

OFFICER DECISION NOTICE



This notice is to be used for the following types of officer decisions. (Select one option).

- A.** Decisions taken by officers under a specific express delegation from Council or a Committee.
- B.** Decisions taken by officers under a general delegation from Council or a Committee, which relates to (i) a permission or a licence, or (ii) the rights of an individual, or (iii) a contract or expenditure over £100,000.

1. Title of decision:	Financial Assessment Allowances 2024-25 for Non-Residential Care and Support (part of the Care and Support Charging and Financial Assessment Framework).
2. Date of the decision:	14 February 2024
3. The decision maker:	Directorate Management Team for Communities and Adult Social Care : (Lead for this decision: Chris Greenway - Assistant Director (Interim) for Commissioning and Transformation)

4. Decision details:

- To apply a 6.7% (Sept CPI) increase to RBC's local 2023/24 'Minimum Income Guarantee' allowances from 8 April 2024 (Current MIG amounts are published at Appendix B of the Framework).
- To apply a 6.7% (Sept CPI) increase to RBC's local 2023/24 'Disability Related Expenditure Guide' amounts considered in assessment for disability related expenditure from 8 April 2024, except for additional heating (linked to November CPI for domestic Electricity, Gas and other fuels); additional water (linked to Thames Water average increase); chiropody maximum guide amount (increased from £2.93 per week (2023/24) to £6.95 per week (2024/25))
- To increase RBC's 'standard' weekly disability-related expenditure allowance from £5.70 (2023/24) to £10.85 (2024/25, from 8 April) to match the rate to the equivalent of 10% of disability benefits¹.

5. Reasons for the decision:

The Appendices B and C within the Council's Adult Care and Support [Charging and Financial Assessment Framework](#) contain allowances to apply in non-residential financial assessments which must be reviewed annually to ensure allowances are consistent with

¹ 10% of higher rates of Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment (PIP) daily living component and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) care component.

inflation and other relevant changes and meet the minimum statutory requirements set out by the Department of Health and Social Care in February.

Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) allowances must be at least equivalent to the minimum rates published in the [Local Authority Circular for 'Social care – charging for care and support for 2024-25'](#). Local basic MIG allowances for 2023/24 were agreed at 3% higher than statutory rates in order to reflect both the cost of living situation and mitigate a risk around an anomaly between Care Act Regulations and Care Act Statutory Guidance. Both those situations are still current.

6. Alternative options considered (if any) and rejected:

An alternative option to apply a below-inflation increase on local 2023/24 Minimum Income Guarantee allowances to return to matching the statutory basic rates was rejected due the current cost of living impact on users and to mitigate financial risk to the Council around the existing anomaly between Regulations and Statutory Guidance.

Two alternative options were considered for increasing the standard disability related expenditure (DRE) allowance:

- An option to increase the standard DRE allowance to £6.10 (applying the same inflation rate as Department for Work and Pensions) was rejected in preference for an option that offers more incentive to people to apply for the disability benefits they're entitled to; and to offer a simpler option for people with lower levels of disability-related expenditure by avoiding the need to request and complete a full disability-related expenditure assessment (saving time in collecting and verifying detailed DRE information in those cases for both service users and council officers).
- An option to increase the standard DRE allowance to match 15% of higher rates of disability benefits was rejected due to the potential risks of future financial sustainability (beyond 2024/25) of maintaining that equivalent level of standard DRE allowance in the future.

7. List of open Background Papers:

8. List of confidential or exempt Background Papers:

Directorate Management Team Report – Care and Support Charging & Financial Assessment Framework - Non-residential financial assessment allowances 2024/25

9. Any other matters taken into consideration:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legitimate expectation of consultation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Procedural requirements
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Health implications	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental or Climate Change
<input type="checkbox"/> Health and Safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Risk Management implications
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transparency of Information (FOI etc)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Privacy Impact Assessments
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights Act Duties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Parenting	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Safety

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regulatory duties	<input type="checkbox"/> EU withdrawal
<input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces Covenant	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Details of the matters taken into account:

It was considered that the decisions made (to increase allowances within financial assessments at, or above, inflation levels for 2024/25) did not require community consultation since these are mandatory annual considerations and the decisions made have a positive impact on service users (keeping more disposable income) and are financially sustainable for Adult Care. It is not possible to include financial assessment allowance considerations (Appendices B and C of the Framework) within the Council's annual budget community consultation due to the timescales of the publication of statutory rates by the Department of Health and Social Care (through Local Authority Circular), usually in February, and therefore are outside the timescale of the Council's annual budget consultation process.

It was considered that an Equality Impact Assessment was not required for the basis of increasing allowances in Appendices B and C because the options proposed increases to financial assessment allowances (positive impact) for people with care and support needs.

10. Legal considerations

Financial Assessment allowances are reviewed in line with [Section 78 of the Care Act 2014](#) and [Local Authority Circular for 'Social care – charging for care and support for 2024-25'](#)

11. Financial considerations

The estimated overall financial impact of the decisions made has a financially-sustainable impact on income to adult care budgets from assessed financial contributions from service users compared to 2023/24, with an estimated 4.6% increase in income compared to 2023/24.

The decisions are supported by the Financial Services Strategic Business Partner for the Directorate.

12. Internal consultations

Discussion and considerations took place on 14 February within the Management Team meeting of the Directorate for Communities and Adult Social Care (DCASC). The decisions proposed in that meeting were subject to consultation with and agreement from the Strategic Business Partner (DCASC), Financial Services on 28 February.

Sections 13- 18: To be completed only for Decision A (express delegation from a Committee)

13. The name of the Committee:

14. Date of the meeting:

Click or tap to enter a date.

15. Minute number:

16. The delegation given by the Committee:

17. The name of any member of the committee who declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision:	
18. Any councillor or officer required to be consulted prior to the exercise of this delegation and details of their response.	