

Home Care Charges Consultation

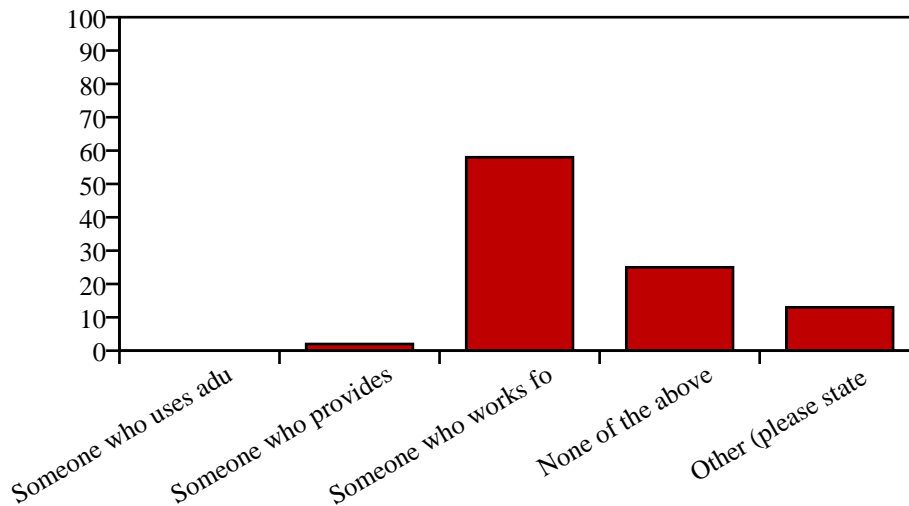
Consulting on proposal to charge for home care

Overview

From **18/02/2008** to **13/05/2008**, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham ran a consultation entitled '*Home Care Charges Consultation*'. This report covers the online element of the consultation process, which was run from <http://www.citizenspace.com/local/lbhf/homecare>

Topic 1: About you

Q1: Are you...?

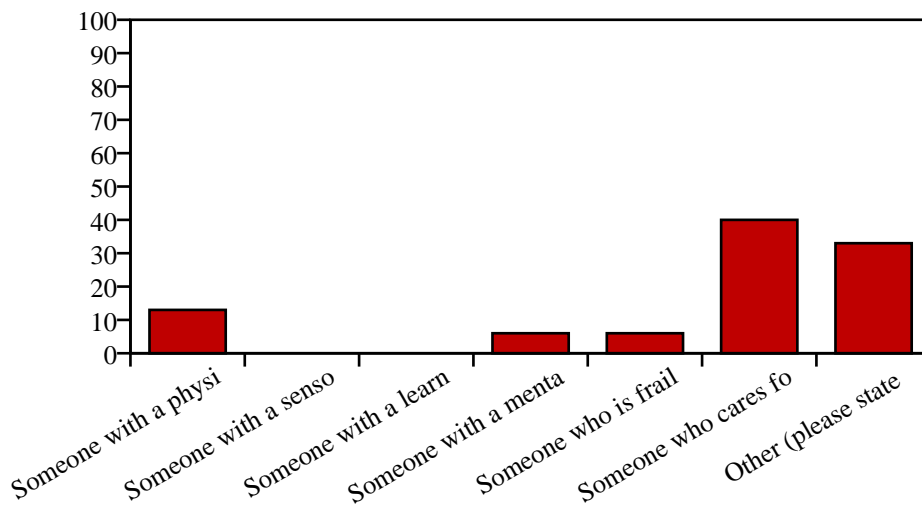


Option	Value	Percentage
Someone who uses adult social care services	0	0%
Someone who provides unpaid care for someone who uses adult social care services	1	2%
Someone who works for an organisation that provides services for someone who uses adult social care services	21	58%
None of the above	9	25%
Other (please state in the box below)	5	13%
Total	36	

Q2: Other (please specify)

There are 55 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q3: Are you...?

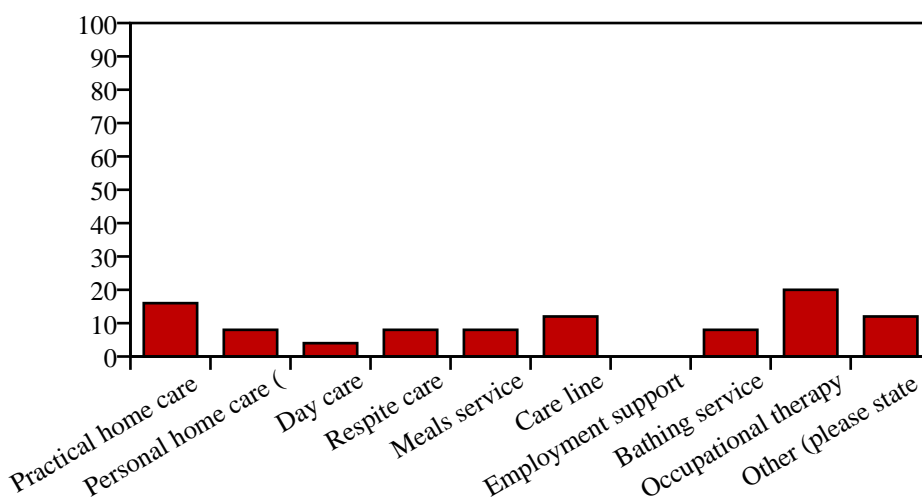


Option	Value	Percentage
Someone with a physical disability	2	13%
Someone with a sensory impairment	0	0%
Someone with a learning disability	0	0%
Someone with a mental health need	1	6%
Someone who is frail and over 65	1	6%
Someone who cares for one of the above	6	40%
Other (please state in the box below)	5	33%
Total	15	

Q4: Other (please specify)

There are 55 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q5: Which services do you, or the person you care for, use at present?



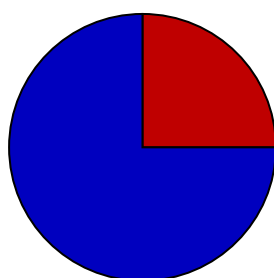
Option	Value	Percentage
Practical home care (housework, shopping, laundry, pension)	4	16%
Personal home care (assistance with bathing, dressing, using the toilet)	2	8%
Day care	1	4%
Respite care	2	8%
Meals service	2	8%
Care line	3	12%
Employment support	0	0%
Bathing service	2	8%
Occupational therapy equipment	5	20%
Other (please state in the box below)	3	12%
Total	24	

Q6: Other (please specify)

There are 55 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Topic 2: About the proposals

Q1: Other London boroughs charge between £10.85 and £17.50 per hour. Do you think that £12.40 per hour of home care is a reasonable charge?



■ **Yes: 25%**
 ■ **No: 75%**

Option	Value	Percentage
Yes	8	25%
No	24	75%
Total	32	

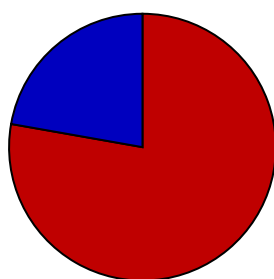
Q2: If 'No', what do you think would be a reasonable charge?

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q3: If 'No', why do you think that £12.40 per hour is not a reasonable charge?

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q4: It is possible to set a maximum weekly charge for home care so that people would not have to pay over a certain limit, no matter how much care they receive. This would reduce the amount of money the Council would bring in. In all cases, only those that can afford it would pay for home care. Do you think there should be a maximum limit for charging?



■ **Yes: 77%**
 ■ **No: 22%**

Option	Value	Percentage
Yes	21	77%
No	6	22%
Total	27	

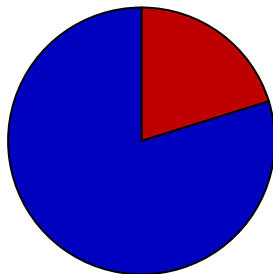
Q5: If 'Yes', what do you think the maximum charge should be and why?

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q6: If 'No', why?

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

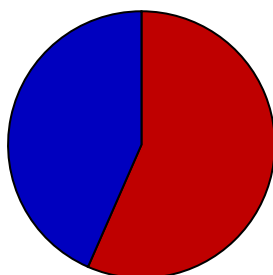
Q7: Assessments must take full account of any disability related expenditure from disability related benefits. How would you prefer the Council to do this?



- By disregarding a fixed percentage of a person's disability benefits
- By carrying out a full assessment of a person's disability related expenditure

Option	Value	Percentage
By disregarding a fixed percentage of a person's disability benefits	5	20%
By carrying out a full assessment of a person's disability related expenditure	19	79%
Total	24	

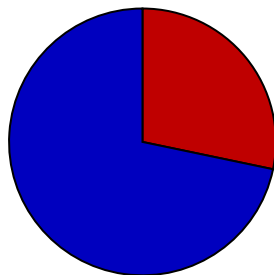
Q8: The Council may also disregard disability related expenditure for those who are not in receipt of disability related benefits. Do you think the Council should do this?



- Yes: 56%
- No: 43%

Option	Value	Percentage
Yes	13	56%
No	10	43%
Total	23	

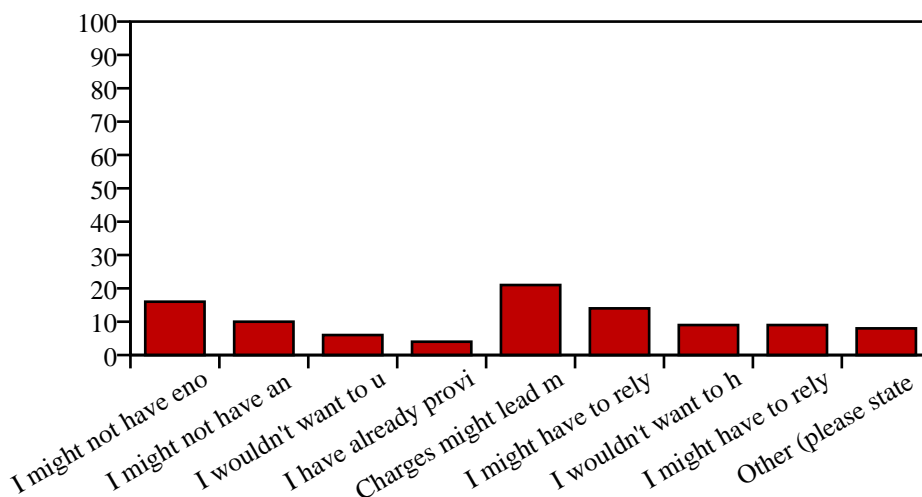
Q9: If 'Yes', how would you prefer the Council to do this?



- By disregarding a fixed percentage of income: 28%
- By carrying out a full assessment of a person's disability: 71%

Option	Value	Percentage
By disregarding a fixed percentage of income	4	28%
By carrying out a full assessment of a person's disability related expenditure	10	71%
Total	14	

Q10: If the Council introduced charging for home care services, what would be your main concerns? (Please tick those options you feel are most important)



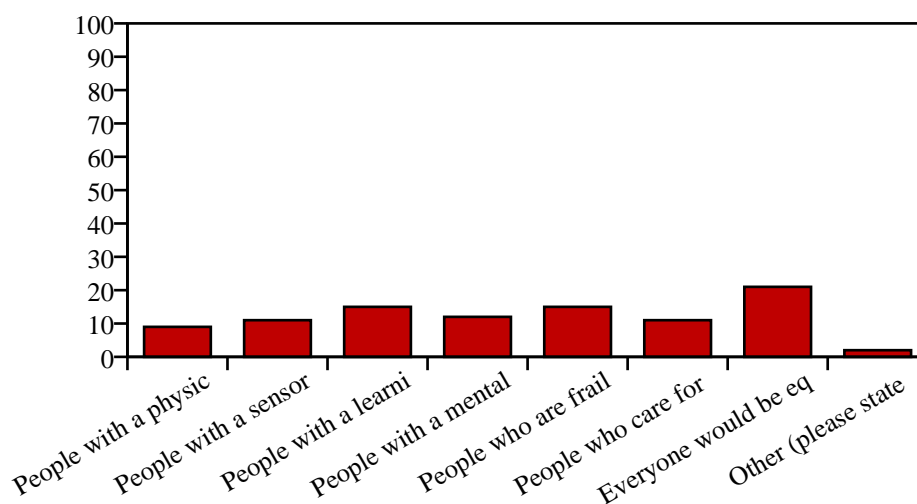
Concern	Value
I might not have enough money left	17
I might not have an accurate assessment of my financial situation carried out	10
I wouldn't want to undergo a financial assessment	7
I have already provided all the information the Council needs to carry out a financial assessment and would not like to provide all that information again	5
Charges might lead me to have to rely on other services	22
I might have to rely on other services	15
I wouldn't want to have to rely on other services	10
I might have to rely on other services	10
Other (please state)	8

might lead me to turn down hours of care that I need	16
would have to rely on informal care more	11
would want to have the administrative burden of paying for services	7
would have to rely on other sources of help than informal care or social care services (e.g. religious group, community club)	7
(please state in the box below)	6
	75

Q11: Other (please specify)

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q12: Are there any groups of people you think would be particularly disadvantaged by the proposed charging scheme?

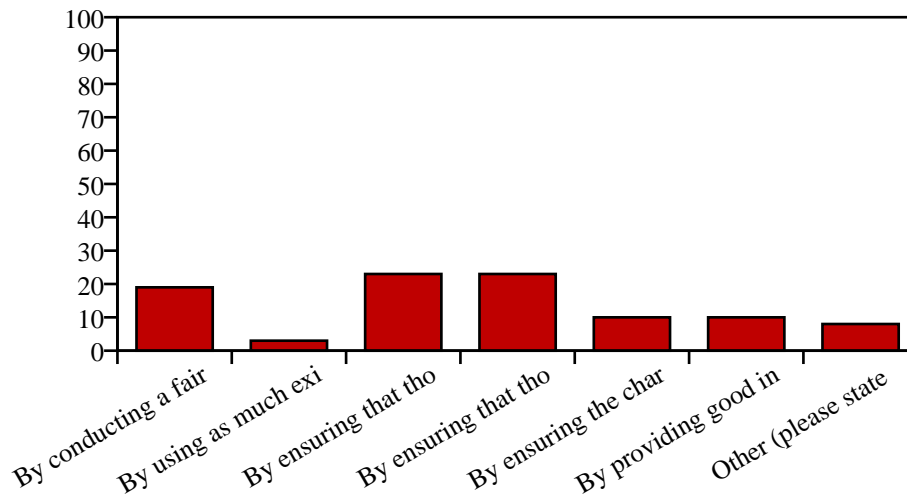


Option	Value	Percentage
People with a physical disability	7	9%
People with a sensory impairment	8	11%
People with a learning disability	11	15%
People with a mental health need	9	12%
People who are frail and older than 65	11	15%
People who care for one of the above	8	11%
Everyone would be equally affected	15	21%
Other (please state in the box below)	2	2%
Total	71	

Q13: Other (please specify)

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q14: How might the Council minimise the impact of introducing charging for home care, were a decision made to do so?

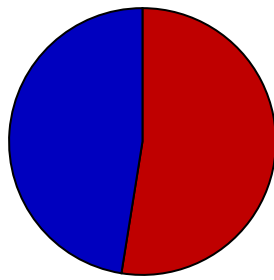


Option	Value	Percentage
By conducting a fair and reasonable financial assessment	11	19%
By using as much existing information as possible for the financial assessment	2	3%
By ensuring that those who cannot pay are not asked to do so	13	23%
By ensuring that those who can pay, do pay	13	23%
By ensuring the charge is a reasonable one	6	10%
By providing good information and advice	6	10%
Other (please state in the box below)	5	8%
Total	56	

Q15: Other (please specify)

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q16: Even though only those who could afford it would have to pay, the proposed charging policy would have an impact on those disabled people who would have to pay. However, this would be a lesser impact than providing the service to fewer people. Do you agree with this approach?



■ **Yes: 52%**
■ **No: 47%**

Option	Value	Percentage
Yes	11	52%
No	10	47%
Total	21	

Q17: Is there anything further the Council could do to promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people with regard to a proposed charging policy?

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q18: If you do not agree that the Council should charge for home care, how else do you think the Council could make sure services were provided within the limits of the resources available?

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Q19: Are there any other comments you wish to make in relation to charging for home care?

There are 44 responses to this question. Please see Appendix A for the text of these responses.

Appendix A

Other (please specify)

1. Housing Support Officer
2. voluntary involvement with an agency that provides these services
3. Full time Carer on Carers Allowance. Carers Allowance is my only source of income, for what it's worth!!!!
4. I work in the mental health team
5. social worker in adult team
6. Mental Health Support Worker
7. I work as a social worker for the Adult Social Work Team.

Other (please specify)

1. someone who refers people for home care
2. Asthma
3. I work in the mental health team
4. Social Worker
5. I work as a social worker for the Adult Social Work Team.

Other (please specify)

1. None
2. Providing continued support upon discharge from Hospital in order to rehabilitate them into the community
3. I don't use any of these services at present.

If 'No', what do you think would be a reasonable charge?

1. service should remain free
2. Service should be free
3. 0
4. Nil
5. Nil
6. £0.00
7. There should be no charge
8. the service should be free, I say this especially as the council appears to be paying for it by cutting council tax
9. 50% of cost ie £6
10. £00.
11. 0
12. service should remain free,my mother is 95 and cannot get in to the shower and we have someone just one hour per week. We could have someone daily but only need help one day a week for less than an hourWe would be able to ask for a shower and are trying to save your money.
13. Should be means tested

14. There should be no charge
15. Service should be free
16. 0.00
17. I don't think its reasonable to have a flat fee; it should be means tested
18. 14.00
19. free of charge
20. Zero
21. should be means tested and reduced rate at least say £5 ph
22. £9.00

If 'No', why do you think that £12.40 per hour is not a reasonable charge?

1. I believe these services should remain free and costs be met from the Council Tax. In this way maximum take-up can be achieved
2. Service should be free. The person I care for only has a small pension and attendance allowance and I only have £40 week Carer's Allowance, cannot afford to pay £80-£90 a week.
3. I think the services should be free for all people over the age of 65.
4. It will cost a lot for vulnerable residents & their families if they are above the proposed means testing levels. Exactly the groups that were meant to benefit from the reduction in council tax.
5. No resident wants to be frail and in need of care. Why doubly penalise those who do?
6. Flat rate charge which will disproportionately affect poorer persons who need home care. This represents about 10% of the guaranteed minimum income for oaps.
7. At a time when the council appears to have as it's principlal target, the reduction of council tax, it appears to me that it opens itself to a charge of hypocrisy by seeming to subsidise the much trumpeted 3% decrease in council tax by raising money from the weak, disabled and elderly within our community.
8. it should be subsidized and even at 50% of cost should be means tested. No-one should pay more than 50% of true cost.
9. Services should remain free. Vulnerable old and disabled people cannot afford charges. The service is currently inconsistent and largely poor and carers seem to be untrained. Older people feel that no-one cares about them, and they are very unhappy with the current service - they are shocked at the idea of paying these ridiculous high rates.
10. I think the services should be free for all people over the age of 65.
11. I'm not sure how people that require these services will find the money to pay for it
12. Pensioners are not very well off and thee is little good to give them a 3% drop in their rates if on the other hand you take a lot more from them. They are old, frail and needy and have paid their dues during their working life and deserve better than that, Bad enough when we were told from the gradle to the grave people have to sell their flats and houses for care, which was meant to pass on to their families.
13. As above - should be means tested. If someone needs say 10 hours or more of home care per week, at £12.40 they may spend their entire income on home care!!
14. I think the services should be free for all people over the age of 65.

15. Disabled and elderly people are the most vulnerable members of our society and by imposing a charge (whatever amount) many will cease to get a small service which in many cases prevents them from needing more costly and permanent support in the future.
16. I don't think its reasonable to have a flat fee; it should be means tested
17. Compared to other Boroughs, Hammersmith encourages dependency in people. If the charge was set higher it would make people think whether they actually need the service. Also, Hammersmith is quite relaxed when assessing situations and provide packages that are too high most of the time.
18. no charge
19. The services should be free - the cost shared by all of us through council tax
20. It does not reflect on the level of benefits/pension amounts received and is out of proportion and above the rate of inflation. If means tested charge should only be for the amount of AA received or other benefits received by someone, that said given the increase of OP in borough there could be two tiers those with above a certain income should pay full price i.e £10 ph
21. it can be purchased for less from agencies

If 'Yes', what do you think the maximum charge should be and why?

1. If the charges proceed I believe there should be a low cap to ensure maximum takeup say £10 per week
2. The limit should be around £100 p/w. this is to motivate people to do more for themselves but will also help those with long term disabilities
3. It shouldn't be more than their weekly Income, where they have capital then maximum income should be charged.
4. £12.40
5. Nil
6. Nil because for fit and healthy people the charge for being able to get up, go to bed, clean the house, cook and shop is nil.
7. The maximum charge should be zero, for reasons already stated.
8. Difficult to answer this question without the answer to any more. I say this because it seems to me that at certain levels the cost of collecting the charge overwhelms the financial benefit and leads to further charges being imposed on the this very vulnerable section of our community.
9. Same as attendance allowance as anyone with high care package should be in receipt of this.
10. Services should remain free
11. Only a small nominal amount for people who can afford to pay e.g.£25 for someone who has daily help and nothing for someone who only has one hour per week and is entitled to a lot more
12. £20.00 because there are some rich residents within the borough who can afford it. And if the council should supplement their income, it would provide an employment opportunity for local people as well as others interested in pursuing a profession in the care field. (I used to work as an Assistant Manager in the Home Care Office)
13. This needs to be looked at in relation to pensions and other benefits to ensure those with the minimum income can still afford the maximum charge.

14. If charging is brought in - this appears to me to have been decided in spite of this consultation - then yes there should be a maximum charge of no more than 10% of income - this should not include benefits which should never be means tested
15. I don't think it's reasonable to have a flat fee; it should be means tested
16. 250.00. If people can afford to pay, they should. However, it is best to set a higher limit so as not to penalise those that have worked hard as well.
17. £300.00 weekly. This maximum charge should be means tested as this would ensure only those that can afford to pay this figure end up doing so. I feel there should be a ceiling even for wealthy people because we should not be seen to discriminate against those who have worked hard to get to where they are.
18. Zero. (If you have to charge, then a small sum, say £10.) I suspect that the cost of administering the assessment and charging system is likely to be high - it doesn't seem fair that people should have to then pay for the system as well.
19. £20
20. £5 for AA/lower income, free for people on Is and £10 for people over a limit

If 'No', why?

1. Service should be free to those who need it - have paid enough into NHS over the years
2. See above
3. Some service users need complex care that would need to be assessed. Why should there be a blanket charge for all?

Other (please specify)

1. If had to pay for services, would drop her at the nearest casualty and leave her there as she needs 24 hour care. NHS is lucky I haven't done this yet!!!
2. I would think the council doesn't value me equally with able-bodied people.
3. I feel that persons who are not best able to represent themselves would be hit hardest. It's clear that they would assume more responsibility for their own care but in many instances might not be able to arrange this properly. It's clear that the council wants to distance itself from the provision of such care but wants to dress it up as providing choice. The choice, of course, should be there but so too should be the element of opting into council provision free care.
4. There are many service users at risk who are reluctant to accept services, and a charge would make this even harder and put them more at risk. Also people accept less help than required, especially respite to relieve informal carers, so carer gets more stressed.
5. The people needing the service are ill and vulnerable and shouldn't have to jump through hoops to get help. And they would just feel defeated.
6. Screening would enable people who do not need the care services to opt out as their eligibility would come under close scrutiny.
7. As an employee of LBHF I would think many people who need home care will refuse it for many of the above reasons.
8. Those family/friends responsible for caring would have a greater burden imposed on them - it is already acknowledged that carers are stressed and many suffer from ill health. They would feel guilty that the disabled person is

forced to pay for services that they as carers would give freely and take on more caring duty themselves - possibly giving up work - and relying themselves on benefits. Perhaps carers should be paid £12.40 per hour and not £50.55 per week for >30 hours of caring that is their going rate

Other (please specify)

1. Also people with dementia often have no insight into thier needs, and as stated previously will decline services, and especially if they have to pay for it.
2. Those with less money

Other (please specify)

1. Once you have gone down the route of charging the frail, the sick and the disabled there's really no way to 'reduce the impact' of what you are doing.
2. By maintaining the current system, I have been proud that the council does not yet charge. I noticed that even the council is proud of this. When we received our recent four star rating it was emphasised that the council's continuing free provision of this service was a major factor in being awarded the top rank. It saddens me that we now appear to be abandoning this vulnerable group, whom we have recently served so well.
3. By not refusing a services to those in need but who cannot understand the need they have or need to pay. Reducing risk should take priority over getting money.
4. You can't minimize the shocking impact this would have on vulnerable people. Why not continue to lead the way in providing free care to those most in need.
5. By giving free service to people who only ask for the minimum care and not all that they are entitled to.
6. By maintaining the current system, I have been proud that the council does not yet charge. I noticed that even the council is proud of this. When we received our recent four star rating it was emphasised that the council's continuing free provision of this service was a major factor in being awarded the top rank. It saddens me that we now appear to be abandoning this vulnerable group, whom we have recently served so well. I have copied this comment as I totally agree with its writer
7. The impact will be enormous. It's very sad that LBHF is thinking of going down this route. I and my family are currently very fortunate in not needing these services but we feel very strongly that in a civilised society, these services should be provided free of charge and the cost should be shared by the community.

Is there anything further the Council could do to promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people with regard to a proposed charging policy?

1. Retain free services
2. Not charge for being frail, disabled or sick.

3. Proper consultation and scrutiny of procedures. I have already written to the council on my thoughts on this policy and I have not even had the courtesy of a response. It's nice to be asked to fill in a document such as this one, but one wonders how much heed is paid to it. It appears clear to me that the decision to charge has already been made.
4. It should be as simple as possible as social workers are often on front line, and have to deal with queries. We try to do assessment of need but then cost influences what people accept. They always want to know about cost first.
5. Having some pay and others not in my view is not 'equality of opportunity'
6. Do not go back on your word, you gave free services, keep it this way. You knew what was needed and you should have budgeted for it I am sure you will find the money. The government gave all this money to the NDC, I am sure there is more where this has come from. We are now a Conservative Council and we trusted you to keep things as they are or make them better not worse.
7. I think the charging policy is wrong in that it only targets income. It should target savings, say over £30,000 to ensure those above this limit pay full cost.
8. The only solution I can see is to keep the services free.

If you do not agree that the Council should charge for home care, how else do you think the Council could make sure services were provided within the limits of the resources available?

1. The costs of the services can be met from a reasonable level of Council Tax and it is disingenuous to consider otherwise. While the Council can argue that it committed to cut the council Tax it also committed to keeping the services free and both are possible.
2. Should be getting the money from Central Government, Pensioners are forgotten these days
3. Stop reducing council tax
4. Increase resources eg via council tax.
5. This, I believe, is the key question. Let me ask one instead. How does the council square its oft stated policy of driving down council tax with this drive to charge the elderly, the infirm, the disabled (ie those less able to fend for themselves) for services we have always provided for free in the past.
6. stop reducing council tax as a political move. This borough was excellent compared to others in what it offered to people in need, why lose that just to keep up with those boroughs offering less. It should be proud to be fair. So what if other boroughs charge. Be different and keep it free I say as first choice.
7. Council tax and complain to Central Government.
8. Council Tax.
9. You should have budgeted for it, you knew what you had to pay and believe me they don't give you the services lightly, you have to be very frail to be entitled to it.
10. By acquiring funding to supplement charges
11. Reduce administration costs the council is top heavy too many commissioners not enough front line staff. Reduce wastage - reuse Ot equipment when possible Ensure agency staff are properly trained and only charge for hours works. Give people budgets to manage themselves
12. While the increasing of the cost of services to the most in need will rise from £1,271,000 to £1,375,000 (about 8%) the contribution made by resident is

reducing by 3%. The limited resources would be a legitimate excuse for cutting services if there was no push on reducing Council Tax. I fear that in my old age I would not receive the services that I paid for others to receive during my working time.

13. Make cuts in other areas

14. Increase council tax and/or cut spending in other areas that do not directly affect people's welfare.

Are there any other comments you wish to make in relation to charging for home care?

1. It is unfair, unnecessary & breaks promise of administration in their manifesto.

2. A pernicious ideas.

3. I hope you are listening to the answers of this consultation. Don't do it, and take steps to improve the existing service at once.

4. I don't think it is fair to cease homecare charging only to reintroduce it.

5. Keep it free

6. No

7. When you do introduce it, please make sure there is plenty of information available beforehand. This will need to be provided to service users and also to services who will have to do the work with the service users.

8. As a locum, I've worked in other boroughs with charging policies. Many have got it right whilst Hammersmith with its income based policy is wrong. This will not even generate the income it is hoping to. Charging should be targetted towards those with high savings to limit the impact on low income users.

9. Ensure it is fair. I think there are a lot of people who can afford do so and ensure there is a system in place where people can ask for personal circumstances to be taken into account if they feel they have unusually large expenditure because of their disability.

10. Is it really worth protesting at all!?