

Social care charging policy consultation

Summary report

1. Purpose

This is a summary of the feedback from service users, carers, representatives from the voluntary and community sector and those employed in the statutory sector.

It is recommended, prior to taking a decision, the findings from the standard and easy read versions are fully considered, in addition to other feedback received during the consultation process, such as letters, emails and a petition.

The feedback received by email and letter are concise and technical in nature. For this reason, CREST have not provided a summary of these submissions. It is recommended these are read in full and considered by the relevant officers in the Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Department and the Assessment Hub.

2. Methodology

This section provides details of how service users, carers, organisations and other stakeholders got involved in the consultation process.

Standard online survey

- This survey was produced on instruction and guidance from the Assistant Director of Strategy and Resources (Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Department) and officers from the Assessment Hub
- Additional comments on the survey were provided by managers from within the Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Department
- The Consultation and Resident Engagement Services Team (CREST) formatted the survey and converted it into HTML format so that it could be posted on the Council website
- Any changes made were signed-off by officers from the Assessment Hub, as was the final version. Copies of all documentation were sent to the Assistant Director of Strategy and Resources (Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Department) before the consultation was launched
- The details of the consultation and a link to the online survey were made available in the Current Consultations section of the website
- All voluntary and community sector organisations in the borough who are on the Council's database were sent an email with the link to the online consultation
- The original consultation period was four weeks but was extended after requests from voluntary and community sector groups and advice from the Consultation and Resident Engagement Services Team
- In total, the Council received 390 submissions via the Council website. Of the 390 responses submitted, nine were completed by representatives from the voluntary and community sector in the borough and a further response

completed by the representative of a local school. The remainder were submitted by individuals

Easy read survey

- An easy read version of the questionnaire was produced by CREST
- This was quality checked by learning disability service officers at the Council
- The easy read version was made available online on the social care charging policy consultation page as a printable document
- It was also sent to service users and carers on request, along with details of how the proposals could have an impact, a covering letter and a pre-paid envelope. Eleven easy read versions were posted following requests submitted to CREST
- Following a request, several printed copies were also sent to a voluntary and community sector organisation for them to share among service users and carers
- Voluntary and community sector organisations highlighted what they considered to be issues with the document. These included:
 - Typo in the Council's address on the front page of the survey ('Sliver' Street instead of 'Silver' Street)
 - The request from the Council for service users to provide their postcode
 - Not enough specific information about the proposals
 - Benefits referred to were not defined
- To address the issues highlighted, definitions of the benefits were added and the description of the proposals was altered
- In most surveys produced by the Council, respondents are asked to provide details of postal district (for example, N14 and N9) to help further understand the data. It is not a requirement to provide this information. The reason why 'postcode' was asked for in the easy read version was because it was felt that asking for 'postal district' may not be understood. The information collated would not be used to identify stakeholders but merely to better understand the data by enabling analysis by postal district
- In relation to the typo on the address, it should be noted that requests for the easy read version were distributed along with a pre-paid envelope, with the correct address, enclosed
- Based on the responses to the open-ended questions in the easy read version and the consistency with the findings from the standard survey, it appears the content of the easy read version was clearly understood by service users and carers
- It is unclear what impact the amendments (for example, providing the definitions of the benefits) had as the theme of responses submitted after these had been made were identical to those recorded before any changes were made

Landing page text and supplementary documentation made available online

- The landing page text was produced by CREST and sent to officers in the Assessment Hub for sign-off

- Examples of how the proposals may impact on two different fictitious service users were produced and made available online. These examples contained an anomaly identified by a resident. In one of the examples a figure was less than £1 different to what it should have been. The mistake was acknowledged and then corrected
- Following a number of queries and issues raised by service users, carers and voluntary and community sector groups, a set of Frequently Asked Questions was produced. This included questions relating to who would implement the proposals should they be agreed. This was added to the website on 6 September 2017
- Included within the landing page text were details on how to contact CREST for assistance with participating in the consultation
- It should be noted that the text on the landing page could be translated into various languages, made larger and communicated via sound

Letter to service users/carers (informing service users and carers of the consultation)

- A letter was sent to all service users, identified via a social care database, on 29 June 2017 informing them of the consultation
- The letter sign-posted the online consultation and informed service users and carers that they could contact CREST for hard copies of the consultation, including an easy read version

Standard paper survey

- This survey was a reformatted version of the standard online survey. The primary difference being that a cover sheet was added, reflecting the consultation landing page and instructions were added to the questions
- The survey was sent to those who requested it, along with a pre-paid envelope. In total, 95 copies were posted following request
- Following a request, several printed copies were sent to a voluntary and community sector organisation for them to share among service users and carers

Meetings with representatives

- Council officers were invited to attend meetings on the 17 July 2017 and 7 August 2017. Both meetings were held at Community House in Edmonton
- The meeting held on 17 July was organised by the Enfield Carers Centre. An officer from the Financial Assessment Hub presented the proposals at the meeting and answered questions. Notes were taken by the organisers of the meeting
- The 7 August meeting, organised by CAPE (Carers and Parents of adults with learning disabilities in Enfield), was attended by Council officers from the Assessment Hub (present proposals and answer questions) and CREST (to take notes)
- The notes of the meeting were shared with CAPE
- In addition to the meetings in which Council officers were invited to attend, the consultation and the proposals were discussed at the Enfield Learning

Disability Partnership Board (August 2017), which was attended by Council officers, representatives from voluntary and community sector organisations and representatives from the statutory sector

- The notes from the three meetings have been sent separately to the relevant officers in the Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Department and Assessment Hub

Written correspondence and emails

- This does not include the emailed queries submitted by those who could not attend the one-to-one sessions
- The Council enabled individuals and organisations to email responses as an alternative to completing a survey
- Eight written responses were received
- The emails received are attached. These have been anonymised

One-to-one sessions with service users and carers

- The Council received requests for a public meeting. Considering the needs of the service users, it was decided that one-to-one sessions would be more effective and inclusive
- On 15 September, the Council wrote to over 700 service users and carers who were identified as being those who will be affected by the proposals
- The letter invited service users and carers to talk directly to officers from the Assessment Hub about their own situation. These sessions took place on 3 October 2017 at Enfield Civic Centre
- There was no requirement for service users or carers to book a session.
- Carers and service users were informed that if they were unable to attend the sessions, they could email their queries
- The sessions were well-received with 46 service users and/or carers discussing the proposals directly with staff
- The key issues highlighted at the one-to-one sessions included:
 - Concerns over ability to pay any potential increased charges
 - Perceived unfairness of cuts being targeted at services used by the most vulnerable
 - Current quality of care issues
 - Questions regarding disability related expenditure
 - Queries on when will any changes be agreed and then implemented
- There were also ten email queries that were responded to by officers from the Assessment Hub
- It appears around 200 more service users should have been on the distribution list, provided by the Data&MI Hub, but were not included. This was raised as an issue as the consultation period was ending. Only after the consultation period had ended, was it confirmed they had not been written to

E-petition

- The Council received notice of an online petition 'signed' by 750 individuals
- The title of the petition was '*Enfield LA's policy to charge severely disabled adults for services they aren't even receiving*'

- It is not clear where the signatories are based. The proposal encouraged local people to sign it but the Council are unable to confirm if they have a link to the borough
- It should be noted that it is not possible to identify if the petition could be signed by more than one individual
- It is possible that several signatories may also have participated in the consultation via another avenue (for example, completing a survey)

In addition to the three meetings, written correspondence, plus the 750 online signatories, there were 522 further interactions:

- 390 responded to the standard survey
- 76 responded to the easy read version of the survey
- 46 service users and/or carers came to the one-to-one sessions
- 10 service users and/or carers emailed queries and these were responded to (submitted by those who could not attend the one-to-one session)

3. Respondents

In the standard survey and easy read version, respondents were asked questions about them to help identify who has completed the survey and to help the Council further understand the feedback (for example, by comparing the views of different groups of individuals).

Of those who completed the standard survey, around six out of 10 (62%) respondents either receive care, care for a social care user or are a relative of a care user. While almost eight out of 10 (78%) respondents to the easy read version are either a carer or service user.

Almost half (49%) of respondents to the standard survey are disabled, while around nine out of 10 (87%) of those who completed the easy read version said they have a disability. In relation to benefit claimants, almost three-quarters (73%) of respondents receive either Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Care Component) and Personal Independence Payments.

Representatives from Durants Special School and the following voluntary and community sector organisations participated in the consultation:

- Enfield Turkish Cypriot Association
- Enfield Disability Action
- Enfield Carers Centre
- Enfield branch of the National Autistic Society (ENAS)
- Enfield Disability Action (EDA)
- One-to-One (Enfield)
- Friends of St Mark's Autism Services (FOSMAS)
- Carers and Parents of adults with learning disabilities in Enfield (CAPE)
- Enfield Mencap

4. Findings

This section provides details of responses received via the methods detailed in Section 2 ('Methodology').

Key themes

Based on the responses received, a number of key themes have clearly emerged. The key issue appears to be suggestions that the proposals will further contribute to the financial hardship experienced by those who claim Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Attendance Allowance (AA).

Other key themes emerging from the feedback include:

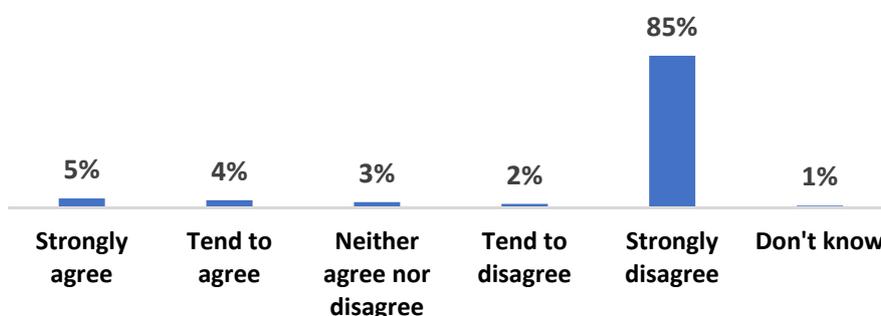
- Claims the proposals are illegal and that a legal challenge is likely. The Council received responses with in-depth analysis of the legal issues suggesting the Council's proposals are illegal. This should be assessed alongside the Council's own legal advice
- Suggestions the proposals are likely to cost the Council more money as carers, who currently don't claim night time care, will consider claiming for night time care. In addition, some responses suggest that due to financial hardship, they will consider requesting full-time care
- The Council received several responses with the following text included: *"Council should not take disabled peoples' benefits to provide night time care when the Council provides only day services"*. The frequency in which this was referred to, as well as one response which included text requesting to insert this quote in to their response to the consultation, suggests this may have been part of a co-ordinated response
- As an alternative, the Council should consider reducing spending in other areas (for example, Cycle Enfield, highways maintenance and reducing frequency of waste and recycling collections), make efficiencies, lobby Government to increase Council budgets and increase Council Tax

Views on the proposal to include the higher rate of Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Care Component) and Personal Independence Payments as income

When participants were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the proposal to include the higher rate of Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Care Component) and Personal Independence Payments as income, the response was unequivocal, with almost nine out of 10 (87%) respondents stating that they disagree (See Chart 1).

Chart 1

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to change our policy to include the higher rate of Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Care Component) and Personal Independence Payments as income?



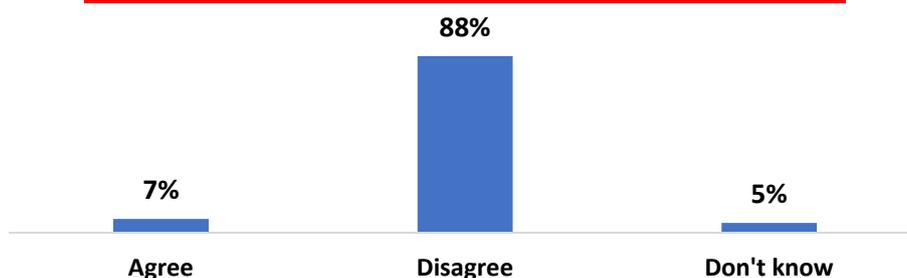
Base size: 390 respondents (standard survey)

Opinions were definitive, with almost nine out of 10 (85%) stating that they strongly disagree with the proposal, while around one in 20 (9%) either strongly agree or tend to agree.

Similarly, around nine out of 10 (88%) of those who completed the easy read version, disagree with the proposal (see Chart 2).

Chart 2

Q3. Do you agree or disagree the Council should include the higher rate of Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments as income?



Base size: 76 respondents (easy read survey)

While most disagree with the proposal, less than one in 14 (7%) agree. The figures closely matching those from the identical question asked in the standard survey.

When looking at the responses of the various sub-sets of respondents, such as those who do not have a disability, younger people, and those who do not use any services associated with adult social care, clear majorities disagree with the proposal.

Those who selected ‘strongly disagree’ or ‘tend to disagree’ to Q3, were asked why. Not all those who were asked the question provided a response. Of those who did respond (269 respondents), the main reasons for disagreeing appear to be perceptions the Council will be taking disabled peoples’ benefits to provide night time care when it provides only day services (34%). See Table 1.

Table 1

Q3a. Let us know why you disagree (to Q3). Open ended	
Base	269
“Council should not take disabled peoples’ benefits to provide night time care when the Council provides only day services”	92 34%
Financial hardship / less for vulnerable people / reduction in income at a time when essentials cost more / punishing those who have less / care costs are high	67 25%
Unfair / unreasonable / immoral / unacceptable (no reference to financial impact or legality)	52 19%
Life is difficult enough for disabled service users / disabled service users are being targeted / penalised for having a disability	37 14%
Going to cost the Council more to provide care / Service users more likely to move into residential care	14 5%
Illegal / unlawful	12 5%
Consultation is inaccurate or contains incorrect information	3 1%

N.B. 269 respondents (standard survey)

Please note: as this question was open-ended, some respondents provided more than one response. All responses suggested by less than 1% of responses are not listed in this table

In addition to the claim the Council will be taking disabled peoples’ benefits to provide night time care when it provides only day services (34%), the other issues most referred to are suggestions of financial hardship experienced by the benefit recipients (25%) and the proposals being regarded as unfair (19%).

When references were made to the proposals being unfair due to potential reductions in income for service users, these were coded under ‘financial hardship’. Responses that stated the proposals were ‘unfair’ without reference to ‘financial hardship’ or any other issue, were coded separately. Similarly, the code ‘Life is difficult enough for disabled service users / disabled service users are being targeted / penalised for having a disability’ (14%), was listed separately to capture those

responses that referred to this but did not make references to other issues, such as financial hardship.

With reference to the above paragraph, it is suggested the issue of financial impact may be higher than that reported in Table 1.

Those completing the easy read version were also asked why they disagree with the proposals. The themes generally reflected those in the findings of the responses to the standard version. A summary of the coded responses is listed in the table below (see Table 2).

Table 2

Q3a. If you said 'Disagree' please tell us why. Open-ended	
Base	62
Financial hardship / financial struggle / poorer	20 32%
Family care should be recognised, not taken away	12 19%
The Council should not take disabled peoples' benefits to provide night time care when they don't provide it' (paraphrased)	7 11%
Unfair / unreasonable	6 10%
Victimisation of the vulnerable / shameful	4 7%
Higher costs for the Council	2 3%

N.B. 62 respondents (easy read version)

Please note: as this question was open-ended, some respondents provided more than one response. All responses selected by less than two respondents are not listed in the table.

Approximately a third (32%) of those who responded to the question state that one of the reasons for disagreeing is due to the financial impact this could have on service users and carers.

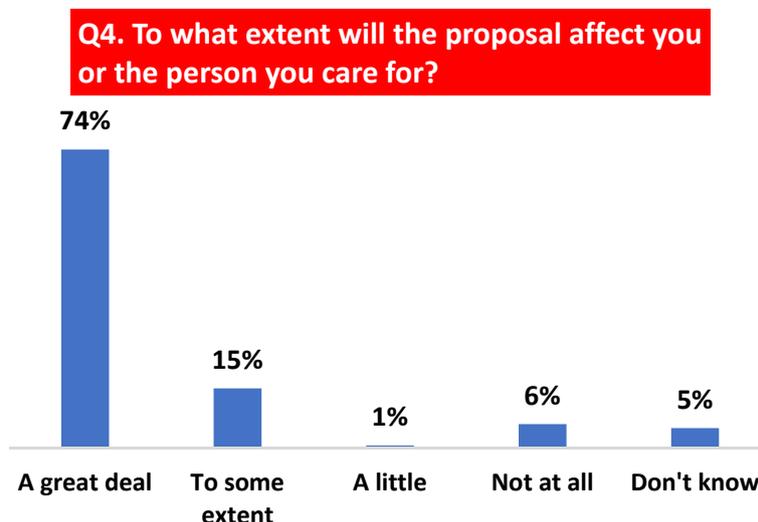
Once more a key issue appears to be the claim that the Council should not take disabled persons' benefits to provide night time care when they only provide day services.

When considering the content of the emails and letters received, the discussions at those meetings attended by Council officers and the feedback from the one-to-one sessions at the Council, the themes are like those listed in Tables 1 and 2.

Potential impact on service users and carers

All respondents were asked how the proposals would impact themselves or the persons for whom they care. Focusing on the responses of carers and service users who completed the standard survey, it appears responses are definitive (see Chart 3).

Chart 3



Base size: 149 respondents (only service users and carers who completed the standard survey)

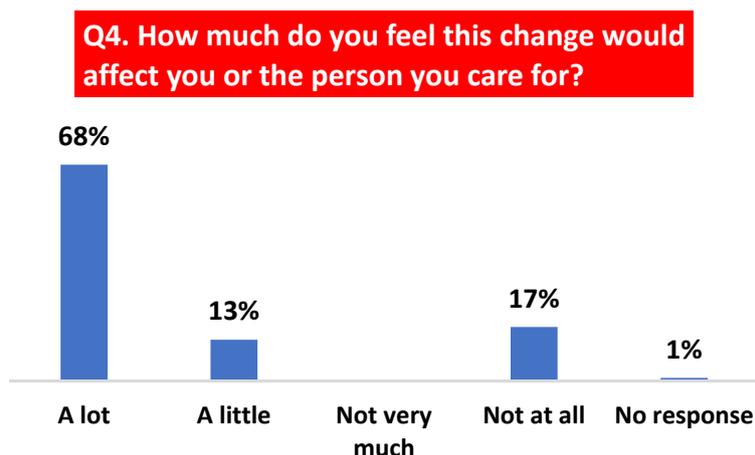
Almost three-quarters (74%) of service users and carers believe the proposals will affect them 'a great deal', while more than one in seven (15%) feel it will impact on them 'to some extent'.

The Council received feedback relating to the consultation materials and survey, stating that it is not clear what is being proposed. The fact that responses to this question have been definitive and only one in 20 (5%) stated "Don't know", suggests the participants, overall, understood what was being proposed.

Considering the definitive nature of the responses to Q3 and the views expressed in the follow-up question that asked why respondents disagree with the proposals, the findings to Q4 may not be unexpected.

The same question was asked in the easy read survey. Once more, the views of respondents were definitive, with more than two-thirds (68%) stating that the proposals would affect them, or the person they care for, a lot (see Chart 4).

Chart 4



Base size: 76 respondents (easy read survey)

Please note: when adding 'a lot' and 'a little', the total is 82% after 'rounding'

More than eight out of 10 (82%), said they, or the person they care for, would be affected either a lot or a little.

The answer options are not the same as those used in the easy read version. The intention was to use the same rating scale for both the standard and easy read surveys but for this question, they were changed following advice.

Alternatives the Council should consider to save the money needed, instead of implementing the proposals

In both the standard and easy read versions of the surveys, respondents were asked what alternatives the Council should consider to deliver the savings required. This was an open-ended question in both surveys. Responses were coded.

In the easy read survey, responses were recorded and coded. The three suggestions most often referred to were: for the Council to stop fraud (21%), lobby Government for money/ 'get money from the banks that caused the crash in 2008' (19%) and to raise tax / tax the wealthier people in the country (17%). See Table 3.

Table 3

Q5. Please tell us below if you have any thoughts on how the Council could save the money needed, instead of making this change. <i>Open-ended</i>	
Base	53
Stop fraud	11 21%
Lobby Government for more money / 'get money from banks that caused the crash in 2008'	10 19%
Raise income tax / tax the wealthier people in the country	9 17%
Reduce spending in other Council services	4 8%
The Council to be more efficient	2 4%
Reduce Council staff pay	2 4%
Raise Council Tax	2 4%

Base size: 53 respondents (easy read version)

Only those issues highlighted by more than one individual have been listed in this table

In addition to the top three recommendations listed above, suggestions were also made to reduce spending on other services (8%), for the Council to be more efficient (4%), reduce the pay of Council staff (4%) and increase Council Tax (4%). No other single issue was referred to by more than one individual.

Most of these issues were also referred to by those completing the standard survey. Reducing spending in other areas (27%), increasing Council Tax (11%) and making efficiencies (10%) featured prominently (see Table 4).

Table 4

Q5. If you have any suggestions or alternatives for delivering the savings required, let us know. <i>Open-ended</i>	
Base	176
Reduce spending in other areas (for example, Cycle Enfield, road maintenance, leisure facilities, arts, supporting those with addictions and supporting people to live in private rented accommodation)	47
	27%
Increase Council Tax	19
	11%
Make efficiencies (for example, reduce wastage, staff numbers and external consultants)	17
	10%
Pressure or lobby central government to provide more money / refuse to accept budget cuts / don't make any	14
	8%
Improve efficiency of assessment	10
	6%
Raise income tax and other taxes set by Government / reduce child tax credits / take money from the rich	9
	5%
The Council should make the decision / not for service users to come up with ideas	4
	2%

Base size: 176 respondents (standard survey)
N.B. All other codes/responses are less than 1%

The issue of reducing spending in other areas (27%), rather than in the service area being consulted on, is a common theme in Council consultations where savings are being proposed. However, this is not a consultation on the Council budget.

Additionally, references were made to lobbying Government (8%) and raising income tax (5%). Both issues were also raised by those who completed the easy read version of the survey.

The only recommendation that relates to adult social care is that of improving the efficiency of the assessment process, although this was only referred to by 10 (6%) of the 176 participants who responded to this question.

It is recommended the verbatim responses to the open-ended questions are read in full before the recommendations of the report are formulated. These responses have been supplied to the relevant officers in the Assessment Hub and the Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Department.

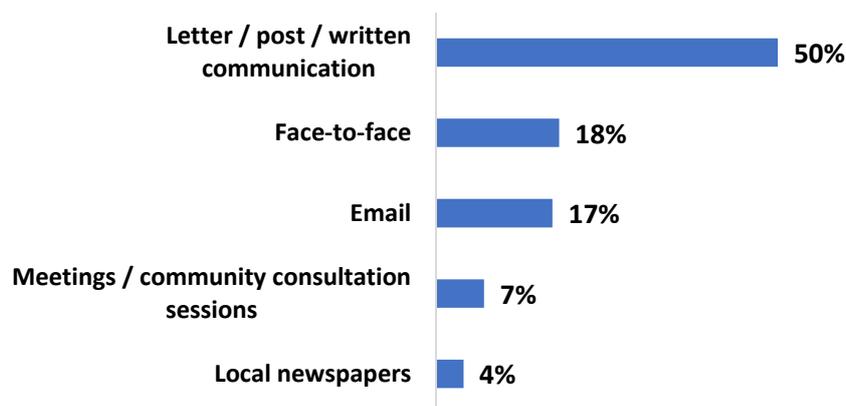
Preferences for being informed of any changes relating to the proposals

Respondents to both the standard and easy read versions of the survey were asked that if any changes were made, how would they want service users and carers to be informed of the details.

Half (50%) of the 214 participants who responded to this question in the standard survey, stated that they preferred letter / written communication (see Chart 5).

Chart 5

Q6. If changes were to be made, how would you like us to communicate the details to service users, carers and others. Open-ended



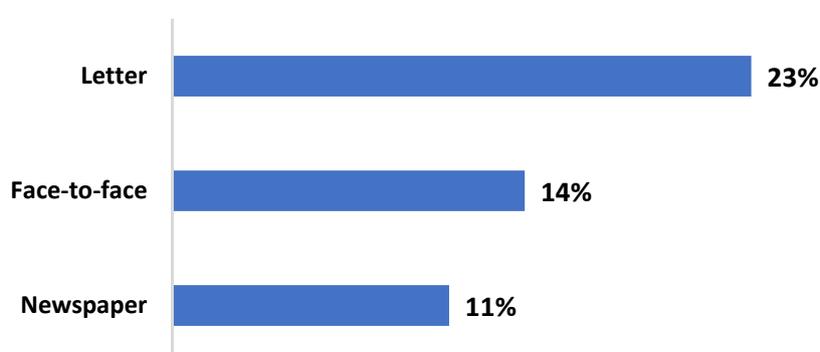
Base size: 214 respondents (standard survey)

Although communication by letter was suggested more than any other method, around a fifth (18%) referred to a preference for face-to-face briefings and a similar number (17%) suggested email

Similar preferences were expressed by those completing the easy read version. Although it should be noted that the number of participants who completed this question was relatively small (35). Once more, letter (35%) was the most preferred option with face-to-face (14%) the second preference (see Chart 6).

Chart 6

Q6. If this change was made, please tell us below how you would like the Council to tell people about it. Open-ended



Base size: 35 respondents (easy read version)
Only suggestions made by more than one individual have been listed

As the base size is low, it is advised that caution is used when considering the findings detailed in Chart 6. However, it is notable that communication by letter (23%) is most preferred, as it was by those who completed the standard survey. It should also be noted that email was not suggested by more than one individual.

It is recommended the suggestions on communication methods are considered if changes are going to be implemented.

Suggestions on how the impact of the proposals could be mitigated if they were implemented

In the standard version of the survey, respondents were asked if a change to the charging policy was implemented, what do they think the Council could do to mitigate the impact.

A relatively small number did state that in terms of mitigation, the best approach the Council could take would be to treat cases on individual merit, rather than simply using a blanket approach.

Many of those who responded to this question used the opportunity to make clear that they do not think the proposals are a good idea, with several participants referring to issues that were highlighted in the responses to Q3a (that is, the question that asked why they do not agree with the proposals). Based on the notes from the meetings, the emailed and written correspondence and the responses to the other questions in the surveys, this may not be a surprise.

Suggestions of other expenditures that should be considered for Disability Related Expenditure (DRE)

Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) is calculated alongside a financial assessment. It is the money service users spend on additional things that help them. These include, respite services, community alarm, day or night care (not provided by the Council) and disability related equipment.

In both the standard and easy read versions of the survey, respondents were provided with a list of expenditures that are included (based on the Department of Health guidance). They were then asked what else they think should be included. In both surveys, a wide range of items were highlighted by respondents. Some of these were already listed.

For the 50 individuals who responded to this question in the easy read survey, the following were most popular:

- Care given by family / allow care provided by family as DRE (37 respondents)
- Community alarm (two respondents)
- Shopping (two respondents)

Of the 106 participants who responded to this question in the standard survey, the most referred to item of expenditure was holidays / breaks (14 respondents). 'Holidays / breaks' was referred to separately from 'respite' (5%). Other items suggestions are listed in the topline and the full set of responses to the question

have been made available to the relevant officers in the Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Department and the Assessment Hub.

It is suggested that the full details of the responses to these questions are considered by the relevant officers in the Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Department and Assessment Hub.

5. Summary

Individuals and organisations contributed to the consultation in the following ways:

- Online standard survey and downloadable easy read version
- Through hard copy standard or easy read versions of surveys produced by the Council
- Meetings with representatives attended by Council officers
- Emailed correspondence
- Written correspondence
- One-to-one sessions with service users

In addition to this, the Council received details of a petition with 750 online signatories stating that they do not agree with the Council's '*policy to charge severely disabled adults for services they aren't even receiving*'.

Most respondents to the surveys, as well as those who expressed their views through other means, disagree with the Council's proposal to include the higher rate of Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Care Component) and Personal Independence Payments as income.

Based on the findings from the surveys, the main reasons for disagreeing with the proposal relate to a number of issues, including the following:

- The perception the 'Council should not take disabled peoples' benefits to provide night time care when the Council provides only day services'
- The financial impact on service users and carers
- It is considered unfair and unreasonable

The issues highlighted in the surveys were broadly reflected in the feedback from the meetings, one-to-one sessions, and the emailed and written correspondence.

Most service users and carers feel the proposal will impact them 'a great deal'. This too was reflected in all the forms of consultation used in relation to this project.

When asked for alternative ways of making the savings needed, respondents made several recommendations, including suggestions the Council should look to make the savings from other services, increase Council tax, be more efficient, be more effective at stopping fraud and to lobby central Government. The only suggestion relating to social care is to improve the efficiency of assessment, although this was only referred to by 10 out of the 176 participants who responded to this question in the standard survey.

When respondents were asked how the impact of the proposals could be mitigated, the participants primarily focused on why they do not agree with the proposals. However, if the proposals are to be implemented, or a policy along similar lines, the responses to the question that asked about why they disagree with the proposals, could help to improve the Council's understanding on how best to mitigate the impact.

If the proposals are to be implemented, the clear preference is for the changes to be communicated by letter.

Various suggestions were made in relation to other expenditures that should be considered for Disability Related Expenditure (DRE). It is recommended these are considered in full by the relevant officers in the Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Department and Assessment Hub.

It is recommended this summary report, along with the literal responses to the surveys, notes of the meetings, written and email correspondence and the petition are all considered as part of the process for developing the Council's social care charging policy.