

# SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## 16<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015

### Introduction of a new charge for a placement into a flexi-bed in a Care Home

#### To consider and comment on the following issues:

- Consider whether a charge should be introduced for a placement into a flexi-bed in a care home and if a charge is to apply then whether the charge should be a fixed charge with no financial assessment or a charge directly linked to a financial assessment.

#### Reasons:

- To introduce a new charge for a placement into a flexi-bed in a Care Home.
- The attached report was referred back from Full Council to the Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee to consider the report further.
- To formulate views for consideration by the Executive Board/Council.

**To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: NO**

**Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Jane Tremlett (Social Care & Health)

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| <b>Directorate:</b><br>Communities<br><br><b>Name of Head of Service:</b><br>Rhian Dawson<br><br><b>Report Author:</b><br>Lyn Walters | <b>Designations:</b><br><br>Interim Head of Integrated Services<br><br>Senior Business Support Manager (Social Care) | <b>Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:</b><br><br>01267 228900<br><a href="mailto:rhian.dawson@wales.nhs.uk">rhian.dawson@wales.nhs.uk</a><br><br>01267 228768<br><a href="mailto:dlwalters@sirgar.gov.uk">dlwalters@sirgar.gov.uk</a> |
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
16<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Introduction of a new charge for a placement  
into a flexi-bed in a Care Home**

Members will be aware that the attached report (Appendix 1) was presented to Executive Board on 15th June 2015 and Executive Board unanimously resolved to recommend to Full Council.

2.1. that residents who are assessed as needing a care home placement based on the flexi-bed eligibility criteria and reasons are charged for the service from the first day of admission;

2.2. that the CRAG [Charging for Residential Accommodation Guide] rules are applied to the placement and that residents are charged based on a financial assessment from the date of admission and not charged a flat rate for the service;

2.3. that the eligibility criteria and reasons/purpose for accessing a flexi-bed remain unchanged;

2.4. that the new charge be implemented from 3rd August 2015.

The report was subsequently considered at Full Council on 8th July 2015 and the minutes and decision of Full Council was:

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 15th June, 2015 (Minute 6 refers), had considered a report on a proposal to amend the current policy on charging for residents placed into a care home by introducing a charge for placement into designated flexi-beds (which facilitated hospital discharge and prevented hospital admission) in care homes from the first day of admission.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations of the Executive Board be accepted.

The following amendment to the Motion was proposed by Councillor B.A.L. Roberts:-  
'That the report considered by the Executive Board, together with the Board's recommendations, be referred to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee for consideration.'

The Amendment was duly seconded.

A number of statements were made in support of the Amendment.

Following a requisition by more than ten members in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.4 a recorded vote was taken with the votes cast being as follows:-

For the Amendment – 50

Against the Amendment – 0

Abstention – 0

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Amendment to the Motion be supported.**

Council thereupon proceeded to vote on the Substantive Motion.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Substantive Motion be adopted and that the report considered by the Executive Board, together with the Board's recommendations, be referred to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee for consideration.**

Charging for a placement into a flexi-bed in a Care Home was proposed in September 2014 as part of the Department's budget proposal for the year 2015/16. The proposal was consulted upon as part of the budget consultation that took place for the Authority and the results can be seen in Appendix 2. This proposal was considered and approved by members, as part of the Authority's budget approval, at Full Council on 24th February 2015.

The content of the attached report gives an explanation of the service and the Department's proposals/recommendations.

Members need to be aware that if a charge is being considered then there are generally two alternatives.

A flat rate charge – the regulations allow for a flat rate charge to be applied for up to the first 8 weeks of any placement. The level of the charge is at the discretion of the Local Authority. The charge could therefore be set to maximise income or to align with charges for non residential service users or something in between to comply with the regulations. However the charge should be set at an amount that is reasonable for the resident to pay. The flexi bed policy currently allows for a free service for up to 6 weeks.

The second alternative, which is the one recommended in the attached report, is to offer a financial assessment (means test) to everyone and the amount someone will pay will be linked to what they can afford. This means that individuals will be charged different amounts for the same services and the charge could range from £17.96 per night (£125.70 per week) to £83.41 per night (£583.88 per week).

If members decide not to charge for this service then there will be a shortfall of approx £73K in the Department's proposed budget efficiencies and this will need to be funded. There is no current provision in the accounts for this shortfall.

The budget projections were predicated on an August implementation date following Council's budget decision in February this year. Every month of delay will result in an additional overspend of £6k per month for the Department in this financial year.

**DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?**

**YES**

# IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: Rhian Dawson Interim Head of Integrated Services

| Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities | Legal | Finance | ICT  | Risk Management Issues | Staffing Implications | Physical Assets |
|---|-------|---------|------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| YES                                     | NONE  | YES     | NONE | YES                    | NONE                  | NONE            |

## 1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The Department has, within its own care homes, designated flexi-beds and this service is currently free for up to 6 weeks for any one placement. This decision was reconsidered and reaffirmed in July 2014 when Council approved and updated a policy on charging for residents placed into a care home.

This report amends the current policy and introduces a charge for placement into designated flexi-beds from the first day of admission, however the purpose of the service and eligibility to access the service will remain as originally approved.

## 3. Finance

Implementing a charge from the first day of a placement into a flexi-bed based on the 'temporary' rule in CRAG will generate approximately £73K per annum. It will also add work to the existing Financial Assessment Team.

If a charge is not approved or approved at a lower figure then there will be a shortfall in the Department's proposed budget efficiencies and this shortfall will need to be funded differently.

There is no current provision in the accounts for this shortfall.

## 5. Risk Management Issues

The main risk is that prospective residents will not take up a flexi-bed service because of a charge and therefore put themselves at risk or access an alternative service which may be more costly but is free to the service user. These free services may be delivered / provided by our partner agency Hywel Dda Health Board. It may also increase admissions to hospital or delay discharges or result in service users accessing other Social Services because the service has a lesser charge.

# CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: Rhian Dawson

Interim Head of Integrated Services

1. Local Member(s) – N/A
2. Community / Town Council – N/A
3. Relevant Partners – N/A
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information**  
**List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

**THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW:**

| Title of Document   | File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection  |
|---|---|
| Introduction of a new charge for a placement into a flexi-bed in a care home (County Council – 8th July 2015)   | <b>Report:</b><br><a href="http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/COCO20150708/SUM08_02.HTM">http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/COCO20150708/SUM08_02.HTM</a><br><b>Minutes:</b><br><a href="http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/COCO20150708/MINUTES.HTM">http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/COCO20150708/MINUTES.HTM</a> |
| Introduction of a new charge for a placement into a flexi-bed in a care home (Executive Board – 15th June 2015) | <b>Report:</b><br><a href="http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/EXEB20150615/SUM06.HTM">http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/EXEB20150615/SUM06.HTM</a><br><b>Minutes:</b><br><a href="http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/EXEB20150615/MINUTES.HTM">http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/EXEB20150615/MINUTES.HTM</a>       |