

APPENDIX 1

DRAFT LETTER TO DD CUSTOMERS

Dear Customer,

RE: Proposal to remove the Direct Debit discount scheme

I am writing to you following the Council's recent consultation on the Fairer Contributions Policy (the council's charging policy for Adult Social Care) The new policy was approved on 7th April 2020. At the same time the council decided to consult on a proposal to remove the Direct Debit Discount Scheme.

We are now seeking your views on removing the Direct Debit Discount Scheme altogether. This is mainly because:

- Very few residents benefit from the discount, which does not make this offer fair
- No other discounts are available in the Council for paying by Direct Debit
- Feedback from the earlier consultation did not indicate any great support for continuing with the scheme
- The cost and administration time involved in operating the scheme could be better spent on frontline services.

More detailed information about the proposal can be found in the enclosed Information Sheet.

Please note that if this proposal is implemented you will be able to continue to pay your charges by direct debit even though the discount would no longer be applied.

The earlier consultation on the council's charging policy asked residents for their views on how to increase the number of people paying their charges for social care by direct debits. Some of the feedback we received included

- Direct debits were not well publicised
- Lack of access meant that many people could not take up this option.
- Concerns about fraud.
- Preference for standing orders rather than direct debits.

There was strong support for making more information about Direct Debits available, and easier to understand and access. We are already working to improve our Direct Debits systems for adult social care.

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I am inviting you to send us your views on this proposal. Please be assured that your views will be taken into consideration before any final decision is made. Your views will be treated in confidence, and we will accept anonymous responses should you not wish to be identified by your response.

If you would like further information on why we are proposing to remove the direct debit discount scheme, please contact ChargingTeam.AdultSocialCare@southwark.gov.uk. Or by

calling 0800 358 0228. The enclosed factsheet provides you with more information on the proposed changes and how to give us your views.

Yours sincerely

Pauline O'Hare

Director, Adult Social Care