

## Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) Public Meeting Notes

**Monday 30 July 2018**  
Town Hall, Tea Room 1.12  
10.30-12.00pm

### Officers in attendance

Ruth Lake	Director, Adult social care and safeguarding
Matthew Cooper	Business manager, Adult social care
Prashant Patel	Business change commissioning manager, Projects
Helen Sheppard	Business change commissioning manager, Projects

The meeting was attended by four members of the public and/or other organisations.

Three alternative language interpreters from the council's community language services were also present.

### Discussion

The director gave an overview of the consultation process, an explanation of disability related expenditure (DRE) and details of the proposal that has been put forward.

The consultation is a statutory 12-week process, which will be live between 3 July and 28 September 2018.

We are consulting with people who receive help from adult social care, or their families and carers, to get their views about the council's proposals to change the way it works out disability related expenditure.

The council carries out a financial assessment to check the money people have, whether they can afford to pay towards their services and if so, how much.

Some people have extra expenses because of a disability (such as personal alarms, gardening and gas or electricity usage) and this is taken into consideration during the financial assessment.

Currently we allow a minimum standard amount of £20 per week towards disability related expenditure for a single person (or £15 per week, for one of a couple).

We have worked out that on average most people in Leicester have disability related expenses of £7.50 per week. Therefore, we are proposing to reduce the set amount to a minimum of £10 per week (whether single or one of a couple), which is closer to what people actually spend. However, we will continue to allow people to keep more than the set amount, if they can show that their expenses are higher.

### Questions and comments raised

Q1	Do mobile meals count towards the list of expenditures?
A1	Mobile meals are not considered as DRE expenditure and will not be affected by the proposal. The current mobile meal provision will cease in September 2018. People requiring help with meals will receive either home care or direct payments, which is already included within the non-residential charging policy.
Q2	My sister is a carer, how will this affect her?
A2	This proposal will not affect carers or their allowances. Only those in receipt of care will receive an individual financial assessment to calculate their contribution towards services.
Q3	I have had difficulty getting through to the helpline number.
A3	We will investigate to ensure it is working correctly and would like to apologise for any inconvenience it may have caused.

## Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) Public Meeting Notes

Wednesday 1 August 2018  
Peepul Centre, Training Room 3  
6.00-7.30pm

### Officers in attendance

Ruth Lake	Director, Adult social care and safeguarding
Matthew Cooper	Business manager, Adult social care
Swarsha Bhalla	Service manager, Projects
Prashant Patel	Business change commissioning manager, Projects
Helen Sheppard	Business change commissioning manager, Projects

The meeting was attended by 16 members of the public and/or other organisations.

Three alternative language interpreters from the council's community language services were also present.

### Discussion

The director gave an overview of the consultation process, an explanation of disability related expenditure (DRE) and details of the proposal that has been put forward.

The consultation is a statutory 12-week process, which will be live between 3 July and 28 September 2018.

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### Questions and comments raised

Q1	Does the council have a consultation policy?
A1	<p>There is no set policy for consultations, as each issue requires individual consideration. There are legal requirements and corporate guidelines in place to determine if/how consultation should be conducted, depending on how a service would be affected by the proposed change. The DRE proposal will be subject to a 12-week statutory public consultation process.</p> <p>At the end of the process, the council must demonstrate that all feedback and input has been captured. A full report will then be produced and published online before a final decision is made by the city mayor and the Executive team.</p>
Q2	Will the report and decision be made available to the public?
A2	The full report and decision will be published on the consultation website. The decision will also be communicated to all service users, or their carers, via post.
Q3	I could not find the consultation policy on the website.

A3	There is no single policy document that covers all areas of consultation; it is tailored to each individual consultation and proposal.
Q4	Can we see the final report that will go to Executive and challenge the decision if we want to?
A4	The consultation process provides everyone with an opportunity to provide input and raise concerns. The process is to ensure that we hear what people have to say and give full consideration to all comments, ahead of making a recommendation or decision.
Q5	The current proposals state that 49% of individuals will not be affected by the change. Why was the consultation pulled back in 2016 and why are we re-consulting?
A5	<p>The previous consultation in 2016 was similar, but it also had two additional proposals – to change the treatment of items that should be provided by the NHS and items not required to meet eligible needs. People raised concerns about items provided from the NHS and felt this resulted in many people paying for items themselves. People also felt that their disability related needs should be broader than just their ‘eligible’ needs.</p> <p>At the time, the decision to change the standard DRE allowance was deferred but the notice clearly stated that the proposals may be revisited in the future.</p> <p>We have reviewed the items that are considered as expenditure (both NHS and non-eligible needs) and are not proposing to include any changes to them on this occasion.</p>
Q6	Has an equalities impact assessment (EIA) been completed, will it be shared?
A6	An EIA was completed previously to assess the impact on service users and the cohort of individuals remains largely similar. Once all feedback and equalities monitoring surveys have been reviewed, another EIA will be completed and published alongside the final report. The council acknowledges that the affected service users will

	have a form of disability, which is one of the protected characteristics of the equalities policy.
Q7	The consultation would be more meaningful if the EIA was shared beforehand. People will struggle as carers without benefits and may put family members into an institution for care.
A7	An updated EIA will be completed once all consultation feedback has been gathered and reviewed, before any decision is made (specifically for DRE, this will not affect any other benefits or payments).
Q8	This affects a group of vulnerable people who may not be able to get involved or attend meetings.
A8	This meeting is just one of many ways of consulting over the 12-weeks consultation period. The proposals will also be discussed at various board meetings and groups. People may also get involved by writing in, calling the helpline or via e-mail.
Q9	We feel people in adult social care (ASC) do not understand the needs of service users or carers, therefore they are making cuts to funding.
A9	This proposal is not a cut to the funding for services.
Q10	Under the new proposal, is the maximum allowance £10 per couple?
A10	A maximum overall allowance has not been set, the minimum proposed allowance would be £10 per person, whether single or one of a couple (i.e. a couple would receive £10 each).
Q11	Are you conducting the consultation with stakeholders and then completing an EIA?
A11	An EIA is a working document. It will be completed alongside the consultation and updated using all feedback and comments received, to inform the final decision.
Q12	I feel the decision is flawed.

A12	No decision has been made and we are satisfied that the decision making process, including the approach to consultation, is legally compliant.
Q13	Who is the assistant mayor for adult social care?
A13	Councillor Vi Dempster; contact details can be found on the council's website.
Q14	Is the consultation meaningful, why are we re-consulting?
A14	The new proposal would still provide people with more allowance than they generally require, on average, which we believe is fair and reasonable. As already stated, the council will continue to allow people to keep more than the proposed amount of £10 if they can show that their expenses are higher. This is part of the council's spending review programme, in the context of the reductions in funding that the council receives from central government.
Q15	When will the EIA be completed?
A15	A baseline assessment has been completed; the full assessment will be finalised once all feedback has been obtained and reviewed.
Q16	Are there any legal implications for not completing an EIA ahead of the consultation?
A16	There is no legal requirement to publish an EIA ahead of the consultation and the council is confident that regulations have been met and that good practise has been followed.
Q17	I am a carer and was only made aware of consultation from a friend, has it been well publicised?
A17	The council has written out to all service users and/or carers who receive some form of non-residential care service. The consultation has also been published on the consultation website. Contact details are held for registered carers only.
Q18	How many service users does this involve?

A18	There are approximately 3100 service users in non-residential care, of which approximately 2800 currently receive some form of DRE allowance.
Q19	Is the new proposal in line with other local authorities?
A19	<p>The council has contacted other comparator local authorities to compare standard rates, although the decision is not based solely on these findings, as there are a range of ways that allowances are calculated.</p> <p>Some councils calculate individual costs per person (case by case), whilst other councils apply a banded rate scheme (i.e. low, medium, high). Whilst there were higher and lower standard rates across various councils, we have opted for a standard rate of £10 per week, which is still above the average expenditure of £7.50 per person, per week in Leicester. However, if an individual evidences higher costs during their financial assessment, a higher amount will be allowed.</p>
Q20	Will the report be published?
A20	The full findings report will be published once consultation feedback analysis has been completed.



## Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) Public Meeting Notes

**Thursday 2 August 2018**  
The BRITE Centre, Main Hall  
2.30-4.00pm

### Officers in attendance

Ruth Lake	Director, Adult social care and safeguarding
Matthew Cooper	Business manager, Adult social care
Prashant Patel	Business change commissioning manager, Projects

The meeting was attended by six members of the public and/or other organisations.

Three alternative language interpreters from the council's community language services were also present.

### Discussion

The director gave an overview of the consultation process, an explanation of disability related expenditure (DRE) and details of the proposal that has been put forward.

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### Questions and comments raised

Q1	If the proposal is approved, will there be support with applications?
A1	Applications will not be necessary. Everyone in receipt of non-residential care will receive either a questionnaire to tell us if their circumstances have changed, or an individual financial assessment, to review their personal circumstances and additional income or expenditures.
Q2	As part of the financial assessment, are all income and outgoing costs reviewed?
A2	<p>The financial assessment looks at people's income and compares this with the minimum threshold of money that they must be left with to cover their living costs. This is sometimes referred to as 'protected income/minimum income guarantee'. This is the amount that the Department of Health guidance states should remain free from charges and is calculated by adding 25% to a person's income support allowances and premiums (excluding severe disability premium) according to age, level of disability and family status or the appropriate pension guarantee credit or pension credit (excluding severe disability premium).</p> <p>The assessment is used to calculate if the individual should contribute towards the cost of care provided.</p>

Q3	As a service user, it is difficult to estimate what expenditure will be.
A3	As part of any re-assessment, individuals will be able to advise the council if their circumstances have changed and expenditures will be noted. Service users can ask for an assessment at any time, if they feel their circumstances have changed significantly.
Q4	Is there a maximum cap to DRE allowance?
A4	There is no upper limit, the most someone would have to pay towards their care depends on their income and the cost of the services that they receive.
Q5	What can I do if I feel I need more time from personal assistants?
A5	Each service user will have an allocated social worker and team. Please contact the duty worker, who will review your circumstances, if necessary.
Q6	What if I need further assistance – for example, to visit a GP surgery?
A6	Unfortunately, social workers are unable to assist with GP visits. GP surgery appointments are a responsibility of the NHS; they are required to ensure needs are met by making alternative arrangements, such as home visits.

