

Why does the council charge for care and support?

The council needs to charge people because the amount of money it has isn't enough to pay for all the services people need.

In one year all the charges added up to £3.6 million.

Together with the amount that the council had, this money was used to pay for services.

Without the money from charging there would be fewer services.

Why does the way the council charges for services need to change?

The Scottish Parliament wants people to have greater choice and control over their services. People will still:

- be assessed to see if they need social care
- decide their personal outcomes
- agree what help they need to achieve them.

What's different from before is that people will now have a personal budget. The personal budget is the total cost of the services or support, based on your support plan, that the council can help with.

Contribution based charging and what it means

The way we charge now is to ask people to pay for particular services, like home care or short breaks.

Because people can now purchase services for themselves, or ask someone else to do it for them, we can no longer just have charges for particular services.

This would mean that instead of paying for each service, people would make a contribution if they can afford to pay an amount towards their personal budget.

So, we are asking you to tell us what you think about this proposed new way of paying for services.

How will the council know if people can afford to pay a contribution?

People will only pay charges, or make a contribution if they can afford to.

We will work this out as we have before, using a financial assessment.

The financial assessment includes a benefits check to make sure people are getting all the welfare benefits they should get.

Is there a charge for all the council services?

There is no charge for these services:

- personal care for people over 65 (including meals preparation)
- nursing care for people of any age
- if people need more care than before when they leave hospital (for six weeks)
- care for people with an illness at the end of their lives
- some criminal justice services
- some mental health services
- some support for carers
- home care re-ablement (for six weeks)
- intermediate care
- crisis support
- some equipment.

How will people know the new way of charging is fair?

The council want to make sure the way they charge in the future is fair, so we will do this by:

- treating people fairly
- treating everyone in the same way
- making sure no-one's contribution is more than their personal budget
- making sure people have all the information they need about paying or making a contribution before they start planning their care and support
- making sure the information about charges and how they are worked out is easy to understand
- making sure everyone has a benefits check
- making sure people can ask for a review of their financial assessment at any time.

Who will be affected if the new way of charging is agreed?

- people who are being assessed for the first time
- everyone who already has care and support, when they are reviewed
- people who already have:
 - home care
 - care at home
 - housing support
 - direct payments
 - respite or short breaks
 - day care services.

Are there any other charges that won't change?

Charges for Community Alarms and Telecare services won't change because these services are not currently included in Self-directed Support. We plan not to assess people twice if they need these and other services at the same time. This will make sure people pay no more than they can afford for their alarm. It will also make sure they contribute no more than they can afford to their personal budget for any other services.

Older people who use day care will still pay for their meals and transport. This is because food and transport are what everyone needs to pay for and are not costs for care.

How will people's contribution or charge be worked out?

We will use a financial assessment as before to work out people's contributions to their personal budget.

If people cannot afford to pay anything, they will not be charged at all.

If people's finances are enough to pay for all of their care, their contribution will be the full cost of their care.

If people can pay for some of their care, their contribution will be based on what they can afford.

People who can afford to make a contribution will pay a fixed weekly amount. Over the year, this will add up to no more than what they have been assessed as being able to pay.

If the changes are agreed, will some people pay more than they pay now?

Some people may pay less and others may pay more.

The people most likely to pay more are those who only use day care services or who have a direct payment for day care.

We will know more clearly how each person is affected when they have their financial assessment.