

The House of Commons
Westminster
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dear (details of MP added here),

As you may already know, Hertfordshire County Council Adult Care Services (ACS) department is consulting on increasing charges for a number of community-based services that support people living at home. The consultation document states:

We continue to face pressure on resources and seek to make the best use of funds available to support all care requirements. We continue to be committed to providing a wide range of services to as many people as possible and collect a fair contribution if and when required towards them. If we don't increase our charges we may have to consider reducing the level of services we currently provide and the number of people we are able to support with these services. The proposals set out in this consultation would produce extra income and help to keep current service levels.

The proposals to increase charges are focused on people who receive a social care service where any of the following also apply:

- they receive the higher rate of Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance;
- they need two care workers at a time to help them, e.g. with hoisting;
- they live in sheltered or assisted accommodation and receive support to enable them to live there safely – this includes Extra-Care Housing and Supported Living;
- they use County Council transport to attend a Day Service;
- they have a telecare alarm supplied by Serco.

We understand that the proposed increases are likely to raise approximately £4m but that ACS will still have to find further savings of £11m in 2018/19. The consultation can be viewed on the Herts Direct website and closes on 31 December 2017. We understand that all responses will be considered at the meeting of the Adult Care Services panel on 10 January 2018, which will forward a recommendation to the HCC Cabinet which meets on 22 January. The proposed County Council budget – which would include any decision about increasing charges – would then be considered at the meeting of the Full County Council on 20 February 2018.

Unpaid family carers from across Hertfordshire have contacted us to express their alarm and distress at these proposals. In response to their requests, we arranged an event on Carers Rights Day (24 November 2018) where Iain MacBeath, Director – ACS, presented the proposals to an audience of carers and took questions. Following that session, the carers asked us to respond to the consultation on their behalf and to send a copy of that response to all the

Hertfordshire MPs. Some carers also chose to contact their MPs direct and so you may have already heard from them.

Carers know that the Government has allowed social services authorities to raise additional council tax which has been ring-fenced for social care, they are also aware of the three years extra funding that has been made available. However it is evident that demographic pressures coupled with reductions in Government grant over the past seven years means that services are struggling. This appears to be driving this present consultation.

Whilst carers do not yet know whether these proposals will be going ahead, they are asking for your support to protect social care and to persuade the County Council not to increase charging levels.

I look forward to your response, which I will be sharing with carers.

Yours sincerely,
Roma Mills
Policy and Engagement Manager