

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**SPECIAL ANGUS COUNCIL – 29 FEBRUARY 2024**

**REVIEW OF ANGUS COUNCIL CHARGES FOR SUPPORT AND CARE SERVICES AND  
RESIDENTIAL FEES 2024/25**

**REPORT BY JILLIAN GALLOWAY, CHIEF INTEGRATION OFFICER, ANGUS IJB**

**1. ABSTRACT**

This report sets out proposals to revise Support and Care and Residential fees for services provided by Angus Health and Social Care Partnership through Angus Council with effect from 1 April 2024.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES**

The proposals in this report contribute as a whole to the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities and the specific targets and objectives within the Council Plan. The proposals in this report specifically contribute to the following strategic priorities in the Angus Council Plan, 'Angus Council to be efficient and effective'. The proposals also contribute to the achievement of the national health and wellbeing outcomes by ensuring resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services.

**3. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) Approves the proposed changes in charges for Support and Care Services as set out at 6.1 and 6.2 with effect from April 2024;
- (ii) Notes that a "catch up" uplift may be required for Support and Care Services in 2025/26 if estimates of the inflationary impacts in 2024/25 have been understated;
- (iii) Supports the intention to adopt during 2024/25 COSLA guidance regarding 'income disregards' for the purposes of assessing client contributions once system capability allows;
- (iv) Agrees the proposed residential charges for Angus Council owned Care Homes as set out at 6.5 and in Appendix 2.

**4. BACKGROUND**

While the responsibility for the operational delivery of Adult Services is devolved to Angus Health and Social Care Partnership, the formal authority to charge for social work services remains with Angus Council. On that basis, it is Angus Council that has the authority to determine whether to approve planned amendments to charges proposed by Angus Health and Social Care Partnership (Angus HSCP). Recommendations are made in the context of the overall financial position of the Partnership, the inflationary environment and general charging requirements. Previous recommendations were set out in report 51/23.

**5. CURRENT POSITION**

This report recommends the use of an uplift of 3.0% for 2024/25 owing to the forecasted or current levels of inflation. It is also necessary to apply an additional "catch-up" uplift of 1.5% which relates to 2023/24, which will increase charges in 2024/25. The "catch-up" uplift was a result of higher than anticipated inflationary pressures in 2023/24. It is proposed that the total uplift for 2024/25 will therefore be 4.5%. If, with hindsight, the proposed uplift for 2024/25 of 3% is insufficient to cover the actual inflation pressures in 2024/25, then it is expected that a "catch-up" uplift will also be applied from year 2025/26 but Council approval for this will be sought in advance.

The overall intention is to set out amendments to charges recovered through charging to support the ongoing delivery of the current volume of social work adult services, taking into account increased demands and costs, without undue detriment to service users and without destabilising front line services and service uptake. It should be noted that inflation-linked benefits and tax credits will rise by 6.7% from April 2024, in line with the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rate of inflation in September 2023.

In terms of managing the implementation of all recommendations, an implementation plan will be managed by Angus HSCP in conjunction with relevant support services.

## 6. PROPOSALS

### 6.1 CHARGES FOR ANGUS COUNCIL SUPPORT AND CARE SERVICES (ASSESSED)

6.1.1 Angus HSCP provides a range of support and care services which are chargeable. These services are charged for in accordance with the contribution policies and charges are based on each individual's financial assessment. These charges were last revised in report 51/23. For these services it is the intention to use an uplift of 3% noted above.

It should be noted that the inflationary environment is currently unstable, and this is particularly the case within services such as Social Care. In line with actual rises to inflation in 2023/24, compared to projected increases of circa 3%, it is now necessary to apply a "catch-up" uplift of 1.5% which will be applied to all charges from 2024/25. It is proposed that the total uplift for 2024/25 will therefore be 4.5%.

In addition, and as in previous years, it should be noted that charges for day care services provided by independent providers will be uplifted in line with inflation as directed by the Scottish Government and agreed via the Angus HSCP Third Party Meeting. The current charges are noted below with the variation in fees being linked to the varying costs of service provision. A review of day care services is currently underway, and the arrangements for these services will be reviewed at this time.

	Unit	2022/23 Charge (£)	2023/24 Charge (£)
Day Care - Forfar	Per placement per day	£41	£43
Day Care - Kirriemuir	Per placement per day	£41	£42
Day Care - Montrose	Per placement per day	£43	£45
Day Care - Brechin	Per placement per day	£48	£50

It should be noted the provision of all Personal Care is free to the service user since the amendments to the Community Care (Personal Care and Nursing Care) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations effective April 2019. While Personal Care is not a charged for service, a rate is shown in this report as a comparator.

6.1.2 The effect on individual services is shown in Appendix 1. The net financial benefit is estimated at c£82k per annum and is constrained by current contributions policies (i.e., charges are only payable when a service user is assessed as being able to afford to pay charges). It is important to recognise the cumulative effect over a number of years of any failure to inflation link costs.

### 6.2 CHARGES FOR ANGUS COUNCIL SUPPORT AND CARE SERVICES (FLAT RATE)

A small number of services are charged at a flat rate (out with the financial assessment). These fees include Community Meals, Community Alarm and Telecare charges.

As above, in line with rises to inflation in 2023/24 it is necessary to apply a "catch-up" uplift of 1.5% which will be applied in 2024/25 but with some exceptions as noted below. The total proposed uplift for 2024/25 will therefore be 4.5%. If, with hindsight, the proposed uplift of 3% is insufficient to cover the actual inflation pressures in 2024/25, then it is expected that a "catch-up" uplift will also be applied from year 2025/26 and Council approval for this will be sought in advance.

	Unit	2023/24 Charge (£)	Proposed 2024/25 Charge (£)
Community Meals Lunches	Per Meal	£4.14	£4.33
Community Meals Evening Meal	Per Meal	£3.00	£3.13
Community Alarms	Per Week	£5.73	£5.99
*Telecare per Premises	Per Week	£1.00	£1.00

\*Telecare - No uplift applied.

The above recommendations take into account the current financial support of the Community Meals service, rates of inflation associated with service delivery (including inflation indices) and guidance regarding chargeable costs. It is recommended to retain the Telecare charges at £1/week as this remains a nominal charge at this time. However, a review of telecare services is to take place and the charging of these services will be reviewed at this time.

It has been assessed that the additional cost recovery that will be derived from the above increases is c£55k per annum. These changes in charges will help offset the increased costs associated with service delivery.

### 6.3 INCREASES IN THE TAPER APPLIED TO EXCESS INCOME

The taper rate is a percentage of the service user's chargeable income, which is then used to calculate how much of a client's income above the threshold figure is taken into account in calculating the contribution. The taper rates are set by the Local Authority and reviewed annually. Since 2019/20 the taper that applies to excess income has been 75%. It is not proposed to revise this for 2024/25.

### 6.4 INCOME DISREGARDS

On an annual basis, COSLA make recommendations regarding income disregard levels. Currently, Angus Council implement the same income disregard level for those above and below state pension age. Approval was given in Angus Council Policy and Resources Committee report 65/23 to update the Capital and Savings thresholds to reflect the COSLA Guidance on charges applied to Social Care Support for people at home. However, due to current system limitations we are unable to implement this change for April 2024. It is proposed to implement this change once system capability allows. Consultation will take place with any impacted service users in the financial year prior to this change taking place.

	Current Disregard Capital	Current Weekly Tariff Income	Proposed Disregard Capital	Proposed Weekly Tariff Income
Below state pension qualifying age	£ 10,000	£1 per £500	£6,000	£1 per £250
State pension qualifying age or above	£10,000	£1 per £500	£10,000	£1 per £500

### 6.5 RESIDENTIAL FEES

On an annual basis, rates need to be agreed for the weekly cost of mainstream in house residential services. For 2023/24 rates were set at £755/week for both mainstream Older People's residential care at Kinloch and Seaton Grove and for the Gables (Learning Disability) and £1214/week for High Dependency Units. It was previously agreed in Angus Council Policy and Resources Committee report 51/23 to review future charging arrangements for Angus Council run care homes, in order to ensure that weekly fees more closely reflected the full cost of service provision.

During 2023/24 a consultation exercise took place regarding the potential changes. The consultation sought the views of all impacted service users within internal care homes, including respite users who had accessed a service within the last 6 months. The outcome of the consultation showed that service

users opted for an incremental increase of their fees over a two-year period and this was agreed at Angus Council Policy and Resources Committee in report 340/23, where it was agreed that the proposed fees would be subject to change due to inflation. This inflationary increase has now been calculated and the new rates to be implemented from April 2024 are provided at Appendix 2.

The overall effect of inflationary increases and policy change in mainstream residential contributions is estimated at c£505k per annum, assuming occupancy remains steady based on previous income levels. This increase reflects the scale of inflationary pressures and policy change at this time.

Step down/Intermediate Care provision is to support discharge from hospital and will continue to be free of charge to service users for up to 6 weeks.

The Angus HSCP can, under certain circumstances and where there is difficulty sourcing long-term community services, provide a fully funded temporary care home placement to facilitate discharge from hospital. The Charging for Residential Accommodation Guidance allows for such publicly funded placements to be made irrespective of an individual's financial assessment. Such temporary placements are short term (initially up to 6 weeks but can be extended if required) until permanent care services can be provided.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The relevant financial impact of the changes are described in the sections above. The overall assumption, reflected in Angus IJB's financial plans, is that from 2024/25 additional charges / income of c£642k should be allowed for. This increase reflects the inflation pressures and policy changes that are currently impacting on service delivery. Increased charges are critical to sustaining the delivery of these services.

On an annual basis Angus HSCP generates c£10m of cost recovery charges. This reflects charges for both Support and Care and Residential Services. Charges are managed through corporate support arrangements. In any given year there can be an element of charges raised that are not recovered. Unpaid charges are continually reviewed, and recovery is in line with Council procedures. Write-offs are only considered after all means of recovery have been exhausted. We continue to progress work to improve the overall management of the charging process. The work is being overseen through a multi-disciplinary oversight group with work streams looking at a range of sub-sections of the process.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

There are risks that the increase or introduction of charges could have a detrimental effect on service uptake. This type of risk is already managed within operational services and the impact of any change would be closely monitored. This is not included on Angus Council's corporate risk register.

## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached.

## **11. CONSULTATION (IF APPLICABLE)**

The following officers have been consulted with on this report.

- The Chief Executive
- The Director of Legal, Governance & Change
- The Director of Finance
- The Chief Financial Officer, Angus Health and Social Care Partnership

**NOTE:** No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Revisions to Charges for Support and Care Services

Appendix 2 – Revision to Internal Residential Fees

Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment (Angus Council)

## Appendix 1 – REVISIONS TO CHARGES FOR SUPPORT AND CARE SERVICES

Type of Support	Per (Describe)	Rates 2023/24	*Revised Rate 2024/25
Support and Care	Hour (1:1 Support)	£28.96	£30.28
Older People Daycare (On site, Angus Council)	Per session (5 hours, Group Support)	£68.36	£71.48
Older People Daycare (Outreach) (Angus Council)	Hour (1:1 Support)	£28.96	£30.28
Older People Daycare - commissioned services	Per session (5 hours, Group Support)		
Resource Centre (Disabilities)	Hour (Group Support, e.g. 1:6)	£6.36	£6.64
Resource Centre (Disabilities)	Hour (Close support, e.g. 1:3)	£12.76	£13.36
Resource Centre (Disabilities)	Hour (1:1 Support)	£38.24	£39.96
Resource Centre (Disabilities)	Hour (2:1 Support)	£76.52	£80.00
Resource Centre (Disabilities) (Outreach)	Hour (1:1 Support)	£28.96	£30.28
Personal Care	Hour (1:1 Support)	£23.16	£25.35

**\*Due to rounding, some uplifts may vary slightly from the general uplift of 4.5%**

**Appendix 2 - REVISION OF CHARGES INTERNAL RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES**

<b>Category of residential care</b>	<b>Homes</b>	2023/24 Rates	Cost per bed 2024/25	Overall increase in charge	Phasing of increase to charge 50%	2024/25 Rates
Mainstream (eg Older People)	Kinloch Care Centre	£ 755	£1,666	£ 911	£ 455	£ 1,211
	Seaton Grove	£ 755	£1,268	£ 513	£ 256	£ 1,012
Learning Disability	Gables	£ 755	£2,200	£ 1,444	£ 722	£ 1,478



## Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Form

(To be completed with reference to Guidance Notes)

### Step 1

**Name of Proposal** (includes e. g. budget savings, committee reports, strategies, policies, procedures, service reviews, functions): **REVIEW OF ANGUS COUNCIL CHARGES FOR SUPPORT AND CARE SERVICES AND RESIDENTIAL FEES 2024/25**

### Step 2

Is this only a **screening** Equality Impact Assessment

YES/No

**(A)** If Yes, please choose from the following options **all** reasons why a full EIA/FSD is not required:

(i) It does not impact on people

Yes/No

(ii) It is a percentage increase in fees which has no differential impact on protected characteristics

Yes/No

It is recognised this report does have an impact on protected characteristic groups and there is an awareness of the impact on age and disability. However, this is a percentage increase only for clients in those groups who pay for these services.

(iii) It is for information only

Yes/No

(iv) It is reflective e.g. of budget spend over a financial year

Yes/No

(v) It is technical

Yes/No

If you have answered yes to any of points above, please go to **Step 16**, and sign off the Assessment.

**(B)** If you have answered No to the above, please indicate the following:

Is this a full Equality Impact Assessment

Yes/No

Is this a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment

Yes/No

If you have answered Yes to either or both of the above, continue with Step 3.

If your proposal is a **strategy** please ensure you complete Step 13 which is the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.



### Step 3

(i)Lead Directorate/Service: Angus Health and Social Care Partnership

(ii)Are there any relevant statutory requirements affecting this proposal? If so, please describe.

Yes

The provision of all Personal Care is free to the service user since the amendments to the Community Care (Personal Care and Nursing Care) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations effective April 2019. While Personal Care is not a charged for service, a rate is shown in the report as a comparator.

(iii)What is the aim of the proposal? Please give full details.

Annual update in relation to charges for support and care services and residential fees. Includes proposed inflationary increases to charges for Support and Care service and Residential charges for Angus Council owned Care Homes.

(iv)Is it a new proposal?      Yes/No      Please indicate      OR

Is it a review of e.g. an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function?      Yes/No      Please indicate

**Step 4:** Which people does your proposal involve or have consequences for?

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees                      Yes/No

Job Applicants                Yes/No

Service users                 Yes/No

Members of the public        Yes/No

**Step 5:** List the evidence/data/research **that has been** used in this assessment (links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance). This could include:

Internal data (e.g. customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).

Information regarding costs of service delivery within Angus Council.

Internal consultation (e.g. with staff, trade unions and any other services affected).

Staff from a number of Council services including AHSCP, finance, revenues and benefits, I.T, legal and planning have been consulted and involved in the preparation of the proposals in this report via the Charging Group.

External data (e.g. Census, equality reports, equality evidence finder, performance reports, research, available statistics)

Scottish Government and COSLA guidance in relation to charging for non-residential and residential services.

External consultation (e.g. partner organisations, national organisations, community groups, other councils).

N/A

Other (general information as appropriate).

**Step 6:** Evidence Gaps.

Are there any gaps in the equality information you currently hold? Yes/**No**

Service Managers have been involved in discussion developing this report. Within services there is a good understanding of the impact of changes to charges on service users

If yes, please state what they are, and what measures you will take to obtain the evidence you need.

**Step 7:** Are there potential differential impacts on protected characteristic groups? Please complete for each group, including details of the potential impact on those affected. Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from Covid-19.

Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each group. Please state the reason(s) why.

Age

Impact – potentially negative – The proposed changes to charges for Support and Care services and Residential fees for Angus Council owned Care Homes will have an impact on some service users however impacted service users will be subject to financial assessment to determine their ability to pay these fees.

Disability

Impact – potentially negative – The proposed changes to charges for Support and Care services and Residential fees for Angus Council owned Care Homes will have an impact on some service users however impacted service users will be subject to financial assessment to determine their ability to pay these fees.

Gender reassignment

Impact – N/A

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact – N/A

Pregnancy/Maternity

Impact – N/A

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers)

Impact N/A

Religion or Belief

Impact – N/A

Sex

Impact – potentially negative as this more on females because they are more likely to access care– The proposed changes to charges for Support and Care services and Residential fees for Angus Council owned Care Homes will have an impact on some service users however impacted service users will be subject to financial assessment to determine their ability to pay these fees.

Impact – N/A

Sexual orientation

Impact – N/A

**Step 8:** Consultation with any of the groups potentially affected

If you have consulted with any group potentially affected, please give details of how this was done and what the results were.

Annual inflationary uplifts of charges are not usually subject to consultation, however specific consultation was carried out with service users who will be impacted by changes to the in house residential fee increases. This was done via letter to each individual service user/ family. Service users were supported by care home staff to complete the return for consultation.

Service users & families understood and accepted the need for the increase in charges.

**Step 9:** What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce potentially negative impacts?

The financial assessment framework is designed to ensure that service users only contribute to the costs of their care to the extent that they can afford to do so.

**Step 10:** If a potentially negative impact has been identified, please state below the justification.

Annual inflationary uplifts to charges for Support and Care services and Residential fees for Angus Council owned Care Homes are required.

**Step 11:** In what way does this proposal contribute to any or all of the public sector equality duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristics?

N/A – Annual inflationary uplifts to charges for Support and Care services and Residential fees for Angus Council owned Care Homes.

**Step 12:** Is there any action which could be taken to advance equalities in relation to this proposal?

No.

### **Step 13: FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

This step is only applicable to strategies which are key, high level decisions. If your proposal is not a strategy, please leave this Step blank, and go to Step 14.

Links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance.

N/A

**Step 14:** What arrangements will be put in place to monitor and review the Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment?

This is an annual update, the EIA in relation to charging is reviewed and updated annually.

**Step 15:** Where will this Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment be published?

As part of the committee report.

**Step 16: Sign off and Authorisation.** Please state name, post, and date for each:

Prepared by: Sheila McGrady, Team Leader Finance. November 2023

Reviewed by: Doreen Phillips, Senior Practitioner (Equalities) February 2024

Approved by: Eunice McLennan, Head of Community Health and Care Services, February 2024