

Charging for care and support services: summary

The full consultation document explains in detail why the Council is considering these changes to its charging policy. In some cases, it also sets out alternative options which the Council might consider. Some of these options would affect different people from the current proposals – please read the full document to see if you might be affected if the Council chooses those options.

All figures given are based on current costs and benefit rates. If the proposals are adopted, the detailed figures will be updated to take account of revised costs and benefit rates from April 2019.

Proposed changes to how we assess what people can afford to pay

- People who receive the highest rates of Attendance Allowance, or Disability Living Allowance (Care Component), or Personal Independence Payment (Daily Living Component), would be assessed as able to pay an additional £13.30 per week, unless they can demonstrate that they spend more than £35 a week on other costs related to their disability.
- People who have a spouse or partner would be assessed as able to pay £43.90 a week more (if they or their partner are over state pension age), or £19.45 a week more otherwise, ending an anomaly which means that they often pay less than single people who are in similar circumstances.

If you already pay the full cost of your services, these proposals might not affect you – nobody will have to pay more than their services cost the Council.

Proposed changes to charges for particular services

If we have assessed that you can't afford to pay the full cost of your services, these increases may not affect you – nobody will have to pay more than we have assessed that they can afford.

- People in rural areas who can afford to would pay the full cost of their home care. This is currently subsidised to match the lower cost of home care in South East Northumberland (with protection for people living in some very rural areas where home care is particularly expensive).
- People using some day care services, which are currently free or subsidised, would be asked to pay the full cost if they can afford to.

Proposed changes to discounts and administrative charges

- People paying by Direct Debit would no longer get a 4% discount on their charges.
- People with savings of more than £23,250 who choose to ask the Council to arrange their services rather than making private arrangements would be asked to pay an administration fee of £3.45 - £4.00 per week.