

The Minimum Income Guarantee

[MIG]

The cabinet decision was

RESOLVED:

That the Personal Budgets Contribution Policy be updated for 2017/2018, retaining Shropshire Council's existing levels of Minimum Income Guarantee [MIG], at £194.50 per week for a single person and £148.50 per week for a member of a couple.

On behalf of the Shropshire Council Liberal Democrat Group I wish to call this decision in.

Cabinet were present with a number of options and chose option 1

This if adopted would mean that a single pensioner affected by this decision will have his/her contribution increased by 8.3%. One of a couple would have their contribution increased by 28.6%.

This increase is far in excess of any other increase in charges that the council made when discussing the annual increase in charges earlier in the year. We consider this increase to be excessive.

At present any increase in contributions does not form any part of the adopted Financial Strategy so no compensatory savings need to be made should this increase not take place. Any income raised by this decision can therefore be considered as a bonus to the council and is extra to any previously shown.

The increase is means tested but it does target those most in need, those who need help in coping with infirmities. Who need help in living from day to day, many being the most vulnerable in our society.

It is noted that the paper did not contain any reference to an EISA Document or consideration of it. Consideration of the effect that increase if implemented would have. We feel that this is an omission and should have been included, particularly as the recommendation proposed for certain individuals that the charge they pay should be **increased by 28.6%**.

We note government did not increase the MIG but what is proposed here is disproportionate and in effect taking away, reducing the guarantee that Shropshire gives to those in need. For example, those pensioners who do not receive any Adult Social Care from Shropshire Council will get receive all the increases awarded them in full. Those who do receive help will face an increase of up to 28.6%. Many feel what is proposed is unfair and disproportionate, especially when compared to other increases that council agreed earlier in the year. It will in effect wipe out any increase they may have had in pension.

- We ask that this decision be looked at by Scrutiny. That they should look into how these charges may affect Shropshire Residents, those residents who it is recognised are in need of help from this council. Scrutiny to consider if cabinet should revisit this decision and consider if a smaller increase or even no increase should be put forward for this year.
- In the report considered and adopted by Council in February the statement shown below was included. This may not be classed as a new charge but it does increase the charge made to certain residents by a very much larger percentage than any approved by council in February. This consideration was not made by cabinet before reaching its decision in September. Scrutiny is asked to consider should this be considered and have they any recommendations to make to cabinet as a result of considering it.
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- In the February report it is noted that the Council was due to receive from the item listed as “Adult Discretionary Income” a total of £1.133m for 2017/18. If this increase is considered under this title it would **increase the income in this budget line by 29.1%**. Is this fair and proportionate that the individuals targeted by this proposal pay this huge increase.

Extract from the February report on Fees and charges made to council in February

3.1*Consideration of new charges will take into account the requirements of the Human Rights Act, any necessary environmental appraisals, the need for Equalities Impact Needs Assessments and in some cases any necessary service user feedback.*

Roger Evans