



**HEALTH SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
NON-RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL SERVICES CHARGING
TASK AND FINISH GROUP - 9TH JANUARY 2013**

SUBJECT: CONSULTATION WITH SERVICE USER GROUPS

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update Members on the outcome of the consultation carried out with service users groups.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 This report summarises the consultation responses received from groups representing service users and carers. This followed on from previous consultation with service users during autumn 2012.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent Assembly legislation.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee carried out consultation with service users in the autumn of 2011. It was agreed that further consultation would be carried out with groups representing service users and carers. Unfortunately this was delayed due to the local government elections in May 2012.

4.2 In order to carry out the consultation a questionnaire was devised (appendix 1), which asked similar questions to those put to service users in 2011. In order to make contact with relevant groups GAVO were asked to circulate to an established list of groups known to support health and social care users and carers.

4.3 The questionnaire was sent to 31 contacts, (appendix 2) and they were given one calendar month to respond. In total 4 responses were received, giving a response rate of 13%. The responses are set out in the following table:

Group	Responses
Older people	2
Learning disability	1
Physical Disability or Sensory impairment	1
Mental Health	0
Carers	0
Total	4

The responses received are outlined as follows:

4.4 Charges for Home Care, Supported Living and Day Care

Comparison of CCBC charges with neighbouring local authorities (as at April 2012):

Local Authority	Home Care Hourly Charge	Supported Living Hourly Charge	Day Care Attendance Daily Charge
Caerphilly	£6.57	£6.57	£1.62
RCT	£11.13	£11.13	£12.97
Merthyr Tydfil	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00
Monmouthshire	£10.85	£10.85	£10.85
Newport	£11.35	£11.35	£34.52
Torfaen	£12.50	£12.50	£31.20
Bridgend	£13.00	£13.00	£24.50 to £33.40
Blaenau Gwent	£16.25	£16.25	£46.43

4.5 The questionnaire asked 'At what level do you think these charges should be set?' The following responses were received:

4.6 Home Care and Supported Living

50% of the respondents answered that charges for home care and supported living should be set at £10 and under per hour, 25% said charges should be between £10 and £20 per hour, and the remaining 25% stated that charges should be in the band of £20 to £30 per hour.

4.7 Day Care

50% of the respondents think that charges for day care should be set at £10 and under per day, 25% said charges should be between £20 and £30 per day and the remaining 25% think that charges should be £30 to £40 per day.

4.8 Comparison with other Councils

The questionnaire asked 'When compared with the other Councils please indicate where you think Caerphilly County Borough Council should be?' The following table outlines the responses received:

Charge Level	Responses
Minimum	1
Average	3
Higher	0

4.9 Previous consultation with service users included the following responses on this issue:

- **Learning Disabilities (30 consultees, 1 response)** - The client felt that charges should be set at what people can afford at an average
- **Older People Group 1 (20+ consultees)** – they declined to give a response.
- **Older People Group 2 (15+ consultees)** - Overall the group felt that they shouldn't pay for care when in most cases they had worked hard all their lives and paid their way. The group was surprised that CCBC was significantly lower than some neighbouring local authorities, charges should be kept as low as possible.
- **Visual Impairment group (18+ consultees)** - The charges should reflect the current economic climate and the fact that many people find it difficult to manage, charges should be kept as low as possible.

4.10 Charges for Extra Care and Community Living Scheme

The questionnaire included a comparison of charges for extra care service and community living scheme with neighbouring local authorities, as detailed in the following table:

	Extra Care Services	Community Living Scheme
Caerphilly	No Charge	No Charge
RCT	No service provision	£11.13
Newport	£11.35 per hour	£11.35
Monmouthshire	£10.85 per hour	£10.85
Torfaen	£12.50 per hour	£12.50
Bridgend	£13.00 per hour	£13.00
B. Gwent	£16.25	£16.25

4.11 The questionnaire asked *'Do you think it is reasonable for the Council to charge for Extra Care and /or Community Living Scheme?'* The responses received were:

- Yes
- They should charge if people can afford it
- Provided the person has the ability to pay and there is a maximum weekly charge
- Yes, as long as the service user can afford to pay

4.12 The questionnaire asked *'Do you consider that the Council should make charges for these services, if yes, how much do you think they should charge?'*

Three respondents stated that charges should be under £10 per hour, and one that charges should be between £10 and £20 per hour

4.13 Previous consultation with service users included the following responses on this issue:

- **Learning Disabilities (30 consultees, 1 response)** - There should be a charge for the services.
- **Older People Group 1 (20+ consultees)** - General surprise that there are differences between services. Strong feeling from the group that all service users should be treated equally, fairly. They felt that any charges should be on ability to pay and that some services users should not be at a disadvantage because of the type of service they receive.
- **Older People Group 2 (15+ consultees)** - Initially some of the group thought that LD service users shouldn't have to pay. However the general view then changes and most agreed that charges to all service users should be fair. It was felt to be unfair to provide services to some service users free of charge and charge other when both are probably on benefits.
- **Visual Impairment group (18+ consultees)** - The majority (1 dissention) agreed that where services can be charged for it should be equal for all services, all groups of people (if they have been assessed as able to pay) should contribute equally.

4.14 **Waiving of Charges**

The questionnaire asked *'Are there any exceptional circumstances where the Council should consider waiving charges for a limited period, e.g. to assist hospital discharge for someone with a terminal illness?'* The following responses were received:

- Each case needs to be looked at individually and decisions based upon specific circumstances.
- Yes I agree, a time span of 2-4 weeks for hospital discharge and free for someone with a terminal illness.
- Possible complex needs only if they can't afford.
- Yes.

4.15 Previous consultation with service users included the following responses on this issue:

- **Learning Disabilities (30 consultees, 1 response) - Yes**
- **Older People Group 1 (20+ consultees) - Unanimous opinion that in situations where someone is terminal and needs urgent care that the Council should not make the situation more difficult by carrying out financial assessments etc.**
- **Older People Group 2 (15+ consultees) - No response**
- **Visual Impairment group (18+ consultees) - The group agreed that in exceptional circumstances (terminal illness) that the Council should be able to use discretion and delay or disregard charges and assessment process.**

4.16 **Including Savings in Calculating Contribution to Pay**

The questionnaire asked *'CCBC is one of only 3 Councils in Wales who do not include capital and savings when calculating charges; do you think the Local Authority should include capital and savings when calculating a contribution towards charges?'* The following responses were received:

- Yes - to be equitable with other authorities
- Yes
- No
- No - I don't, as I don't think people should be penalised for saving or buying a house!

4.17 Previous consultation with service users included the following responses on this issue:

- **Learning Disabilities (30 consultees, 1 response) - No**
- **Older People Group 1 (20+ consultees) - The majority were of the opinion that if £22k was the threshold that it wouldn't affect most people and therefore couldn't see a problem. One person did state that people who have saved all their life shouldn't be penalised.**
- **Older People Group 2 (15+ consultees) - The majority said no and 1 person said yes.**
- **Visual Impairment group (18+ consultees) - No**

5. **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the Council's EqIa process does not need to be applied.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been contained in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That the task and finish group consider the responses received.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To inform the review of non-residential social services charging.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, Non-residential Social Services Charging Task and Finish Group Questionnaire
Appendix 2 - Survey distribution list