

## Business Planning / MTFs Options 2019/20 – 2023/24

Ref: PA2
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<b>Title of Option:</b>	<b>Fast Tracking Financial Assessments</b>		
<b>Priority:</b>	<b>People</b>	<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>John Everson</b>
<b>Affected Service(s):</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Contact / Lead:</b>	<b>Farzad Fazilat</b>

### Description of Option:

- *What is the proposal in essence? What is its **scope**? What will **change**?*
- *What will be the impact on the Council's objectives and outcomes (please refer to relevant Corporate Plan 2015-18 objectives and outcomes, and Borough Plan Evidence Packs)*
- **How does this option ensure the Council is still able to meet statutory requirements?**
- *How will the proposal deliver the benefits outlined?*

*[Proposals will be mapped to the new Borough Plan Priorities/Objectives/Outcomes as they emerge – please take account of any likely changes when framing proposals]*

This proposal aims to speed up the process of financial assessment so that charging starts as soon after the start of services as possible. The aim would be to carry out any necessary financial assessment before services are brokered and put in place, except in an emergency. The saving lies largely in reducing levels of debt and the costs of recovering overpayments rather than any additional costs to the user of this approach.

The Financial Assessment Process currently starts after a service has been agreed. The delay in assessment results in direct loss of income for the council. The direct loss of income for 2017-18 was £140k. We are changing the process to bring the assessment upstream and complete the calculation and determine client contribution before the service starts to avoid loss of income to the council.

It is worth noting that there are additional non-cashable savings which are deemed to be significant: the avoidance of the costs of lengthy recovery of unpaid contributions and a reduction in queries from providers and families which take up resources within the social care adult services, payments and Brokerage service. The fast tracking of financial assessments will ensure that all assessments are carried out before care packages and funding are agreed and will avoid loss of income as outlined above.

<b>1. Financial benefits summary</b>					
<b>2018/19 Service Budget (£'000)</b>					
<b>Savings</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
<i>All savings shown on an incremental basis</i>	<b>£000s</b>	<b>£000s</b>	<b>£000s</b>	<b>£000s</b>	<b>£000s</b>
<b>New net additional savings (year on year)</b>	<b>140</b>				

<b>Impact / non-financial benefits and disbenefits</b>
<p><b>What is the likely impact on customers and how will negative impacts be mitigated or managed?</b>  <i>List both positive and negative impacts. Where possible link these to outcomes (please refer to relevant Corporate Plan 2015-18 objectives and outcomes)</i></p>
<p>Service users will be aware of the outcome of the financial assessment sooner and thereby be able to understand any charges they will be required to meet, including deciding to make plans to manage their own care.</p> <p>Users will be aware sooner of the costs of services which have been put in place, with greater clarity about the client's contribution to the cost of care for people who receive care.</p> <p>Users may feel they are being charged more or that charging is playing a part in their assessment – this is not the case.</p>
<p><b>What is the impact on businesses, members, staff, partners and other stakeholders and how will this be mitigated or managed? How has this been discussed / agreed with other parties affected?</b>  <i>List both positive and negative impacts.</i></p>
<p>There would be an additional requirement for two Financial Assessment Officers to manage the fast tracking of Financial Assessments. The process needs to be fully integrated with the front of the service. This process would need to be fully reviewed prior to implementation to test the capacity of the team to deliver and the cost effectiveness of the approach.</p>
<p><b>How does this option ensure the Council is able to meet statutory requirements?</b></p>
<p>The statutory requirement to provide care and support under the Care Act 2014 legislation is not affected by this proposal.</p>

<b>Risks and Mitigation</b>			
<i>What are the main risks associated with this option and how could they be mitigated?</i>			
Risk	Impact H/M/L	Probability H/M/L	Mitigation
Risk that users and carers will disengage with the financial assessment process if carried out near the needs assessment, adding further delay	M	M	Ensure financial assessment is introduced sensitively, demonstrating the benefits to the users of compliance
Capacity of staff to deliver	M	M	<p>Currently the staffing arrangement and process of the referral from Social Care front of the service to the Financial Assessment service does not lend itself to efficient way of working. Financial Assessment Officers need to be working closely with the front of the service to provide Fast Track assessments and provide timely advice to service users.</p> <p>We require two financial Assessment Officers at PO1 grade at the cost of £86k. This is invest to save.</p> <p>This would be reviewed after 24 months.</p>