

Decision Made Under the Council's Urgency Procedure by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health on 6 July 2020

Changes to the Warwickshire County Council Adult Social Care Charging Policy for the Financial Year (2020/21)

Portfolio Holder	Councillor Les Caborn Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health
Date of decision	Decision Date 6 July 2020
	Signed 

Decision

1. That Warwickshire amend its approach under section 3 of the Adult Social Care Charging Policy for this financial year (2020/21) so as to discount temporary uplifts in Universal Credit granted by the government in response to the Covid-19 pandemic
2. That the Strategic Director for Resources and Strategic Director for People have delegated authority to undertake all necessary steps to give effect to the decision.

Reasons for decision

Anyone in receipt of adult social care is offered a financial assessment to calculate how much they can afford to pay towards the cost of their care.

The standard rate for universal credit and tax credits have both been increased by £20 a

week for the year from 6 April 2020. This means that someone getting the maximum universal credit will have a £20 increase

That increase will adversely affect social care users by increasing the amount that they were assessed to pay at a time when such an increase is particularly difficult for them.

Social care users will thus lose out on the intended benefit of the universal credit increase introduced by government to provide extra support to vulnerable groups during the pandemic period

An amendment to the policy assessment framework is required to enable the additional universal credit income to be discounted. Such decision is a matter for the Portfolio Holder under delegations to “approve charges for services or change the charges for services”

Reasons for Urgency

The report is considered urgent due to the financial impact on service users during the covid-19 pandemic and the fact that assessments are currently being undertaken to which this assessment criterion is relevant.

It is not considered practicable to comply with SO16 and 17 in these circumstances.

Background information

Anyone in receipt of adult social care is offered a financial assessment to calculate how much they can afford to pay towards the cost of their care.

The standard rate for universal credit and tax credits have both been increased by £20 a week for the year from 6 April 2020. This means that someone getting the maximum universal credit will have a £20 increase.

In addition, those not in receipt of the maximum e.g. people with other income, will see an increase in the standard rate meaning they will have an extra £20 universal credit or other income increases, making them better off by £20 per week compared to the pre-covid level.

Current legislation has not been amended in light of this increase. However, the temporary increase was designed to ensure that vulnerable people were not financially disadvantaged as a result of covid-19.

Leaving the policy unchanged would mean that as every individual's income is assessed, the £20 uplift would be taken into account, increasing their contribution to their care.

While this is technically correct, it would disadvantage those in receipt of social care by increasing the amount that they were assessed to pay at a time when such an increase is

particularly difficult for them.

It is therefore proposed that the Council allow a £20 reduction against universal credit income when carrying out assessments under the policy within the 2020/21 financial year only

This will allow individuals to retain the benefit of their universal credit increase.

Financial implications

If the policy remains as currently drafted the Council will receive an increase in income from social care users. This additional income was never budgeted for and would present a windfall. There are no adverse financial implications for the Council other than not receiving the potential added income if the change were not made.

Environmental implications

None

Report Author	Nichola Vine
Assistant Director	Sarah Duxbury
Lead Director	Nigel Minns
Lead Member	Councillor Les Caborn

Urgent matter?	Yes
Confidential or exempt?	No
Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?	No

List of background papers (If applicable)

N/A

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Caborn

Corporate Board – Yes

Legal – Nichola Vine and Jane Pollard

Finance – Liz Firmstone and Andrew Felton

Equality – n/a

Democratic Services – Paul Williams

Councillors – Helen Adkins, Jerry Roodhouse and Jonathan Chilvers

Councillor Wallace Redford, Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (For consent to Urgency)

Local Member(s): N/A