

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Report title	Charging Policy – Respite Care	
Executive Member*	Julia Rostron; Executive Member for Adult Social care and Public Health	
Chief Executive or Director	Erik Scollay, Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration	
Date	10 January 2019	
Purpose of the report	To approve a change to the current charging policy for respite care	
Summary of the report	To introduce and seek approval for a change in the current charging policy for respite care. Current practice is to charge a flat rate fee to all users of respite care provided that they can afford it, but this does not take full account of ability to pay more towards the cost. Neighbouring local authorities charge this as a means tested service, as with all other social care service provision. Implementation of this change will ensure a transparent and consistent charging policy across all social care provision and bring in line with local practice.	
If this is a key decision, which key decision test applies?*	Over the financial threshold (£150,000)	
	Amends the Council’s policy framework	x
	Affects two or more wards	
	Non-key	x
For the purposes of scrutiny call in procedure this report is*		
	Non-urgent	
If this is a confidential report, which exemption(s) from the Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 applies?	Confidential	
Decision(s) asked for	That Executive approves the proposed change in charging for respite stay.	
Impact of decision(s)	The approval will ensure that Middlesbrough service users are charged for respite care in line with neighbouring local authorities, and therefore mitigate the cost of care to Middlesbrough Council.	
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* *Applicable to Executive, Executive Sub-Committees and Executive Member reports only. Remove rows for other reports.*

What is the purpose of this report?

- 1 To obtain approval for a change to the current charging policy for respite care.

Why is this report necessary?

- 2 The proposals set out in this report will have an impact on adults receiving care in their own home by an informal carer. Such decisions fall within the remit of Executive/Single Member.

What decision(s) are being asked for?

- 3 That Executive approve consultation on the following:
 - A change to the current charging policy for respite care, bringing Middlesbrough Council in line with other Local Authorities.

Why is this being recommended?

- 4 The Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance identifies that Carers play a significant role in preventing the need for care and support for the people they care for, and local authorities must consider interventions which can prevent Carers from developing needs for care and support themselves, as result of their caring responsibilities. One of these interventions is a period of residential respite stay for the cared for person, allowing the carer, time to take a break from their caring duties.
- 5 Middlesbrough Council currently supports this respite, by agreeing to fund the cost of the placement and recharging a flat rate to the cared for person, based on their ability to pay.
- 6 The average cost of a stay for one week in a Middlesbrough care home is £550, however, all adults using this facility in Middlesbrough have been charged £140.35 where they have been assessed as being able to meet this cost.
- 7 Cared for adults may or may not be service users. Some adults being cared for have not requested care and support from the local authority as their needs are being met, by being cared for informally.
- 8 A number of cared for adults utilising respite stay would be classed as being able to fund the cost of care themselves, as they have income and/or assets above the current financial threshold of £23,250, however, they are only charged the nominal cost above.
- 9 It is proposed that the cost of respite care will be means tested, as with all other social care provision, and will be charged according to ability to pay.
- 10 Consultation will take place with all relevant stakeholders before implementation of the change, if approved.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended?

- 11 The options are to:
 - a) Continue with the current charging policy, however that is at a continued cost to the local authority

- b) Approve the decision as requested.

Impact of the recommended decision

- 12 The implementation of this charging policy will mitigate the ongoing costs of respite care, and bring Middlesbrough Council in line with the charging policies of neighbouring local authorities. In addition, it will ensure that a consistent and transparent policy is in place for this and other social care packages.

Legal

- 13 There are no legal implications, as consultation will take place with stakeholders. The outcome of the consultation will be presented to Single Member for approval.

Financial

- 14 Potential savings are identified as follows:

A recent review of respite care provision was undertaken, and comparison made between cost of respite care actually charged, and what would have been charged if a means tested financial assessment had been carried out. The review considered all periods of respite care in the 12 months ending November 2018.

No of periods	Charged to clients	Means tested charge
470	£72,576	£166,966
	Savings	£94,390

- 15 Consultation with Hartlepool, Redcar and Darlington Councils confirms their policy to charge for respite residential stays as a fully means tested provision, with those cared for adults with sufficient income, or assets, above the threshold of £23,250, would be expected to pay for the cost of the respite stay in full.

The Mayor's vision for Middlesbrough

- 16 The proposal is in line with the Mayor's vision in that it supports the protection of vulnerable individuals.

Policy Framework

- 17 The council's budget includes a statement to realise savings in 2018/19 and the implementation of this policy will assist in achieving this goal.

Wards

- 18 Service users are based across the whole of Middlesbrough

Equality and Diversity

- 19 A level 1 impact assessment has been carried out which has determined that the policy will not adversely affect the Human Rights, Equality or Community Cohesion of the service user group.

20 Some service users will be adversely financially affected by the decisions, however, financial assessments will be carried out to confirm ability to pay, and the level at which the service user will be charged.

21 A consultation will be carried out with previous and current service users by direct contact, where they will be directed to a weblink for response. Service users will also be offered the choice of responding by letter, or by personal discussion. Full details of the consultation will be published on the Middlesbrough Council website, and on Middlesbrough Matters.

22 The impact assessment is attached to this document.

Risk

23 There is a risk that service users will refuse to take respite breaks due to the cost, thereby affecting the ability of the carer to have a break from their caring responsibilities, however, alternative respite support can be provided to carers at less cost to the service user, and financial assessments will ensure ability to pay.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision

24 The following actions will be progressed:

- Approval to consult sought
- Consultation with service users
- Consultation results referred for approval

25 Implementation:

- All new requests for respite stay following approval of this policy will have a financial assessment, and will be charged according to the new procedure.

Appendices:

1 Impact assessment

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