

**South Ayrshire Council**

**Report by Director of Health and Social Care Partnership  
to Cabinet  
of 18 March 2025**

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**Subject: South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership -  
Social Care Charges for 2025-26**

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the proposed social care charges for the financial year 2025-26 for approval.

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:**

**2.1.1 notes the benchmarking exercise and review of current costs of services to inform charges;**

**2.1.2 approves the implementation of a financial administration charge for Corporate Appointees; and**

**2.1.3 approves the increase to the proposed social care charges for 2025-26.**

**3. Background**

3.1 Since the introduction of Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002, local authorities are able to charge for non-residential social care support with the exception of personal care. The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) produce annual guidance which defines a set of principles to underpin the development of local charging policies for social care support for people at home. It is managed by the COSLA Charging Guidance Working Group and any change to guidance requires approval by the political leadership of COSLA.

3.2 Charges are an important source of Council income and all income from social care service charges are reinvested through funding the Health and Social Care Partnership in order to maintain and develop services and in so doing are a means to help the Council deliver services within available resources.

3.3 South Ayrshire Council charges are set in line with statutory requirements and National Guidance and are subject to approval by elected members.

## 4. Proposals

- 4.1 South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership have undertaken a review of the current charges and benchmarked the costs and charges with other areas across Scotland. This exercise has resulted in recommended increases for charges for 2025-26.
- 4.2 The proposed rates have been shared and reviewed with South Ayrshire IJB's budget working group, who have recommended the proposed rates for approval.
- 4.3 Meals at Home are commissioned from an external provider, the current cost of a hot meal is £8.01 delivered to the service users home. The current charge is £4.46 per meal, therefore the meal is subsidised by £3.55 (80%) per meal. It is proposed that the subsidy for the hot meal is removed over a period of three years. This will be reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process and an increase proposed for approval each year. An increase of 26% is proposed for 2025-26 to increase the charge to £5.64 per meal.
- 4.4 Community Alarms are charged as a flat rate per week and not means tested, the current charge per week is £4.85 per week. Community Alarms have recently transferred from analogue to digital and the cost of providing the community alarm service including the responder service is £11.42 per alarm per week. An increase of 5% is proposed for 2025-26 to increase the charge to £5.10 per week.
- 4.5 Community Care (Non-Personal Care) is provided to individuals to support them with preparing food, shopping, accessing the community and socialising. The charge for non-personal care is means tested and a financial contribution is based on [COSLA non-residential charging financial assessment guidance](#). The cost of purchasing this service from providers is £23.08 per hour. An increase of 18% is proposed for 2025-26 to increase the charge from £12.16 per hour to £14.39 per hour.
- 4.6 A new charge is proposed to manage Corporate Appointees/Access to Funds. The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 (AWI Act) was introduced to protect individuals with incapacity and provide support for their families and carers in managing and safeguarding the individuals' welfare and finances. The AWI Act introduced arrangements to help people (age 16 and over) who lack capacity to act or make some or all decisions for themselves. It covers people whose incapacity is caused by a mental disorder, such as dementia, learning disability, acquired brain injury or severe mental illness. The AWI Act supports the organisation in managing and safeguarding the welfare and finances of the person.
- 4.7 The South Ayrshire Council Finance Team provide this service to approximately 180 Corporate appointees. The service provided includes all aspects of financial management, payment of utilities, rent, council tax, insurance as well as day to day living expenses and budget management in conjunction with the Care Manager.
- 4.8 Charging for this service is proposed as a flat weekly rate. For community- based services users £8.00 per week is proposed and for care home-based residents £3 per week is proposed. No charge will be made for the first 8 weeks from commencement of Appointeeship. This will allow a sufficient period to identify and budget income and expenditure on behalf of the individual.
- 4.9 The cost to run the service is £0.160m per year, the income generated from charges will be used to partially fund the service.

- 4.10 Maximum Weekly Charge is the maximum a service user can be charged to contribute to their social care services. This is currently £100 per week and the proposal is to increase this by 2% to £102 per week. Currently no service user pays the maximum weekly charge.
- 4.11 The Council operates two residential care nursing homes, South Lodge in Ayr and Hillcrest in Girvan, it is proposed to increase the weekly charges for the care homes in line with the National Care Home Contract (NCHC) increase for residential care. The NCHC rate is still subject to approval.
- 4.12 The contribution a person makes to their care home fees is determined by a financial assessment following the Scottish Government's [Charging for Residential Accommodation Guidance](#) rules.
- 4.13 Where respite in a care home is required for the persons care needs and not for carers respite there is a weekly charge that is not means tested and based on Department for Work and Pensions benefits for employment support allowance, disability premium less personal expenses allowance. The personal expenses allowance has still to be published by Scottish Government for 2025-26.
- 4.14 Where respite is provided to give a carer a break from their caring duties. The charge for respite is waived.
- 4.15 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the proposed increases for approval.

## 5. Legal and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

## 6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The estimated financial impact is noted in the table below. The HSCP will need to identify savings following implementation of charging increases, due to the current under recovery of income position.

	<b>2025-26</b>
Projected Additional Income	£160,284
Less under recovery of Income	(£300,000)
Less Corporate Finance Resource	(£52,000)
<b>Net Efficiency to be achieved</b>	<b>(£191,716)</b>

## 7. Human Resources Implications

- 7.1 The proposed charge for the administration of corporate appointees will allow for one temporary post to be made permanent.

## 8. Risk

### 8.1 *Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations*

- 8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

## 8.2 **Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations**

- 8.2.1 Rejection of the recommendations will have financial implications to the Health and Social Care Partnership to identify further savings. Corporate Finance Team will also need to identify savings to provide capacity in the team to support the financial management of Corporate Appointee service users accounts.

## 9. **Equalities**

- 9.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out on the proposals contained in this report, which identifies potential positive and/ or negative impacts and/ or areas that require further consideration. The IIA Summary Report is attached as Appendix 2 which includes information on any mitigating or follow-up action required.
- 9.2 A copy of the fully completed IIA can be accessed here: [HSCP Charging Increase IIA.xlsm](#).

## 10. **Sustainable Development Implications**

- 10.1 **Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

## 11. **Options Appraisal**

- 11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

## 12. **Link to Council Plan**

- 12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Priority 4 of the Council Plan: Efficient and effective enabling services and the report aligns with IJB Strategic Priority 'We are an ambitious and effective partnership'.

## 13. **Results of Consultation**

- 13.1 The IJB Budget Working Group has been consulted and involved in the scrutiny and review of the charging proposals and recommends these proposals to Cabinet for approval.
- 13.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Hugh Hunter, Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

## 14. **Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes**

- 14.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Director of Health and Social Care Partnership will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Managed by</b>
Social Care Charges	1 April 2025	Service Lead – Revenues and Benefits

**Background Papers**    **None**

**Person to Contact**    **Lisa Duncan, Chief Finance Officer**  
**Elgin House, Ailsa Hospital, Dalmellington Road, Ayr**  
**Phone 01292 612392**  
**E-mail [lisa.duncan2@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.duncan2@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)**

**Date: 5 March 2025**

**Health and Social Care Partnership**

**2025/26 - Charging increases for Social Care**

	£	£	£					
<b>Community Care Charges</b>	<b>Current Charge</b>	<b>Increase</b>	<b>25-26 Proposed Charge</b>	<b>25-26 Cost</b>	<b>Per</b>	<b>Date of implementation</b>	<b>Means tested?</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Meals at Home	£4.46	26%	£5.64	£8.01	Meal	01/04/2025	N	Increase over 3 years to meet Costs of Meals Charged by Provider
Community Alarms	£4.85	5%	£5.10	£11.42	Week	01/04/2025	N	Increase over 3 years to meet additional cost of Analogue to Digital Transfer
Community Support (Non Personal Care)	£12.16	18%	£14.39	£23.08	Hour	01/04/2025	Y	Increase following benchmarking with other HSCP Charges.
Max Weekly Charge	£100.00	2%	£102.00	N/A	Week	01/04/2025	Y	Increase in line with inflation
Corporate Appointees - Financial Administration Charges (Community )			£8.00	£17.09	Week	01/04/2025	N	New charge to support management of individuals finances.
Corporate Appointees - Financial Administration Charges (Care Home)			£3.00	£17.09	Week	01/04/2025	N	
<b>Residential Charges</b>	<b>Current Charge</b>	<b>Increase</b>	<b>25-26 Proposed Charge</b>	<b>25-26 Cost</b>	<b>Per</b>	<b>Date of implementation</b>	<b>Means tested?</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Local authority care home charges (in line with NCHC Residential Base Rate)	£762.62	TBC	25/26 NCHC Residential Increase	25/26 NCHC Residential Rate	Week	07/04/2025	Y	Financial assessment carried out in line with Charging for Residential Accommodation Guidance (CRAG) National Care Home Contract (NCHC) subject to approval
Respite in care home charges - Age 18-24	£118.70	TBC	Based on DWP Benefits	25/26 NCHC Residential Rate	Week	07/04/2025	N	charge related to benefits
Respite in care home charges - Age 25-59	£137.50	TBC	Based on DWP Benefits	25/26 NCHC Residential Rate	Week	07/04/2025		
Respite in care home charges - Age 60+	£257.00	TBC	Based on DWP Benefits	25/26 NCHC Residential Rate	Week	07/04/2025		

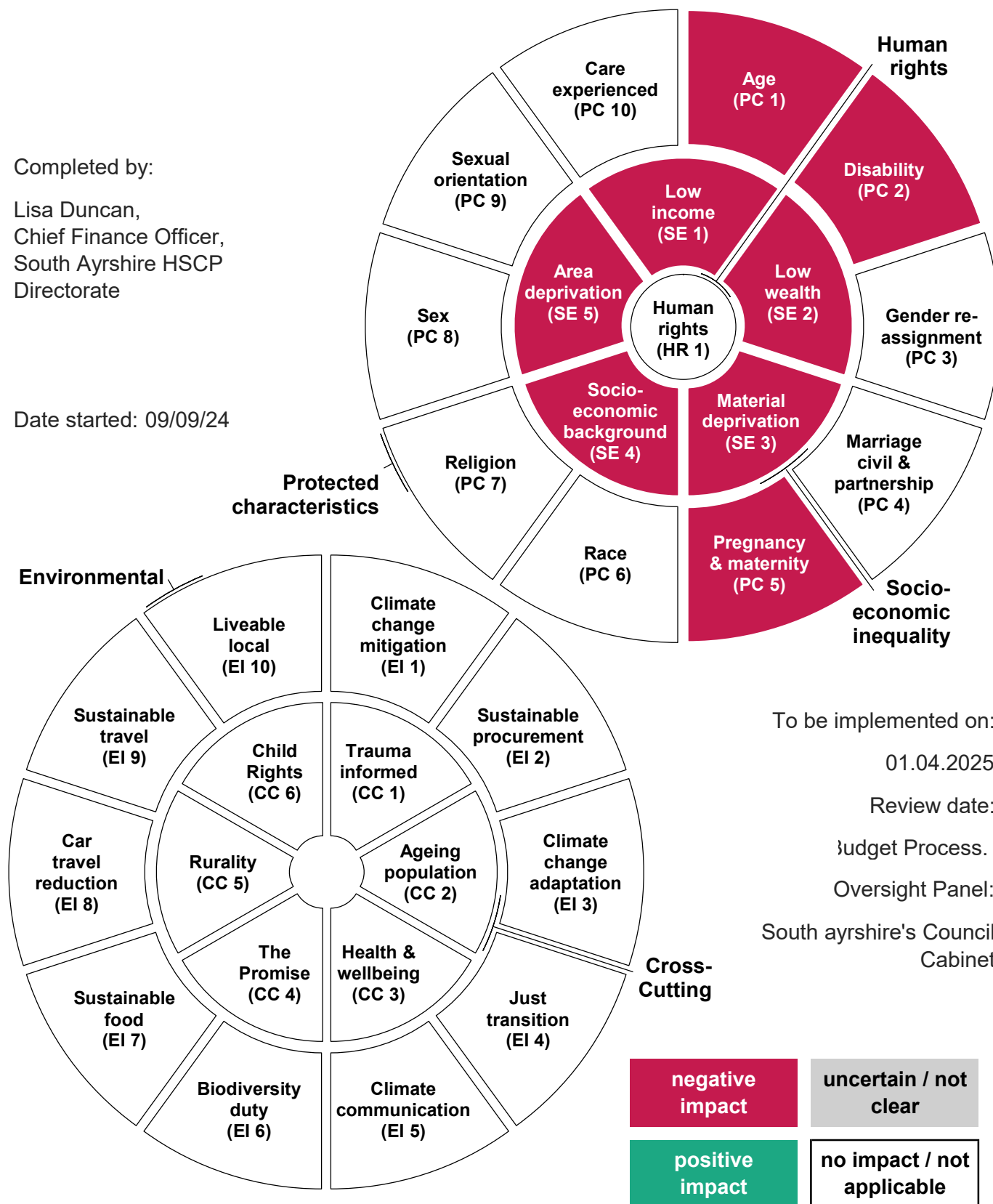
# Integrated Impact Assessment Summary Report

## Social Care Charges 2025-26



Completed by:  
 Lisa Duncan,  
 Chief Finance Officer,  
 South Ayrshire HSCP  
 Directorate

Date started: 09/09/24



To be implemented on:  
 01.04.2025  
 Review date:  
 Budget Process.  
 Oversight Panel:  
 South Ayrshire's Council  
 Cabinet

**Public sector equality duty**

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation?

The implementation of this charge will ensure a consistent approach regardless of any protected characteristics.

Advancing equality of opportunity?

The implementation of this charge will ensure a consistent approach regardless of any protected characteristics.

Fostering good relations?

The implementation of this charge will ensure a consistent approach regardless of any protected characteristics.

**Consultation declaration**

We confirm consultation has been carried out as part of this process.

**Mitigating Actions Required (re negative / unclear impacts)**

**EQUALITIES: impact on protected characteristics**

<b>PC 1</b>	Age	A financial assessment will be undertaken to prevent negative impacts. People who are experiencing financial hardship and unable to meet charges, will be reviewed on a case by case basis and some or all of the charge may be waived.
<b>PC 2</b>	Disability	A financial assessment will be undertaken to prevent negative impacts. People who are experiencing financial hardship and unable to meet charges, will be reviewed on a case by case basis and some or all of the charge may be waived.



**Mitigating Actions Required (re **negative** / unclear impacts)**

<b>PC 5</b>	Pregnancy and Maternity	A financial assessment will be undertaken to prevent negative impacts. People who are experiencing financial hardship and unable to meet charges, will be reviewed on a case by case basis and some or all of the charge may be waived.
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**EQUALITIES: impact on socio-economic inequality**

<b>SE 1</b>	Low Income / Income Poverty	A financial assessment will be undertaken to prevent negative impacts. People who are experiencing financial hardship and unable to meet charges, will be reviewed on a case by case basis and some or all of the charge may be waived.
<b>SE 2</b>	Low and / or no wealth	A financial assessment will be undertaken to prevent negative impacts. People who are experiencing financial hardship and unable to meet charges, will be reviewed on a case by case basis and some or all of the charge may be waived.
<b>SE 3</b>	Material Deprivation	A financial assessment will be undertaken to prevent negative impacts. People who are experiencing financial hardship and unable to meet charges, will be reviewed on a case by case basis and some or all of the charge may be waived.
<b>SE 4</b>	Socio-Economic Background	A financial assessment will be undertaken to prevent negative impacts. People who are experiencing financial hardship and unable to meet charges, will be reviewed on a case by case basis and some or all of the charge may be waived.
<b>SE 5</b>	Area Deprivation	A financial assessment will be undertaken to prevent negative impacts. People who are experiencing financial hardship and unable to meet charges, will be reviewed on a case by case basis and some or all of the charge may be waived.

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Does this proposal require a Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)? no

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