

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

**Cabinet Member for
Adult Social Care and Public Health**

DECISION NO:

24/00009

For publication Yes

Key decision: Yes

Title of Decision: Fee Uplifts for Adult Social Care Providers for 2024/2025

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, I agree to:

- a) **Approve** the fee uplifts for Adult Social Care Providers for 2024/2025 and
- b) **Delegate** authority to the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health to take relevant actions, including any changes to the percentage uplifts, as necessary to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision: While in 2023/2024 we applied a differential uplift, in 2024/2025 we are returning to a standard uplift for framework providers which seeks to balance available funding, Consumer Price Index and provider pressures.

The proposed allocations are those which are affordable in the Council's recently agreed budget. We are aware that the proposed uplift will not meet providers' expectations. We will work with providers to offer incentives where we can work together to reduce costs overall, for example by working with an individual to increase their independence, or framework providers increasing their capacity to reduce off framework spend.

The decision supports Priority 4 of 'Framing Kent's Future', to ensure the sufficiency of the market of social care in Kent and objective 2 of Securing Kent's Future in delivering savings from identified opportunity areas to set a sustainable 2024/2025 budget and MTFP:

The fee uplifts need to be finalised by 7 March 2024 to enable them to be applied to the Council's Adult Social Care case management system in time for providers to be able to submit invoices for the revised rates from April 2024.

Financial Implications: Table 1 below shows the proposed percentage fee uplift, as a proportion of the overall provision in the 2024/2025 budget. The first section represents those services where a standard percentage uplift will be provided to all framework providers.

Providers within both these and other services, on individual (non-framework/INDI contracts) will receive no automatic uplift to their fees although, additional funding is available for individual price negotiations. Allocation of this funding will be governed by the development of a standard approval process based on the financial viability and benchmarking of the provision in question.

Direct Payments are handled separately and are uplifted depending on the purpose of the payment, eg to access day care, purchase agency care or to directly employ a Personal Assistant.

Table 1 – Price Uplift – Budget Impact 2024/2025

	%	Vulnerable Adults £000	Older People £000	Total £000
Framework providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and Support in the Home • Older Persons Nursing and Residential • Learning Disability, Physical Disability and Mental Health Residential • Supported Living/Supporting Independence Service • Supported Accommodation 	4%	9,119	7,193	16,312
Provision for Direct Payments		2,316	828	3,144
Provision for individual negotiations				9,391
Total uplift budget				28,847

Legal Implications: There have been no legal implications identified as it is for local authorities to set their own prices in the light of current market activity and status. Local authorities have a range of statutory duties including through the Care Act 2014, but also has a duty to set a balanced budget within the resources made available through the national funding settlement.

Equalities implications: An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. This is a live document and will continue to be updated as required, but the EQIA outlines how certain client groups will be impacted by the decision, where the full cost of the care is paid, or where the assessed contribution is greater than the full cost. It also sets out the mitigating factors in these instances.

Data Protection implications: A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required as there are no material changes to the way in which personal data is handled, nor the way in which it is used. Similarly, this work does not involve data profiling or changes to the way in which special category data is handled,

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation: No Cabinet Committee consultation has been undertaken as the decision is being taken through the semi urgent decision making process. However views from members will be sought and incorporated into the decision paperwork.

The decision will be reported in retrospect to the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee on 13 March 2024.

Any alternatives considered and rejected: There were three options identified as to how the fee uplifts could be managed this year:

- **Apply differing** standard percentage uplifts applied to specified framework contracts according to the services provided, as we did in 2023/2024. We rejected this option given the funding envelope available.
- **Apply no uplifts across all services:** this was discarded, because although we cannot meet providers' expectations, we have to do what we can within our constrained resources to support providers with their challenges.
- **Apply standard percentage uplift across all service provisions:** This is the preferred option

given the limited funding available. It seems to be the fairest approach given that all care sectors are facing cost pressures.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Watkins', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

D.Watkins

Wednesday 28 February 2024

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signed

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date