

We Asked, You Said, We Did

Proposed changes to Adult Care policies on Transport, Client Contributions and Fair Access to Care Services (FACS)

We asked

We asked for your views on three proposals which would change or reduce adult care services in January 2014 and save up to £11 million.

We consulted on all three proposals together:

- a proposed change to who qualifies for council care (FACS) from 'higher moderate' to 'substantial' so that only people who have been assessed as having substantial needs or above would be eligible to receive on-going support from the county council in the future
- a proposal to increase the amount people would have to pay for council care which would mean people would have to pay more for the adult social care services they receive through the council
- the introduction of a transport policy including charging people £5 per journey for transport provided or arranged by the council to travel to day care services and other activities

You said

We held a 12-week consultation and 1,800 of you gave us your views on the proposals in a number of ways including via questionnaire, meetings and online. A total of 1,200 of you attended 48 meetings held across the county to discuss the proposals and give your views. A total of 46% of you either agreed with the proposal to raise the eligibility threshold to substantial or had no opinion and just over half of you disagreed with the proposal.

A total of 44% agreed to an increase in the level of contribution towards care costs, while 55.5% didn't want an increase at all. There was a broad acknowledgement that those with over £50,000 in capital should pay their full cost of care

The proposal to introduce a £5 flat rate charge for transport to and from day services and activities saw 39.1% of people strongly agreeing and agreeing, although concerns were raised that the combined effect of the introduction of the charge and the proposed increase in client contributions at the same time would have a significant impact on some people's ability to budget successfully.

A total of 48% agreed or strongly agreed with the introduction of a transport policy for the service.

We did

We listened to what people told us over the course of the consultation and where it was possible we made some changes and concessions to the original proposals.

Cabinet agreed to:

- raise the eligibility threshold for who qualifies for council care **from higher moderate** level to **substantial**

- increase the contribution people make towards their care from **50%** of the money they get from the low rate Attendance Allowance, middle rate Disability Living Allowance (care) or the standard rate of Personal Independence Payment to **75%**
- The income protection buffer to be set at 25% above basic benefit rates – *this means clients who were currently **not paying** any contribution, would now be asked to start making a contribution towards their care and support (dependant on their individual circumstances). Also, those clients making a co-funding contribution of **less than** the current standard co-funding contribution, i.e. £27.22 per week, would be asked to contribute up to £10 per week more. (from their Attendance Allowance/Disability Living Allowance (Care)/Personal Independence Payment)*
- Clients with over £50,000 capital (not including their main home) to pay 100% of the costs of their care
- The transport policy to be introduced (with a £5 per day cost for transport to adult care services, rather than £5 per journey).

We listened to what you told us and while aware that the proposals were not broadly welcomed we believed that the proposed changes were the fairest way we could do things. Where possible we adjusted some of the original proposals and made concessions where we could.

It was agreed that the increase in the amount people would have to pay towards their care would be phased in over two and a half years to lessen the impact of the change.

We also addressed concerns that the transport charge proposal was too high, especially for clients who made multiple journeys – so adjusted it to a charge of £5 per day no matter how many journeys were taken, rather than per journey

The changes to the eligibility threshold bring the council in line with the national minimum threshold introduced through the Care Act.