

**Consultation on New Charging Arrangements for**

**Selected Adult Social Care Services**

Warwickshire County Council are consulting on proposals to implement a new charging structure for some adult social care services to bring these in line with the Council’s policy to charge for services at full cost.

The consultation period is 10 weeks from 21st July 2014 to 29th September 2014. Feedback from the consultation will be reported to elected Members and a decision will be taken in November 2014. At least 4 weeks’ notice will be given before any changes resulting from the consultation are made. Therefore the earliest proposed implementation date for the first proposed changes would be 01 January 2015.

**Who should respond to this consultation?**

The consultation is for all members of the public, but in particular adult social care customers, potential future customers and anyone interested in these services.

The following information sets out why changes are being put forward, what the changes are and how people can contribute their views.

**What is the consultation about?**

The consultation is about proposals for a new charging structure, which will make the following changes:

* New charges where services were previously offered at no cost (Take a Break, Night Support, and 24 Hour support)
* Increased charges for some residential respite care, and
* Changes to the charging method for learning disability and day opportunity services.

**Why are the changes necessary?**

* To offer a consistent, equitable, and fair charging policy for adult social care services.
* To modernise charging arrangements to better reflect how customers choose to use services.
* To make the most of limited council resources to support those who need it most.

Additionally, the Government will implement a new Care Act which will introduce significant changes in the charging of adult social care. This consultation is based upon the current legislation, regulations, and guidance. Any changes resulting from the Care Act will be considered separately, but the council believes by amending our charges now will help us meet the requirements of the Care Act when it is introduced.

The report that underpins the consultation was reported to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care on the 23rd May 2014 can be found on the council’s online meeting database at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/democracy).

All of the information you need to respond to the consultation is available at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask). The consultation questions can be completed online via the survey link on the webpage or printed and posted to:

**Adult Social Care Charging Consultation, Warwickshire County Council, 3rd Floor, Kings House, King Street, Bedworth, CV12 8LL.**

Comments can be posted on the webpage or emailed to **chargingconsultation@warwickshire.gov.uk**.

For questions about the consultation process or for assistance to contribute your views please **call 02476754004** or **email** **chargingconsultation@warwickshire.gov.uk**

To help customers to understand what the changes could mean to them, we would be happy to discuss people’s individual circumstances with them. Please contact us via the letter, email, or phone contact details set out above.

**Background to Adult Social Care Charging**

In 2010 the Council changed the way it charges for adult social care services in Warwickshire. It decided that services should not generally be subsidised and that charges should be based on the full cost of the service, in line other councils. At that time, the changes made prioritised the most significant service areas, but the Council is now considering the position of some services whose charges were not changed.

Although charges for adult social care services are based on the cost of the service, the amount that customers actually pay is means tested and based on ability to pay. So in practice some customers pay the full cost of their care, some pay part of the cost, and some do not pay any contribution towards the costs of their care.

The means test is a financial assessment taking into consideration an individual’s savings and income and is explained on our website at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/socialcarecharges](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/socialcarecharges).

**Charging Proposals**

**1. Plans to introduce new charges**

The council plans to introduce charges for the following services:

* Take a Break
* Night Support
* 24 Hour Support

The council plans to start to charge at full cost for these services, which it proposes to implement in a staged process. Services will be charged at half the full cost from January 2015 and at full cost from April 2015 in order to allow people who would be paying to make plans for the changes.

Charges for Take a Break and 24 Hour Support services will be charged at the actual cost per hour, and Night Support charges will be based on the average cost per hour (with Night Support and 24 Hour Support costs being shared where the support is shared between customers).

Take a Break offers respite to carers but the charge for the service will be means tested and calculated based on the financial assessment of the person requiring care.

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| **Charging Proposal** | **Current Arrangement** | **01 January 2015** | **01 April 2015** |
| Take a Break | No charge | Half of Full cost (50%)£7.77 per hour for most services | Full cost (100%)£15.54 per hour for most services |
| Sleeping Night Support | No charge | Standard average cost£2.23 per hour (pro rata when shared) | Standard average cost£4.46 per hour (pro rata when shared) |
| Waking Night Support | No charge | Standard average cost£6.95 per hour (pro rata when shared) | Standard average cost£13.91 per hour (pro rata when shared) |
| 24 Hour Live In Support | No charge | Half of Full cost (50%)Average is £2.58 per hour (pro-rata when shared) | Full cost (100%)Average is £5.17 per hour (pro-rata when shared) |

**2. Plans to increase charges (actual cost) for some residential respite care services**

The County Council currently charges for residential respite care at a flat rate of £51.80 per day but this is lower than the actual average cost of £63.57 per day. In reality the actual cost of residential respite care varies significantly with most placements being within a range from £50 per day to £400 per day.

From January 2015, the council proposes to start charging based on the actual individual costs of each placement, but proposes to place a temporary cap of £100 per day on the maximum charge until April 2015 in order to allow customers to plan ahead for the changes.

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| **Charging Proposal** | **Current Arrangement** | **01 January 2015** | **01 April 2015** |
| Respite Residential Care | £51.80 per day | Introduce charging at the actual daily rate, but capped at £100 per day. | Remove the charging cap and charge all services at full cost |

**3. Plans to change charging method for learning disability day services**

Charges for Learning Disability Day Services (Learning Disability Day Opportunities and Learning Disability Day Care) are currently based on a flat rate average cost and are charged by the day. The Council plans to start charging at the actual cost of individual services, and to introduce the option to charge by the hour as this is increasingly how customers choose to buy day services and day opportunities.

For Learning Disability Day Opportunities charging would be based at the same rate but the amount a customer pays will depend on the number of hours they actually receive rather than a flat day rate. Therefore for some customers the cost will increase and for others it will go down.

For Learning Disability Day Care charging will be adjusted to actual daily rate from average daily rate.

The council plans to implement this change on 01 April 2015.

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| **Charging Proposal** | **Current Arrangement** | **01 January 2015** | **01 April 2015** |
| Learning Disability Day Opportunities | £46.74 per day | No change | Introduce hourly rates at the actual rates for each service |
| Learning Disability Day Care | £46.74 per day | No change | Replace the average daily rate with individual actual daily rates for each service |

**Points of Note**

The amounts included in the consultation are calculated at current prices. Costs will change from year to year, reflecting inflation and other changes. As a result charging rates may change annually.

All dates quoted are the earliest implementation dates. Customers will always receive a minimum of 4 weeks’ notice before any changes are made.

**What could the changes mean for a customer?**

Information about the new charging proposals has been outlined in this document; however, the impact on an individual customer is dependent upon a combination of the care they receive and their financial assessment. All of the new planned charges would continue to be means tested. The means test checks, through financial assessment, whether a customer can afford services by taking into account their savings and income.

* If a customer is assessed as not having the means to pay charges, or not having the means to pay any more charges, then the planned new charging structure will not affect the amount they pay.
* If a customer is already paying for other social care services, then this would be taken into account as part of the financial assessment. For example, if they are already paying the assessed maximum towards the cost of these other social care services, then they would not pay any more as a result of any planned increases in charging rates for services included in this consultation.
* If a customer is currently paying a maximum level contribution for a service, their contribution could go down if the service charge is reduced below this level as a result of the planned changes. This may be the case for some residential respite services and learning disability day services that may cost less than the current charge.

Further support for individual customers about how these changes may affect them is available. Customers who would like to discuss their circumstances further, or request a provisional financial assessment (if they have not previously had one) can contact us via letter, email, or phone using the contact details set out above in this document.