

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00891 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Social Work Adult Services None	Lead Officer Name:	Clair Devlin
		Team:	Social Work Adult Services
		Tel:	07843 022 623
		Email:	clair.devlin@falkirk.gov.uk
Proposal:	Review of charges/charging policy 2025/26	Reference No:	

What is the Proposal?	Budget & Other Financial Decision	Policy (New or Change)	HR Policy & Practice	Change to Service Delivery / Service Design
	Yes	Yes	No	No

Who does the Proposal affect?	Service Users	Members of the Public	Employees	Job Applicants
	Yes	No	No	No

Other, please specify:

Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):

01/04/2025	Review of charging policy and implementation of inflationary uplifts to residential and non-residential care charges. Efficiency proposal towards addressing 25/26 budget gap.

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:	n/a	
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:		
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:		
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:	£1.55m	
	Expected Annual Income Total:	£2.44m	Benchmarking carried out with other HSCP's. Of the 12 respondents, 6 do not have a cap on charges and the remaining 6 do. Of those with a cap the lowest was £78.40 per week and the highest £121.25 per week. Some authorities do not have a cap and charge up to the full cost of the service subject to financial assessments. Should this proposal be implemented Falkirk would still have the lowest charge per week for non residential care amongst those authorities who submitted benchmarking data on request.
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:	01/04/2025	
	End Date (if any):		

SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)

A - Quantitative Evidence This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

952 service users are currently subject to non residential non personal care or day care charges. MECS charging information is shown on separate EPIA for that purpose.

Of the 952 in total, 489 are older people and the remaining 463 are adults with a learning disability/physical disability or mental health condition.

B - Qualitative Evidence This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.

Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other

For older [people](#):-

-The capped charge for non residential care for adults over the age of 65 will rise to £33.60 (from £17.75)

-The current weekly charge of £7.15 for non personal care and support will change to an hourly charge of £13.55, to bring this in line with the charges for under 65's. There has been an inequity in this approach for a number of years.

-Daycare charges will rise from £6.45 per week to £6.80 per week

Effect of [increases](#):-

42 users will have an increase up to £20 per week (day care and non personal care)/ 27 of these users also affected by MECS charges

258 users will have an increase of £26.45 per week (more than 2.5 hours of non personal care per week due to the change to an hourly rate) - still capped at £33.60 per week. 168 users will also be affected by the MECS charges therefore this would increase their charges by £31.45 per week.

14 users will have an increase of £6.40 per week (1 hour of non personal care)

66 users will have an increase of £19.95 per week (2 hours of non personal care)

109 users will have an increase of £0.35 per week (Daycare only)/ 70 of these users also affected by the MECS charges

All non personal care charges (excluding MECS should the proposal for MECS be approved) still capped at £33.60 per week for adults over the age of 65

For adults under 65:

-The current capped charge of £34.15 per week will rise to £50 per week

-The hourly rate for non personal care will rise from £12.90 per hour to £13.55 per hour (5.4%)

-The day care rate per week will rise from £34.15 to £36.00

Maximum effect for adults under 65 is £15.85 increase per week (excluding effect of MECS proposal)

361 users will have an increase of £15.85 per week (currently paying max charges for one or more services (some will be affected by MECS charges also - 51 users)

45 users will rise by £1.85 per week (4 also affected by MECS charges)

34 users will rise by £1.30 per week (4 also affected by MECS charges)

23 users will rise by £0.65 per week (1 also affected by MECS charges)

All non personal care charges (excluding MECS should the proposal for MECS be approved_ still capped at £50 per week for adults under the age of 65

Residential in house fees increasing by 5% to £1,114.05 per week for Burnbrae, Cunningham House, Grahamston and Summerford. (affecting 103 current residents)

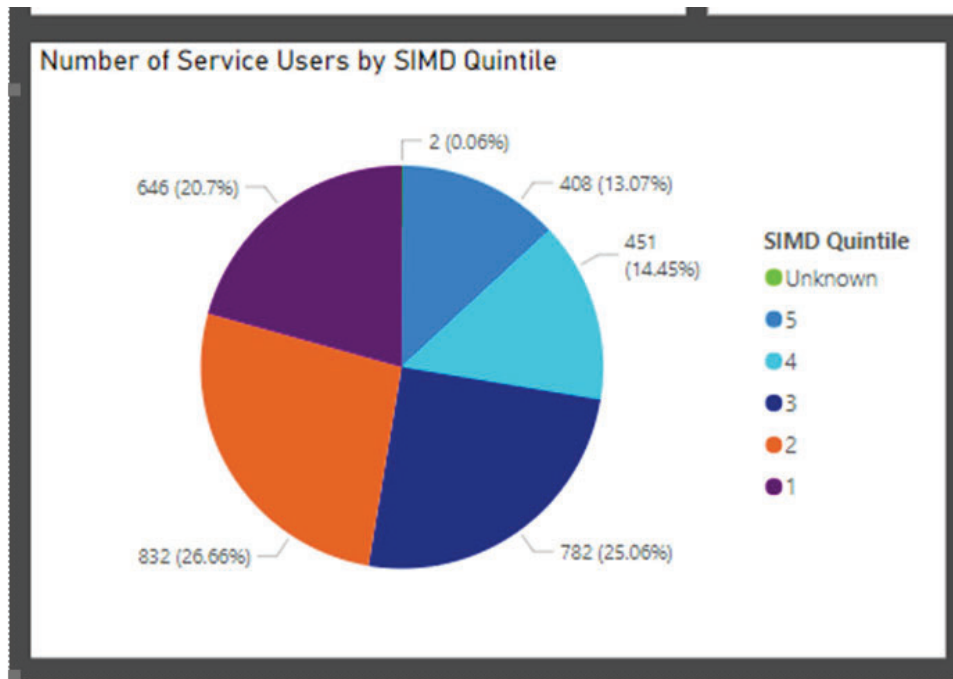
Housing with Care meal [charges:-](#)

Breakfast charge from £1 to £2 per meal

Lunch charge from £2.40 to £3.75 per meal

Tea charge from £1.15 to £1.50 each

An analysis of our service users by SIMD Quintile is shown below (this will related to all service users including those with free personal care which is not chargeable)



Best Judgement:	
Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?	No
Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?	
What gaps in data / information were identified?	There are some gaps in data across some protected characteristics as the data in relation to charges is not held to that level of detail
Is further research necessary?	No
If NO, please state why.	Not proportionate to carry out further research at this time. Included in public consultation exercise and some data is provided in this regard in the following sections

SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT**Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place**

Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?	Yes	
If YES, please state who was engagement with.	Public consultation exercise taking place for budget proposals between 17th January and 25th February 2025. Engagement with Carer's voices, Happy Mondays, ADP AVG group, drop in sessions at three libraries amongst others taking place. Extract of information to date for social care charging proposals provided within this EPIA	
If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.		
How was the engagement carried out?	What were the results from the engagement? Please list...	
Focus Group	No	
Survey	Yes	Participate Plus 17th January to 25th February 2025. Results to date included here as at 7th Feb 2025.
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	Yes	Public engagement for overall proposals was undertaken in Library sessions with two held to date and another to take place week beginning 10th Feb 2025
Other: please specify	Results have not been fed back to participants as yet. Once consultation closes Participate plus will be updated with results for info, and those who requested feedback will receive it.	
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	No	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	No	
Is further engagement recommended?	No	

SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

Equality Protected Characteristics: What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
Age			✓	<p>4 out of 8 respondents in the over 65 age bracket indicated a significant of some impact/the other 4 stated no impact. For under 65s of 72 people who indicated their age bracket was under 65, 52 indicated some or significant impact. 20 indicated no impact.</p> <p>Older people are more likely to experience financial disadvantage than the others in the population, as such any increase in charging may impact on this group.</p>
Disability			✓	<p>Of 66 respondents who indicated they had a disability, 28 indicated there would be significant impact, 19 stated some impact and the remaining 19 indicated no impact therefore the majority indicated a negative impact. Of the 60 people who responded in relation to their disability, 20 indicated they had no disability, 15 had multiple conditions and the rest were spread over sensory impairment, learning disabled, long term conditions, mental health conditions and physical disability.</p> <p>People with a disability are more likely to be in receipt of benefits and reliant on welfare support, therefore may be negatively impacted by this proposal.</p>
Sex			✓	<p>61 respondents completed the information related to sex and 24 indicated a significant impact, 19 some impact and 18 indicated no impact. Respondents identified as female (47) and male (14).</p> <p>Older age groups are more likely to be female than male, there may be an impact on this group from this proposal.</p>
Ethnicity	✓			<p>61 people completed the data in relation to ethnicity, with 54 identifying as White Scottish with 24 indicating a significant impact, 19 some impact and 18 no impact. Of the remaining respondents (7), 5 indicated there would either be significant or some impact.</p>

Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:				
				of respondents (33) indicated they had no religion and there was a fairly even spread across all other categories.
Sexual Orientation	✓			58 people completed their sexual orientation with 54 indicating that they were straight/heterosexual. 21 in total indicated a significant impact, 19 some impact and 18 no impact.
Transgender	✓			No respondents identified as transgender
Pregnancy / Maternity	✓			None
Marriage / Civil Partnership	✓			The majority of respondents were married 38/61 with an overall 25 respondents indicating a significant impact, 19 some impact and 17 no impact
Poverty			✓	51 respondents completed the information in relation to benefits, 47 stating they were not entitled to state benefits. 22 indicated there would be a significant impact, 14 some impact and 15 no impact.
Care Experienced	✓			27 of 65 indicated that they were care experienced. Of the 27, 14 indicated a significant impact, 9 some impact and 4 with no impact.
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.	✓			Carers, - 108 respondents indicated that they were Carers, with 47 indicating a significant impact, 29 some impact and 32 showing no impact from this category
Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)	There could be a risk that referrals for income maximisation may cause some pressure on staff in this area with 1.0 WTE dedicated to this function at present. This will require to be closely monitored. There may be a risk of non collection of charges should the proposal be approved. A 20% allowance has been made in this regard.			
	Evidence of Due Regard			
Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):	Support will be available for income maximisation and users will be able to request a financial assessment for charges to arrive at the affordable amount in relation to their income. A waiver process will be available for anyone in particular financial difficulty on production of appropriate information.			
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	Previous charging policy treated under 65s differently from over 65s, with over 65s charges significantly lower than those of under 65s in relation to non personal care charges. These proposals create more equity in relation to the non personal care hourly charges. Capped charges are still different but will be considered going forward in relation to the overall SDS policy.			

Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):

SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project?		Describe the interest / affect.
Business	No	
Councils	Yes	Other authorities will also be considering similar proposals. Benchmarking has been carried out via IJB CFO network.
Education Sector	No	
Fire	No	
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	Yes	IJB proposals
Police	No	
Third Sector	Yes	Our third and voluntary sector have been asked to take part in the consultation with information sharing regularly taking place
Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.		

SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

Mitigating Actions: If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Identified Impact	To Who	Action(s)	Lead Officer	Evaluation and Review Date	Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes
Negative	All Service users	Notify all of those affected with 4 weeks notice of any changes being implemented. Offer financial assessments to anyone who requests them and also refer for income maximisation on request. Waiver available where significant financial impact (to be approved by Head of Service and CFO)	Marie Keirs	13/12/2025	

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

Are actions being reported to Members?	No
If yes when and how ?	

SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

No major change required	No	
The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups	No	
Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups	Yes	Negative impacts have been indicated. The overall assessment in relation to benchmarking data shows that Falkirk has charges significantly lower historically. These proposals will still mean that Falkirk has one of the lowest charging policies in comparison with benchmarked areas therefore is assessed as appropriate with the mitigating actions in place.
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature:	<i>Marie Keirs</i>	Date:	09/02/2025
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SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA: Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties?	Yes
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ASSESSMENT FINDINGS If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA	Sufficient engagement and data evidence within EPIA document
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Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>?	Yes	If YES, please describe: Appropriate level of engagement carried out. Proposals still indicate a lower than average charge for Falkirk.
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LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA

LEVEL		COMMENTS
HIGH	Yes	Majority of respondents indicated a significant impact however mitigating actions described within EPIA and overall proposals still indicate a lower than average charge for Falkirk in comparison with other HSCPs.
MEDIUM	Yes / No	
LOW	Yes / No	

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:			
Signature:	<i>Gail Woodcock</i>	Date:	12/02/2025