

Proposed changes to the way Social Care is provided in Thurrock

The demand for public services, including social care and health care, is increasing. This is mainly because our population is ageing, but also because there has been a significant increase in the number of people living with long term conditions: for example heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure.

At the same time as demand is rising, public funding for services provided by the council from grants from central government, is reducing.

We all need to decide how best to use the available resources to ensure citizens have the opportunity to enjoy independent, rewarding and healthy lives in communities that are welcoming, inclusive, supportive, safe and secure.

In Thurrock our Adult Social Care Service needs to save £500,000 this financial year, and more next year. The Council wants to maintain services as far as possible for the people who need them now and in the future. So it is taking action to reduce costs, and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services.

The proposals here affect 4 main areas of social care services:

1. Day Care for older people and the Carers' Service
2. Charges for adult social care services
3. Equipment and adaptations costing less than £50
4. The provision of Extra Care Housing

You may wish to comment on all of these proposals, or just one or two that may directly affect you.

You may also have your own suggestions that could help us make social care services continue to help as many people as possible.

All your comments and suggestions will be carefully considered.

After the consultation ends on the **7th of December** a report on the responses received will be considered by the Council before changes are made. It is likely that the agreed changes will be introduced from **April 2016**.

1. Proposals affecting Day Care for older people and the Carers' Service

Day Care Services offer a range of activities for older adults living alone, or with their families or carers. Attending Day Care can:

- help prevent you feeling lonely
- help you to meet new people
- help you remain as independent and socially active as possible
- provide a break for your carer

Day Care currently offers a service to people who may experience mild memory loss or dementia. Between 12-15 people attend Day Care each day at the following sites:

- **Harty Close in Stifford Clays** on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays
- **Arthur Barnes Court in Chadwell** on Mondays and Thursdays
- **The Lodge at Piggs Corner in Grays**, Monday to Friday
- **Kynoch Court in Stanford-le-Hope**, Monday to Friday
- **Bell House in South Ockendon**, Monday to Friday

Most users of these services are given transport and arrive between 9:30am to 11am and leave between 3pm to 4:30pm.

Some service users attend both Day Care and the Carers' Service.

Our Carers' Service also offers activities for older vulnerable people at the **Carers' Centre at Cromwell Road Grays**, to give carers a break at the following days and times:

- Mondays: 1pm to 5pm
- Tuesdays and Wednesdays: 1pm to 6pm
- Fridays: 10am to 5pm
- Saturdays and Sundays: 9am to 5pm

The Council wants to improve what is on offer at a number of these sites, and to provide a more responsive service that costs less. We would like to hear your views on the following options:

Some of the sites, because of their location and size, are not suitable for Day Care and so it is proposed not to offer a service there in the future.

Q1. Should we extend the proposals and only provide the service at the larger sites (including the Carers' Centre Cromwell Road) with longer hours, possibly 7 days a week?

Yes No

Comments:

Q2. Should Day Care offer it's services to people on a more flexible basis? This could be hourly sessions, or half days as well as full days.

Yes No

Comments:

Q3. Should the service be offered to people who arrange and pay for their own social care, as well as those who are assessed eligible for Council provided care?

Yes No

Comments:

The Council acknowledges that there will be a growing need for more specialist services, particularly dementia care, and will be exploring ways in which this can be introduced in Thurrock.

Q4. Is there a need for specialised dementia Day Care services or should all Day Care and the Carers' Services aim to meet all needs?

- Specialised dementia day care Aim to meet all needs Other

If 'other', please specify:

Comments:

Q5. Should transport be offered to:

- All people attending day care
 Only when people cannot provide their own transport or use public or community transport instead
 Other

If 'other', please specify:

Comments:

Q6. Can you suggest any other ways to improve the quality and reduce the cost of Day Care and the Carers' Service?

2. Proposals affecting charges for adult social care services

The Government says that councils are allowed to charge for social care services, and services you buy with your personal budget. The Council tries to make this fair and keep charges as low as possible. The amount you have to pay depends on your financial circumstances, not your care needs. You shouldn't be prevented from having the care you need because you can't afford it.

Because most people will have to pay something towards their care, the Council carries out an assessment of each person's own particular financial circumstances. This will determine how

much you have to pay. However, at present, the Council provides a range of very different types of services, and each is charged in a different way.

The Council wants to maintain its social care services but needs to ask those who use services to make a contribution if they can. Options being considered include:

- Moving towards charging half the full cost of providing the **Day Care service** over a period of three years. That approach would result in a charge of around £10 per day in the 1st year, around £20 per day in the second year and then around £30 per day in the 3rd year.
- Charging half the full cost of providing the **Sitting service**. This would mean a charge of £11 per hour from 2016.
- Offering sessions at the **Carers' Centre** on an hourly basis, or as 3 hourly or half day sessions, as well as on a whole day basis. A range of charges could then be set according to the length of the session, with the Council funding up to half the full cost.
- Adding the cost of any **transport** provided to the charge for the Day Care service and charging that at half the full cost.
- Charging the full cost of providing the **Careline emergency home alarm** where this is provided as a part of a social care service.

Points to consider:

- The Council acknowledges that some service users and carers may not feel they can afford to use these services in the future, and this may mean that they no longer get the benefit of the service.
- However, increasing charges over a period of three years would allow the Council, service users and carers to evaluate the impact of the introduction of the charge. Service users and carers would be offered a Financial and Benefits Assessment to ensure the charges do not reduce their income below Income Support +25%.
- Offering a range of different length sessions will help ensure Day Care and the Carers' service remains affordable for service users and carers, some of whom will use both services.

Q7. Looking at the above options, which of these proposals would affect you?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day Care services | <input type="checkbox"/> Sitting Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Carers' Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transport | <input type="checkbox"/> Short breaks | <input type="checkbox"/> Careline emergency home alarm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above | | |

Please tell us how these proposed changes would affect you:

Q8. Please tell us about any ideas or other ways of improving the quality or reducing the costs of these services:

3. Proposals affecting equipment and adaptations costing less than £50

The Council provides equipment and home adaptations to make life at home easier and safer for older adults and people with disabilities.

Equipment is usually something that is fixed permanently in the home. Examples include:

- raised toilet seats
- perching stools
- bath lifts
- telecare

An adaptation may be any change made to the home including:

- hand rails
- stair rails
- half steps

Under Department of Health regulations equipment and adaptations provided by the Council up to the value of £1,000 must be provided free of charge. However, the list of equipment the Council currently provides includes many low value items which service users and carers could easily purchase in the High Street, or from on-line retailers. In addition, the delivery of these items of equipment can cost the Council between £15.50 and £41.00.

The Council is considering changing the list of equipment and adaptations it provides so that in future only items which cost £50 or more would be provided. The Council will continue to provide information and advice about how items of equipment or adaptations costing less than £50 can help in the home or, whether instead of buying equipment, it may be better to change the way you do everyday things to make them easier. Council staff will be able to suggest where the items may be purchased, and organisations which may be able to assist with fitting, installation and maintenance.

Other councils have adopted this approach for low cost items of equipment and adaptations and it does appear to work satisfactorily. However, Thurrock Council intends to keep the arrangement under review in case service users or carers have any difficulty obtaining the equipment or adaptations they need.

The Council will also take a risk based approach to the list of equipment it provides to ensure that care can be delivered safely. Where it is necessary, items which cost less than £50, for example, slide sheets and transfer belts, will be provided.

Before making any changes the Council would like to know how they may affect you.

Q9. Given the information above, please let us know how the proposal to only provide items costing £50 or more will affect you:

Q10. Please tell us about any ideas or other ways of improving the service or reducing costs of providing adaptations or equipment:

4. Proposals affecting Extra Care Housing

Extra Care Housing at Piggs Corner and Kynoch Court was introduced by Thurrock Council in 2003. Since then our understanding of how best to deliver Extra Care has grown enormously. In 2013 the Council, in a partnership with Hanover Housing and Care Watch East London, commissioned a new purpose built Extra Care scheme at Elizabeth Gardens, drawing on a number of successful examples from across England. However the Piggs Corner and Kynoch Court schemes have not changed to take advantage of this greater understanding and so they do not, in their current form, reflect best practice, nor are they financially sustainable.

Changes planned at Piggs Corner and Kynoch Court include:

- Sheltered Housing Officers will be on duty between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday to manage the schemes. There will also be a 24 hour concierge service to manage the facilities.
- The costs of providing these accommodation related support services will in future be included in the costs of the tenancy but the Council will ensure no current residents are worse off.
- A subsidised flat rate charge of £40 per week will also be introduced as a contribution towards the cost of providing the 24 hour core care and support service.
- The Council will arrange for a home care service provider to provide the night time care and support service.
- The council is proposing to stop providing extra care at Kynoch Court. Existing residents will have the option of continuing to have their care and support needs met on site by a care and support provider commissioned by the Council but vacant flats will not be relet as Extra Care.
- No decision has been taken regarding the long term future of the cafes at Piggs Corner and Kynoch Court. However, the Council will engage with community groups and local charities to explore if the cafes could be provided by such a group, in the expectation that in future they would be entirely self-funding.

The Council also wants to make sure that all residents and anyone wishing to move into Extra Care Housing at Elizabeth Gardens is clear about the charges for care and support there. In future the Council will ask Hanover Housing to provide all prospective residents (whether tenants or leaseholders) with an information leaflet setting out all the charges for care and support in the scheme. This will clearly state that those who wish to enter Elizabeth Gardens will be deemed to have made a request for a care and support service because of the nature of the scheme.

Q11. Please give any comments that you may have about these proposals:

These proposals involve a significant change in the way Extra Care Housing is provided and charged for in Thurrock. It is vital that the model is right and so your help is needed. The council will be holding a series of meetings throughout the next 12 weeks to gain an understanding of the impact of the proposed changes on you as members of staff/users of the service/individuals whose family member/s will be affected etc.

Q12. Would you like to take part in these meetings?

- Yes No

If 'yes', please give your name and contact details (phone number or email):

About you

Thurrock Council wants to deliver high quality services to everyone, whatever their background. It is also important that everyone feels their views are valued and included. You are not required to complete any of these sections, but telling us about your background will help us to make sure that we are meeting the needs of all our communities and help us to evaluate what parts of the community have had an input to this consultation. If you feel that the group you identify with is not listed feel free to write this in the 'other' boxes provided.

All responses will be treated in confidence.

How are you responding to this survey?

- As someone who uses social care services
- As a carer
- As a member of the general public
- On behalf of an organisation
- Other

If 'other', please specify:

Are you a:

- User of the Day Care, Carers', Careline, Sitting Services or Short breaks
- Resident of Extra Care Housing
- User of social care equipment or home adaptations
- User of other Adult Social Care services
- Other

If 'other' please specify:

What is your ethnic group? Choose ONE and tick the appropriate box

White

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other White background

Asian or Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

If you selected other, please write your preferred ethnic group in the box below

Please specify your gender

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- Prefer not to say

How would you define your sexual orientation?

- Heterosexual
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Lesbian
- Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

- Yes
- No

If you are disabled, how would you describe your impairment?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visual impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech Impairment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility (a wheelchair user) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility (not a wheelchair user) | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health condition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long term medical condition | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hidden impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

If other, please specify your disability in the box below

Mixed

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed background

Black or Black British

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black background

Other ethnic group

- Arab
- Prefer not to say
- Any other ethnic group

Please specify your age group

- 17 or under
- 18-24
- 25-44
- 45-59
- Over 60 years old
- Prefer not to say

What is your religion?

- No religion
- Christian
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Any other religion

If other, please specify below:

*****Please send your completed questionnaire to the Council using the Freepost envelope provided before 7 December 2015*****