

**Delayed Office Opening
for Employee Training**

*This office will be closed from
8.45 am - 11.00 am on the first
Thursday of each month.*

Assessment & Charging Team

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Our ref <<ID>>

Your ref

Date 6 August 2020

Dear

Review of Adult Social Work & Social Care Contributions Policy

As you will be aware, Perth & Kinross Council has been undertaking a review of its Adult Social Work & Social Care Contributions Policy. This policy is the basis on which the Council completes financial assessments in order to determine how much people are asked to contribute towards their non-residential care and support services at home.

These include services such as day care, telecare, supported living including sheltered housing and short breaks/flexible respite.

Consultation, consisting of a questionnaire and a series of drop-in sessions, was held or planned in March to gather feedback from people who either use, or support people who use, these services. The views gathered during this consultation will influence the final decision taken on the proposals.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown restrictions, only 4 of the intended drop-in sessions were able to take place. The online questionnaire was, however, able to remain open until it's intended closing date of 29 March 2020.

It has now been agreed to recommence the consultation process to allow everyone the opportunity to further comment on the proposed changes to the policy. If you were unable to provide us with your feedback in March, I would strongly encourage you to do so now through one of the following channels:

Online Questionnaire	<p>The online questionnaire on the Council's Consultation Hub at https://consult.pkc.gov.uk/housing-environment/adult-social-work-social-care-contributions-review will reopen and be available from 24 August 2020 until 31 October 2020.</p> <p>If you completed the questionnaire in March, there is no need to submit your views as your previous response will be included.</p>
Telephone	<p>If you are unable to complete the online questionnaire, you can contact our Assessment & Charging Team on 07768 733725 to provide your feedback to the proposals over the telephone.</p> <p>Depending on the volume of calls received, it may be that you are asked to leave your contact details for someone to call you back and collect your feedback within 72 hours.</p>

Open Microsoft Teams Video Session	<p>Our Assessment & Charging Team will be holding online open video sessions through Microsoft Teams at the following dates/times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5.30pm on Thursday 10 September 2020 - 6.00pm on Tuesday 15 September 2020 - 12.00pm on Wednesday 16 September 2020 - 1.00pm on Saturday 19 September 2020 - 10.00am on Monday 21 September 2020 <p>If you would like to take part in either of these public online sessions, please provide your email address to our Assessment & Charging Team on 07768 733725 or HCCAssessment&Charging@pkc.gov.uk confirming which session you would like to attend. An invite with joining instructions will then be sent to you.</p>
Facebook Live Q&A	<p>Our Assessment & Charging Team will be holding a live Q&A session on the Council's Your Community Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/YourCommunityPK) at the following dates/times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11.00am on Thursday 27 August 2020 - 2.00pm on Wednesday 23 September 2020 - 1.00pm on Monday 26 October 2020 <p>There is no requirement to sign up for these sessions but if you would like to submit any questions in advance, please email these to HCCAssessment&Charging@pkc.gov.uk.</p>
Socially Distanced Drop-Ins	<p>Depending on social distancing rules at the time, it is hoped to be able to hold a series of drop-in sessions later in the consultation period. If possible, it is anticipated that these will take place in September and October 2020. Confirmation of the dates and venues, along with the format of the sessions, will be issued once they are confirmed.</p>

It was previously anticipated that a summary of the consultation responses would be considered by Councillors in June 2020 with any approved changes implemented from 1 October 2020. However, due to the delay caused by the pandemic, the remaining restrictions and the decision to extend the process of consultation, it is intended that this will be considered by Councillors early next year.

I would like to confirm that this consultation process is an important element that will inform the Council's review of the Contribution Policy and I would therefore encourage you to consider providing your feedback on the four proposals being considered.

Information on the four proposals is included with this letter. Please note that where amounts are stated, these are based on data used for the original consultation in March 2020.

Yours faithfully

Gordon Paterson
Chief Officer/Director - Integrated Health & Social Care

Overview

Perth & Kinross Council is currently reviewing its Adult Social Work and Social Care Contributions Policy. It is important that we hear the views of local people, groups, charities and organisations so that we can shape a joint vision for the future.

Proposals that could affect the amount some people contribute towards their care and support services are being considered. We would like to know what you think about these proposals.

Your comments and suggestions will help Councillors decide what changes to make.

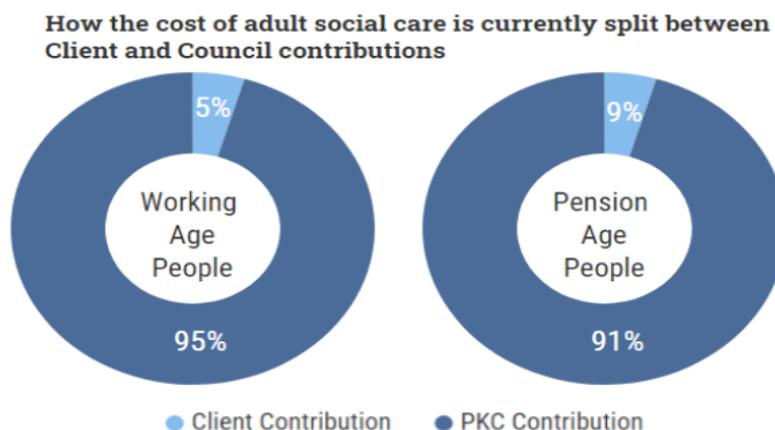
Why We Are Consulting

Perth & Kinross Council implemented its current adult social work and social care Contributions Policy in February 2014 in preparation for the introduction of the Self-Directed Support (Scotland) Act in April 2014. The Contributions Policy covers all adult care and support services received by a person at home, such as homecare, day services, transport, short-breaks, telecare and sheltered housing support. More information about all these services can found at <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/olderpeople>.

The Council considered revising the current policy in 2018 and at the request of clients and organisations, deferred implementation to consider a wider range of options and undertake more detailed work.

The policy, which covers around 3,300 people at any time has now been in place for five years and we want to make sure that it is still fit-for-purpose.

The Council currently contributes an average of 93.6% of the cost of care for adults receiving chargeable care and support services. Demand for services continues to increase. Introducing a policy where people who can afford it, pay a bit more for their services will help ensure everyone continues to receive support and reduce the risk of services being reduced.



As part of the review several potential changes have been identified to bring the Council's policy more in line with national guidance on charging for non-residential care and support services.

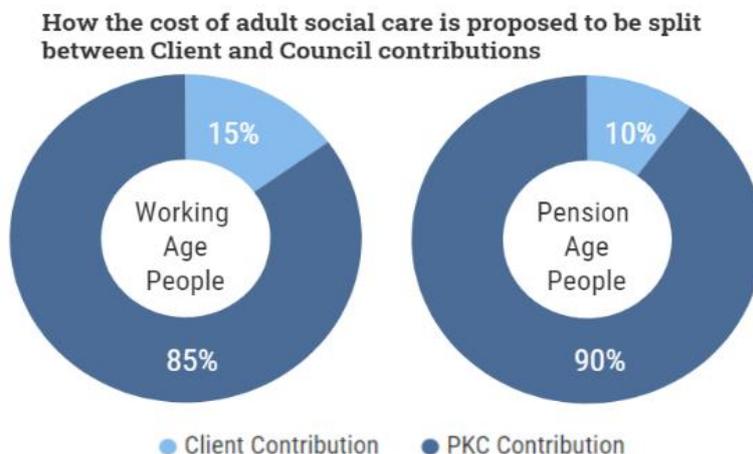
This consultation exercise outlines these potential changes and the financial impact they would have on both the people using our services and the Council.

The Council has previously been more generous than the national guidance recommends. However, at a time when there is pressure on our budgets and demand for care and

support services is continuing to increase, it is proposed that the Council moves to be more in-line with the rest of Scotland.

Any additional income raised through a change of policy would be used by the Health & Social Care Partnership to sustain the current level of essential care and support services.

Care services will continue to be heavily subsidised by the Council. If all the proposals in this consultation were approved you can see from these graphics that the Council will still be paying the majority of care charges for clients, at an average of 89.8% of the costs.



It is anticipated that if all the proposed changes were implemented, it would generate an additional £1.2million of income that would be used to provide Health and Social Care Services. This is the equivalent of any one of the following:

- 24 permanent fully-funded places in the Council's Care Homes (Dalweem and Parkdale)
- 37 permanent fully-funded places in a private/voluntary residential care home
- 32 permanent fully-funded places in a private/voluntary nursing care home
- 70,000 hours of urban care at home
- 64,000 hours of rural care at home
- 58,000 hours of enhanced care at home

NB: Where costings/savings are quoted against any review option, these are calculated based on the assumption that, only that single change is implemented. Should more than one change be implemented, the costing/saving may not be an exact sum of the figures quoted as some changes will impact on the calculation of other options and the costings/savings have been calculated using current client information.

All current clients will be advised, in writing, of this consultation exercise to allow them the opportunity to provide individual feedback on the changes that will potentially affect them.

This consultation is being carried out by Perth & Kinross Council. Any information you give us will be anonymous and will not be used for any other purpose than described above.

Proposal 1: Upper Capital Threshold

The upper capital threshold is the amount of money a person can have in savings etc and still apply for financial support from the Council towards their care and support services.

Currently Perth & Kinross Council does not consider an adult to be self-funding for care and support services unless they have capital such as cash, bank/building society accounts, investments and shares worth above £28,000. The value of a person's main home is not included.

This means that people with capital below £28,000 only contribute based on their weekly income. This is in-line with national guidance for charging when someone enters a care home.

However, national guidance on charging for services at home recommends that a person should be treated as self-funding when their capital reaches £16,000. A change to this amount is being considered by the Council.

When someone is treated as self-funding, they are charged the full cost of their non-residential care and support package, except for exempt services, such as personal care.

What this would mean for clients

This would mean that 72 people with capital between £16,000 and £28,000 would be classed as self-funding. Forty-five of these people already pay the full cost of their service based on their weekly income.

Of the remaining 27 people who do not currently pay the full cost: -

- fifteen people would be deemed as self-funding for less than 52 weeks and be asked to pay an average increase of £319 per week for an average of 15 weeks towards their care and support services
- twelve people would be deemed as self-funding for more than 52 weeks, and be asked to pay an average increase in their contribution of £9.04 per week towards their care and support services,

Once a person's capital reduces to £16,000, a full financial assessment would be completed to determine their ongoing contribution from that date.

It is therefore anticipated that this change could generate an additional £78,000 in the first year and an additional £6,000 each year after, which would be used to fund future social care services.

Proposal 2: Weekly Income Threshold

The weekly income threshold is the minimum amount of income the Council will ignore when working out how much a person can afford to pay towards their care and support services.

The Council currently uses a single weekly income threshold of £210 per week for all clients when assessing how much someone can afford to pay towards their services.

This amount is disregarded from a person's weekly income to cover their daily living costs such as utilities, food, social activities etc. Other allowances such as rent/mortgage, council tax and mobility benefits are also disregarded on top of this amount.

However, national guidance suggests that there should be four thresholds. From April 2020 these will be as follows:

- Single person below state pension age - £137
- Single person of state pension age - £218
- Couple below state pension age - £209
- Couple of state pension age - £332

Whilst the national guidance suggests four-thresholds, Perth & Kinross Council will continue to treat all clients as single people to make sure no income or capital belonging to a partner will be included in someone's individual financial assessment. The Council are therefore considering adopting the following two thresholds:

- person below state pension age - £137
- person of state pension age - £218

All recommended threshold figures are based on the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)'s minimum income amounts in the United Kingdom welfare benefit system, whereby people of pension age are given a higher minimum guaranteed income.

The average weekly income across current clients is £275 per week for people of pension age and £204 per week for people below pension age.

The income threshold is calculated using the minimum amount of guaranteed income received by a person from the UK Government. In line with the national guidance on charging for non-residential care and support charges, a 25% buffer is added to this amount in recognition that not all of a person's income above these rates should be taken in charges.

What this would mean for clients

This would mean that people below state pension age would no longer be given the higher threshold of £218 in their financial assessment. This would change to £137 per week in line with the national guidance.

People of state pension age would continue to be given the recommended higher threshold of £218 per week in their financial assessment.

All clients will continue to be treated as a single person with only their income, along with 50% of any joint income, included in the financial assessment.

People below state pension age would be asked to pay an average of £29.67 per week more towards their care services. This would generate an additional £1,036,000 per year which would be used to fund future social care services.

Proposal 3: Transitional Protections

Transitional protection means that some people still pay the 2013/14 rate for their care and support services.

When the current Contributions Policy was implemented in February 2014 around 3,600 people who received non-residential adult social work and social care services at that point were advised that they would not be charged more due to the change in policy. This meant that these people continued to pay the previously subsidised rate, and only new people were asked to pay the actual cost of the service.

That protection was in place until the person's care plan was reviewed and changed. Currently around 420 people remain protected at the previous subsidised rates.

What this would mean for clients

If these protections were removed it would mean that the average client contribution, for those people who remain protected, would increase by around £0.44 per week generating an additional £10,000 per year in income to spend on future care services.

Proposal 4: Flat Rating of Low-Level Charges

Flat-rating means everyone being asked to pay the same amount towards the same care and support service.

When someone receives an adult social work and social care service, they complete a financial assessment to work out how much they must pay towards their service.

It is recommended that in order to improve efficiency and reduce administration costs, smaller charges for services such as telecare, amenity housing, retirement housing and the maintenance of occupational therapy equipment are made simple and are not means-tested. This means that everyone receiving these services will pay the same amount.

What this would mean for clients

This would affect around 280 people currently who would be asked to pay an average of £3.98 per week more towards their services. Flat-rating of these services (where everyone pays the same amount for their service) would generate almost £60,000 per year of additional income which would be used to fund future social care services.

It is anticipated that this change would also remove a significant amount of administration requirements across the Health & Social Care Partnership, allowing all teams to dedicate time to a greater number of clients.