkit. The review was completed in 2005 and published an updated improvement plan in January 2006. Some of the key findings of the review are:

- the overall numbers of older people being supported at home are gradually decreasing as more “intensive” home care packages are commissioned from within the same resource base. The reduction in numbers also means that fewer people are benefiting from “lower level” prevention
- the “higher level” prevention is not resulting in significantly fewer older people being admitted to residential or nursing care
- the home care service is not effectively geared to ensuring older people remain as independent as possible for as long as possible
- procurement and contracting arrangements need to be improved so they are fit-for-purpose

2.11 In response to the Council’s request for reviewing the scale, type and financing of home care provision appropriate for Derby, the Commission is encouraged to make use of the information already gained through the BVR exercise. The Commission may therefore wish to:

- examine the current and future demands for the home care services by examining the service user and the wider population profiles
- examine the types of services required by the service users for modern settings, how these should be provided to meet their needs and how these should be financed
- examine whether abolishing the charge allows the Council to meet its core objective to “help more older people to remain living at home for longer”
- consider impact of the abolishing the charge on Adult Social Services and the wider councils budgets
- examine the effect of the change in policy to no longer meet low level needs on the Council’s capacity to provide effective home care services

- seek views of the current and prospective service users on the no charge policy and the decision to only provide services to people with moderate, substantial and critical levels of need
- examine the needs assessment criteria and compare it with comparator authorities as well as Derbyshire County Council
- how home services provided by comparator authorities and the levels of charges they make on the service users, if any

2.12 The Commission asked to identify witnesses and set a time frame for completions of this review. The timetable should enable the Commission feed its recommendations into the 2007-08 budget setting round. A draft list of witnesses and the information required from them is given below. Members may wish to add or amend this list.

Witness	Information required
Director of Adult Social Services and/ or senior staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scene setting – explanation of the current policies and procedures for delivering home care services • Type of services provided under home care • Statistical information on the number of users accessing provision and how this has changed following the change in policy • Information on new criteria used and how this has been introduced
Lead Cabinet Member	Political direction for the development and deliver of home care services
Director of Resources	Financial implications of abolishing the charge on Adult Social Services and wider Council budgets
Services users and prospective users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of abolishing the charge on users • Impact of changing the criteria to no longer provide low level needs on prospective users
Comparator authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Criteria for Social care needs • Type of services provided under home care • Level of charge set by the authorities • Number of users of home care services

<p>For more information contact: Mahroof Hussain 01332 255597 e-mail Mahroof.hussain@derby.gov.uk</p> <p>Background papers: BVR of Home Care Services for Older People</p> <p>List of appendices: Appendix 1 – Implications</p>
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Appendix 1

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. There is likely to be a cost involved in conducting public consultation which will be contained within the Commissions research budget.

Legal

2. None arising from this report.

Personnel

3. None arising from this report.

Equalities impact

4. Effective scrutiny benefits all Derby people.

Corporate Priorities

5. This report links with Council's priority for 2006-09 to build healthy and independent communities, by:
 - improving the standard of social care for vulnerable adults and older people