

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title

Title:

Adult Care Charging Policy

Directorate:

Adult Care, Housing & Public Health

Service area:

Adult Care and Integration

Lead person:

Gioia Morrison

Contact:

gioia.morrison@rotherham.gov.uk

Is this a:

☒

Strategy / Policy

☐

Service / Function

☐

Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

Cabinet approved in May 2025 for a consultation on two areas which would form part of the new Adult Care Charging Policy. This would bring together the charging structure for Residential and Non-Residential settings into one policy.

The consultation also consulted on two specific proposals:

1. The removal of the maximum charge for non-residential care, while maintaining the minimum charge of £1, for people who fund their own care.
2. The introduction of an administrative charge for organising care for people who

fund their own care.

The Cabinet report outlines the outcomes of the consultation, recommends specific areas for inclusion within the new consolidated charging policy and seeks approval from Cabinet to implement the new policy approach from April 2026.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		X
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		X
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

People who are currently affected by the potential proposals were identified prior to the consultation taking place.

The changes are most likely to affect those people who are financially well off and who are in receipt of non-residential care and support. Only changes are proposed to those who are self-funding their own care and support or who have declined a financial assessment.

- **Key findings**

Many people who have taken part in the consultation have given feedback on what they feel, in some cases this was positive but in other cases it was negative.

For Proposal 1 'Removal of the maximum weekly charge', a total of 97 responses were received. The majority of respondents opposed the change, with 49% strongly disagreeing and 31% disagreeing. A smaller proportion supported the proposal, with 11% agreeing and only 2% strongly agreeing. Additionally, 7% were unsure about the proposal.

Responses to the proposal to remove the maximum weekly charge for non-residential care highlighted strong opposition and several recurring concerns. Many participants felt the change would undermine fairness and equity, arguing it penalises those who have worked hard, saved, and planned for their future, while rewarding those who have not. There was a strong sense that this approach would discourage saving, as people questioned why they should plan for old age if they are penalised later. Financial concerns were prominent, with respondents warning of hardship and affordability issues. People feared that removing the cap would make care unaffordable, deplete savings rapidly, and force individuals into reliance on benefits. Some suggested that a cap should remain but be adjusted annually for inflation or replaced with a sliding scale to ensure fairness.

Other themes included service quality and value, with some questioning whether the current level of care justifies higher charges. Respondents also raised the impact on vulnerable groups, noting that those with extensive care needs or disabilities would be disproportionately affected. There was also distrust of council motives, with comments suggesting the change is driven by revenue generation rather than fairness and calls for greater transparency in how charges are calculated.

Overall, the feedback reflects strong resistance to removing the cap, with suggestions for alternative approaches that balance financial sustainability with fairness and protection for those most in need.

For Proposal 2 'Introducing an annual fee for self-funders where the Council facilitates care packages', there were 97 responses. The majority of respondents opposed the proposal, with 56% strongly disagreeing and 26% disagreeing, indicating significant resistance to the introduction of this charge. Only a small proportion supported the change, with 14% agreeing and 2% strongly agreeing, while 2% were unsure. Overall, feedback shows strong opposition to adding an administrative fee for self-funders.

Feedback on the proposal to introduce an annual administrative charge for arranging care for self-funders revealed strong opposition and recurring concerns. Many respondents felt the charge was unfair and discriminatory, arguing that it penalises people who have worked hard, saved, and already pay the full cost of their care. There was a strong perception that this would discourage saving for later life, as individuals questioned why they should plan responsibly if they are penalised for doing so.

Financial concerns were widespread, with respondents highlighting that self-funders already face high and rising care costs, and an additional £350 annual fee would create further hardship. Some noted that recent care cost increases have already placed significant strain on budgets, and adding this fee could push people below the savings threshold, making them reliant on public funding.

Several respondents questioned the value and justification of the fee, asking what administrative tasks it covers and why the amount was set at £350. Many felt the service provided by the Council was limited or poor, making the charge seem unjustifiable. Suggestions included replacing the annual fee with a one-off payment when care is first arranged or charging only when packages are revised.

Other themes included impact on vulnerable groups, with concerns that older adults and those unfamiliar with care systems would be disproportionately affected. There was also distrust of council motives, with comments suggesting the proposal is a revenue-generating measure rather than a fair cost recovery. Some respondents argued that arranging care should remain a core council responsibility, funded through existing council tax contributions.

Overall, the feedback indicates strong resistance to the proposal, with calls for greater transparency, fairness, and alternative approaches such as one-off charges or means-tested fees.

The consultation did not ask the user to tell us if they are already in receipt of non-residential care and support or if they are self-funding in terms of their care and support.

- **Actions**

All people who would be directly affected by proposed changes have been contacted make them aware of the potential changes and to give them the opportunity to take part in the consultation and give their comments.

Next steps are to present the findings to Cabinet along with the proposed Adult Care Charging Policy.

A Part B Form will be produced to reflect the outcome of the consultation.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	20/10/2025
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	22/10/2025
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	gioia.morrison@rotherham.gov.uk

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Kirsty-Louise Littlewood	Assistant Director, Adult Care and Integration	04/11/2025
Caroline Hine	Change Lead, Adult Care	04/11/2025

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	04/11/2025
Report title and date	Adult Care Charging Policy
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	07/11/2025