

Appendix F7: Fees and Charges Consultation Adult Social Care

Fairer Contribution Consultation Report (January 2021)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Barnet Council has completed a four-week consultation with residents about changes to our fairer contribution rates for those that contribute to the cost of their care, to order to inform the recommendation on this proposal to the Policy and Resources committee on 8th February 2021.
- 1.2 The proposal was to increase the hourly charge of homecare services from £17.00 to £18.39 to reflect the average rate paid by Barnet Council under its new contract with homecare providers.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The questionnaires asked respondents how much they supported or opposed the proposal and in what ways, and to what extent these policies would affect them.
- 2.2 There were also open-ended, free text boxes which allowed respondents to include any suggestions they had on the charges policy more generally.
- 2.3 The Fairer Contribution policy was consulted on from 23rd December 2020 to 19 January 2021.
- 2.4 The questionnaire was uploaded onto Engage Barnet and paper questionnaires were sent out to the 114 residents who would be directly affected by this proposal.
- 2.5 A total of 22 responses were received during the period of consultation, all of which were paper copies of the questionnaire that were completed and returned.

3. Demographics of respondents

- 3.1 The majority of responses were from those who contribute to the cost of their council-arranged care (15 respondents). There were also two of responses from residents who have council-funded social care as well as two from carers of someone who contributes to the cost of their council-arranged care. The final response was from a carer of someone who uses council-funded care.
- 3.2 The council is also required by the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard in ensuring people are treated fairly, particularly in relation to those with protected characteristics: age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, religion/belief and sexual orientation.
- 3.3 The majority of respondents were older people, with the largest group being 75+ year olds (14 respondents) and the second largest group 65-74-year olds

(three respondents). The smallest group within the cohort was that of the 25-34 age group (one respondent). This is reflective of the overall cohort who access social care services.

- 3.4 The gender profile of the respondent cohort was also uneven, with slightly more female respondents (ten) than males (nine). However, the respondent who chose not to disclose this information could either render this cohort entirely equal, or further weighted towards female respondents.
- 3.5 Most respondents were heterosexual (12), with seven preferring not to say.
- 3.6 17 respondents identified as having a disability, with 14 of the cohort reporting related mobility challenges.
- 3.7 The majority of respondents identified as White British (11), with some representation among other ethnic groups: Asian/Chinese, Black/Caribbean and White Irish comprising 1 respondent each respectively.
- 3.8 The main religious group of respondents was Christian (nine), whilst many respondents selected Jewish (four), and the same amount chose not to disclose this information.
- 3.9 There was a relatively even distribution of respondents according to marital status as seven respondents were married, five were divorced, four were widowed, two were single, and two preferred not to say.

4. Results

- 4.1 Proposal: To increase the hourly cost of social care from £17.00 to £18.39, to more closely reflect the actual cost of care, which is on average, £18.39 an hour.

- 4.1.1 A total of 22 respondents answered the first question: 'To what extent do you support or oppose the proposal?', the results of which are below:

To what extent do you support or oppose the proposal?	Percentage of respondents	No. of respondents
Strongly support	0%	0
Tend to support	36%	8
Neither support nor oppose	23%	5
Tend to oppose	14%	3
Strongly oppose	27%	6
Don't know/Not sure	0%	0
	Total: 100%	Total: 22

4.1.2 A total of 22 respondents answered the second question: 'What impact do you think this proposal would have on you or your family?', the results of which are below:

What impact do you think this proposal would have on you or your family?	Percentage of respondents	No. of respondents
Very positive	14%	3
Quite positive	14%	3
No change	45%	10
Quite negative	14%	3
Very negative	0%	0
Don't know/ Not sure	14%	3
	Total: 100%	Total: 22

4.1.3 Those who supported the proposal thought that the impact would have no change or even a positive impact on them or their families' circumstances, with 100% of those who supported the proposal to some degree selecting one of these three options in the second question.

4.1.4 Seven of those who opposed the first proposal thought it would have a quite negative impact on their circumstances, with the remaining respondents in this category expressing that they either anticipated no change due to the impact of the proposal, or that they were unsure of the impact, if any. This suggests there is some correlation between support for the proposal and impact on circumstances, as well as perhaps an underlying uncertainty of the proposal's impact.

4.1.5 The additional responses to the free-text option of why people responded the way they did included:

- It is a short period of time since the last increase, and my income has not increased.
- Carers whom I depend on for assistance have a right to a wage in keeping with the ever-rising cost of living.
- I have a fixed income which I cannot increase because I am retired.
- The carers do an amazing, respected job. Just hope their wages are increased accordingly and that the increase is not only seen in council wages.
- I thought that recently, the government had given millions of extra funding to social care.

- I would like to know how much of this increase will be given to actual carers, many of whom have to actually use time consuming public transport to reach their clients.
- People should be paid at the appropriate rate.
- You raised your charges on 1st August 2020.
- To enable carers to be paid fairly.
- Wages and expenses for companies providing care have increased.
- I think this is a fair proposal.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Slightly more people who responded to this consultation opposed this proposal than supported it, and those who opposed it felt more strongly. However, more people thought that the proposal would have a positive impact on their circumstances than a negative one.