



Report to Leader (Health & Wellbeing portfolio)

Decision Date:	30 September 2021
Reference number:	HW03.21
Title:	Amendment to Charges for Adult Social Care Services 21/22
Cabinet Member(s):	Councillor Angela Macpherson
Contact officer:	Tracey Ironmonger Interim Service Director for Integrated Commissioning Tracey.Ironmonger@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Ward(s) affected:	All
Recommendations:	That the Leader Agrees to the Amendment of the Charges for Home Care and Telecare
Reason for decision:	To ensure that Buckinghamshire Council charges can be processed effectively and are in line with the Care Act 2014

1. Content of report

- 1.1 The updated charges for Adult Social Care were agreed by Cabinet in February 2021. Prices were uplifted on the basis of the minimum uplift provided to care providers or on prices agreed with providers as part of specific contractual arrangements. This ensured that the charges to clients continue to reflect the cost of care.
- 1.2 The new charges will be applied from October 21. In the preparation for applying charges a problem with applying the charges in practice became apparent. The approved price for home care is set at an hourly rate, but some clients receive shorter episodes of care support. However, the approved price is not divisible by the shorter episodes. Similarly, telecare is a weekly charge, but some clients will use part weeks either when starting, suspending or ending the need for the service. This requires a charge that is divisible by 7.

- 1.3 In order for charging to operate home care services need to be divisible by 15 minute intervals and telecare by 7 days. The following amendments to the charges have been proposed:

Item	Cabinet Approved Prices February 21	Proposed New Prices
Home Care Single Handed	£19.70	£19.68
Home Care Double Handed	£39.70	£39.36
Landline Telecare	£4.51	£4.48
Mobile Telecare	£7.88	£7.84

This equates to a reduction in charges from those agreed at Cabinet to ensure that prices stay within the actual costs.

2. Other options considered

- 2.1 Consideration was given to increasing the prices in order to enable processing; however, it was felt this was not appropriate after prices had been agreed and a reduction would ensure prices stayed within the cost of care

3. Legal and financial implications

- 3.1 All charges are applied within the context that local authority budgets continue to be challenging and are in a context of increasing demand for Adult Social Care.
- 3.2 Most Adult Social Care charges are means-tested and this income is used to directly offset the cost of providing or commissioning these services. The basic principle of fair charging is that service users only pay what can be afforded. A Local Authority cannot charge more than cost of service provision to the Local Authority with the exception of meal charges as Income Support/State Pension is provided to individuals to assist them with household expenses, such as meals. The impact of these price changes on income will be minimal.

4. Corporate implications

- 4.1 Section 14 of the Care Act enables a local authority to decide whether to charge a person for services when it is arranging to meet a person's support needs or a carer's support needs. Section 17 of the Care Act enables a local authority to undertake a financial assessment to determine if a person is able to pay towards the cost of support services to meet their needs.

5. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

- 5.1 There is no requirement for consultation on these changes and all wards are equally impacted.

6. Communication, engagement & further consultation

- 6.1 There is no requirement for consultation of these changes. Clients have been informed that these prices are currently in an approval process

7. Next steps and review

- 7.1 Following approval clients will be informed that the new prices have been approved and updated charges will begin October 2021.

8. Background papers

- 8.1 None

9. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 9.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report, please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider, please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone 01296 382343 or email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.