



## **The Review of Home Care Services and Charges**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 That the Council Cabinet considers the report of Adult Services and Health Commission on the Review of Home Care Services and Charges and presents it to the Full Council.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 2.1 At its July meeting, the Full Council asked the Adult Services and Health Commission to undertake a review on home care services and make recommendations about the scale and type of service provision and financing of such provision that is appropriate for Derby.
- 2.2 The Commission discussed the Council's request in September and agreed a review plan that involved:
- examining the information contained in the Best Value Review of Home Care for Older People
  - considering the eligibility criteria and the scale of charges of our comparator authorities
  - assessing evidence from a range of local stakeholders
- 2.3 In conducting the review, the Commission held a series of meetings on 29 September and received evidence from senior managers from Adult Social Services, the Director of Resources and Finance, representatives from voluntary sector organisations and also a number of recipients of the home care services who responded to an article in the Derby Evening Telegraph asking for comments on home care charges.
- 2.4 The Commission considered the evidence presented to it and agreed the following recommendations at its 30 October meeting.

#### **Recommendation 1**

- 2.5 The Commission recommends that low domiciliary care needs should be met and that the Council Cabinet should look to the capacity of the voluntary and independent sector to provide through service level agreements.

### **Reasons:**

- 2.6 The evidence showed that there is a demand for low level needs to be met in order to directly promote individuals' practical abilities to manage at home but also to promote a sense of dignity and well-being.
- 2.7 It is likely to be more cost effective to undertake tasks like shopping, domestic odd jobs etc from the private and voluntary sector than relatively highly paid home carer workers whose salaries reflect skills in undertaking intimate personal care. The Commission endorses the Best Value Review recommendations to use Council staff on intensive and urgent cases.

### **Recommendation 2**

- 2.8 Where a client received the service at recommendation 1, it would remain cost effective to continue to use the private and voluntary service providers should the client later need personal care tasks

### **Reasons:**

- 2.9 It would not be an effective use of public money to have domestic tasks undertaken by staff paid to deliver personal care. It would also provide some continuity in personal contacts.

### **Recommendation 3**

- 2.10 Continue to promote Direct Payments in line with the Government policy.
- 2.11 Direct Payments provide greater flexibility and choice for the service user on how to meet their specific needs.

### **Recommendation 4:**

- 2.12 To avoid over rigid adherence to particular home care tasks on days of the week, there should be flexibility within the agreed assessed needs.

### **Reasons**

- 2.13 There was evidence that client requests for even modest variations in the particular tasks undertaken on individual days are not accommodated. The recommendation would enable such leeway, whilst still being limited to agreed needs and not broadened to clients 'wants'.

### **Recommendation 5**

- 2.14 The Commission held detailed discussions on the how the service should be financed. Members considered arguments both in favour and against reintroducing a charge for home care services. The Commission does not however wish to see the reintroduction of home care charges based on the evidence provided.

### **Arguments in favour of reintroducing the charge**

- The income can kick start support of the voluntary sector. The money can also support service charges, Council Tax and other budgets
- Enable the Council to provide more services particularly in the moderate needs category
- The Director of Resources and the Senior Assistant Director Adult Social Services both stated the job evaluation is likely to increase the wage pressure of social services staff which will have knock on effect on the independent sector. This will further increase the pressures on the Adult Social Services budget.
- The ratio of the cost of collecting the charge against the income derived from it may be lower than previously due to the change in FACS criteria which no longer meets the needs of people in the low need category. The cost of collection should be kept low.
- Due to the growing older population, more people will be requiring care services and we will need to spend more just to maintain at the current level.
- It needs to be set in the context of the forthcoming difficult budget round.

### **Arguments against the charge**

- The majority of service users who responded to the article in the Derby Evening Telegraph were opposed to the reintroduction of the charge
- Resources can be found within other parts of the Council to support free service
- The charge can have a deterrent effect on the majority of the users according to the Chief Executive of Disability Direct
- Legislation requires each applicant to undergo financial assessment and conduct a means test which increases administrative cost of collection
- The cost of collection was considered to be too high relative to the income

2.15 The Council Cabinet is asked to consider the Commission's report and present it to the Full Council at the first opportunity.

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<b>Background papers:</b>	BVR Home Care Services for Older People
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 Implications Appendix 2 The Review of Home Care Service and Charges- Final report

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. None arising from this report.

**Legal**

2. The Adult Services and Health Commission is responsible for the overview and scrutiny of items that fall within its remit.

**Personnel**

3. None directly arising

**Equalities Impact**

4. People receiving home care services are amongst some of the vulnerable members of the community.

**Corporate priorities**

5. The report accords with the Corporate priorities of building healthy communities by improving the standard of social care for vulnerable adults and older people