

Making a Difference

Achieving Greater Financial Fairness

Introduction: When people feel they need help to safely stay at home, social services can discuss what individual help may be needed. Where services and support are made available through the council, a financial assessment is needed. This helps make sure the person is getting the right government funds towards their living and caring costs, and also to see if they can afford to pay towards the cost of any support they may receive.



By working together with community organisations, we were able to understand and [report](#) issues people had experienced with the financial assessment process. We have been meeting with West Sussex County Council and Capita (the service provider) to follow-up on the recommendations to see how things are changing and improving.

We also followed the public consultation outcomes and decision to reduce the *Minimum Income Guarantee* people had, before working out what a person could afford towards their publicly funded care.

What has now changed?



The assessment team has received customer care training, and other training to support them ahead of the council writing to residents who get funded support to live in the community (not in a residential home). People are being asked to complete a self-assessment financial review, and there is support for those who need help to do this.

A new, easier to understand [guide](#) has been sent out to residents to help them understand why and how the Council works out a cost.

People are now told to keep receipts so they can show what they already pay because of their extra needs.



People should expect to get a clear breakdown of how costs have been worked out. This will make it easier for them to see if the costs are right.

A maximum additional care cost will be applied from October 2019 (was previously going to be from April 2019). This will be set at an extra £5 per week for a single person, and £8 for couples until March 2020. This should give people time to consider their options and plan a budget for their spending.



We now want to see if this has made this process fairer and easier to understand. As well as speaking to staff about this, we want to hear from residents who have received a letter and done the self-assessment or are having an assessment now (September 2019).

You can call us on 0300 012 0122 or email helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk to share your experience.

Share your experiences with us on 0300 012 0122

