



Meeting of East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership	Integration Joint Board
Held on	25 September 2024
Agenda Item	11
Title	Charging for Services 2024/25 and beyond
<p>Summary</p> <p>To provide the Integration Joint Board (IJB) with an update from the Income Generation Short Life Working Group (IGSLWG) and the proposed approach to extending the scope for charging for non-residential services. This will consider the potential impact to income during 2024/25 and beyond, including in year increases for some existing charges.</p>	
Presented by	Lesley Bairden, Head of Finance and Resources (Chief Financial Officer)
<p>Action Required</p> <p>The Integration Joint Board is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the update on the implementation of charging for non-residential care, • note the previously agreed report to ERC Cabinet will be considered on 3 October 2024; this proposes increases to existing charges for Community Alarms and for Bonnyton House, effective from 1 January 2025, • note and comment on the proposed next steps for October with a focus on communication and engagement in preparation for 2025/26, • agree to receive the 2025/26 proposed charging report for ERC Cabinet at a seminar in late October / early November. 	
<p>Directions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Directions Required</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Directions to East Renfrewshire Council (ERC)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Directions to NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Directions to both ERC and NHSGGC</p>	<p>Implications</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Risk</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Legal</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equalities <input type="checkbox"/> Fairer Scotland Duty</p>

EAST RENFREWSHIRE INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

25 September 2024

Report by Chief Financial Officer

Charging for Non-Residential Care

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide the Integration Joint Board with an update on the recommendations from the Income Generation Short Life Working Group (IGSLWG) to confirm the previously agreed report to ERC Cabinet proposing an increase to existing charges for Community Alarms and for Bonnyton House along with preparation for implementing new charges for 2025/26.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Integration Joint Board is asked to:
 - note the update on the implementation of charging for non-residential care,
 - note the previously agreed report to ERC Cabinet will be considered on 3 October 2024; this proposes increases to existing charges for Community Alarms and for Bonnyton House, effective from 1 January 2025,
 - note and comment on the proposed next steps for October with a focus on communication and engagement in preparation for 2025/26,
 - agree to receive the 2025/26 proposed charging report for ERC Cabinet at a seminar in late October / early November.

BACKGROUND

3. The Income Generation Short Life Working Group (IGSLWG) was set up to explore the implementation of wider charging for non-residential care.
4. Members of the IJB will recall the report to the August IJB that agreed increases to existing charges this year:
 - Community Alarms to £4.90 per week, increased from £3.25
 - Bonnyton House to £960 per week, increased from £912.80
5. This proposal will be considered by ERC Cabinet on 3 October 2024 with an implementation date of 1 January 2025.
6. Within the existing legislation, the Council has the statutory duty to set charges. ERC Cabinet will consider the proposal for inflation, any cost recovery increases and any new charges at the end of November.
7. All charges are linked to the ability to pay and this is confirmed through financial assessment. There is a risk that some people may choose not to engage in this process and potentially pay the full cost of care, or withdraw from engagement with the HSCP. Given the East Renfrewshire population dynamic some people may opt to engage in private arrangements entirely.

8. All charging proposals are supported by our charging policy. This aligns with the “COSLA NATIONAL STRATEGY & GUIDANCE; Charges Applying to Social Care Support for people at home 2024/2025 guidance” which provides a recognised framework.

REPORT

9. The focus of this report is on the next steps between now and the end of October as we prepare to set out the proposed charges for 2025/26, with particular focus on the introduction of charges for non-residential care.
10. Our engagement timetable and supporting communication information is being refined. The following summary shows the key activity for October:
 - Arrange a series of engagement events, both in person and on-line, across both localities and invite all stakeholders
 - Work with the Council’s Money Advice and Rights Team and agree engagement / signposting input
 - Send letters to all peoples impacted by in-year increases pending ERC Cabinet decision on 3 October
 - Reflect engagement feedback in the Frequently Asked Questions document that has been drafted
 - Reflect engagement feedback in the Equalities, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment that has been drafted
 - Work with Council debtors team to assess workload impacts
 - Revise our charging policy as required
 - Prepare a draft report for the IJB to consider at a seminar towards the end of October / early November with subsequent remit to ERC Cabinet for decision at the end of November
 - Thereafter communicate with all individuals impacted
 - The IGSLWG will also consider any changes to existing charges proposed for 2025/26
 - Continue to review process and procedures for existing and new charges as part of the implementation of the finance module with the MOSAIC system
11. The engagement with those we support and other key stakeholders will set out the reason for introducing the new charges; what it could mean to individuals, how the ability to pay will be assessed and the supports we can offer within the HSCP and from our partner organisations.
12. We need to identify the range of charges we will set to support charging such as an hourly rate for support and expect this to be c£20 to £25 per hour.
13. The ability to pay the identified charge is then linked to a financial assessment which looks at all income the person has, allows for a range of deductions recognising the costs of living incurred, identifies a “disposable amount” left over and then applies a taper to that disposable amount. A taper is used to determine the percentage of the disposable income the person should keep and the percentage that should go towards paying for their care. The IGSLWG has agreed this should be set at 60%.
14. This will allow a calculation that will show the maximum amount someone would pay towards the cost of their care. It is important that we identify an appropriate cap – a level which should not be exceeded – to ensure that those with the most complex needs, whose cost of care is normally higher, are not disproportionately disadvantaged.

15. There will also be certain circumstances where it is not appropriate to charge for a service and the Charging Policy for the IJB sets this out.

CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

16. The Chief Financial Officer has consulted with our partners and will continue to work in partnership with colleagues to develop and implement the expansion of non-residential charging, recognising this was agreed as part of the budget process for 2024/25 and preparing for 2025/26.
17. The consultation and engagement activity throughout October will allow us to set out the rationale for the introduction of new charges with a wide range of stakeholders and most importantly, those directly impacted by this change.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

Finance

18. The likely income level from non-residential charging will continue to be assessed and included in the November report to the IJB and ERC Cabinet.
19. Consideration needs to be given to the treatment of bad debt and any non-payment for services provided. Under the current arrangements the Chief Officer and Chief Financial Officer have the delegated authority to write off bad debt, although to date this has not been required at any material level.

Risk

20. If charging for non-residential services is not implemented then additional savings will be required to meet the targets required in 2024/25 and beyond.
21. There will be cumulative impacts on individuals as a result of implementing charging on top of other changes to care packages.
22. We may see a retraction from use of or engagement with statutory services.
23. There may be conflicts with Scottish Government policy intentions.
24. Managing the expectations of the people we support and their families may result in reputational damage.

Workforce

25. There will be additional work involved relating to setting up and operating the processes for charging for services. This will need to be considered alongside the system and process changes resulting from the implementation of a new case recording system (MOSAIC) and associated finance module. The council is supporting the IJB with “invest to save” funding for a post to support the implementation of non-residential charging for a 12 month period.
26. It is hoped that some of the new work may be contained through the introduction of new processes for existing workflows. As we work towards implementation of the Mosaic system this will become clearer.

27. We need to assess the impact to other Council services and in particular the Money Advice and Rights Team (MART) and Debtors teams.

Equalities

28. We will complete an equalities, fairness and rights impact assessment relating to the charging proposals following engagement with key stakeholders.

29. Engagement and communication needs to be mindful of multiple impacts on any group or individual following Supporting People reviews and / or other service changes.

DIRECTIONS

30. There are no specific directions at this time.

CONCLUSIONS

31. The IGSLWG has identified two in-year increases for 2024/25, to be considered by ERC Cabinet on 3 October 2024. The IJB will receive a further report in November that will set out the impacts and implementation process for non-residential charging for 2025/26 along with the associated report to be considered by ERC Cabinet for setting all charges for 2025/26.

RECOMMENDATIONS

32. The Integration Joint Board is asked to:

- note the update on the implementation of charging for non-residential care,
- note the previously agreed report to ERC Cabinet will be considered on 3 October 2024; this proposes increases to existing charges for Community Alarms and for Bonnyton House, effective from 1 January 2025,
- note and comment on the proposed next steps for October with a focus on communication and engagement in preparation for 2025/26,
- agree to receive the 2025/26 proposed charging report for ERC Cabinet at a seminar in late October / early November.

REPORT AUTHOR

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16 September 2024

Chief Officer, IJB: Julie Murray

BACKGROUND PAPERS

IJB 16.08.2024 – Charging for Services 2024/25 and beyond

https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/10593/IJB-Item-13-14-August-2024/pdf/IJB_Item_13_14_August_2024.pdf?m=1722614081173

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