

Have your say

Proposed changes to our Fairer Contributions Policy for adult social care

22 December 2020 to 19 January 2021

Consultation document

Introduction

We are seeking your views on changing our Fairer Contributions Policy in a way that is fair and prioritises support for those in greatest need.

What is the Fairer Contributions Policy?

Barnet Council, like many other councils, assess contributions towards the costs of care. Barnet's charging and contributions policies follow national guidance set by the Department of Health.

The council's Fairer Contributions Policy is used to assess contributions towards the cost of care for people who receive community-based care services, such as home care, day care and direct payments. Under the policy, contributions are assessed on ability to pay, after taking into account income and outgoings. The council also has guaranteed minimum income levels, which protect a person's level of income after assessing a contribution. These all help to ensure that contributions are affordable.

Why are we consulting?

Barnet Council is consulting as it is proposing to increase the charge rate for homecare services from £17.00 to £18.39 to more accurately reflect the cost of homecare services paid for by the Council.

We want to engage with current and future users of Adult Social Care services about how these changes will impact on Barnet residents.

How to have your say:

The consultation is open to all Barnet residents, and also residents who live outside the borough and use our services, businesses, and community and interest groups.

There are two ways you can give your feedback:

- complete a questionnaire online at: www.engage.barnet.gov.uk
- complete a paper questionnaire.

If you would like a paper questionnaire or a copy of the consultation in another format, please email Engage.adults@barnet.gov.uk or call 020 8359 3289

Proposal for changes to fees and charges

To increase the hourly rate for homecare services

It is proposed that Barnet will change the maximum rate of charge for homecare to more accurately reflect the actual costs of providing care. Over the past few years there have been a number of changes which directly or indirectly impact on the cost of care, including an increase in National Living Wage and inflation pressures on care providers in Barnet.

The maximum hourly charge rate for homecare services is currently £17.00 and we are proposing to increase the rate to £18.39, which is the average rate paid by Barnet Council under its new contract with homecare providers.

This means that the council will charge £18.39 per hour or less if the actual cost of delivering the care is less than £18.39 per hour.

Who will be affected?

The proposal will mainly affect those people who have been assessed to pay for the full cost of care or who have chosen not to disclose their finances. For example, an individual's savings are above £23,250 or they have a high disposable income that will be affected.

It is estimated that there are up to 150 people who fall into this category and may be affected by the decision to increase the maximum hourly charges. This is less than six per cent of the 2800 residents who are financially assessed for receiving care and support in the community.

We are seeking your views on:

- to what extent do you support or oppose the proposal to increase the hourly rate for homecare services?
 - please give reasons for your answer
- what impact do you think you think this proposal would have on you and your family?
- do you have any other suggestions for how the council charges its residents for care services?

Frequently asked questions

How much will these proposals save?

The combined effect of the proposed changes will lead to savings of around £60,000 a year for the council.

Why is the rising cost of care relevant?

The maximum rates we charge people reflect the costs to the council of paying care providers. These charges were last reviewed in 2019 and since then the Council has a new contract for homecare services. In the new contract the rates we pay care providers have changed. It is fair and reasonable that where someone can afford to pay, they pay the amount it costs the council to provide care.


How will the Council update me on changes to my contributions?

All those affected by these changes will receive a letter by 1 April 2021, advising them of their contributions towards their care for the 2021 to 2022 financial year. This will include the proposed changes outlined in this document as well as other smaller increases / decreases due to increases in inflation or changes to government legislation.

What can people do if they believe Barnet Council has used incorrect information to assess their contributions?

If people believe that Barnet Council has used incorrect information to assess their contributions, they can call the Financial Assessments Helpline on 020 8359 3289 or email financial.assessments@barnet.gov.uk.

For more information:
tel: 020 8359 3289 email: engage.adults@barnet.gov.uk
or visit: engage.barnet.gov.uk

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