

POSSIBLE CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL'S

NON-RESIDENTIAL CARE CHARGING POLICY

DISABILITY RELATED BENEFITS

CONSULTATION METHOD

16 AUGUST – 16 OCTOBER 2017

1. The council recognised the importance of consulting as widely as possible on its proposal to change the council's non-residential care charging policy by including disability related benefits at the higher or enhanced rate as part of a person's means tested financial assessment. In order to do this, and following previous well engaged consultation exercises, it was decided to continue a consultation partnership with People Matter IW. In this partnership arrangement, People Matter IW agreed to:
 - Facilitate a user led focus group to ensure the letters, survey and background information were easily understood;
 - Receive calls and visit service users who requested support completing the survey;
 - Receive back completed paper responses; and
 - Ensure all paper responses were accurately recorded in the online survey.
2. In addition, the council also offered a dedicated phone line support to assist people with the survey.
3. In order to ensure that the consultation was both meaningful and easy to understand the specific words used in the background information and questions were agreed by a user led focus group facilitated by People Matter IW prior to the consultation period. This followed the lessons learned from previous consultations that the council undertook on changes to its non-residential care charging policies between 1 April and 31 May 2014 (changes to the way the council assessed service users' entitlement to disability related expenditure) and 2 March – 30 April 2015 (how to assess charges for respite care and sitting services).

4. The council used information held on its social care database to write to 900 relevant service users, or people identified as being responsible for dealing with service users' finances, offering them the opportunity to complete a consultation questionnaire or access it online via the council's website iwight.com. The number of service users who were sent a letter and questionnaire was slightly smaller than that reported to Cabinet on 15 June 2017 due to a thorough data quality check which ensured that letters were not sent to people who were no longer receiving these services or who were exempt from charging. A council telephone support number and the support of People Matter IW were also given should anyone need any help to complete the questionnaire.

5. In addition to consulting directly with people who would possibly be affected by the proposals, it was felt important to also consult with key stakeholders including carer's groups. This was undertaken by direct contact through People Matter IW. Town and Parish Councils were also offered the opportunity to respond.