

Equality Impact Assessment Rapid Impact Assessment Form



This form will help you decide if you need to undertake a full Equality Impact Assessment. In using the form, please read the guidance document '**Issues you will need to consider when undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment**'. Equality Impact Assessments need to consider the needs for people covered by the equality strands of Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation.

Title: Social Work Services Contribution Policy for Non-Residential and Residential Care Services 2015/16

1. Who does the proposed piece of work/policy/proposal affect?

Staff	Service Users/Carers	Communities/Voluntary Groups	Public
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What are the aims and objectives of the work/policy/proposal being assessed?

	Yes	No
3. Will the proposal have any impact on equality of opportunity, discrimination between groups or relations between groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Is the proposal controversial in any way in terms of equality and diversity (including media, academic, voluntary or sector specific interest)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Will the workforce or users of the service be disadvantaged as a result of the proposed work?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is there doubt about answers to any of the above questions (e.g. there is not enough information to draw a conclusion)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes or you are unsure of your answers to any of the above a full impact assessment is recommended.

7. Given the above statement, do you recommend a full impact assessment is completed? Yes No

8. If a full impact assessment is not required briefly explain why and provide evidence for the decision.

Completed By

Name	Frances Eneide	Dept.	Social Work
Post	Project Manager	Date	02/10/2014

For your records, keep one copy of this rapid impact assessment form and send an electronic copy plus any supporting documentation to evidence your decision to rosie.kennedy@scotborders.gov.uk

Record of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Please complete this form in conjunction with the guidance provided. If you have any questions, please contact Equality and Diversity on 01835 824000 x 6675. (Please note that your policy or function should also be rural proofed. Please refer to Scottish Borders Council's Rural Proofing Guidance).

Section One:

Details of Service	
1.1	<p><i>Name and brief description of the service, policy or function:</i></p> <p>In April 2014, the Council approved a Comprehensive Review of Charging for Social Work Services to be undertaken.</p> <p>The remit of the Charging Review was set out and included charges and income from service users for all Social Work Services and its aim was to ensure that the project delivered a working solution. The project scope included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Engagement with key stakeholders, service users, elected members and other affected parties during the development stage. 2) Communication with key stakeholders, service users, elected members and other affected parties - relating to the good practice COSLA guidance. 3) Identification of national legislation, local guidance and policies that will impact upon this review. 4) Project considered charges for all Social Services, including Self-Directed Support, Children's Services, Transport and Housing Support. 5) Project aimed to make proposals to maximise the efficiency and income collection across all Social Work services and explored other possible solutions to income collection. 6) To ensure an understandable, fair and transparent policy clearly documented and owned by the service and its staff. 7) Identification of recurring savings target of £400,000, as outlined in the budget setting process, and set out mechanisms to monitor and achieve the target either by an increase in the level of income from charges or through efficiencies in processes. 8) Review of policies and documentation to ensure there are clear policies which are fair and equitable detailing what is chargeable (flat rate or financially assessed) and what services are non-chargeable. 9) Model the potential impact on sample service users groups receiving services, including the impact of Welfare Reform and potential risk of benefits changing in the coming years. 10) Review current processes relating to the assessment, collection and recovery of income.

1.2	<p>What are the aims and purpose of the service, policy or function? (<i>consider explicit and implicit aims and outcomes</i>)</p> <p>The Council has a responsibility to charge individuals for certain social work services and it therefore has a policy to support this. The current Social Work Charging Policy was introduced in 2010 and has been updated since then, most recently last year in line with national guidance. However, over the last few years there have been a number of changes to services and as a result the Council has decided to completely review the policy.</p> <p>The aim is to introduce a new policy that will be fair, easy to understand and to provide a system to ensure payments can be made easily. There is also a need for the Council to make sure it can continue to generate a fair level of income which will allow for services to continue to be provided.</p>
1.3	<p>Which groups or individuals have you involved or consulted with about your service, policy or function? (<i>see guidance: Issues you will need to consider when undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment.</i>)</p> <p>An Information Gathering Workshop was held early in the project attended by Council staff from Finance, Care Resource Team, Learning Disability Team, Appeals Panel, Adult Services, Children's Services, CCA Finance and Business Performance. This was a session aimed at gathering information about the current charging policy and its processes, and areas where potential improvements could be made and additional income generated.</p> <p>Meetings were held throughout May/June with relevant staff and other stakeholders from the following areas: Finance, Care Resource Team, Adult Services – Assessment & Case Management, members of the Appeals Panel, Welfare Benefits, Self-Directed Support, Mental Health, Housing with Care, Intermediate Care, Contracts, Children's Services, Bordercare, Borders Ability Equipment Store, Legal Services, Learning Disability and Borders Voluntary Care Voice (Voluntary Sector).</p> <p>A Core Group of key members of staff was established and has been meeting weekly since May 2014 to look at emerging themes, identify actions, and consider issues and to drive forward the project.</p> <p>A survey was developed and issued to service users and their families/carers asking for feedback on the current charging policy and processes. This gave individuals an opportunity to provide their views anonymously on the current charging policy and to make suggestions about what could work better. The survey and its covering letter were also made available in an easy read format for service users with a learning disability and/or literacy issues. A staff version of the survey was also developed. Overall there were 300 surveys returned.</p> <p>Throughout June, July and early August 2014 a series of Co-Production sessions were held across the Borders as part of the 'Stakeholder Engagement' phase of the project. These sessions involved service users, family members, carers and external providers, giving individuals an opportunity to participate in the development of the new Contribution Policy.</p> <p><u>The following Co-Production sessions were held:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Disability – Elders Locality Citizen Panel, The Hive, Galashiels – 24th June 2014 Mental Health – Consultation Café, Old Gala House, Galashiels – 7th July 2014 Learning Disability Day Services – Katherine Elliot Centre, Hawick – 8th July 2014 Older People in Community – Oakview Day Centre, Galashiels – 11th July 2014 Learning Disability – Brothers Of Charity "Checking it Out" meeting, Galashiels – 24th July 2014 Physical Disability – Ability Centre, Galashiels – 28th July 2014 Older People in Community – Deanfield Day Centre, Hawick – 4th & 5th August 2014 Older People Extra Care Housing – Friends of Dovecot, Peebles – 6th August 2014 Carers Centre – Eyemouth Carers Support Group – 6th August 2014

<p>Carers Centre – Hawick Carers Support Group – 7th August 2014 Learning Disability – Brothers Of Charity Service User/Families, Galashiels –11th August 2014</p> <p>External Organisations that were consulted include: Borders Voluntary Care Voice, Brothers of Charity, Borders Carers Centre, British Red Cross, Borders Independent Advocacy Service, Cornerstone, Encompass, Elder Voice and Neighbourhood Links.</p> <p>From the consultation with staff, survey returns, engagement with external organisations and the Co-Production sessions, key themes were identified, the analysis of which formed the basis of the new Contribution Policy.</p>
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Section 2: Assessing the Equality Impact of the Service Change

Please use the table below to assess the impact of the service, policy or function on different equality groups. Please mark negative or positive impacts for each equality group.

Equality Groups	Nature of Impact			Please set out details of negative and positive impacts
	Negative	Positive	No Impact	
Age: Effects on children, young people and older people	low	med	<u>high</u>	<p>In order to ensure fairness, the review considered all aspects of Social Work charging including the possible introduction of charges for young people, a possible introduction of some charges for older people, and a potential rising of charges for older people. The review concluded to not introduce charging for Children's Services.</p> <p>In the Scottish Borders, almost half (49%) of adult service users in receipt of social work services are older people (65+). Older people with assets accumulated over a lifetime may be in the most risk of having their charges increased by the changes. Whilst younger people may be more likely to be in receipt of Housing Benefit they may be more at risk of their charges increasing. Therefore, the policy will phase in financial assessments in line with Self-Directed Support guidelines to ensure that individuals do not have to contribute more than they can afford.</p>
Disability e.g. Effects on people with mental, physical, sensory impairment, learning disability, visible/invisible, progressive or recurring	low	med	<u>high</u>	<p>In order to ensure fairness, the review considered all aspects of Social Work charging and concluded a potential rising of current charges for disability groups. A large proportion of service users have some kind of physical disability, learning disability or mental health issue and therefore likely to be affected by any the changes to the Contribution Policy. However, it should be noted that changes will be mitigated by the financial assessment process to ensure they do not have to contribute more that they can afford.</p> <p>There is a possibility of some flat rate charges affecting this group, however the Council is committed to review and reconsider changes in circumstances where the person does not have the means to pay or has special circumstances which the Council have not been aware of. The appeals process is available for a person to have any of their charges reviewed including a waiver of charges. The Appeals Panel will consider appeals for all services including flat rate and assessable</p>

					<p>charges.</p> <p>Co-production sessions were arranged to be accessible for people with range of disabilities in venues that have disabled access – each session was hosted in established group meetings that service users are familiar with and on days/times that are already part of their usual pattern.</p> <p>A key recommendation from the charging review is to conduct a review of all charging communication, looking at how charging information is presented to service users - letters, leaflets, invoices, debt recovery letters, internet content etc. Drafts of all revised literature will be prepared and circulated to stakeholders for review, such as BVCV, Locality Citizen Panel, Carers Centre, Brothers of Charities, Cornerstone as well as services users and carers. Feedback will be collated and literature amended. Finalised leaflets and letters will be made available for those with a learning disability and/or sensory impairment, such as in an easy read format and large print.</p>
Gender: Effects on Male, Female, Transgender and Transsexual people	<u>low</u>	med	high		<p>The charging policy strives for equity; therefore there is no reason why a person would be charged more due to their gender.</p> <p>In the Scottish Borders the percentage of the population who provide unpaid care is 9.1%, (Scottish average is 9.3%). Nationally, 6 in 10 unpaid carers are female. There is a risk that if charges increase to an unaffordable level, service user may be unable to afford to pay for services, and in turn unpaid carers may end up bridging the gap for providing care, which would have a strain on the population of female unpaid carers. Male carers may be also be affected if there is a rise in the responsibility of providing care, information from the Carer’s Trust states that 56% of male carers aged 18–64 said being a carer had a negative impact on their mental health, and nearly half said that caring had a negative impact on their physical health.</p> <p>It is anticipated that these issues should be mitigated by the financial assessment process to ensure service users do not have to contribute more than they can afford. However, the number of unpaid carers and the amount of hours they care for, as well as the number of service users in receipt of services will be monitored before and after implementation to assess the impact of the new policy.</p>

<p>Effects on Race Groups: including colour, nationality, ethnic origins, including minorities (e.g. gypsy travellers, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers)</p>	<p><u>low</u></p>	<p>med</p>	<p>high</p>			<p>The charging policy strives for equity; therefore there is no reason why one race would be charged more than any other. However, a person's cultural background may mean that they are more likely to depend of family for care needs and this issue could be exacerbated if charges are raised.</p> <p>In addition, racial backgrounds of those taking part in the review's consultation was considered. For example, by ensuring that, if requested, literature could be made available in appropriate languages.</p> <p>The review has been mindful of service users' family support networks in relation to different racial/cultural groups, for example, service users who do not have a support network in this country, may be adversely affected if charges increase to an unaffordable level. They may feel unable to pay charges and if they do not have a support network to help them with their care needs, they may become isolated and vulnerable. This should be mitigated by the financial assessment process to ensure service users do not have to contribute more than they can afford.</p>
<p>Effects on people with Religious or other Beliefs: different beliefs, customs (including atheists and those with no aligned belief)</p>	<p><u>low</u></p>	<p>med</p>	<p>high</p>			<p>The charging policy strives for equity; therefore there is no reason why person would be charged more than any other because of their religion. However, a person's religious requirements may impact on their care needs and preferences regarding service delivery.</p>
<p>Effects on Sexual Orientation, e.g. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Heterosexual</p>	<p><u>low</u></p>	<p>med</p>	<p>high</p>			<p>The charging policy strives for equity; therefore there is no reason why a person would be charged more than any other because of their sexual orientation. However, a person's sexual orientation may impact on their care needs and preferences regarding service delivery.</p> <p>The review should be mindful of how the charging policy may affect the service users' sexual orientation, for example, if charges increase to an unaffordable level, service users without a family support network, may be adversely affected if they have no-one to rely on and may become increasingly isolated. This should be mitigated by the financial assessment process to ensure service users do not have to contribute more than they can afford.</p>

<p>Effects on Poverty Groups: (including impacts on communities in rural areas, people on low wages, who have literacy and other difficulties etc.)</p>	low	<u>med</u>	high			<p>Service changes will be mitigated by the financial assessment process, but there is a possible of some flat rate charges affecting this group. The Council is committed to review and reconsider changes in circumstances where the person does not have the means to pay or has special circumstances which the Council have not been aware of. The appeals process is available for a person to have any of their charges reviewed including a waiver of charges. The Appeals Panel will consider appeals for all services including flat rate and assessable charges.</p> <p>There are no recommendations that impact on the availability of service and access to service remains in place through transport provision, which will continue to be charged on a nominal flat rate basis rather than on mileage and therefore does not discriminate against service users in rural areas. The proposed move to a financial assessment model of contribution to a support plan based on affordability is a fair and equitable way to levy charges across all geographical areas.</p> <p>A key recommendation of the review is to conduct a review of charging communication, looking at all charging information - letters, leaflets, invoices, debt recovery letters, internet content etc. Drafts of all revised literature will be prepared and circulated to stakeholders for review, such as BVCV, Locality Citizen Panel, Carers Centre, Brothers of Charities, Cornerstone as well as services users and carers. Feedback to be collated and literature amended. Finalised leaflets and letters will be made available for those with a learning disability and/or sensory impairment, such as in an easy read format and large print.</p>
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<p>Effects on people with health problems/issues or needs (including those with recognised medical and mental health conditions). The effects on public health and the general health of the population caused by the service change should also be assessed here.</p>	low	med	<u>high</u>			<p>There will be a potential rising of current charges for this group.</p> <p>The review has been mindful of the stress and anxiety changes to the Charging Policy may cause service users. The health of service users with mental health conditions and those with medical conditions may worsen as a result of the stress, anxiety and uncertainties.</p> <p>The review will be looking to refine processes to be as efficient as possible as there has been an issue with delays in invoicing and collection of bad debt which service users have found anxiety provoking. The review will be looking to streamline processes where possible.</p> <p>The charging review recommended conducting a review of charging communication, looking at all charging information - letters, leaflets, invoices, debt recovery letters, internet content etc. Drafts of all revised literature will be prepared and circulated to stakeholders for review, such as BVCV, Locality Citizen Panel, Carers Centre, Brothers of Charities, Cornerstone as well as services users and carers. Feedback to be collated and literature amended. Finalised leaflets and letters will be made available for those with a learning disability and/or sensory impairment, such as in an easy read format and large print.</p> <p>These issues should be mitigated by ensuring all communication is clear and detailed, in plain English and sensitively written, with easy read formats available.</p>
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Section 3: Summary Findings of Equality Impact Assessment

3.1	<p>Please summarise the general impact of the service, policy or function and its impact on the equality groups:</p> <p>In order to address the national agenda of Personalisation and the Social Care (Self-Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 it is necessary to develop a new and updated policy which will enable individuals to make a contribution to their care while accessing other types of support in order to promote the achievement of agreed personal outcomes. The underlying principles of the policy must incorporate transparency, equity and ability to pay based on income maximisation. The updated policy will therefore remain consistent with COSLA and Scottish Government guidance on charging for Non-residential care and support services.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Council will continue to follow the Charges for Residential Accommodation Guidance (CRAG) in respect of charging for Residential Care in registered establishments. In the interim this will also hold true for respite care in registered establishments while the issue of funding respite under SDS regulations is clarified.</p> <p>In order to ensure fairness, the review considered all aspects of Social Work charging and concluded a potential rising of current charges for some equality groups. However, the effect of these changes will be mitigated by the financial assessment process to ensure service users do not have to contribute more that they can afford.</p> <p>With the roll out of Self-Directed Support, service user contributions will be calculated following a financial assessment and applied fairly and transparently, with income, savings, and capital taken into account whilst allowing a predetermined level of income for general living expenses as well as relevant disregards. Where a person has income below this amount, they will not be asked to make a contribution towards the cost of their care. Income maximisation will also be offered to ensure that all benefit entitlement has been applied for.</p> <p>To ensure there is continuity of resource leading up to January 2017, and to allow time for phasing in the policy and completing updated financial assessments for all service users, there will continue to be some flat rate charges which will be applied on an interim basis until the new Contribution Policy is phased in.</p>
3.2	<p>Please summarise mitigation actions to deal with negative impacts of the service, policy or function:</p> <p>There is a possibility that some of these flat rate charges will affect some of the equality groups, however the Council is committed to review and reconsider changes in circumstances where the person does not have the means to pay or has special circumstances which the Council have not been aware of. The appeals process is available for a person to have any of their charges reviewed including a waiver of charges. The Appeals Panel will consider appeals for all services including flat rate and assessable charges.</p> <p>Income maximisation will also be offered to ensure that all benefit entitlement has been applied for. This is particularly important in the light of the anticipated impact that Welfare Reform will have on service users.</p> <p>An early stage in the review process focused on stakeholder engagement, with a survey being developed and issued to service users, their families and carers to gather anonymous views on the current charging policy processes. Furthermore service users and carers were invited to take part in Co-Production sessions to provide feedback on the current charging policy, and have an opportunity to make suggestions for consideration.</p>

As part of the implementation of this policy, a series of information sessions will be held during November and December across the Borders region (stakeholder groups, local area forums, community councils) to update the public on the new Contribution Policy. Information will be made available via leaflets and on the SBC website. Social Work staff will be trained and able to provide correct information.

Service users and carers will be keen to understand the effects of the new policy, and therefore a phone line will be set up and Customer Services staff will be trained to answer queries. Individualised letters will be issued to service users prior to April 2015 to explain in detail what the changes will be. There will be a clearly defined timescale for the implementation of the new policy to give service users time to prepare for the changes.

All new referrals to Social Work are assessed using the SDS framework and existing users will gradually be transferred to this approach by January 2017 following individual service reviews. A financial assessment will be offered to all service users to ensure that they only pay what it is determined they can afford and will take into account income, savings, and capital, whilst allowing a predetermined level of income for general living expenses as well as relevant disregards. Where a person has income below this amount, they will not be asked to make a contribution towards the cost of their care.

Section 4: Signing off your Equality Impact Assessment

I confirm that this report is an accurate and correct account of the EIA findings for this service change and I am satisfied with the conclusion and outcome of the impact assessment:

**Agreed by
Manager or
Head of Service
or Directorate**

Name/Job Title:

**Jason McDonald
Senior Manager Business, Strategy & Resources**

Date: 13/10/2014

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) SUMMARY (Publishing Form)

Title of Policy/Function/Service:	Scottish Borders Council Social Work Contribution Policy for Non-Residential and Residential Care Services 2015/16
Directorate/Department: Head of Service:	Elaine Torrance
Telephone No: Email Address:	01835 825080
Names/ Job titles of Assessors	Frances Eneide, Project Manager
Summary of Policy / Service /Function aims:	<p>The Contribution Policy outlines the charges of Scottish Borders Council, Social Work Services, and explains how we will work out how much people who use our services will have to pay towards the cost of the services they receive. The policy covers non-residential and residential services.</p> <p>The policy is intended to help staff, service providers, people who use our services and other interested groups to understand how we will calculate the cost of services and charges to be applied.</p>
<p>Strands Impacted:</p> <p>Please note: If you leave any box blank in this section you will have decided that your proposed service or function has no impact on that particular strand.</p>	<p>Age <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Sexual Orientation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poverty/Social Exclusion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
Summary of key issues arising and decisions made	<p>In order to ensure fairness, the review considered all aspects of Social Work charging and concluded a potential rising of current charges for some equality groups. However, the effect of these changes will be mitigated by the financial assessment process to ensure service users do not have to contribute more that they can afford.</p> <p>To ensure there is continuity of resource leading up to January 2017, and to allow time for phasing in the policy and completing updated financial assessments for all service users, there will continue to be some flat rate charges which will be applied on an interim basis until the new Contribution Policy is phased in.</p> <p>There is a possibility that some interim flat rate charges will affect some of the equality groups; however the Council is committed to review and reconsider changes in circumstances where the person does not have the means to pay or has special circumstances which the Council have not been aware of.</p> <p>The appeals process is available for a person to have any of their charges reviewed including a waiver of charges. The Appeals Panel will consider appeals for all services including flat rate and assessable charges.</p>

Summary of key recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a Contribution Policy based on service user contributions to their Self-Directed Support (SDS) plans. 2. Contributions will be determined on a financial assessment of income. 3. Financial assessment of income will be phased in between April 2015 and January 2017 as SDS is mainstreamed. 4. Charging for service users already in receipt of SDS will commence on 1st April 2015, and will be based on the financial assessment of their income. 5. Some flat rate charges will remain until service users are moved on to SDS. 6. Some flat rate charges will remain in place once all service users are moved to SDS (meals, transport, Bordercare Alarm, Housing Support and Housing with Care). 	
Agreed by Head of Directorate	Name:	Date:

**For further information, a copy of the full assessment or if you require this information in an alternative format or language please contact:
Equality & Diversity Service, Business Improvement Unit, Scottish Borders Council HQ, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA. Tel: 01835 824000**