

Fairer Contributions Policy

Contributions for Self-Directed Support

The County Council's Fairer Contributions Policy aims to make sure that the amount people pay for support at home is fair, based on their ability to pay, and in proportion to the level of support they receive.

The policy has been revised following a review of people's contributions to their Personal Budget which identified these as '*... too complex for service users to understand and frontline professionals to implement*'.

The new policy aims to:

- improve service user experience by ensuring greater transparency
- reduce the number of invoice queries and complaints
- ensure effective use of resources and staff time
- ensure public funding is used appropriately
- maximise income collection.

Which in turn will mean that:

- service users know what they should do to help manage their Personal Budget and the collection of their contribution
- the council can be efficient and clear in its approach to collecting service users' contributions.

What changes have been made?

The new policy is easy to understand. Now included are:

- a clear position on Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) – standard amounts are included in the policy, these will be used in the financial assessment process;
- a section on deprivation of capital – if a person has knowingly reduced their capital, in order to reduce their contribution, this will be taken into account in the financial assessment;
- details of services users responsibilities and the consequence of not providing the information required for financial assessment within 28 days

The format of the policy has been simplified to make it easier to understand. Invoices have a new layout that is clearer and easier for people to understand what they are being asked to contribute.

Cancellation Clause

The Cancellation Clause has been revised and made simpler to understand so that the service user has better information about what to do if they want to cancel their care, and an understanding of how their contribution will be affected if they decide to cancel their care.

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Additional changes

- People who pay the full cost of their care will be encouraged, where appropriate, to make a direct arrangement with their provider.
- When people are discharged from hospital into an interim bed, or when crisis care or unplanned respite care is needed, the service user's contributions will restart when they are discharged from hospital and continue to be collected until permanent arrangements are clarified and their financial assessment reviewed.
- We will explain how contributions are collected for arranged care, direct payments and where the service user has both.
- The application of the 'peace of mind' charge in Extra Care Housing has been clarified. This is a contribution to having access to carers on site 24 hours a day.
- A revised **Invoicing Manual** has been produced to support teams in their work and enabling them to identify issues prior to releasing invoices.

When is the new policy being introduced?

The new policy is going live at the end of July 2014. **The first invoices will be issued on 13th August 2014.**

The new policy will mean that service users and their families will have a better understanding of the policy and the supporting systems and processes, which will reduce the number of queries and complaints.

Where can I find out more?

The Fairer Contributions Policy (July 2014) is available to download from the County Council's website at: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk Follow the links to: Adults & Older People; Practitioners and Providers Information; Strategies and Plans.

[Download the policy here](#)

What have service users been told about the new policy?

An information pack called '**Your Support Costs**' has been produced for service users. This includes information on the financial assessment process, including how we work out what a person should pay and the ways to pay their contribution. A factsheet will be made available to download from the **Your Life, Your Choice** Adult Social Care website, see www.yourlifeyourchoice.org.uk.

What information has been provided to teams?

A Fairer Contributions Policy page has been created on the County Council's Intranet site to provide staff with information about the new policy and the changes that have been made. It includes a **Practitioner's Factsheet** summarising the changes, a copy of the policy, and the revised **Invoicing Manual**. Workforce development implications resulting from the introduction of the new policy will be delivered within existing training programmes and staff briefings.

Who can I contact if I have a question about the information in this Briefing?

If you have any questions about the new Fairer Contributions Policy please email personalisation@cambridgeshire.gov.uk