## **Thurrock Council**

# **Community Equality Impact Assessment**

#### Service area and lead officer

Name of service	Potential Increases in Adult Social Care Charges
Lead officer name	Ceri Armstrong
Lead officer job title	Head of Transformation and Commissioning
Lead officer email address	carmstrong@thurrock.gov.uk

## Subject of this assessment

What specific policy, strategy, function or service is the subject of this assessment?								
Adult Social Care Fees and Charges Policy								
Borough-wide or location-specific?								
☑ Borough-wide ☐ Location-specific – please state locations below.								
Why is this policy, strategy, function or service development or review needed?								
To look at options to enable the continued provision of essential Adult Social Care services to eligible individuals within Thurrock.								
This CEIA is updated from 2021 when Cabinet agreed a change to the Adult Social Care charging policy (with many services being charged at full cost recovery subject to a means test to identify affordability).								
This update is required given the Fees and Charges report going to HOSC and Cabinet November 2023 relating to 2024/25 Fees and Charges.								

## 1. Engagement, consultation and supporting information

1.1. What steps you have taken, or do you plan to take, to engage or consult (where applicable) the whole community or specific groups affected by this development or review? **This is a vital step.** 

#### Steps you have taken, or plan to take, to engage or consult

Consultation was carried out on the initial decision to move to a 'full cost recovery position', via the councils website and a letter to all ADS services users, the outcome of this consultation is available on request. Response rate 14.42 %,

Reassurance was and will be given that will not impact the level of service that users receive as the underlying duty to meet eligible needs under the Care Act 2014.

1.2. What data or intelligence sources have you used to inform your assessment of the impact? How have these helped you understand who will be affected by the development or review?

#### Sources of data or intelligence, and how they have been used

Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate – to provide narrative in regard to negative impacts being minimised.

Care Act 2014 – in both the 'summary of impacts' and 'mitigation' sections. The narrative explains the legal duty placed on the authority in regard to completing a financial assessment and that charges are made based on ability to pay.

Controcc – our data recording system has been used to provide numbers/percentages of individuals for some for the protected characteristics.

Office of National Statistic – 2021 census information. To add to the narrative in 'summary of impacts' sections.

<u>Social Care Access for adult BAME and LGBT+ populations: a rapid realist review - NIHR</u>
<u>Funding and Awards</u> – to provide additional narrative in the 'summary of impacts' sections for Race and Sexual Orientation.

## 2. Community and workforce impact

2.1. What impacts will this development or review have on communities, workforce and the health and wellbeing of local residents?

Communities and groups	Sit			
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Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Local communities in general				Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and contributes to sustaining the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.
				Individual impact can only be fully understood on completion of a financial assessment.	Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.
				Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows
				A greater proportion of people requiring social care support will come from deprived areas of the borough than less deprived areas of the borough. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) – individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.
				Individuals may refuse care where they have been assessed as requiring to pay partially or in full for their care.	The LA has the ability to exempt an individual
				Individuals may request to have their care reduced where they have to contribute towards the costs.	for care costs on a
				Health & well-being of individuals may be impacted on where assessed provision of	Refer to the Carers Support service – free to access.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Age				Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.  The majority of users of Adult Social Care (ASC) services are age 65+ and therefore increasing charges would have a greater impact on those aged 65+.  However, out of those age 65+ just under 20% will be affected. Therefore, whilst this does not disproportionately affect this protected characteristic (as most users of ASC users in Thurrock do not make any contribution to their care) it is however worth noting.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Disability				36% of ASC service users are recorded as those with physical, learning or mental disability. This is the second largest client category.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide details of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Gender reassignment				No specific impacts on grounds of gender reassignment has been identified, this data is not routinely collected from service users.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide details of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Marriage and civil partnership				Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Pregnancy and maternity				No specific impacts on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity have been identified.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Race				Any charges levied are unlikely to impact on grounds of race, it is recognised that some nationalities may have difficulty in understanding any communication received in relation to increased charges due to limited English language skills. Communication needs are noted by staff and information can be made available in other languages, font sizes or easy-read upon request.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.  Whilst this assessment is focused on charges for services. It is worth noting that research carried out in 2019 suggested that some of the people most likely to miss out on social care services are black, Asian or from another ethnic group (BAME) - Social Care Access for adult BAME and LGBT+ populations: a rapid realist review - NIHR Funding and Awards.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Religion or belief				No specific impact on grounds of religion or belief has been identified.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Sex				Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.  Women form the largest part of the ageing population and therefore is likely to impact on women more than men, however charges will only be levied following an individual financial assessment.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.
				In addition 59% of unpaid carers are female – and provide more hours of unpaid care than men	Carers are entitled to request a carers assessment.
					Respite to take a break from Caring role/sitting service/day services.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Sexual orientation				No specific grounds on sexual orientation has been identified.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.  Whilst this assessment is focused on charges for services. It is worth noting that research carried out in 2019 suggested that some of the people most likely to miss out on social care services are from lesbian, gay or bisexual communities - Social Care Access for adult BAME and LGBT+ populations: a rapid realist review - NIHR Funding and Awards.  It would therefore be reasonable to assume that these experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual communities in Thurrock replicate national findings.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Location-specific impact, if any				N/A	N/A
Workforce				No specific impacts on the grounds workforce have been identified.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

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Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Health and wellbeing of residents				It is likely that the increase in charges may have a negative impact on individuals health and well-being.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service.  This will be based on the person's ability to pay and contributes to sustaining the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock.  Individual impact can only be fully understood on completion of a financial assessment.  Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.  Health & well-being of individuals may be impacted on where assessed provision of care is refused in part or full. This could lead to informal carer breakdown, hospital admissions, increased crisis, increased usage of Thurrock Urgent Community Response Team.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Socio-economic outcomes				No specific impact on grounds of Socio-economic outcomes has been identified.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Veterans and serving members of the armed forces				No specific impact on grounds of Socio-economic outcomes has been identified.  Individuals may have to pay more towards the cost of their Adult Social Care service. This will be based on the person's ability to pay and help sustain the provision of all care services for the vulnerable adults within Thurrock. Charges are only levied against those who can afford it following individual financial assessment.	Via means testing to assess the person's ability to pay. Individuals can request a review of their financial assessment at any time.  Benefit maximisation is offered to ensure each individual has access to any benefits they are entitled to.  Thurrock's Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is set at the Department of Health & Social Care MIG rate plus 25%,this allows people to keep more of their income.  Disability related expenditure (DRE) — individuals are asked to provide detail of any DRE which will be deducted from any income to assess their ability to pay.  The LA has the ability to exempt an individual for care costs on a case by case basis on complex matters such as, waiting for a Continuing Healthcare decision, Ordinary Residency decision.

## 3. Monitoring and review

3.1. How will you review community and equality impact once the policy, strategy, function or service has been implemented? These actions should be developed using the information gathered in sections 1 and 2 and included in your service area's business plans.

Action	By when	By who
Service users can request a review of their financial circumstances, this is also carried out at review which occurs on an annual basis	On going	Financial Assessment Officers
Continue to monitor the application of increases to fees and charges in relation to protected characteristics	On-going, as and when changes are made to our policy	Head of Transformation and Commissioning
Review any additional feedback from engagement and update this CEIA accordingly	January 2024	Head of Transformation and Commissioning
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### 4. Next steps

4.1. The information gathered must be used to inform reports presented to Cabinet or overview and scrutiny committees. This will give members a necessary understanding of the impact their decisions will have on different groups and the whole community.

Summarise the implications and customer impact below. This summary should be added to the committee reports template in the Diversity and Equality Implications section for review and sign-off at the consultation stage of the report preparation cycle.

Summary of implications and customer impact

Sex: women form the largest part of the ageing population, and therefore this has the potential to impact more on women.

Race: some nationalities may have difficulties understanding the policy due to limited English Language skills.

Sexual Orientation: whilst not in relation to increases in charges, research suggests that accessing services is limited for this particular protected characteristic, no

Disability: more people with disabilities are in receipt of care and support services than those without disabilities. The policy has the potential to impact more on disabled people than non-disabled people.

Age: more older people are in receipt of care and support services than younger people. The policy has the potential to impact more on older people than younger people.

Deprivation: those in receipt of adult care and support services are likely to be amongst the most deprived.

Health and Well-Being: there is potential that increases to fees and charges, where applicable, may negatively impact some individuals.

### 5. Sign off

- 5.1. This Community Equality Impact Assessment must be authorised by the relevant project sponsor, head of service, or assistant director. Officers authorising this assessment are responsible for:
  - the accuracy of the information
  - making sure actions are undertaken

Name	Role	Date
Ceri Armstrong	Head of Transformation and Commissioning	5 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Jayne Middleton-Albooye	Interim Head of Legal Services	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
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