

## **Item: 10**

**Policy and Resources Committee: 24 November 2020.**

**Telecare Services – Proposed Introduction of Charges.**

**Report by Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care.**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To consider introducing charges for Telecare services delivered by Orkney Health and Care.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Committee is invited to note:

#### **2.1.**

That, on 14 November 2019, the Orkney Health and Care Committee recommended that consideration of introducing charging for Day Care and Telecare services be deferred, to enable the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care to submit a Strategic Charging Policy for social care services, in line with COSLA guidance and best practice.

#### **2.2.**

That, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, day services have been closed and, although some of these services are reopening, this is on a much reduced capacity basis and therefore it is proposed that charging for these services should not be pursued at this time.

#### **2.3.**

That, although a Strategic Charging Policy can be developed, the policy could not currently be implemented, as detailed information in relation to individual service users is not easily accessible.

#### **2.4.**

That, once the issues regarding extracting detailed information in relation to individual service users has been addressed, a charging policy will be presented to the Committee.

#### **2.5.**

That, as charging for Telecare services is proposed at a flat rate per week, introducing such a charge will not impact any future charging policy.

**It is recommended:**

## **2.6.**

That, with effect from 1 January 2021, a flat rate charge of £3.50 per week be introduced in respect of Telecare services provided by the Council.

## **3. Introduction**

### **3.1.**

Within the “COSLA Charges Applying to Non-residential Social Care Services” the following services are chargeable:

- Care at Home (including Supported Accommodation, Supported Living, and Housing Support Services).
- Day Care.
- Community Alarms and Telecare.
- Laundry Services.
- Meals on Wheels
- Lunch Clubs
- Aids and Adaptations
- After Care Services for people with a mental illness
- Care and Support Services for those who have or have had a mental illness (in or not in hospital)
- Transport.

### **3.2.**

At present, the Council does not charge for the following services:

- Day Care attendance or services provided in lieu of day services, although service users pay for meals that they receive.
- Community Alarms and Telecare.
- Aids and Adaptations.
- After Care Services for people with a mental illness.
- Care and Support Services for those who have or have had a mental illness (in or not in hospital).
- Transport.

### **3.3.**

On 14 November 2019, the Orkney Health and Care Committee noted:

#### **3.3.1.**

That, on 6 June 2019, the Orkney Health and Care Committee recommended that the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care should undertake a consultation on the proposal to introduce the following charges:

- Day Care – £5 per day.
- Telecare – £3.50 per week.

### **3.3.2.**

That consultation had been undertaken in respect of the proposal to introduce charges for Day Care and Telecare services, as detailed in section 4 of the report by the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care, with the full range of responses attached at Appendix 1.

### **3.3.3.**

That those service users who indicated a wish to cease their Day Care and/or Telecare services due to the introduction of charging would be offered an opportunity for a case review and financial assessment, including income maximisation.

### **3.4.**

The Committee recommended that consideration of introducing charging for Day Care and Telecare services be deferred, to enable the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care to submit, to the next meeting of the Committee, a Strategic Charging Policy for social care services, in line with COSLA guidance and best practice.

### **3.5.**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, day services have been closed since March 2020 and, although some of these services are reopening, this is on a much reduced capacity basis and it is therefore proposed that charging for these services should not be pursued at this time.

## **4. Consultation**

### **4.1.**

Principal stakeholders in the consultation process for charging for Telecare and Day Care were identified as:

- Individuals who use services (including Direct Payment recipients in lieu of Day Care)
- Families, friends and carers of individuals who use services
- Staff.
- In addition, the views of the broader public were sought via the Orkney Opinions network.

### **4.2.**

The principal methodology for engagement was a published survey, made available in electronic and paper versions. This was sent directly to principal stakeholders. In addition, input was sought from the Third Sector via Voluntary Action Orkney, where the survey featured extensively on their web page and was distributed by social media.

### **4.3.**

A total of 203 surveys were received. There were 132 responses submitted via the online Smart Survey platform, with 71 responses received in paper format. All of the responses are detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.

### **4.4.**

Almost half of respondents said that they did not agree with the proposed charges for either Day Care or Telecare, with just over a third of respondents saying that they agreed with the proposals; the remaining respondents indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

### **4.5.**

Detailed analysis of responses revealed that those who identified themselves as receiving services, or those supporting people receiving services, felt more strongly that no charges should be introduced. Those who did not indicate a direct relationship with either Day Care or Telecare services were more likely to respond favourably to the proposed charges.

## **5. Proposed Charges**

### **5.1.**

Faced with significant reductions within public sector funding, it is essential that services try to ensure frontline services can be maintained wherever possible. The budget simulator exercise which was carried out until November 2016 evidenced that some people would be prepared to pay for Council services to minimise the scale of the budget reductions required.

### **5.2.**

At present Telecare is provided free of charge. The introduction of charges is in support of being able to continue to provide services at a sustainable level.

### **5.3.**

The current cost of providing Telecare is on average £2,041 per week. However, it should be noted that these calculations do not include any costs incurred where the responder service is the acting keyholder.

### **5.4.**

A benchmarking exercise on Telecare charges was carried out and reported to the Orkney Health and Care Committee on 6 June 2019. Based on the local authorities who charge a set rate, on average the charge is £3.33 per week. The lowest charge is Shetland at £1.30 per week and the highest charge is Highland at £6.25 per week. The benchmarking exercise is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

## **5.5.**

It is proposed a flat rate charge of £3.50 per week be implemented in respect of Telecare services provided by the Council. Implementation of a charge would require administration, therefore a small element of the income would need to be set aside to support the function. A G3 x 0.1 FTE (£2,350) is estimated to be required to administer these charges. This cost has been factored into the calculations.

## **5.6.**

It has been recognised that, although a Strategic Charging Policy can be developed, the policy cannot currently be implemented as detailed information in respect of individual service users is not easily accessible. This is being addressed and a charging policy will be presented once these issues have been resolved. However, Telecare would still be proposed at a flat rate per week. Therefore, introduction of this charge will not have any impact on any future charging policy.

## **5.7.**

In other council areas across Scotland, the introduction of charging for these types of services has, in some cases, led to individuals ceasing to utilise the service. This could present significant risk to individuals who make this choice. Officers cannot fully anticipate the impact of this and, if this were to occur, officers would engage with the individual to assess what risk this would pose and take agreed actions to minimise the risk.

## **6. Equalities Impact**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 3.

## **7. Corporate Governance**

This report relates to the Council complying with its financial processes and procedures and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

## **8. Financial Implications**

### **8.1.**

It is proposed that Telecare will have a set charge and will be excluded from a financial assessment.

### **8.2.**

Although at present there are over 700 service users in receipt of these services, it is assumed that there will be a reduction due to the introduction of charges.

### **8.3.**

In regard to the introduction of charges for Telecare services, based on 500 Telecare users it is assumed this will generate in the region of £91,000 per financial year, giving close to full cost recovery.

### **8.4.**

Future years' charges would be based on the incremental increase agreed as part of the Council's budget setting process.

### **8.5.**

Service users who express a wish to end their service following introduction of charging will be offered a review prior to the withdrawal of the service in an attempt to mitigate against any unforeseen negative impacts. This review will focus on risk assessment and risk management and will seek to explore with the service user their concerns about the charges and the benefits of the service that are in place. Benefits checks and income maximisation will be offered, and onward referrals made to Citizens Advice Bureau and / or Department for Work and Pensions as appropriate. People in receipt of a service should be entitled to benefits as a result of their disability or dependency levels. These benefits are intended to contribute to the cost of their support services.

### **8.6.**

It is an expectation that the charges applied could be paid by direct debit on a monthly basis.

## **9. Legal Aspects**

### **9.1.**

In terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

### **9.2.**

The undertaking of the consultation exercise and equality impact assessment, both referred to in this report, comprise evidence of the Council's fulfilment of this statutory duty.

## **10. Contact Officers**

Gillian Morrison, Interim Chief Officer / Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care, extension 2601, Email [gillian.morrison@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.morrison@orkney.gov.uk)

Lynda Bradford, Interim Head of Health and Community Care, extension 2611, Email [lynda.bradford@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:lynda.bradford@orkney.gov.uk)

Pat Robinson, Chief Finance Officer, Email [pat.robinson@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:pat.robinson@orkney.gov.uk)

## **11. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Consultation Responses.

Appendix 2: Benchmarking of Telecare charges.

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment.

## Daycare and Telecare – Proposed Introduction of Charging

### Full Responses

#### Q1. Which of the following best describes you? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Someone who uses Daycare and / or Telecare services	24.02%	43
2	A carer of someone who uses Daycare and / or Telecare services	15.08%	27
3	Family or friend of someone who uses Daycare and / or Telecare services	16.20%	29
4	A local resident	41.90%	75
5	Employed in the health or social care sector	12.85%	23
6	Employed or a volunteer in a community/voluntary organisation or group	11.17%	20
7	Other (please specify):	11.73%	21
		<b>Answered</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>Answers from Respondents who answered "Other"</b>			
1	Was carer for someone using Telecare until she died		
2	My late mum had telecare		
3	Third Sector Manager		
4	Guardian of someone who uses Daycare and / or Telecare services		
5	Paper		
6	Paper		
7	Not sure which		
8	In receipt of Direct Payments		
9	Daycare user x 2 per week		
10	Only in emergency. Retired		
11	My care is through the Independent Living Support Service at Kirkwall Travel Centre. Do not go to Day Care		
12	Family of someone who may need telecare services		
13	POA for parent		
14	Carer for my father		
15	I am a keyholder for a neighbour who uses telecare.		
16	My brother and I care for our mother who has dementia. Only service at the moment is Crossroads.		
17	Retured and disabled.		
18	A number of years ago my mother used (and loved) day care but woul dnot have been able to pay anything toward it (basic state pension).		
19	Now the oldest resident on the island.		
20	Have used carers in post-operation periods.		
21	Have had family use the service in the past.		



**Q2. We are proposing to introduce a daily charge of £5.00 for Daycare services. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?.**

1	Strongly Agree	10.29%	18
2	Agree	26.86%	47
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	14.86%	26
4	Disagree	17.14%	30
5	Strongly Disagree	30.86%	54
		<b>Answered</b>	<b>175</b>

**Please provide any comments or suggestions you have for this part of the proposal:**

1	I have no problem with the Council charging for these services. I believe it is unrealistic to expect these services to be free of charge.
2	Many simply can't afford what would amount to £10 per day for day care. If someone is assessed and found to be in need, or family in need of a break from caring then this should be provided and not treated as a luxury. Many in the County are already having to choose whether to heat or eat from small pensions and day care is the only break they get. Also telecare is an essential service not a luxury. It would cost much more to care for that person in residential care than provide a piece of equipment to enable them to live safely in their own home.
3	Service Users often receive money to help pay for care and support, so a small charge for this valuable service seems reasonable for those who can pay.
4	I don't use day care services at present
5	I think it is appalling that the most vulnerable members of our community/society are being charged for an essential service. Many of these people will of paid tax and NI throughout their lives and now when they require support they have to pay for it. How about council officials getting paid over £40000 take a 10% pay cut and put this towards support supporting vulnerable people within our community.
6	I would suggest that £5 is too low and a charge of £10 should be made.
7	The premise is that "folk in Orkney are prepared to pay for services". That is all very well and I am sure that most employed people are willing to do so. But I wonder how many people using the services, mostly on benefits, and possibly in fuel poverty, responded. I don't know what steps were taken to facilitate users of these services to have their views heard. Most of the people in receipt of Daycare and Telecare will not be using email or internet surveys or have the facilities to print off a copy of the survey - even if they are able to complete a hard copy. I think in asking people whether they agree with implementing or increasing charges we also need to know the proposed steps that will be taken if someone defaults on their payments or feels they cannot access the services in the first case because of the charges. Do services use FareShare to help with the reduction of the cost of meals for service users?
8	I'm not sure what additional benefit the £5 would be to the council, given that it is a very small % of the actual cost. However it doubles the cost of attending for the person involved and that may put them off going at all. The health and well-being benefit of groups and socialising opportunities is well known for lonely, isolated and vulnerable people. I believe the cost, in the longer term, to the council of deterring people to join these activities may well be higher than the immediate saving.
9	With lunch as well, that would equate to nearly £10 per day. That is simply not affordable for many households.
10	Hits those who need this service most.
11	If someone cannot afford this it should be able to be waived. Access to these lifeline services is vital. It should also be noted that the introduction of this fee will become a barrier to accessing these services. This should be avoided and in some cases the fee waived to prevent this happening. Where people work unpaid in these services we should consider it unfair to charge for this service as they are gaining skills and producing an income for the service. This should be recognised. Therefore there is an incentive reward in taking part in the work programmes offered available and service users can gain feelings of self worth and accomplishment.
12	I agree but would like to see something in place for those on very low income. Daycare services provide an important social as well as care element for individuals. It would be detrimental to people if they cancelled their service because they felt they couldn't afford it.

13	Will it be means tested?
14	I think this is a fair way to make the budget stretch further. However, not all people will be able to afford this all year. I still believe individual circumstances should be considered.
15	cause most are on limited benefits, further charges may discourage those who really need it
16	£35 is a lot of money out of benefits, this may leave people socially isolated if they have to stop attending daily.
17	Those who can afford should pay. Maybe free for those in receipt of supplementary benefit/pension, as for dental treatment and spectacles?
18	With a provision for those who maybe can't afford even a nominal fee.
19	Services should be free at the point of access and paid for through taxation. To charge for them shifts the burden of cost onto disabled people
20	would this be means tested or a flat rate?
21	This charge will not increase your revenue by much yet the cost to a family could mean they are unable to attend.
22	This figure represents almost 10%of gross income and from income the care element of DLA is already paid to Enable for the care OIC contracts from them. A flat rate charge may be prohibitive for some.
23	I couldn't afford it.
24	Some folk just could not afford to pay.
25	The consultation paper referred to said people would be prepared to pay more to keep services going and personally I was talking about paying more taxes not individuals paying it for themselves. Many services users will receive benefits and by charging them, these already vulnerable people will create further marginalisation.
26	This £5 daily charge amounts to £25 per week (or over £1200 per annum). The service user can ill afford this charge from their already stretched benefits package.
27	Vulnerable people who are on benefits may struggle financially to pay this charge. Their benefits will not be going up.
28	will it depend of folks financial status or a flat fee regardless? if folk have this service and it is essential to them but you bring in this fee and they cant afford it what happens to them receiving daycare?
29	I have no issue with this charge if it keeps daycare services going.
30	While I can understand the reason behind it, it would mean that my son would be unable to attend the lifestyle service as it would be to expensive.
31	The danger of this is that people who need support and who are already vulnerable and at risk of isolation, are unable to access day care, and end up costing the local authority more in the long run, or just end up being forgotten and alone.
32	"the Council's Budget Simulator Exercise of a couple of years ago demonstrated that folk in Orkney are prepared to pay for services if this means that front-line services will continue." there is a huge and false assumption here that takes it that service users pay for services. Another interpretation of the above [and more in line with Orcadian sentiments] is that the community at large are prepared to pay for services used by the most vulnerable in our community.
33	Absolutely disgusted that you would even consider charging the most vulnerable people in our community for this life line service
34	Daycare and homecare are to help prevent or limit people ending up in hospital and hence cut the costs to the NHS. The introduction of charging to underpin the supposed savings goes against the meaning of the NHS.
35	It's a great idea but if this was means tested then you could potentially charge some people more.
36	Its a bit dear
37	I feel the only way ro provide services is to change which will supplement the service and provide the development of extending the service
38	Yes I would be willing to pay £3.50 per week for my Telecare alarm.

39	So long as the charge is affordable for me, it's acceptable.
40	I don't think this applies to us, we use ILSS, therefore my daughter doesn't use any council owned building and she pays for any mileage.
41	We have no real objections to paying a contribution, but already do so for respite. Do have serious misgivings about this proposal. People with LD (at St. Colm's or Lifestyles) have a limited income. People may struggle to afford it. Individuals at St. Colm's and Lifestyles often have 24 hour support packages. How would this impact same? St. Colm's has the ability to provide work experience for its clients. (One does not usually pay for or towards work experience.) This proposal requires much more thought than is allowed here (its implications, impact, etc.)
42	Many a vunrable person with Daycare Service will be paniced and feel that they have to cancel it
43	All carers should be trained or in training - these are lone workers and don't have supervision or mentoring.
44	The service is very good and I understand finances are tight and every little helps.
45	I don't have daycare, but I worked as a Home Carer for 11 years. I don't think you should be £35 a week for being old or ill. If you go ahead and charge £3.50 a week, I will send my community alarm back.
46	I don't know how people receiving Direct Payments will be charged if they do not have full care everyday and no care some days.
47	I was a carer for 8 years before asking for help and being assessed and granted Direct Payment, this being the best option for my husband's wellbeing. I also have the lowest level of carers allowance I now have to hire for all the exterior and interior work on our home (including cleaning). A dedicated carer provides a vital role, don't take away from what is a very small payment, by charging £5 per day.
48	oN TOP OF THE £4.90 FOR LUNCH AN ADDITIONAL £5 MIGHT NOT BE AFFORDABLE FOR SOME DAY CARE USERS. i WOULD BE HAPPY TO PAY THE CHARGE PERSONALLY.
49	Would Westray Development consider paying for the extra payment?
50	I worked for 48 years and paid insurance all that time. I am 88 and my carer is 81. If I were in a home that would cost you a lot more. Surely the council should consider the elderly and not spend so much on tourists etc. You Councillors will be old some day. This is the only outing some folk get in the week and consider stopping if they can't afford it. Some OAP can't afford to heat their homes but prisoners get free heating tv (the lot)
51	As long as there were discounts for folk on a really low income.
52	People do not ask to be ill or old. If we can't look after the people in our community by trying to put a cost on it - we really have to take a long look at ourselves, Disgraceful. You shouldn't put a cost on health, disabilities.
53	Disability seems to be the word that you can grab as much money of them as you can, so that in the end they have nothing left.
54	The users of telecare and daycare services are a very vulnerable group. Many users are on a restricted income and there is the possibility that individuals stop using services due to cost thus increasing their vulnerability, risk of harm and isolation. I believe that these services should continue to be provided at no charge and that society has a duty of care to the most vulnerable in the community...
55	As I only use the service once a week I can afford it but if I used it more often it would become a burden.
56	I don't think it is unreasonable to make a charge, I would worry that some people might not be able to afford it. In my mother's case she has just been awarded attendance allowance and therefore can afford to pay it.
57	I don't use Daycare at present, but find the sudden charge a bit much to say the lease. The elderly suffer.
58	Both the above services are invaluable to the care I require and I appreciate both services.
59	Well its expensive if going more than 1 day.
60	If it was demonstrated a couple of years ago that users (folk in Orkney) were prepared to pay, why was it implemented at that stage? What would the cost of administration be of a £5 fee?
61	A persons ability to pay could be assessed?
62	N/A

63	Safe way to empty the centre
64	I could not afford this on a pension. (Do not go to Day Care.)
65	If you charge five pounds daily some people can't afford this
66	This seems quite costly £35 pw. Should there be a sliding scale of charges dependent on how many you use? Sorry I somehow answered thinking about telecare charges. So if you didn't attend some days you wouldn't pay and that seems fair enough if the services are appropriate to needs and available to all.
67	If this introduced then a reminder of the attenders allowance use should be stated.
68	our elderly today have payed insurance and tax all their lives so they thought they didn't have to worry about care in old age. I know from elderly friends suffering ill health, and as published in the Orcadian a few weeks ago, they are having to choose heat or eat. If someone is living alone, perhaps blind and reliant on care services they have been assessed to be in need of exercise and stimulation. If they can have a tin of soup for £1.00 and be able to heat the room they are living in as anything else id hypodermic they will continue to live in isolation.
69	I agree subject to the recipient's ability to pay being assessed, as per question three, and tat no-one should be excluded from the service simply because they are unable to pay.
70	These proposals are clearly targeted at one the most vulnerable groups of people in our community. If this proposal is implemented it will inevitably turn out to be the thin end of an extremely thick wedge. In respect of Q3, no mention is made of criteria etc that would be used to assess a persons ability to pay. Furthermore, can we really trust the OIC to do this fairly? Why isn't there a comments box for all questions?
71	It is my understanding that the Scottish Govt. made a commitment to provide free Social Care so would expect the Local Authority to abide by the same commitment.
72	I think this may exclude those who might need it most.
73	Targeting many people who have the least ability to pay/already on the breadline. Must be means tested.
74	Although I believe a charge may be required. a lot of families/people that would need to use these facilities are probably on either low incomes or benefits and will probably be requiring help to pay for the service. Therefore the money will be coming from somewhere else within OIC and not really helping with savings anyway.
75	Pensioners and retired People have already paid taxes and dues to society. I realise they are an easy target to get money out off.
76	The day care service is vital but dogged with staffing issues leaving too little time with some of the higher need people. I would hope any possible daily charge would be put directly into employing more carers (not into administration!)
77	Is the vulnerable people who use this service going to get increase in benefits to ensure that they do not end up in financial hardship. These vulnerable people may have to choose daycentre/food/heating home - leaving them in a potential crisis.
78	As I am on state pension, so are a lot.
79	These services are a port of our entitlement - paid for over a working life in tax, NI etc. If you want to isolate older people in their homes - charging is the ay to go - I am ashamed and appalled that OIC want to do this - one of the wealthiest councils in Scotland too!
80	Would the cost of processing the payments outweigh the cash received? Would the service be removed if the user did not pay promptly or at all?
81	Services for legitimately ill or old people should not have fees increased. Savings should be cut from people who are working age and are not physically disabled who are living for free in Council properties. DISGRACEFUL.
82	I think this is not too much to ask for such a terrific service.
83	As long as it was 'means' tested, and that people that can't afford it are not disadvantaged.
84	Stop people going who can't afford it.
85	I have and always will be strongly against service users paying for care costs. I appreciate the requirement is driven by central government budget cuts and if the charges must be introduced then the user has to be means tested - although a basic form of means testing can also be unfair. A cost of £91.87 per person/per day for day care must be challenged. There must be room for improvement on this front.
86	Added to ?? costs it becomes expensive.

87	There needs to be more awareness of benefits people are entitled to which could offset the cost
88	Personal care was a government commitment and should remain so at present.
89	£5 daily is a significant charge for someone on a basic pension from the state. Perhaps it should be phased in over two or three years.
90	As a member of the community I am outraged that older people in our islands are to have further financial strain because of your plans. The vast majority have served our community over their lives - and this is the thanks they are getting - SHAME ON YOU ALL!

**Q3. It is proposed that a flat charge of £5 per person, per day, is made in respect of the use of Daycare services. To what extent do you agree or disagree that a person's ability to pay should be assessed?**

1	Strongly Agree	26.74%	46
2	Agree	26.16%	45
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	10.47%	18
4	Disagree	10.47%	18
5	Strongly Disagree	26.16%	45
		<b>Answered</b>	<b>172</b>

**Q4. We are proposing to introduce a weekly charge of £3.50 for Telecare services. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?**

1	Strongly Agree	8.57%	15
2	Agree	29.14%	51
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	17.14%	30
4	Disagree	13.14%	23
5	Strongly Disagree	32.00%	56
		<b>Answered</b>	<b>175</b>

**Please provide any comments or suggestions you have for this part of the proposal:**

1	If a person can live at home safely with a telecare device it is much cheaper than keeping that person in residential care.
2	I worry that those in most need are the least able to pay.
3	Firstly you need to explain what you mean by Telecare Service as many service users also use the Responder service as one of their keyholders and all installations and servicing visits are carried out by the Responder service. Are the funds raised from the charging purely to cover the cost of Telecare equipment or will some of this be taken for the Responder Service. Secondly some service users only have a basic care alarm while others have far more equipment in use. It seems very unfair to charge everyone the same regardless of how much they use the service. Your Day care charges reflect more how much a person uses the Day care service. The Telecare charge does not seem to, again depending on what you mean by 'Telecare services'.
4	I agree in principle with a charge being made, but don't feel it is appropriate to charge the full cost of the service when other services are effectively subsidised. A part payment towards the full cost seems more appropriate.
5	I receive direct payment and use all my allowance on care. The benefits that I receive is spent on my bills and food. I'm constantly watching my money and certainly don't have any to spare. The telecare system

	provides peace of mind and enables my daughter to leave me unattended while she goes to work however if there is a charge I will no longer have that security.
6	As before
7	Please see previous comments
8	What happens if you take away this lifeline service and force people into a position of needing community or residential care? This is surely not an economic or efficacious strategy and does nothing to give individuals and families confidence in the safety of their loved ones.
9	Rather than charge the entire amount, cost should be split on a 50/50 basis.
10	This is being charged to the most vulnerable among us. People struggling to remain in their own homes and independant as possible. It will lead to less uptake therefore more injury from falls and people not accesing help when they need it. My elderly in laws struggle to accept telecare in their home the charge will probably mean they will have it removed. This is the opposite to the desired outcome of enabling people to live their life out in their own environment kerping up connections and family life. Which in itself reduces the costs of having to find them care home space and funding. The more we help people to be able to do for themselves in a safe supported way the better all round. To be able to call for assistance is a basic right.
11	Will it be means tested?
12	Service users should be charged per item of equipment they have -not a set charge per household. This seems very unfair.
13	many venerable people need service to be there just in case, my husband needed it as a back up in case we got stuck. Being on limited income we would have been unable to afford it while he fougth cancer and i was off work
14	But free for those on low incomes
15	I would just comment that although my mum has the telecare service, I don't believe she ever used it so not sure paying for it would be justified? Although the proposed rate is low, some people have this service for a number of years at a time in life they are not earning so it would add to the demands on limited resource
16	as long as it's assessed
17	Older people would stop using it and it would put them at risk.
18	I think people would stop using their buttons etc and that would put them at risk. I don't think folk would accept paying for this service now.
19	This is a lifeline service for support and the costs are low.
20	See answer for question 2
21	£3.50 doesnt sound like a lot of money when its one week but when you multiply it by 52 its a lot of money for perhaps some folk to find extra
22	Although a small charge be tendered to users, there are some users not able to afford the amount and therefor a clause should be included to exempt those concerned.
23	While again I can understand the reason behind the charge, it becomes expensive over the course of a year.
24	People don't choose to need a service such as this - it is a "lifeline" service for the most vulnerable people in our community and therefore should not have a charge attached.
25	Again, I fully agree with this but if you were to means test people, you could potentially charge some people slightly more.
26	It seems a shame, but I wouldn't like to be without it, and we have had to use it a few times.
27	I know for fact my mother will refuse to pay for it, she is ninety and proned to falls.
28	This service provide peace of mind to family + friends
29	Too expensive
30	I don't want to pay £3.50 a week. You can come here and take the communication box away and I will use my cord free phone
31	As per Q2

32	I don't mind paying when I use this service but not when I don't use this service. Surely OAPs should get this free. I might never use this in the year.
33	This service is a lifeline and goes some way to easing families concerns . Peace of mind about someone's safety. Once again, people do not have a choice (or make one lightly) to be so reliant on the system. We did not ask to be ill, but are now penalised for being so. Our benefits will certainly not be increased to cover this "penalty". I will be returning mine and shall be making it known why. Shameful that such an action is being proposed. I really hope you never have to rely on such a thing. It really shows you where ill/old people are in the scheme of things. Disgraceful!!
34	This is more believable.
35	I rely on telecare services for support because of my age and special needs. To add £14 a month on top of my daycare charges would make me think again about keeping this service.
36	Again, as my mother now receives AA so she can afford £3.50 a week.
37	O huge amount over a year - over £150 by far. I would struggle to pay - not all pensioners are wealthy you know. Why not a reduction to Council Staff salaries? But of course that will NEVER happen! So throw the burden on those who can't afford it. It does seem an awful lot to pay for someone who has never needed yet to use this service!
38	Should only be charged if used.
39	If people were to be charged and not have the ability to pay or make a financial choice to prioritise other household costs neighbours / family / carers will not have the ability to be supported by responders at a time of need. The alternative is NHS24 / emergency services does not have a stipulated maximum respond time of 45 minutes. Therefore family / neighbours / carers will be required to attend with situations for which they may be untrained for.
40	A persons ability to pay should be assessed!
41	Why should people have to pay another charge on top of their phone bill.
42	This sounds reasonable but some people may use more than others and perhaps a sliding scale if charges would be fairer.
43	I would be happy to pay the £3.50 per week for the telecare services - my husband and I really appreciate the peace of mind it provides.
44	Please provide any comments or suggestions you have for this part of the proposal:: 3.50 is not an appropriate charge. Some telecare service users only have 1 piece of equipment. Some have 3 pieces of equipment and some even have up to 10 pieces of equipment. How does this seem fair? Also, how does this work when a couple is involved? Is it 3.50 per person or per household?
45	Again this should be assessed for ability to pay, also for some this is something that they don't feel they need but it is seen as a need by those involved in their care package.
46	If OIC want to encourage care in the community and elderly people find it very hard to loose independence as it is they will choose to heat and eat and perhaps pay for maintenance on their property rather than pay for telecare putting lives at risk. There are already not enough care home placements to force them in to residential care.
47	As per the day care question, recipient's should be assessed for their ability to pay and not excluded from the service if they do not have the means to pay for it.
48	Again, this is simply an assault on some of the most vulnerable folk in our community. We are supposed to be a caring and compassionate community yet we constantly see around us public money being used for no end of "nice to have" projects. If this council can afford a million pounds for the Island Games then it makes these proposals look quite shameful!
49	These services are ultimately preventative so any additional costs that might be incurred should be taken into consideration. Also users might be deterred from accepting a service with added costs thus having a detrimental effect on both users and carers.
50	I think this may exclude those who might need it most.
51	Again many people would not be able to afford this service and then be left more at risk.
52	Same opinion as before for day care. It's only going to be shifting money from benefits department to care so pointless exercise really. It would be better for the Council as a whole to work closer together.
53	I think this is a disgrace. you want to keep older people at home for as long as possible but as I said before they are an easy target. Instead of cutting services to the under 5's, whose parents should be looking after them you pick on people who cannot defend themselves.



54	I am not in a position to know how much this service costs or if it already fills the needs of the service users. Knowing about day care challenges then I assume that the telecare service is also underfunded.
55	It's not an enormous cost to the individual but it is an enormous combined cost to OIC and so it does not appear to be unreasonable to expect service users to pay the full cost of this service.
56	As most on state pension.
57	Free at point of need. Means testing - is a crude tool that once introduced - can be adjusted to penalise low income service users by threshold adjustment. It costs to apply... and provides another administrative burden on a clearly barely functioning OIC infrastructure. These services are meant to be free at the point of need - users have already paid for there/throughout their life!
58	The cost of the telecare services will be more than outweighed by the savings in hospital and other charges. What about bad debts - would you cut-off the service?
59	Stop funding young people to live in brand new council houses.
60	It's a necessity for elderly people and the expense could mean they won't use it.
61	Outgoings for pensioners should be sensitively considered.
62	Ditto re benefits
63	Savings could be made in other departments rather than from the elderly, disabled and vulnerable.
64	My same objections apply as in previous page: As a member of the community I am outraged that older people in our islands are to have further financial strain because of your plans. The vast majority have served our community over their lives - and this is the thanks they are getting - SHAME ON YOU ALL!
65	I can see many people returning their alarm if being charged £3.50 pw and if so disastrous accidents may occur, leading to death in some cases. Build more sheltered housing at even more expense!

**Q5. It is proposed that a flat charge of £3.50 per person, per week, is made in respect of the use of Telecare services. To what extent do you agree or disagree that a person's ability to pay should be assessed?**

1	Strongly Agree	27.59%	48
2	Agree	22.41%	39
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	12.07%	21
4	Disagree	12.64%	22
5	Strongly Disagree	25.29%	44
		<b>Answered</b>	<b>175</b>

**Q6. If the proposed charges are introduced, would it be more convenient to charge:**

1	Monthly	55.33%	83
2	Quarterly (Every 3 Months)	7.33%	11
3	Don't Know	37.33%	56
		<b>Answered</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Please provide any comments or suggestions you have for this part of the proposal:</b>			
1	As with other bills it is easier to pay a little weekly than have a big bill.		
2	That surely would depend on how you plan on implementing the charge.		



3	For many service users, setting up these payments is likely to be stressful, and may lead to people withdrawing from the service because they cannot cope with the process, not just because of the cost.
4	I will no longer be able to use this service so this is no applicable.
5	I don't think this should be introduced however I fear that this has already been decided upon.
6	Please see previous comments
7	I don't want there to be a charge at all, so this question is irrelevant according to how I've answered previously.
8	Variable frequency to suit household. Ie for some weekly would be better and for others monthly. Provide options
9	Weekly as the sum does not sum so large then. I would prefer no charge as we need to help vulnerable people feel and be safe. This should not carry a charge with it.
10	Perhaps a flat monthly rate would be better for telecare services and a weekly rate for the day care services
11	Many bills eg electricity etc are paid by monthly direct debit but many people still pay quarterly. Could both options be offered?
12	Depends on user's preference
13	Most elderly people have small budgets and little money saved. They prefer to do things on a month by month basis
14	i would have thought the cost of assessing if money and invoicing would cost more than take in
15	Or offer a variety of options. Weekly, monthly or quarterly.
16	There should be no charges
17	depend on the individual receiving the services how they could pay it
18	As my council tax and rent automatically are taken off my superannuation pension each month I would prefer the same method for the telecare charge.
19	Please don't charge for this service it is absolutely essential for the people who need it to have access to the service free of charge. Why is it always that your charges are levied at the vulnerable. Get rid of some of "the high head yins" and leave the vulnerable alone.
20	You should be flexible and allow people to pay when they can. Some people may prefer to pay weekly whereas other people may wish to pay quarterly.
21	We would be happy to pay for the meals also on a 3 monthly basis.
22	I prefer a monthly bill; it's the most manageable option for me
23	Well, it would be less times to look after it.
24	If it comes to it.
25	I would like to know how the figure of £3.50/wk is arrived at?
26	If by direct debit. At present we can't pay for Day care meals by direct debit!
27	I have only stopped paying for independent living as I am only 55 years old. I am not in favour of spending money for a service to watch over me. I will just use my phone.
28	Weekly
29	I don't want to pay if I don't use this service
30	Direct debit please (or standing order) keep it simple and minimise paperwork.
31	People should not be charged. Frequency should not ever be asked about. Shamefull!!
32	Pay as you go
33	Sounds like you've already decided? So why ask us if we agree?
34	No matter what ayment frequency is proposed it will incur additional administration for center staff. telecare staff, finance dept staff at school place It will cause additional distress to service users who believed that they have paid their taxes and National Insurance during their working life to be supported by the community in which they have served all their life.

	Currently invoices are sent out for center lunches. As a family member of a service user I have to check the invoices are correct as we have been charged for days the center was closed due to weather and seasonal holidays, This puts additional distress on me as carer who already spends hours of unpaid work attending to the users finances and wellbeing.
35	The Day Centre meals invoice are sent monthly. Day Care would be included in that.
36	Do not fully understand these questions, but have answered them best I could.
37	Some of it weekly and maybe some monthly but it should be up to the person what suits them the best.
38	In the Daycare provision they should pay on the day they attend or, if that is too complicated having cash payments daily, then perhaps pay in advance. I would think weekly would give some idea of whether the service user was fit to attend the centre for a few days. Sometimes they will be unwell / in hospital / on holiday. You might consider a discount on the daily charge for those coming every day.
39	N/A
40	N/A
41	It would feel wrong if the users of the system had to withdraw from it because they couldn't afford it.
42	For Daycare, it would be easier to charge monthly as can be done when invoicing for meals.
43	Paying monthly would be best for most folk as pension is monthly and a bill every month would be easily managed rather than a big one every 3 months
44	DONT DO IT, I am disgusted this is even being considered. I will never vote for any councillor who supports this and will publicise their infamy to the best of my ability
45	Monthly to avoid larger paying a lump sum.
46	Elderly will not accept something which will get them into debt.
47	Obviously I do not support this proposal thus I cannot sensibly answer this question
48	N/A
49	It would depend on people's circumstances.
50	Would depend on ability to pay and when Pension's etc paid? Weekly/Fort Nightly/Monthly.
51	Maybe an option should be available to suit individual needs or preferences.
52	They should not be introduced, but I know that they will be no matter what anyone says. Older people are easy pickings for OIC. They don't have anyone to fight for them.
53	Do not agree to charging as these people have paid TAX all their lives and deserve a service now.
54	Quarterly billing would allow missed payments to accrue a larger debt - so monthly is safer for all concerned. Monthly would be more likely to compliment the budgeting schedule used by Telecare users and those being supported to live and budget their finances independently.
55	It will suit the wealthy to be monthly/quarterly but we know many pensioners live in extreme poverty not necessarily because of sub benefit level incomes but because their costs of heating etc are increased. Before I respond, I would need to know the total cost ?? OIC and weigh it against other priorities.
56	It would be better for the OIC to charge quarterly but better for the user to be charged monthly, but even better no charges at all.
57	Have it automatically removed from their benefits so they are able to budget with what they have left over rather than being unable to find the money each month/quarter.
58	Keep admin cost as low as possible.
59	Probably monthly.
60	Speak to the people involved - some older residents that perhaps find it easier to pay by cash.
61	Choice for cheques should not be in advance
62	DISGUSTING

## Q7. If the proposed charge is introduced, would it be more convenient to pay

1	By Standing Order	32.19%	47
2	By bill, with phone or postal options	34.25%	50
3	Online	5.48%	8
4	Other (please specify):	28.08%	41
		<b>Answered</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Answers from Respondents who answered "Other"</b>			
1	I have no idea which would be most convenient for payers		
2	Cash		
3	Maybe an option should be available to suit individual needs or preferences.		
4	They should not be introduced.		
9	In cash.		
<b>Please provide any comments or suggestions you have for this part of the proposal:</b>			
1	I would pay online but not all folk can use or trust the internet for payment		
2	See Q6!		
3	Perhaps folk could be given an option? There may be folk who do not have access or understand how to pay online.		
4	Frail and elderly panic at any type of bills		
5	<p>It should be borne in mind that many people, and perhaps particularly those in need of these sorts of services, may well not have access to secure means of internet payment or indeed be aware of how to use the internet to pay bills. Online could be an option but it should not be the only method of payment accepted.</p> <p>In general I am concerned that, since the charges proposed are generally low, it may cost the Council more to collect them than they will receive back. This does not mean I think they should be higher, just that the proposal should be properly costed to ensure that the Council's finances receive a net gain over the cost of employing someone to collect any charges they decided to introduce.</p>		
6	Refer to Q6.		
7	N/A		
8	Many of the people who would have to pay may not be able to use computer/online facilities. (Also answered with By bill, with phone or postal options.		
9	Depends on individuals financial circumstances.		
10	<p>I think all options should be available to people in the same way as with Council Tax and many other bills/services.</p> <p>To restrict these options is discriminatory, not everyone has access to all of these options and will choose the one best suited to their individual circumstances and abilities,</p> <p>Seeing as these, perfectly reasonable charges are imminent when are OIC going to start charging for the free meals provided at Papdale Halls of Residence?</p>		
11	<p>Should be able to pay in any way but opposed to payment.</p> <p>This opinions seeking regime is a briefing document about costs, demographics etc before it can be sensibly responded to.</p>		
12	Or a choice of any of the methods, why do you need to choose just one.		
13	Have it automatically removed from their benefits so they are able to budget with what they have left over rather than being unable to find the money each month/quarter.		
14	No charges should be made.		

15	Keep admin cost as low as possible. PS - it would have helped to have known how many users there are of the service mentioned to give a better idea of the current costs in total to OIC.
16	Not really sure!
17	Also answered by standing order. Speak to the people involved - some older residents that perhaps find it easier to pay by cash.
18	Some of these options are too complicated for elderly people to manage.
19	Many old people do not understand online.
20	Depends on individual circumstances as not all people may not have internet.
21	In cash to carers etc. would bring home the penalty that is being imposed on the vulnerable section of the community.
22	Definitely the best option for the old and/or the slightly wandered.
23	STOP NOW - DO NOT DO IT!!!
24	Many elderly cannot use a computer to pay online therefore a range of payment ways should be introduced.

**Telecare  
Comparison of Charges  
2018/19**

Council	Per week (£)
Aberdeen City Council	1.35
Aberdeenshire Council	3.50
Angus Council	4.90
Argyle & Bute Council	5.15
Clackmannanshire Council	3.20
Comhairlie nan Eilean Siar	1.50
Dumfries & Galloway Council	3.60
Dundee City Council	3.30
East Ayrshire Council	4.31
East Lothian Council	4.00
East Renfrewshire Council	2.30
Falkirk Council	3.65
Fife Council	2.00
Glasgow City Council	3.37
Highlands Council	6.25
Inverclyde Council	2.60
Midlothian Council	3.85
Moray Council	1.73
North Ayrshire Council	4.30
Perth & Kinross Council	3.82
Renfrewshire Council	3.48
Scottish Borders Council	4.50
Shetland Islands Council	1.30
South Ayrshire Council	2.87
South Lanarkshire Council	1.59
Stirling Council	2.80
West Dumbartonshire Council	5.00
West Lothian Council	3.02
Average	3.33
Lowest	1.30
Highest	6.25



## Equality Impact Assessment

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to improve the work of Orkney Islands Council by making sure it promotes equality and does not discriminate. This assessment records the likely impact of any changes to a function, policy or plan by anticipating the consequences, and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

<b>1. Identification of Function, Policy or Plan</b>	
Name of function / policy / plan to be assessed.	Charging for Telecare Service.
Service / service area responsible.	Orkney Health and Care.
Name of person carrying out the assessment and contact details.	Lynda Bradford, extension 2601.
Date of assessment.	03 November 2020
Is the function / policy / plan new or existing? (Please indicate also if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly).	New. Aim is to reduce service costs, passing a portion of the cost to service users.

<b>2. Initial Screening</b>	
What are the intended outcomes of the function / policy / plan?	Reduce service costs, passing a portion of the cost to service users.
Is the function / policy / plan strategically important?	Yes, as a mechanism to generate income thereby reducing costs.
State who is, or may be affected by this function / policy / plan, and how.	Any adult who currently uses the telecare service will be affected. There are over 700 service users at present. The extent to which they are affected will depend on the charging framework that is selected should this proposal be agreed.

<p>How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this function / policy / plan?</p>	<p>Stakeholders have been the subject of a consultation and their views are recorded in a report, to be submitted to the Board of Orkney Health and Care on 14 November 2019.</p>
<p>Is there any existing data and / or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic / consultants' reports, benchmarking (see equalities resources on OIC information portal).</p>	<p>All stakeholders have been the subject of a consultation, as referred to, above. A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken, revealing an average nationally of £3.33 per week; the lowest charge is £1.30 in Shetland, with the highest being £6.25 per week, charged by Highland Council. ISD NSS have produced data for the authority area which gives the current and projected demographics of the local population. This data indicates there will be increased demand for community services, with Orkney having the highest percentage nationally of people aged over 80 years.</p>
<p>Is there any existing evidence relating to socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. For people living in poverty or for people of low income. See <a href="#">The Fairer Scotland Duty Interim Guidance for Public Bodies</a> for further information.</p>	<p>The consultation asked stakeholders whether ability to pay should be a factor in determining the charge made. The consultation indicated that the majority of respondents are in favour of some form of assessment to determine ability to pay.</p>
<p>Could the function / policy have a differential impact on any of the following equality areas?</p>	
<p>1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality.</p>	<p>No, the policy applies equally to all Telecare service users. Access to the Telecare Service is not affected by race or ethnic group as it is based on care and risk management needs.</p>
<p>2. Sex: a man or a woman.</p>	<p>Telecare provides a service for both sexes; however there are more older women currently in receipt of the service, so they will be more disproportionately affected.</p>
<p>3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.</p>	<p>No, the policy applies equally to all Telecare service users. Access to the Telecare service is not affected by sexuality as it is based on care and risk management needs.</p>
<p>4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another.</p>	<p>No, the policy applies equally to all Telecare service users. Access to the Telecare service is</p>

	not affected by gender reassignment as it is based on care and risk management needs.
5. Pregnancy and maternity.	No, the policy applies equally to all Telecare service users. Access to the Telecare service is not affected by pregnancy as it is based on care and risk management needs.
6. Age: people of different ages.	Yes, Older people and carers of any age. Older people are proportionately more likely to have lower incomes.
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists).	No, the policy applies equally to all Telecare service users. Access to the Telecare service is not affected by religion or belief as it is based on care and risk management needs.
8. Caring responsibilities.	Yes, If cost cannot be met by service user respite for carers would be reduced.
9. Care experienced.	No, the policy applies equally to all Telecare service users. Access to the Telecare service is not affected by care experienced status as it is based on care and risk management needs.
10. Marriage and Civil Partnerships.	No, the policy applies equally to all Telecare service users. Access to the Telecare service is not affected by marital or civil partnership status as it is based on care and risk management needs.
11. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not).	Yes, If cost cannot be met by services user there would be a high impact as the majority of people who currently receive the service have a disability. In addition, national evidence shows that disabled people are proportionately more likely to have lower incomes.
12. Socio-economic disadvantage.	Yes, the proposed charge would affect everyone the same so would impact more on those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.
13. Isles-proofing.	Access to the Telecare Service is not affected by location as it is based on care and risk management needs.

### 3. Impact Assessment

Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	If approved for implementation there is likely to be a greater impact on older people, people with disabilities, carers and those who are socio economically disadvantaged. These differential impacts are a consequence of the nature of the service in question and cannot be entirely addressed.
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<p>How could you minimise or remove any potential negative impacts?</p>	<p>To mitigate any potential negative impact, service users who express a wish to end their telecare service, following introduction of charging, will be offered a review of the service, focussing on risk assessment and risk management, prior to withdrawal. The review will seek to explore with the service user their concerns about the changes and the benefits of the telecare that is in place. Benefits checks and income maximisation will be offered and onward referrals made to CAB and/or DWP as appropriate. This may address some of the concerns that people have about paying a charge.</p> <p>In addition, many people in receipt of a telecare service will also be accessing or entitled to benefits as a result of their disability or dependency levels. These benefits are intended to contribute to the costs of their support services. We would consider whether a charge could be waived for the replacement or repair of equipment that is lost or damaged while installed in the service user's home and an assessment of the circumstances of the loss or damage and charges would be applied in a discretionary manner. This aims to prevent people being charged where the cause of the loss or damage is a result of their disability or physical or mental health condition, for example dementia or epilepsy, so that they are not penalised financially for the direct effects of their condition.</p>
<p>Do you have enough information to make a judgement? If no, what information do you require?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>

#### 4. Conclusions and Planned Action

<p>Is further work required?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>What action is to be taken?</p>	<p>If charge approved and service users wish to cease the service, the review described above will be undertaken with each individual.</p>
<p>Who will undertake it?</p>	<p>Adult Social Work Team.</p>
<p>When will it be done?</p>	<p>As required.</p>
<p>How will it be monitored? (e.g. through service plans).</p>	<p>As part of the review of the Telecare charging implementation.</p>

Signature:



Date: 03/11/20

Name: LYNDA BRADFORD

(BLOCK CAPITALS).

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send a copy to HR and Performance. A Word version should also be emailed to HR and Performance at [hrsupport@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:hrsupport@orkney.gov.uk)