



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

These are some of the questions the Council expects to be asked, but it is important that you read the full details of the proposals in the consultation information available online.

How long is the consultation open for?

The consultation is open to everyone (not just those receiving services) from 14th October 2019 up to and including the 22nd December 2019.

Who should respond to the consultation?

This is a public consultation and anyone can give their views. We would especially like to hear from people who receive services, carers, service providers, Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector, and anyone else with an interest in adult social care services. It is important that you tell us what you think about the proposals even if you do not use the services now, as you may need them in the future.

What is the consultation for?

This consultation gives you the opportunity to let the Council know how you feel about the proposed changes in the way we charge those people who the government state can afford to pay towards their care. It also gives you the chance to say how the individual proposals could affect you and to add comments around their implementation. The consultation means that we can reflect your views to the Council's Cabinet so they can make the final decision. Council Cabinet could decide to make all, some or none of the proposed changes. Your feedback will be taken into account in their decision.

What proposals are being considered?

Full details of the 9 proposals that are being considered are available in the consultation information booklet, which is available online at: www.doncaster.gov.uk/adultsocialcarecharges and paper copies available in local libraries and Doncaster Council, Civic Office One Stop Shop. In summary they are:

- **Proposal 1: Home Alarm Service**

The Home Alarm Service is currently charged at £3.30 per week and provides a 24 hour monitoring and response for 6,000 people across Doncaster through pendant alarms. Not all people pay for this service. Changes in charges are proposed for everyone, that give people choice and make charging fairer. Two charging options are being proposed:

Pendant alarm service only - £3.64 per week

Response service - £1.50 per week

Everybody using the service will benefit from the 24 hour monitoring, but people may want choice about how any response is organised. This would mean that a combined pendant alarm and response service would cost £5.14 per week. This will mean that some people are

charged for the service which they have previously received free of charge or some people paying more than they do now.

- **Proposal 2: Care at home**

For some people the Council does not include all the costs of care when working out what they should pay. If they need two or more care workers to help them at the same time only the cost of one care worker is currently included in financial assessments, when care has been arranged by the Council. The proposal is to include the costs of all care workers attending and providing a service to a person, in their financial assessment.

- **Proposal 3: Day Opportunities**

Day Care

People are only charged for their day care if they can afford it after a financial assessment. The current charges for those able to afford it is £31 per day, which is lower than the actual cost to the Council. The proposal is to increase the day care charge to reflect the actual cost of providing the services. The charge would increase to £46 per day for moderate support and £76 per day for higher-level support. These charges will remain subject to a Financial Assessment so people will only pay what the government states they can afford.

Transport

The current charge for transport to day care is £3 per journey. The Council has worked hard to reduce transport costs, but it still costs an average of £10 per journey to provide the service. The proposal is to increase the charge for each journey from £3 to £4 from April 2020 and further increase the cost by £1 a year after that, until the cost charged equals the actual cost of providing the transport.

- **Proposal 4: Safeguarding personal assets**

The Council's Safeguarding Adults Personal Assets Team (SAPAT) looks after the personal matters, money and property of people who cannot look after it themselves and do not have family help, but it does not pass on all the costs. The proposed charging arrangements for this service would help to keep it running and make sure that the valuable property that vulnerable people own is kept safe.

- **Proposal 5: Arrangements for people who fund their own care in full**

People who have over £23,250.00 (including investments/bonds but excluding the value of their home) are seen as being able to fund their own care and support in full. A yearly charge of £300 is proposed to cover the cost of providing this service.

- **Financial assessment procedure changes**

After people's care needs have been assessed and an agreed care and support plan is in place there is a financial assessment. This is where the Council asks about finances and income to work out how much a person will contribute to their care in line with national guidance.

It is proposed to make changes to the way the council carries out financial assessments. .
This includes:

○ **Proposal 6: Maximum weekly charge for non-residential services**

No matter how much a home care and support package costs, the council will only charge those who are deemed able to afford to pay a maximum charge of £429.20 per week. It is proposed to take away the maximum amount and instead charge the full cost of the service provided to those people who can afford to pay. The financial assessment will determine the maximum amount people are able to pay.

○ **Proposal 7: Enhanced daily living component of Personal Independent Payment (PIP)**

It is proposed that the full value of PIP, that people receive, will be included in financial assessments. This includes an extra £28.95 per week enhanced component above the standard rate. If a person receiving PIP can show that they pay for additional care at night, their night care costs will be taken into account as part of the assessment.

○ **Proposal 8: Residential respite and short stay care**

When a service user receives residential respite or short term residential care it is subject to charging after a financial assessment. The Care Act allows options to carry out this financial assessment under residential or non-residential rules. Up to now the Council has chosen nonresidential rules. Where the respite and short stay care is residential based, the proposal is that in the future the financial assessments would be carried out under the residential rule.

○ **Proposal 9: Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG)**

When doing a financial assessment, councils are given advice by the government on how much of a person's total weekly income should not be used towards care charges. This protected money is known as the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG). Government set MIG rates are lower than the current rates that the Council uses. The proposal is to move towards the government set MIG rates and use these in financial assessments instead of working out its own rate.

What is meant by phasing over a number of years?

This means that the change could be brought in little by little, so that the full effect would not be felt immediately and it would be over a longer period of time. In this way people would feel less of a sudden increase in charges and will also be able to adapt to any new payments more gradually.

How will the changes affect me?

If you know which services(s) you receive, then the more detailed consultation information available online should help you to answer this question. However, as everyone's circumstances and financial situation is different, there is no single answer. We will look at your finances and work what the government says you can afford. Those who are financially assessed as not being able to afford more won't be asked to contribute more.

How long is the survey?

The survey has information and questions on 9 proposals, followed by some space for your own comments. It also asks some questions about you, which will help the Council to assess the survey results and their potential impact on different groups of people.

What are the next steps when the consultation closes?

Following the end of the consultation period all views, comments and survey responses will be collated into a report, which will then be passed to the decision makers. This report will be available to you via the Doncaster Council website. Council Cabinet will be meeting in February 2020, when they will consider each of the proposals, taking into account the views of the public, and will decide upon which of the proposals will be taken forward, over what time scale and whether there are any extra actions needed to lessen the impact upon individuals. The outcome will be published on the Council's website. If the proposals are agreed we will be writing to those people affected detailing how the changes will individually affect them.

When will changes happen?

If changes are agreed to the charging arrangements, they will not be effective before April 2020.

Contact us

If you have any questions or queries about the consultation, or require documents in an alternative language or format then please contact Customer Services on 01302 736999 or email us at ASCcharges@doncaster.gov.uk.