

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Policies, Procedures and Services

Proposal name	Support for Living at Home Services (Community Based Service) Fee Levels, Cost and Volume Contracts and Transitional Contract Arrangements 2015 - 16		
Directorate	Social Care & Inclusion		
Service	Personal Care at Home Services		
Responsible Officer	Tracy Simcox		
EqIA Author	Tracy Simcox		
Date proposal started	10 June 2015	Proposal commencement date (due or actual)	October 2015

1	What is the purpose of the proposal?	Yes / No	New / revision
	Policy	Yes	No
	Procedure	No	No
	Internal service	No	No
	External Service	Yes	Revision
	Other - give details		
2	What are the intended outcomes, reasons for change? (The business case)		
	What is the intended outcome? The outcome is to increase the hourly rate from £11.50 per hour to £12.00 per hour for personal care at home services and to introduce cost and volume contracts for older persons services based on geographical zones within the borough.		
	Reason for change? Cabinet in April 2014 agreed an increase in fee levels to a minimum £11.50 per hour for personal care at home services in order to correct an historical legacy of low fee levels which were unsustainable, and seek to build capacity in the market to improve quality and meet demand.		
	Further work has identified that an additional increase is necessary in order that fee levels are sufficiently high to meet national requirements for minimum wage and pensions, and ensure quality of service and outcomes for service users.		
	In September 2014 Cabinet agreed the new specification includes cost and volume as well as locality "zones" for older people services, to improve continuity and cost effectiveness of care delivered. The previous report also advised Cabinet on progress with preparations to go out to tender to renew the contract arrangements, which had been delayed in order to give extra time to take account of any additional requirements from the Care Act 2014.		

	<p>The current aim is to tender from July 2015 with contract award in October 2015, and there is therefore a requirement to extend current transitional contract arrangements to cover this period.</p> <p>Who is intended to benefit? Walsall Council's SC&I Directorate is commissioning circa 15,000 hours per week of support for living at home care services (primarily to older people, and adults with complex conditions), to over 2,000 service users at a total spend of circa £16 million per year. Support for living at home services includes personal care at for older people and supported living services for adults with complex conditions.</p> <p>Some 44 homecare providers continue to provide service at fee levels that were originally established as part of contractual arrangements in 2008. Apart from some small percentage annual inflationary increases there has been no adjustment of fee levels to take account of cost pressures such as the rise in the minimum wage which has increased by twice the level of the Council's fee levels during the last 10 years. These providers clearly are challenged to deliver high quality, reliable and sustainable services to vulnerable people which some have communicated strongly to officers recently.</p> <p>Committing to an increase in fee rates will help contribute to providers investing in the recruitment and retention of skilled staff to deliver good quality services supporting the achievement of excellent outcomes for service users.</p> <p>The introduction of cost and volume as well as locality "zones" for older persons services will be beneficial for the Council and will support operational infrastructure developments within the next 12 months for greater efficiencies and effectiveness within Social Care &Inclusion. There may be new providers to a zone so to provide continuity of care service users users or their carers who wish continue with existing providers will be able do so through the use of Direct Payments, supported by a Direct Payment Support Organisation if the need is identified through the assessment of care and support planning process .</p>																	
3	<p>Who is the proposal potential likely to affect?</p> <table><tr><th>People in Walsall</th><th>Yes / No</th><th>Detail</th></tr><tr><td>All</td><td>No</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Specific group/s</td><td>Yes</td><td>Older People Adult Social Care funded service users and providers.</td></tr><tr><td>Council employees</td><td>No</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>No</td><td></td></tr></table>			People in Walsall	Yes / No	Detail	All	No		Specific group/s	Yes	Older People Adult Social Care funded service users and providers.	Council employees	No		Other	No	
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4	<p>Summarise your evidence, engagement and consultation.</p> <p>Evidence The majority of the agencies with fee levels below £12.00 were providing service prior to</p>																	

	<p>the latest framework contract which allows agencies to set their own fee level for new cases. They continued to provide a service under a historical and transitional contract arrangement. It is these agencies to which the increase to a minimum of £12.00 should be applied.</p> <p>An increase to a minimum fee level of £12.00 for providers who had transitional contract arrangements would lead to an annual full year increased cost of £840k during 2016/17, with part year effect from the point of award of contract in 2015/16 of £420k.</p> <p>Market engagement with the sector is continuing as the Council moves from its current contractual arrangement to a framework agreement which will have a cost and volume contract for older persons services based on geographical zones within the borough, an indicative maximum price level, and a reduction in the number of commissioned providers within the sector. This will be beneficial for the Council and will support operational infrastructure developments within the next 12 months for greater efficiencies and effectiveness within Social Care & Inclusion. Those users or their carers who wish continue with existing providers will be able do so through use of Direct Payments.</p> <p>Consultation</p> <p>There is ongoing consultation with providers of personal care at home services and they will also receive a written explanation of the basis for the Council's decisions on setting fee levels during 2015/16.</p> <p>Commissioning forums and workshops for agencies who can provide personal care and support at home and in the community have been held during this transitional period to provide the care market an opportunity to contribute to the commissioning process and to assist in demonstrating that fee levels will be realistic in recognising the costs of care for both adults and children and zoning of contractual arrangements for the older person's provision.</p> <p>There is a bi-monthly commissioning forum for personal care at home agencies which provides the agencies in the market an opportunity to query the background to the fee increase, challenge the Council to demonstrate that the fee levels will be realistic in recognising the costs of care and comment on zoning arrangements .</p>			
5	<p>How may the proposal affect each protected characteristic or group? The affect may be positive, negative or neutral.</p>			
	Characteristic	Affect	Reason	Action needed Y or N
	Age	Positive	An increase in fee levels for Older People providers will help contribute to providers investing in the recruitment and retention of skilled staff to deliver good quality services supporting the achievement of excellent outcomes for service users. The introduction of cost and volume contracts for Older People services will be beneficial for the Council and will support operational infrastructure developments within the next 12 months for greater	N

			efficiencies and effectiveness within Social Care & Inclusion. Those users or their carers who wish continue with existing providers will be able to do so through use of Direct Payments. New users who wish to use a non contracted provider will be able to do so through the use of a Direct Payment.	
	Disability	Neutral	No significant impact foreseen.	N
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	No significant impact foreseen.	N
	Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	No significant impact foreseen.	N
	Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	No significant impact foreseen.	N
	Race	Neutral	No significant impact foreseen.	N
	Religion or belief	Neutral	No significant impact foreseen.	N
	Sex	Neutral	No significant impact foreseen.	N
	Sexual orientation	Neutral	No significant impact foreseen.	N
	Other (give detail)			
	Further information			
6	Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative affect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details below.			(Delete one) Yes / No
	No			
7	Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation suggest you take? (Bold which one applies)			
	A	No major change required		
	B	Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality		
	C	Continue despite possible adverse impact		
	D	Stop and rethink your proposal		

Now complete the action and monitoring plan on the next page

Action and monitoring plan				
Action Date	Action	Responsibility	Outcome Date	Outcome
October 2015	Implement new rates at point of contract award.	Procurement	October 2015	Increased hourly rates
October 2015	Communication to Adult Social Care and Inclusion and Corporate staff to inform of new rates, providers per zone at point of tender award and option to choose a Direct Payment	Procurement and JCU	October 2015	Informed staff.

Update to EqIA	
Date	Detail