



Contributions Policy - Examples

Mrs Smith has a Personal Budget of **£77.84** a week which she uses to purchase 7 hours of care. She needs to have enough money still to live off after paying her contribution. This means that she must be left with her Income Support or pension credit + 25%.

After looking at the money she has the other things she has to pay for it is agreed that she should contribute **£43.15** towards the cost of her Personal Budget.



Mrs Ray has a Personal Budget of **£85** a week and pays a contribution of **£50.23**. After a stay in hospital her needs are reassessed and her Personal Budget increases to **£115** a week. As she has already been assessed as being able to pay £50.23 a week, her contribution doesn't change.



Contributions Policy

1. What is this policy about?

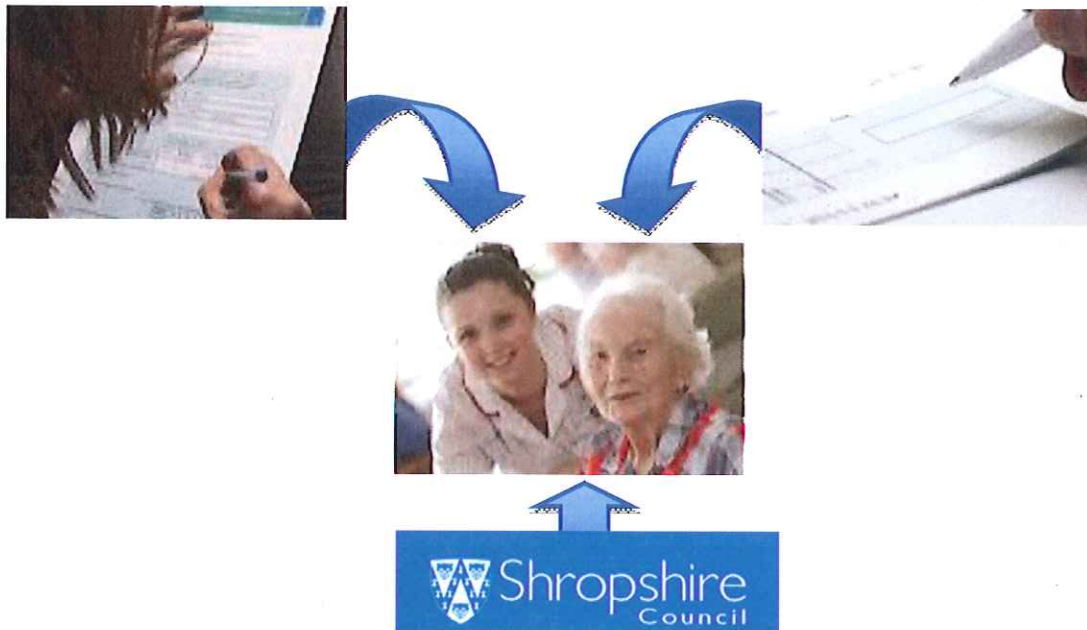
Shropshire Council has a duty to support the most vulnerable, frail and disabled people who live in Shropshire.

Many of those people will be entitled to some kind of service.

The money that the Council uses to pay for this care and support is only one of the ways of funding it.

Some people receive benefits which are to help pay for the cost of their care.

Some people have their own savings and use these to pay for what they need.



And for those people who are entitled to it, the Council will pay towards the cost of their care out of public money

For many people, their care and support is paid for by a combination of their own benefits and the Council.

This policy describes the system the Council will use to work out how much people should be asked to contribute out of their own benefits if they are entitled to help from the Council.

2. What principles is it based on?

Shropshire Council's approach to contributions is based on 3 key principles:

a) Some of the cost of providing care and support to people in Shropshire who need it most must be met through individual contributions.

Shropshire Council has to ask people to contribute towards the cost of their care and support otherwise it would not be able to support all the people who need it.

b) The amount that people are asked to contribute must be reasonable and affordable

No one should be left unable to afford a reasonable standard of living because of the contribution they have to make towards the cost of their care or support.

c) The system we use to work out how much people need to contribute must treat all people in the same way; it must be fair and consistent

All people will be treated in the same way and in line with the policy in Shropshire.

3. What does this policy cover?

This policy applies to anyone who is receiving support paid for the Council and who is *not* in residential or nursing care.

(This is because the government has set different rules for people in care homes.)



This policy applies to all other people receiving services from the Council. This means it will be applied for new people needing support as well as for people who are already receiving services and are paying a contribution. This is so that we treat everyone fairly.

4. Why is a new policy needed now?

There are a lot of changes in social care and the old way that we worked out people's contributions wouldn't work now as it wouldn't treat all people fairly.

The government wants people to have much more choice over how they get support and how the money from their local Council is used.



This is called Self-Directed Support and people who are entitled to help from the Council to meet the cost of their care and support will be offered a 'Personal Budget'.

This Personal Budget can be used in lots of different ways to meet a person's social care needs. It can be spent on things that the Council wouldn't normally spend money on. But the important thing is that whatever the money is spent on, it has to achieve some agreed outcomes for the person and keep them safe and well.

For example, it might be used to pay someone to help with gardening or cleaning, or to have art classes, or to join a gym or club or have a weekend break.



There are lots of ways people can use their Personal Budget and there is more information on how Self-Directed Support works from 'My

Life, My Choice' (contact details below).

The old way of working out people's contributions looked at what services they were getting and for most people these were usually care at home, transport or day services.

With Self-Directed Support people can spend their money on all sorts of things and we need a new system that treats people fairly and that



isn't based on what service they are getting.

5. How are contributions worked out?



The Council will look at how much money the person receives. Certain things will then be taken off this amount to make sure they still have enough and this includes the benefits they receive that are not to pay for their care.

The amount that is left is then available for contributions to their Personal Budget, with a few exceptions, such as:

If a person only has care and support during the day in their home and they receive benefits for nighttime care, the amount of these benefits will not be included in the amount that is available as a contribution.



If a person is receiving services as part of an aftercare plan (under Section 117 of the Mental Health Act) they will not pay a contribution.

5. What about savings?



The value of the person's home is not counted nor is the value of any other big things they own up to an amount of just over £14,000

But if the person has savings over £23,250 then they will be expected to pay for the full cost of their care and support.

If the person has a partner then their money is treated in the same way. It is assumed that the person needing support has half of any savings.

6. How will it work?

1. A Financial Assessment

Working out someone's contribution will be done alongside the work to find out what their care and support needs are.



As well as working out with the person what they need and the things that are important to them, we need to find out what the person's financial position is. This is called a 'Financial Assessment' and is carried out by a 'Welfare and Income Officer'.

They will ask for certain information and if the person who needs support cannot give this themselves then they will ask the information from someone who is acting on their behalf.

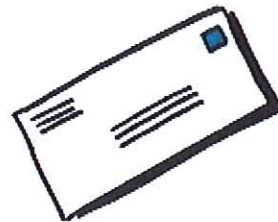


This assessment does 2 key things:

- It makes sure that the person is receiving all the benefits they are entitled to;
- It works out how much they should contribute towards their Personal Budget

2. The person is given a rough idea of the amount they will have to contribute

After the assessment, the Council will write to the person to tell them what they think the contribution might be.



This will be done at about the same time that the person finds out what their Personal Budget amount might be.



At this stage it gives them an idea but is not definite.

This is because the amount of the Personal Budget is not confirmed until they have agreed with the Council how they want to use their budget and the final cost may be different.

At this stage it is an *indication*, which is

important to people as it gives them the information that they need to plan how they might use their Personal Budget, knowing, roughly, how much they might have to contribute.

3. The amount is confirmed once the Personal Budget is agreed.

A Support Plan will be written which sets out how the budget can best be used, based on the things that are important to the person and those closest to them.

The Support Plan needs to be agreed by the Council as a good way to use the budget.

Once the Support Plan has been agreed, the Personal Budget will be confirmed. At this point too, the Council can confirm the amount of the person's contribution.



4. The contribution is made



When the Support Plan is approved a date will be agreed for the payment of the Personal Budget to start.

There are a number of ways that the Personal Budget can be paid but whatever has been agreed will start on a certain date agreed with the person and on this date the contribution will also start.

7. What if I don't agree with the contribution I have been asked to make?

The Council will always look again to check that the calculation is right if someone doesn't agree with what they have been asked to contribute.

But it can only agree to change the amount if there are very unusual situations. This is because it must act fairly. However, there some occasions when the Director may agree that this is reasonable.

8. What if I don't want to tell the Council how much money I have?



If the person doesn't want to share how much money they have then the Council will assume that they have savings of more than £23,250.

This means that they would have to pay the full cost of their care and support.

9. What if I already receive services from the Council?

Everyone who receives services they will have a Financial Assessment at the time of their annual review.

As well as making sure they are receiving all the things they should, this assessment will also tell them whether or not the amount they are asked to contribute will change.

