



Nottinghamshire
Learning Disability and Autism
Partnership Board

Nottinghamshire County Council
Adult Social Care,
Health and Public Protection

Additional meeting of the Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board



Date :
Thursday, 20th December 2018



Venue :
Everyday Champions Centre
Newark



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Who came to the Meeting

Stuart Wallace	Chair / Councillor, Nottinghamshire County Council
Steve Vickers	Councillor, Nottinghamshire County Council
Yvonne Woodhead	Councillor, Nottinghamshire County Council
Paul Henshaw	Councillor, Nottinghamshire County Council
Paul McKay	Deputy Director, Nottinghamshire County Council
Paul Johnson	Service Director – Strategic Commissioning, Adult Access and Safeguarding, Nottinghamshire County Council
Konrad Bakalarczyk	Access Officer - Nottinghamshire County Council
Mandy Snowden	Personal Assistant to Adult Social Care and Health Service Directors

Nottinghamshire County Council Board Representatives

Ainsley MacDonnell	Service Director - North Nottinghamshire & Direct Services, Nottinghamshire County Council
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Carer Representatives

Adrian Hartley	Carer Representative
Dianne Neal	Carer Representative
John Parrott	Carer Representative
Marek Melges	Carer Representative

Service Users and their Support Workers

Eddie Moorcroft	Service User
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Parent Carers

John Belcher	Parent Carer
Margaret Belcher	Parent Carer
Diane Evans	Parent Carer
Alyson Fisk	Parent Carer
Hedley Harrison	Parent Carer
Louise Harrison	Parent Carer
Julie Hartley	Parent Carer
Christine Martin	Parent Carer

Providers / Other Attendees

Amanda Allport	Nottingham Mencap
Neil Pike	ROB Ollerton and Boughton Recycling
Bridgette Shilton	Team Manager – Adult Care Financial Services Nottinghamshire County Council

Press Officers (part of meeting)

Kit Sandeman	Nottingham Evening Post
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Apologies - Who could not come to the Meeting

Alan Rhodes	Councillor, Nottinghamshire County Council
Tony Harper	Councillor, Nottinghamshire County Council
Sheila Place	Councillor, Nottinghamshire County Council
Muriel Weisz	Councillor, Nottinghamshire County Council
Ruth Harrison	LD (IDD) Specialist Nurse & Team Leader, Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Michaela Le Bail	DOSH
Helen Scaman	Service Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council
Naomi Russell	Group Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council

1. Welcome and Introductions

Ainsley MacDonnell welcomed everyone to today's additional meeting of the Learning Disability & Autism Partnership Board.

Colleagues on the top table introduced themselves: Councillor Stuart Wallace, Councillor Steve Vickers, Paul McKay, Ainsley MacDonnell, and Paul Johnson.

Ainsley MacDonnell explained that today's meeting was an additional meeting to those which normally take place and was being held following a specific request from Board Members to continue discussions about changes to what people pay towards their care and support.

Ainsley MacDonnell gave an outline of the agenda for today....

- Update
- Session to Provide Answers to Questions
- Session to Provide Answers to Previous Carers Questions
- Session to give details of where People can go for Support

Ainsley MacDonnell said the Ground Rules for the meeting are available for everyone to look at (on tables). She said it is important for people to follow the rules.

Ainsley went through the ground rules to remind everyone.

Ainsley MacDonnell said it is important to see there is a distinct absence from service users today. She said they had specifically elected not to come due to feeling uncomfortable at the last meeting.

Ainsley MacDonnell said that Konrad Bakalarczyk, instead, will be holding a separate session at their Service User Forum.

Ainsley MacDonnell said, again, for everyone to please take note of and stick to the ground rules. She handed over to Councillor Stuart Wallace.

Councillor Stuart Wallace thanked everyone for coming today.

Councillor Stuart Wallace said he was here today to give people an update on the decision previously made regarding people's contribution to their care and support.

Councillor Wallace said there are many challenges the Council have faced and are still facing. He talked about the high demands for services needing to be provided, whilst we also have reductions in funding as well.

Councillor Wallace said there is an increase of 4.5% of people who are 85 and over each year. He said we now support more people than ever before. Next year costs will rise by £7.5 million and over the next few years the Council will be short by £64 million.

Councillor Wallace said unlike the NHS who are able to roll-over any overspend into the following financial year, we are unable to do this. This is because as a Council we have a legal responsibility to have a balanced budget.

Councillor Wallace said the Policy Committee which took place on October 2018 agreed for the proposed changes to contributions to go ahead. He said he wanted to reassure everyone the decision which had been made to do this was a difficult one.

He said this decision was within government guidelines and other similar, local authorities have done the same thing.

Councillor Wallace said carers and many others had expressed great concern and were upset about the increase in the cost of care and the start date for these changes to take effect.

Councillor Wallace said he accepted the criticism about the suddenness of notification. He gave his sincere apologies to people for this.

Councillor Stuart Wallace said he supports the Policy and why we need to do this. He added that the information sent out was not clear and people didn't understand, and he apologised for this.

Councillor Wallace said we have listened to and read what people have said. He said the Government have given us a one-off funding amount of £9.5 million and we are able, therefore, to now use some of this money to change the timescales for the changes to contributions to care. He added that this one-off funding is not just for Adult Social Care.

Councillor Wallace said Carers and Service Users will now be given more time to adjust and get support to understand what is happening.

He said people identified to make a payment towards the cost of care for the first time or face an increase in contributions, will now have until April 2019. In April people will be asked to pay part of their new contribution, with full contributions being made from November 2019. The new contributions will be phased in two parts, not all at once.

Councillor Wallace said Nottinghamshire County Council have always made it clear that people will get help and support from Adult Care Financial Services. This is to ensure people are receiving the right benefits and the maximum entitlements.

He said it is essential that we do ensure all Service Users are accessing the benefits they are entitled to receive. He said there are colleagues here today for people to talk to about this and their own circumstances.

Councillor Stuart Wallace said if there is anyone who is having great difficulty, please talk to us. He said we will look at individual circumstances, we have professional support here – we will work with people.

Councillor Wallace said people need to record their income and expenditure; to tell us the full details. We can then look at this and ensure people can afford care costs.

Councillor Wallace again urged people to come and talk to us. He said we fully recognise that needs change all the time (some monthly) and some do not. He said we are not always aware of the changes.

Ainsley MacDonnell thanked Councillor Stuart Wallace and said we would now go into a question and answer session and handed over to Paul Johnson to continue.

Paul Johnson firstly apologised for having to leave the last meeting early. He thanked people for the questions they had raised at the last meeting and said that Konrad Bakalarczyk and Mandy Snowden had collated these for today's meeting.

Paul Johnson said he will be going through the questions and answers with people today. He said the questions and answers will be circulated at a later date.

Paul Johnson said there are a lot of questions and answers to go through, some will be quick and some answers more complex.

Paul McKay checked, at this point, that everyone was okay with what has been said so far.

Dianne Neal said today is an opportunity for Nottinghamshire County Council to respond and for people to comment further.

Ainsley MacDonnell said the questions had been ordered together into common themes, which would make it easier to answer and for people to understand.

Paul Johnson went through the questions and answers.

1. Why were the letters not sent out in easy read?

Paul said care was taken in writing the letters (to use plain English) and it was felt an easy read version was not required. He said the documents for the consultation had been supplied in easy read. He added that we will take every opportunity to learn from the feedback given.

2. Why can't the Finance team talk in easy read?

Paul said although every effort was taken to produce the letter in plain English, it is a complex issue to explain. He said we will take opportunities in the future to involve more Service Users in producing letters and documents, before they are sent out. We will endeavour to do this wherever possible.

3. Are the Council confident that the information sent to people meets the legal requirements under Accessible Information Standards? People are telling me they do not understand the letters sent to them.

Paul said it is a complex topic and apologised if people felt anxious, did not understand and also had difficulty in trying to contact us. He said we will take back what people said, look at this and work with colleagues to review language used.

Paul explained that we try whenever we can to use plain language so that people supporting individuals will be able to explain information.

Paul said he will answers questions 4a and 4b together.

4a. Is there a list of people who have received a letter? This is so we can check where the letter has been sent to. If sent to parents, why don't I know about it?

4b. I haven't had a letter. I don't know if it's gone to my parents.

Paul apologised if letters had not gone to where people expected. He explained that the letters go to the nominated person on our records.

Paul said for people to let us know (Adult Care Financial Services) if you need a copy of correspondence. He said, occasionally, it is possible that we may have incorrect names and addresses – we need people to tell us if changes need to be made.

5. How many people got through to the phone lines? Can we have a clear plan with phone numbers so people know who to call to ask for a re-assessment and who can help them.

Paul said we have received over one thousand five hundred calls (contacts). He said we have 4 dedicated telephone lines set-up to take calls and we still have these.

Paul acknowledged that lots of people had problems initially trying to get through due to the number of calls being received and apologised for people having difficulty in contacting us.

Paul said that people can also make contact with our Customer Service Centre as well (alternative number to dial – 0300 500 80 80). If the Customer Service Centre are not able to answer a query directly, they will take a message and pass this on to the right people in Adult Care Financial Services. Paul added that a call will be returned within 7 days and will be the same day, if we are able to do this.

Paul added that people can also contact the Customer Service Centre if they would like a review of care and support needs and are looking to be put in touch with the appropriate social care team to support with this.

Paul said if this situation occurs again, we will be better prepared and ready.

6. When will letters go out? If they are before Christmas, will adequate phone support be in place over the Christmas period?

Paul said letters regarding telling people the change in the start date is now being put back have been sent out this week.

Paul said the letter will inform people about the outcome of the committee meeting, what their payment or contribution will be until the policy starts to be implemented in April 2019.

This will be Phase 1. He said a further letter will be sent which will provide people with a minimum of 6 weeks' notice of any change to the payment or contribution they will need to make from April 2019.

Paul said if people need to call us when they receive the letters, there will be enough phone lines available.

Alyson Fisk talked about the Direct Payment letter and asked if this payment will be put back to what it was.

Paul said, yes, and added that managed services will get a different letter.

It was asked what days the telephone lines would not be available during the Christmas and New Year period.

Paul Johnson said the lines would not be manned during Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Ainsley MacDonnell thanked people for their questions and asked if any further questions could be asked at the end of this session as there are a lot of questions you sent in to answer and get through.

7. No explanation on the letter how to pay.

Paul said some people had not paid a contribution before and that we do recognise that not enough information was given to people. He said the Council does advise service users on payment options and we will make sure that details are provided in future and will make this clear in letters.

8. Could the roll out of letters be staggered so that there is not a bottleneck of calls and queries inundating phone lines?

Paul said the roll-out of letters in October were staggered, but there were so many of them. He said there were 3 different letters and they were sent out over a short period of time.

Ainsley MacDonnell asked if there were any additional questions or comments relating to this first set of questions and answers.

Julie Hartley talked about Direct Payments being put back to what they were and for people to get a refund back for any additional payment they have already made.

Julie also said she had telephoned 3 weeks ago and asked for a formal assessment and is still waiting for the forms – not yet received. She said the direct payment is on hold until everything has been sorted out correctly.

Paul said Bridgette Shilton (Adult Care Financial Services) can take these queries away with her today, look into it and will contact Julie as soon as possible.

Eddie Moorcroft mentioned a number of letters that have been sent and received by people this year. He said that no one can understand them and someone at the Council should look at what is being sent out before it is signed-off.

Ainsley MacDonnell said this is a really good point and also a learning point. Ainsley said the Council, has a whole, needs to make sure information is understandable and in easy read format. She also said this is something we need to continually work on.

Dianne Neal said letters about charges are so important to people. She mentioned the Plain English Campaign (crystal mark) and that this would have saved a lot of money.

Dianne also said it had been awful and upsetting for people to receive letters and then not to be able to understand them.

Ainsley MacDonnell acknowledged what Dianne had said and asked if there were any other questions.

Eddie Moorcroft said he needs specific information in letters which relate to him and also where he lives.

Paul McKay said he hears what Eddie is saying and apologised for any upset and distress the letters had caused. He said, going forward, we will make sure we will work with people to ensure information is understandable.

Alyson Fisk said that this point has been raised before and you have still not got it right. She asked how we are going to ensure things will change.

Ainsley MacDonnell said she agrees and added that Adult Social Care & Health absolutely needs to be sending out information to people that they can understand. Ainsley said she would take personal responsibility to make sure this is done and for Adult Social Care & Health to lead the way.

Bridgette Shilton said we do make efforts to get the letters checked and circulate to people before sending out but will take back feedback and widen this process.

Konrad Bakalarczyk said himself and service users are keen to get involved in process.

Paul McKay said the key messages are that we hear what people are saying and will take back feedback to look at. He said we need to ensure documents are sent out in a format that people can understand and for service users to be more involved in the process of checking correspondence before it is circulated.

Ainsley MacDonnell thanked people for their questions and for being patient. She said we will now give answers to questions 9 to 14 and handed over to Paul Johnson.

9. It takes time to work out the cost of disability.

Paul Johnson talked about the feedback from service users, carers and other people. He said it has been recognised that sufficient time is needed to adjust to changes and the Council have agreed to put back the implementation of charges to April 2019. He said the changes will be introduced in 2 phases – one in April and the other in November.

Paul said this should now give people time now to discuss details with Adult Care Financial Services, complete the income and expenditure forms and make adjustments to household budgets.

10. Define assessment, not just running existing figures through a computer.

Paul said initial calculations of revised contributions are run through the computer (this is called an automated process). He said where people feel information produced is incorrect, they will be able to provide new, updated details. He added that people can have another financial assessment carried out, which for the majority is completed over the telephone.

11. How long will the re-assessment take?

Paul said re-assessment will take approximately 3 to 4 days. He explained that Bridgette Shilton's team receive new information and then it takes 3 to 4 days for this to be processed and worked out.

12. The software being used to calculate the assessment – is it accurate and up-to-date? There seems to be a number of appeals that have since been upheld thereby inferring the software is wrong. This creates additional cost to the Council.

Paul said that some formal assessments have to be changed manually as our computer system cannot do automatically. He said these show up as an appeal or waiver on the financial assessment notification.

Paul said Nottinghamshire County Council will be moving over to a new computer system that will resolve above.

Paul mentioned that we had the wrong financial information for 2% of assessments and we had to make some corrections. We think that we mostly got it right.

13. Can the Council not make any decision regarding individual contributions until there has been an opportunity for all service users/representatives to have made their concerns known and had their questions answered?

Paul Johnson said we have heard the feedback from service users, carers and other people who provide support. Councillors deciding to change the implementation to April 2019 will now give people time to raise their concerns and have any questions answered. He also said it will give us time to look at individual circumstances, person by person, if needed.

14. Why did they not train Social Workers, Community Learning Disability Team's staff to answer questions? Have Social Workers and support staff had adequate training to help support the people they work with and provide help and guidance where needed?

Paul Johnson said we did share information about the consultation with staff, however, we acknowledge that this did not always help staff to answer questions put to them. He said that more information could have been provided and this has now been actioned and has been given to teams working in social care.

Paul talked about financial assessments and said because of their specialist nature, these will continue to be dealt with by Bridgette Shilton's team. This will be by Financial Assessment Officers in the Adult Care Financial Services Team – contact number: 0115 804 3862. He said it would not be right to place this with social workers as they would only be able to give broad details.

Ainsley MacDonnell asked if there were any additional questions or comments relating to this second set of questions and answers.

Adrian Hartley talked about the consultation question and it identifying that no changes would be made until everyone had had an assessment. He said letters had come out with various details that were incorrect, e.g. benefit related. He also said the information which came out should have been about doing new assessments and we should not be contacting Nottinghamshire County Council asking for these to be done.

Paul Johnson said over 7,000 people are receiving services and only about 2% of information is different; the majority being up-to-date. He said we can never be fully up-to-date as people's circumstances change.

Paul said we wouldn't have sent out invoices if we knew the information we currently held was incorrect. He said we will make corrections where they are needed and make sure we use the most relevant information at the time.

Adrian Hartley said letters arrived on a weekend and this did not give people the opportunity to discuss changes being made or to have an assessment. They were close to some people's payment dates.

Paul Johnson said he accepts that some people did receive letters very close to their payment date and apologised for this, and also for letters which were received over a weekend. He said we are able to make corrections in 3 to 4 days.

Alyson Fisk said that she agreed with Adrian's comments. She talked about the assessment form and raised that it is not a good form as it does not cover lots of expenses for someone with learning disabilities living at home. She said at the end of the form, it has an area for disability related expenses for which no details are given. She said extra wording could be included, so people have guidance of what can be included in this section. Alyson said the form is unfair and needs to be looked at.

Alyson said the assessment questions need to be asked by someone who understands; as the relevant knowledge. She emphasised again that Nottinghamshire County Council really, really need to take a good look at this form.

Neil Pike said for some parts of the assessment form, you do not know what to put on the form. He said people will, therefore, end up not giving the full information they need to and paying more than they should and put themselves in trouble; this is a big concern.

Christine Martin said she has not heard about the assessment form and has not received any information.

Paul Johnson acknowledged what people were saying and said we will look at the form and promise to make sure in future letters that information is given for people to include additional information. He said this can be done over the telephone when speaking to our advisers, or by including (writing) information on the assessment forms. He further said we are more than happy to review all the information people provide to us.

Bridgette Shilton said she will take all the comments on board and look at what people have said.

Christine Martin asked for clarification of what is going to be happening in April 2019.

Paul Johnson said letters will be sent out 6 weeks in advance of April 2019 date, which will tell you the minimum income guarantee has changed. He said people will receive individual letters about the contribution level and the same will happen before phase 2 in November 2019.

Adrian Hartley said he is concerned about service users having no one to help them. He said it is not always possible for people to have conversations over the telephone and least of all understand what they are being told.

Adrian talked about people with learning disabilities usually attending a service, but not now being able to go as cannot afford this. He said Providers would normally be keeping an eye on people and they will now be losing this contact / support. He said these people cannot be forgotten about.

Paul Johnson said an answer to Adrian's comments is coming up later in the meeting. Ainsley said this will be in the response to question 24.

John Parrot said there was no mention in the telephone call that you can appeal, or any mention of an assessment form being sent out.

John said the whole thing has been totally miss-managed and the assessment form should have been sent out with the original letter.

Paul Johnson acknowledged what John had said.

Paul asked that people complete the income and expenditure form as soon as possible. He said Bridgette Shilton's team look at and carry out assessments all year round.

Alyson Fisk mentioned the financial assessment and she said if you do persist, people will come out to you as well. Alyson said it is not made clear that people can come out and see you to complete the form.

Dianne Neal talked about it being mentioned how important benefit advice is but stating that Nottinghamshire County Council's benefit department has depleted significantly.

Paul Johnson acknowledged Diane's comment and said Bridgette Shilton's team is bringing in £35,000 extra benefit to people every week from people talking to her team. He mentioned a small number of extra applications being referred to Welfare Rights.

Dianna Neal asked if this is a specialist team / department.

Paul Johnson said it has 3 people with specialist knowledge.

Bridgette Shilton said we listen and support with whatever needs to be done. She said we do benefit checks.

Dianne Neal asked why we have depleted the department dealing with benefits.

Paul Johnson said Bridgette's team is now dealing with most benefit issues.

Paul McKay summarised and said that feedback will be taken back and looked at. He emphasised that people need to ensure they complete the financial assessment form and receive all the help needed to do this. He said that we do have people available to offer advice and support.

Ainsley MacDonnell thanked people again for their questions and patience. She said we will now give answers to questions 15 to 18 and handed over to Paul Johnson.

15. The most disabled are worse off.

Paul Johnson talked about changes and these changes having seen Nottinghamshire County Council adopt the Department of Health and Social Care guidance.

Paul said this is about the benefits that councils can take into account and the Minimum Income Guarantee levels that can be applied when calculating what a person can afford to contribute to their care.

Paul said this was taken in the context of financial pressures being faced. He said we need to ensure the fair distribution of funding across all care services.

Paul said this will mean more people will be asked to contribute and pay a bit more. He added that we will work with people to ensure they are only asked to contribute what they are able to afford.

16. Why is all (my) funding assumed to be available for the Council?

Paul Johnson said calculations do take account of other costs. He talked about the twenty pounds a week additional disability related expenditure allowance the Council provides. He said if this is not sufficient to meet people's needs, you can discuss with social worker and request an income assessment / increase. He added that Nottinghamshire County Council also makes an allowance for housing cost that are not covered by housing / council tax benefit.

17. We need to know where the money is going. Can the public see the December 10th committee information?

Paul Johnson said, yes, the public can see minutes of the 10th December committee meeting; they are available on the internet.

Paul said the money will help to meet the Council's funding gap and help the Council to maintain vital services.

Paul also talked about extra expenses (costs) being incurred for people in hospital care and in services for higher needs.

Paul said extra money / contributions being spent on services that are highly valued. He mentioned investing in a new Newark Day Service.

18. Will this funding go to Health or other reduction in PIP, Universal Credit?

Paul Johnson said, no, it is not paid for things Health should be funding (paying) for themselves. He also said it is not to offset Universal Credit.

Ainsley MacDonnell asked if there were any further questions or comments relating to this section.

John Parrot asked if the money is going to be ring-fenced for Social Services.

Councillor Stuart Wallace said he cannot give a full answer to this question. He said our budget is set in February each year, to start in April of each year. He said there is a set number of operations and activities for which money is spent on.

Councillor Wallace said money will go into the Health and Social Care budget (mentioned operational costs).

Paul McKay said the money goes towards helping the Council to provide care – it will be included in the gross total that goes into the Council's overall budget.

Ainsley MacDonnell said when the budget is set, this is calculated on how much money you need and how much income is being received (contributions). She confirmed income is not ring-fenced or offset against anything else.

Paul Johnson acknowledged that is difficult to accept.

Councillor Stuart Wallace mentioned having a budget to use of £127 million pounds for residential care. He talked about figures relating to staff leaving care and recruitment costs / training. Also mentioned Newark being the highest place in Nottinghamshire for +85 years care and increasing costs relating to higher complex care needs.

Councillor Wallace mentioned Adult Social Care & Health being in the position of having an underspend this year and that money will be going into services for everyone.

Ainsley MacDonnell moved on to the final section of questions and answers. She handed over to Paul Johnson to give details.

19. Why were carers questions not answered?

Paul Johnson said it had not been possible to provide answers to questions before the Committee meeting in October, as the answers were going to be determined by the talks at that meeting.

Adrian Hartley said, no, it was answers to the 5 questions prior to the last Board meeting.

Paul Johnson said he would answer questions 20 and 21 together.

20. Does the Council have risk assessments for this decision including possible impact on people's mental and physical well-being (e.g. not having physical exercise, reduced community contact, not accessing services, less healthy diet)?

21. Should you have done risk assessments on each individual?

Paul Johnson said an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and is available for people to look at on the Council's website. He said the EIA considers the impact (what the effect could be) of the policy change on groups of people with protected characteristics. These include age, disability, gender and said that this was rather than on individual service users.

Paul said these changes only alter the way the Council calculates for people to contribute to their care costs (it looks at what they can afford). He said it **doesn't** impact on the amount of care provided.

Paul said that the Council will continue to work with people, so it can ensure individual support needs are identified and met.

Paul talked about the level of contribution people being asked to pay being based on the financial assessment outcome. He said this is a complex situation and we need to look at individual circumstances and we do need to talk to people to make sure we get it right.

22. How will people affected by this who are not at the meeting have a choice to have their say, ask questions and find out what is happening?

Paul Johnson said every service user who receives social care support either in the community or at home will receive a letter.

Paul said for people not able to attending meetings, the letters will provide contact numbers and explain where to get help. He emphasised again that everyone will receive a letter.

23. Are people losing the benefit of having the higher rate of their care component?

Paul Johnson said we are no longer able to ignore this higher rate of benefit as we are adopting the Department of Health & Social Care guidance. He said everyone will, however, be able to talk to us on an individual basis to request a financial assessment review to ensure they will be paying the right amount.

24. What staff resources will be needed to ensure that people who withdraw from our services will be followed up?

Paul Johnson said that Nottinghamshire Council had identified some one-off funding. He mentioned £35,000 being used for resource needs to support Adult Care Financial Services (ACFS), Benefits and Reviewing Teams.

Paul added that it is anticipated that the same amount of money will be required next year to support the phased implementation of the revised policy change.

25. How is the £20 per week allowance (Disability Related Expenditure) calculated? What do you expect it to include? Can we have a suggested list? Carers sometimes don't realise the full extra costs they incur.

Paul Johnson said the Council allows everyone a £20 a week allowance over and above the Minimum Income Guarantee before asking anyone to contribute towards their care needs.

Paul said the Care Act gives guidance. He said we will get these put into the minutes – see following details...

The Care Act Guidance provides this a suggested process/list:

39) Where disability-related benefits are taken into account, the local authority should make an assessment and allow the person to keep enough benefit to pay for necessary disability-related expenditure to meet any needs which are not being met by the local authority.

40) In assessing disability-related expenditure, local authorities should include the following. However, it should also be noted that this list is not intended to be exhaustive and any reasonable additional costs directly related to a person's disability should be included:

- 1. (a) payment for any community alarm system.*
- 2. (b) costs of any privately arranged care services required, including respite care.*
- 3. (c) costs of any specialist items needed to meet the person's disability needs, for example:*
 - 1. (i) Day or night care which is not being arranged by the local authority*
 - 2. (ii) specialist washing powders or laundry*
 - 3. (iii) additional costs of special dietary needs due to illness or disability (the person may be asked for permission to approach their GP in cases of doubt)*
 - 4. (iv) special clothing or footwear, for example, where this needs to be specially made; or additional wear and tear to clothing and footwear caused by disability*

5. (v) *additional costs of bedding, for example, because of incontinence*
6. (vi) *any heating costs, or metered costs of water, above the average levels for the area and housing type*
7. (vii) *occasioned by age, medical condition or disability*
8. (viii) *reasonable costs of basic garden maintenance, cleaning, or domestic help, if necessitated by the individual's disability and not met by social services*
9. (ix) *purchase, maintenance, and repair of disability-related equipment, including equipment or transport needed to enter or remain in work; this may include IT costs, where necessitated by the disability; reasonable hire costs of equipment may be included, if due to waiting for supply of equipment from the local council*
10. (x) *personal assistance costs, including any household or other necessary costs arising for the person*
11. (xi) *internet access for example for blind and partially sighted people*
12. (xii) *other transport costs necessitated by illness or disability, including costs of transport to day centres, over and above the mobility component of DLA or PIP, if in payment and available for these costs. In some cases, it may be reasonable for a council not to take account of claimed transport costs – if, for example, a suitable, cheaper form of transport, for example, council-provided transport to day centres is available, but has not been used*

13. (xiii) in other cases, it may be reasonable for a council not to allow for items where a reasonable alternative is available at lesser cost. For example, a council might adopt a policy not to allow for the private purchase cost of continence pads, where these are available from the NHS

41) The care plan may be a good starting point for considering what necessary disability-related expenditure is. However, flexibility is needed. What is disability-related expenditure should not be limited to what is necessary for care and support. For example, above average heating costs should be considered.

26. No change in payments to over 65s – why is this?

Paul Johnson said there are no changes to minimum income guarantee, the level of £189 will remain. He said this is because it already reflects the national guidance.

Paul said that some people, however, will be affected by the inclusion of the higher rate of disability benefits in the calculation of the contribution they will be asked to make.

Paul Johnson said he would answer questions 27 and 28 together.

27. Please can people, families and carers have signposts to services that have capacity and experience to help people understand and manage the significant cut in income? For some people this is a cut of a 1/3 in income.

28. I do not understand the changes, who will help me with this?

Paul Johnson said a single sheet of information has been prepared for people to take away with them today, which contains information and details.

Dianne Neal mentioned Advocacy2Engagement and for us to check what they can actually offer regarding support to service users. She said what they said they could offer at the last meeting would be very limited. This is because of the number of staff the organisation has, how busy they are with their own business. Bearing this in mind asked if they can be taken off the list.

Paul Johnson said Supported Living should be able to sign-post people back. It is part and parcel of what they should be doing.

Paul also said for people to please shout up if they need any help and advice.

29. Transport is cancelled but the payment doesn't include this cost. Do carers have to pay transport?

Paul Johnson said that transport is only provided in exceptional circumstances. If included, a flat fee of £9.00 per return journey to a service is charged. He said that this does not form part of the financial assessment of care and support needs and is calculated separately.

It was noted that the charge is more if it includes a journey to a separate service. It was explained this means if someone is not returning to the same departure point. Paul also said all transport is subsidised by the Council.

People who don't pay the transport charge

1. *The charge will not be made if the service user gives 48 hours' notice of cancelling the journey, either by contacting their Council service or the Transport and Travel Service directly. If the journey is missed due to emergency hospital admission or death of the person, the charge will be withdrawn, once information about this situation is received by the Council (ACFS).*
2. *Some people are exempt from any transport charges. These are people who have:*
 - *transport assistance to attend services provided as aftercare under Section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983*
 - *Creutzfeldt Jacob Disease (CJD)*
 - *transport funded 100% by the NHS or another public body (e.g. Nottingham City Council)*
 - *been granted exemption from the charge as a result of becoming a new user of County Council transport when transferring day service locations, caused by the Day Service Modernisation Programme (2011-2013).*

30. Is the Direct Payment to cover monthly or daily or weekly? Do we still pay when on holiday and not attending services?

Paul Johnson said the Direct Payment is paid in advance every 4 weeks. He said if a service has not already been planned, people will not get charged.

Bridgette Shilton said that people will not have to pay if we cancel and confirmed that bills come out every 4 weeks.

John Parrot talked about a register being taken and whether people should pay if they are off, but not sick.

Bridgette Shilton explained that payment is only cancelled (adjusted) if it is an emergency or people are in hospital. She said that Adult Care Financial Service (ACFS) need to be notified and given notice of 48 hours, this is what the policy says....

1.1 Personal Contribution to a Personal Budget

If people are assessed as being able to afford to contribute, they need to understand that their personal contribution is charged by ACFS through an invoice, every week for 52 weeks per year. If any repayment is due, this repayment will be paid back either on a quarterly, half-yearly or annual basis. They will receive a personal budget statement which will confirm any reduction.

Repayments for non-attendance at day service will only be made if:

- The service is closed, for example on a bank holiday.*
- The person was admitted to hospital and the day service was told about this*

- *The person was attending an outpatient appointment and the day service was told about this*
- *The person could not attend due to receiving outpatient care for diagnosis or treatment, relating to a specific illness or disability, and has told the day service about this*

If the person attended a day service during a period of respite care (see 4.3), for reasons necessary to the stability of their care, then he/she will not be charged twice (i.e. for the respite care and the day service).

Neil Pike said that Providers will be expecting payment whether or not a service user attends, as staff are already in paid and in place to provide that service.

Paul Johnson said for a person using Direct Payment / paying the bill, they will have periods of non-attendance at a service and will still need to pay.

31. No account for rurality.

Paul Johnson said the Minimum Income Guarantee levels are the same nationally. He said there are no account taken for rurality.

Ainsley MacDonnell gave an opportunity for people to ask any further questions.

Dianne Neal said she was still unsure about the process for April and November.

Paul Johnson said you will be written to individually telling you if there is a change to your contribution. If the letter says there is a change to your contribution the change will start from 8th April 2019. This will not be for the full amount as we want to give people time to adjust to the changes to the money they will have to spend. This is Phase 1 of the change.

Paul said in October, final calculations will be made ready for Phase 2 in November. This is when full changes come into effect start. He said Bridgette Shilton's team will sort out contribution levels.

Dianne Neal said everyone is expected to pay something from April.

Paul Johnson said, no, some people will still have nothing to pay, but others will see a difference, some will pay smaller amounts, some bigger amounts.

Eddie Moorcroft asked if it could be clarified that everyone will receive a new letter.

Paul Johnson said, yes.

Christine Martin asked when people will get an assessment.

Paul Johnson advised for people to make contact with Bridgette Shilton's team straight away and they sort this out.

Christine mentioned the higher rate of disability allowance being taken into account. She said this money belongs to individuals who need it and it is not for Nottinghamshire County Council.

Christine said she does not understand why the Government give this higher rate and then Nottinghamshire County Council take it away.

Paul Johnson said if people can afford to contribute, they will need to.

John Belcher mentioned £20.00 to £25.00 to get more benefit?

Bridgette Shilton said that people should put down everything – we need to see everything. We have guidance that tells us what we can include, and that staff will work to when calculating your contribution.

Alyson Fisk talked about her Freedom of Information Request (FOI) and expressed dis-satisfaction in response received.

Paul Johnson said we established that there were at least 10 to 12 authorities making changes to payments.

Alyson Fisk said that this is not many.

Paul Johnson said that there are 152 local authorities altogether.

Alyson Fisk said the answer is that you don't know the actual figure. Alyson said that 10-12 authorities is not 'most or the majority.' You can't say this when 10-12 out of 152 was the actual number you looked at. This is misleading people. She talked about the consultation and said that people had made a decision on being given inaccurate information.

Paul Johnson said it is a considerable number of local authorities (similar size to Nottinghamshire) and other councils are looking at making this change as well.

Paul McKay said many local authorities have already introduced changes and he confirmed that we have not contacted all 152 local authority areas.

Alyson Fisk said you cannot give us definitive details.

John Belcher said you are saying a significant number and asked what percentage.

Paul Johnson said numbers related to local authority areas with similar demographics (meaning similar size and budgets). Information received are from a broad range of people – this suggests, it is a significant number.

John Belcher mentioned delivering guidance before meeting.

Ainsley MacDonnell said many other organisations work within the Department of Health guidelines and said we can endeavour to get the information, but it will not change the decision that has been made.

John Belcher talked about people voting without having important information.

Paul McKay summarised in that people have talked about all sorts of things and mentioned other local authorities being very similar in size to Nottinghamshire County Council.

Adrian Hartley talked about there being lots of reports in the press relating to the amounts of money people are having to pay (mentioned £56.55 per week and many paying over £100).

Bridgette Shilton said she didn't know where the figures mentioned in the press came from.

Dianne Neal said that the more disabled you are, the more you will be asked to pay.

Paul McKay said we cannot comment on what is in the press.

Paul Johnson and Bridgette Shilton confirmed that each person's circumstances are looked at on an individual basis to inform any level of payment that is needed to be made.

Paul Johnson said 42% of people will not need to pay.

Christine Martin asked about how many people had cancelled services and said that she would like a home visit, so circumstances can be fully taken into account and form completed accurately.

Paul Johnson said 10 people (service user) had made a decision to cancel services and each individual had been followed-up.

Ainsley MacDonnell thanked everyone for coming to today's meeting, for their questions and responses. She said everyone will be looked at individually and there were common themes which had come out of discussions.

Ainsley MacDonnell said if people have concerns, to please make contact and talk to people. She said that Bridgette Shilton will be available in the Coffee Shop afterwards, if anyone wishes to stay and talk to her.

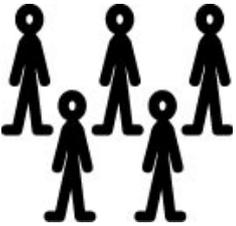
Ainsley MacDonnell said we will get the notes from this meeting typed up, which will include answers to the questions, and circulate as soon as possible.

Ainsley closed the meeting at this point.



Dates for Meetings in 2019:

- Thursday, 24th January 2019
- Thursday, 21st March 2019 (this date may change)
- Thursday, 23rd May 2019
- Thursday, 25th July 2019
- Thursday, 26th September 2019
- Thursday, 28th November 2019



All meetings will take place in the Champions Suite, **Everyday Champions Centre**, Jessop Close, Brunel Close, Newark, NG24 2ER from 10 am until 12.30 pm



The website is at:

<http://www.everydaychampionscentre.org.uk/newark>

Meetings are public, so anyone can come along and see what we do.

For more information about the Partnership Board, please visit our website at:

www.nottscountypb.org