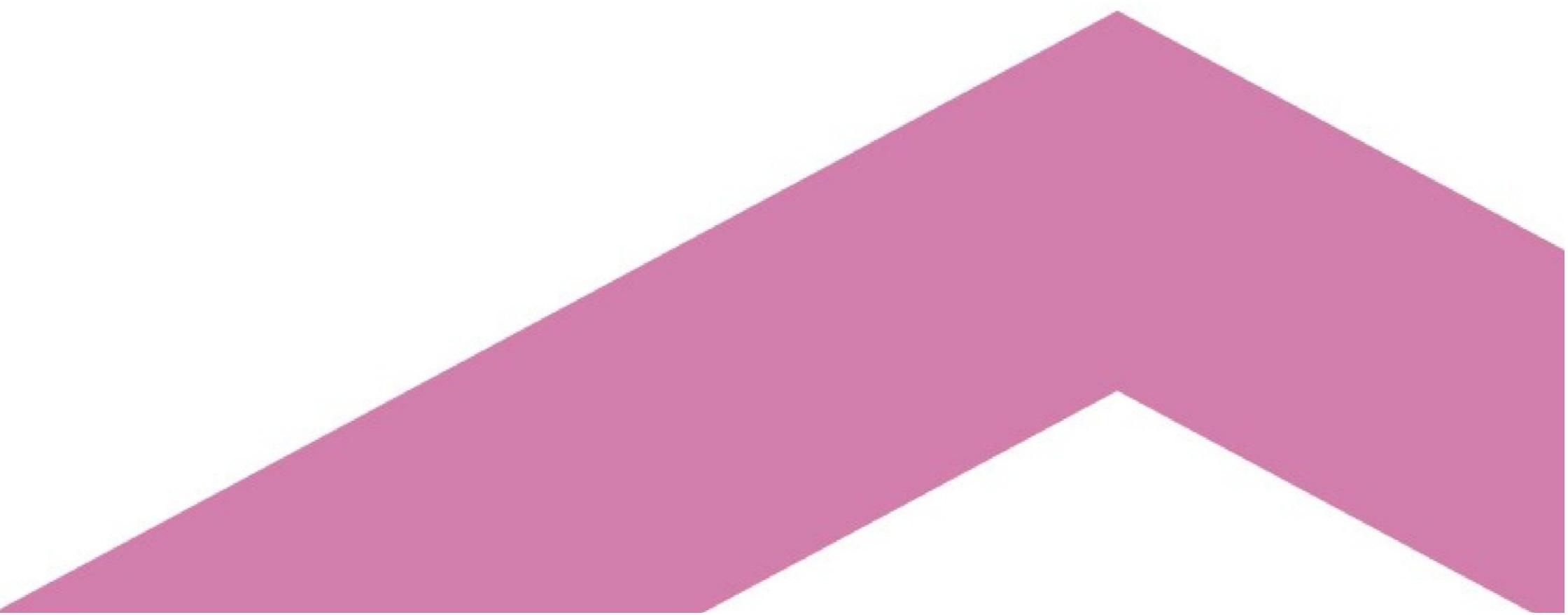


# Community Impact Assessment

Discretionary Fee Review 2026/27

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## ○ Equality Assessment

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, public authorities must have due regard to the need to achieve the three equality needs whenever they exercise their functions. The three equality needs are (a) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010; (b) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (outlined above) cover the following protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind.

The assessment below considers the likely equalities impacts of the discretionary fee review recommendations.

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<b>Age</b> - older people (65+) and younger adults (18-64)	The care services benefitting from the discretionary fee review process provide care and support to adults with assessed eligible care and support needs across all age ranges	Insufficient care available to meet assessed eligible care and support needs if the discretionary fee review process has an adverse impact on market sustainability leading to care providers ceasing to trade or handing back care packages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with care providers to establish cost pressures facing the market.</li> <li>Enhanced fee uplifts for those services most at risk of unsustainability due to insufficient funding.</li> </ul>
<b>Disability</b> - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illness, long term conditions, Autism and other neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and physical disabilities.	The care services benefitting from the discretionary fee review process provide care and support to adults with a range of disabilities and assessed eligible care and support needs.	The decision may have a particular impact on people with disabilities and older people. However, the purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Reviews to identify financial risk in providers of Supported Living services and care home placements for adult aged under 65 years.</li> <li>Ongoing support for recruitment and retention will contribute to sufficient capacity and skills in the workforce.</li> </ul>

		<p>of the review is to ensure that people with those protected characteristics continue to have access to an effective and sustainable market for the provision of care and support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balancing risks across different sectors to ensure that all care services get a proportionate and equitable fee uplift.</li> <li>• The Council has contingency arrangements in place through in-house services and local authority trading company to provide “Provider of Last Resort” care in emergency situations.</li> <li>• The Council has invested in increased reablement services to support people to regain independence and reduce ongoing need for care and support. It has also expanded its investment to cover a Dementia Reablement pilot.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b> - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another</p>	<p>The care services benefitting from the discretionary fee review process provide care and support to adults with assessed eligible care and support needs irrespective of gender identity.</p>	N/A	N/A
<p><b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b> - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work</p>	<p>The care services benefitting from the discretionary fee review process provide care and support to adults with assessed eligible care and support needs irrespective of marital status.</p>	N/A	N/A

<p><b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b> - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers</p>	<p>It is highly unusual for a pregnant woman or a woman to have assessed eligible care and support needs.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Race</b> - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins</p>	<p>The care services benefitting from the discretionary fee review process provide care and support to adults with assessed eligible care and support needs irrespective of race.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Religion or Belief</b> - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered</p>	<p>The care services benefitting from the discretionary fee review process provide care and support to adults with assessed eligible care and support needs irrespective of religion or belief.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Gender</b> - men or women</p>	<p>The care services benefitting from the discretionary fee review process provide care and support to adults with assessed eligible care and support needs irrespective of gender.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Sexual orientation</b> - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes</p>	<p>The care services benefitting from the discretionary fee review process provide care and support to adults with assessed eligible care and support needs irrespective of sexual orientation.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

## ○ Workforce Assessment

Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Maintaining the care workforce is essential to the sustainability of the market and the quality of care.</p> <p>The care workforce in Staffordshire includes:</p> <p>Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 84% of our workforce identify as female</li> <li>• 16% of our workforce identify as male</li> </ul> <p>Nationality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 81% of our workforce describe themselves as British</li> <li>• 16% of our workforce describe themselves as from non-EU countries</li> <li>• 3% of our workforce describe themselves as from EU countries</li> </ul> <p>Ethnicity</p>	<p>Calculation of cost pressures facing the market included an allowance to ensure that all care providers can pay staff at least the 2026/27 National Living Wage (NLW).</p>	<p>Care providers do not pass on fee uplifts to their workforce. Care providers reduce staffing numbers to ensure that dividends/profits are not reduced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NLW increases are mandatory and are monitored by HMRC.</li> <li>• The Council will continue to monitor the quality-of-care services, including that they have adequate staff.</li> <li>• Ongoing support for recruitment and retention will contribute to sufficient capacity and skills in the workforce.</li> <li>• Registered Care Services are regulated by the CQC, and providers are legally required to follow those regulations.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 79% of our workforce identify as White</li> <li>• 12% of our workforce identify themselves as from black ethnic minority groups</li> <li>• 1% of our workforce identify themselves as from mixed / multiple ethnic groups</li> <li>• 1% of our workforce identifies themselves as from 'other' ethnic groups</li> </ul> <p>Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The average age of a worker is 43.4 years old 8% of our workforce is aged under 25 years old</li> <li>• 66% of our workforce is aged between 25 to 54 years old</li> <li>• 26% of our workforce us aged 55 years and over</li> </ul> <p>Staffordshire's recruitment and retention appear to be sufficient currently to maintain capacity.</p>			
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## ○ Health and Care Assessment

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Giving people the right support, at the right time and in the right place so they can live healthier, happier and more independent lives is a strategic priority in the Council's Strategic Direction 2026-28.</p>	<p>The discretionary fee review process will ensure that the Council maintains a sustainable and high-quality care market in accordance with the Care Act 2014 so that adult with assessed eligible care and support needs are well cared for and their outcomes are met.</p>	<p>Insufficient care available to meet assessed eligible care and support needs resulting in longer waits for care packages and placements with an impact on the health and well-being of the adults involved as well as their families and informal carers. Where they are in hospital this might result in delays to discharge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with care providers to establish cost pressures facing the market.</li> <li>• Enhanced fee uplifts for those services most at risk of unsustainability due to insufficient funding.</li> <li>• Service Reviews to identify financial risk in providers of Supported Living services and care home placements for adult aged under 65 years.</li> <li>• Balancing risks across different sectors to ensure that all care services get a proportionate and equitable fee uplift.</li> <li>• Ongoing support for recruitment and retention will contribute to sufficient capacity and skills in the workforce.</li> <li>• The Council has contingency arrangements in place through in-house services and local authority trading company to provide "Provider of Last Resort" care in emergency situations.</li> <li>• The Council has invested in increased reablement services to support people to regain independence and reduce ongoing need for care and</li> </ul>

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### Communities Assessment

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Building safer, stronger and more connected communities by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, and supporting local networks is a strategic priority in the Council's Strategic Direction 2026-28.	The discretionary fee review process will provide additional funding for many small and medium enterprises at the heart of communities to ensure that they are sustainable.	Loss of community assets if the discretionary fee review process has an adverse impact on local organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council will continue to take a strengths-based approach and through the Supportive Communities continue to build, map and signpost to community assets.</li> <li>Ongoing care market development to support providers.</li> </ul>

## ○ Economic Assessment

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Managing public money carefully by shaping services that work for local people and planning well for the future is one of five key priorities in the Council's Strategic Direction 2026-2028.</p> <p>Care providers are a significant employer in the county.</p>	<p>Investment of c.£13m into the care market through the discretionary fee review process.</p>	<p>Loss of gross value added as well as business rate receipts if the discretionary fee review process has an adverse impact on market sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with care providers to establish cost pressures facing the market.</li> <li>• Service Reviews to identify financial risk in providers of Supported Living services and care home placements for adult aged under 65 years.</li> <li>• Balancing risks across different sectors to ensure that all care services get a proportionate and equitable fee uplift.</li> <li>• Ongoing support for recruitment and retention will contribute to sufficient capacity and skills in the workforce.</li> </ul>

## ○ Environment Assessment

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Built Environment/ Land Use	N/A	N/A	
Rural Environment organisations.	N/A	N/A	
Air, Water and Land Quality Will the proposal affect air quality (e.g., vehicle, industrial or domestic emissions), drinking water quality or land quality (e.g., contamination)?	N/A		

Waste and Recycling Will the proposal affect waste (e.g., disposal) and recycling?	N/A		
Transport Will the proposal affect the ability of people/ communities/ business to travel? Will the proposal impact on walking/ cycling opportunities?	N/A	N/A	
Noise Will the proposal cause disruptive noise	N/A		