

2016-17 Budget proposal

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

Informing our approach to fairness

Name of proposal	Looked After Children - Introduction of a charging policy to enable us to charge for some elements of children's social care
Date of original assessment	October 2015
Lead officer	Karen Simmons
Assessment team	Ann Banks
Review date	1 February 2016

Version control

Version	2
Date	1 December 2015
Replaces version	1

This is our assessment of the potential equality and other impacts of this 2016/17 budget proposal, based on the available evidence. It is a 'living document' and we will review it throughout the consultation period. A formal review will take place on all proposals when consultation closes to consider comments and information from all stakeholders, research or new and emerging policy.

The following 2016/17 budget proposal is put forward in a context of continued financial austerity. Due to cuts in government funding and unfunded cost pressures we have already been forced to make £191m savings. We anticipate having to make further savings of £100m over 2016-2019, £30m of which are needed in 2016-17.

This IIA should be read in conjunction with 'Newcastle – a great city: Ambition in the face of austerity' which explains more broadly how we are responding to the financial challenges we face.

Section A: Current service

1. What does the service do?

Children's Social Care provides a range of statutory services for vulnerable children and their families. This includes the provision of accommodation through s.20 of the Children Act 1989. This accommodation is provided through either fostering, supported living or residential care provision depending on the needs of the child concerned.

2. Who do you deliver this service for?

This proposal relates to the provision of local authority accommodation to children at parental request under s.20 of the Children Act 1989.

3. Do you have any statutory requirements?

Section 17 of the 1989 Children Act places a general duty on all local authorities to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need and this may include provision of financial support. Section 29 of the Act makes provision for councils to recover reasonable contributions from families who are supported under S17 (other than advice, guidance or counselling),

There is also provision within the Children Act 1989 for councils to seek contributions from parents towards the actual costs of their child's placement when children are placed in voluntary accommodation through s.20 of the Children Act 1989.

The ability to charge is limited where families are in receipt of benefits or a state pension.

4. How much do you spend on this service?

Gross expenditure	Gross income	Net budget	Capital projects
£15,985,880	£1,188,190	£14,797,690	0

Note that income relates to income for children with additional needs from health and education based on need.

5. What workforce delivers this service?

Posts	FTEs	Comments
0	0	

Section B: Change proposal

1. What is the proposal to change the service?

We propose to charge some families who receive support under s17 of the Children Act 1989, or who have a child in foster or residential care due to a voluntary care arrangement.

The policy will be underpinned by a financial assessment which will exclude families on benefits and on low incomes.

This proposal is not about charging families in crisis and will not apply to families receiving services due to child protection concerns.

The policy will facilitate family members who are requesting that their children are accommodated by the local authority to make a financial contribution the costs of their care and will encourage families to take responsibility for their children.

We estimate that the policy will apply to a small number of children.

2. What evidence has informed this proposal?

Information source	What has this told you?
Review of a number of other Local Authority Charging Policies	The legality and scope of charges to be applied
Consideration of the current LAC population and reasons for their accommodation	That there are a small proportion of children who have been accommodated at parental request and where the parents are likely to have the financial means to make a contribution to their care

3. How much will you spend on this service?

	Gross expenditure	Gross income	Net budget	Capital projects
16/17	£15,968,880	£1,205,000	£14,780,690	N/A

4. What will the net savings be of this proposal?

	Gross Saving	Implementation Cost	Net Saving
16/17	£17,000	£0	£17,000

5. What impact will this have on the workforce?

	No. FTEs	% workforce
16/17	0	0%

6. Who have you engaged with about this proposal?			
Date	Who	No. of people	Main issues raised
w/c 30 November	CSC Staff		
16 December 2015	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board		
13 January 2016	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board		
18 January 2016	Children's Trust Board		

7. What are the potential impacts of the proposal?				
Staff / service users	Specific group / subject	Impact (actual / potential disadvantage, beneficial outcome or none)	Detail of impact	How will you address or mitigate disadvantage?
People with protected characteristics				
Service users	Younger people and / or older people (age)	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that people will only be asked for a financial contribution if they can afford it
Service users	Disabled people	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that people will only be asked for a financial contribution if they can afford it

Service users	Carers	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that people will only be asked for a financial contribution if they can afford it
Service users	People who are married or in civil partnerships	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that people will only be asked for a financial contribution if they can afford it
Service users	Sex or gender (including transgender, pregnancy and maternity)	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that people will only be asked for a financial contribution if they can afford it
Service users	People's sexual orientation	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that people will only be asked for a financial contribution if they can afford it
Service users	People of different races	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that people will only be asked for a financial contribution if they can afford it
Service users	People who have different religions or beliefs	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that people will only be asked for a financial contribution if they can afford it
Service users	People living in deprived areas	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that there should be no financial

				disadvantage to people living in deprived areas
Service users	People in low paid employment or in households with low incomes	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that there should be no financial disadvantage to people in low paid employment
Service users	People facing barriers to gaining employment, such as low levels of educational attainment	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that there should be no financial disadvantage to people facing barriers to employment
Service users	Looked after children	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that there should be no financial disadvantage looked after children
Service users	People facing multiple deprivation, through a combination of factors such as poor health or poor housing / homelessness	Potential disadvantage	Service users may be asked to make a financial contribution	The inclusion of a financial assessment means that there should be no financial disadvantage to those facing multiple disadvantage
Businesses				
	Businesses providing current or future jobs in the city	No disadvantage	None	Not applicable
Geography				
	Area, wards, neighbourhoods	No disadvantage	None	Not applicable

Community cohesion				
	Community cohesion	No disadvantage	None	Not applicable
Community safety				
	Community safety	No disadvantage	None	Not applicable
Environment				
	Environment	No disadvantage	None	Not applicable