

Healthwatch Worcestershire
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Mr Paul Robinson,
Chief Executive,
Worcestershire County Council.

By Email

25.01.2023

Dear Mr Robinson,

Re – Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) and increasing living costs

As you know living costs across the whole population have significantly increased and these increases have had a disproportionate impact on disabled people.ⁱ

We are writing to you as members of our Reference and Engagement Group have raised with us the impact that cost of living increases are having on people who make a contribution to the cost of their Council provided adult social care services.

We are aware that cost of living issues have been raised at the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board, and of the correspondence on this point with SpeakEasy N.O.W.

The Government sets a Minimum Income Guarantee annually. This rate varies according to an individual's circumstances.

When assessing an individual's contribution to the cost of the provision of local authority arranged care, other than in a care home, the Minimum Income Guarantee is the minimum level of income that the person must be allowed to retain after housing costs and disability related expenditure has been taken into consideration. We understand the Council has discretion to allow people to retain more of their income above the Government set Minimum Income Guarantee.

Paragraph 49 of the [Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#) describes the purpose of the MIG as being to promote independence and social inclusion and to ensure that a person has sufficient funds to meet basic needs such as food, utility costs or insurance.



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We are aware of the various Government initiatives to assist people, including older and disabled people, to meet cost of living increases. Nevertheless some may still struggle to meet their day to day living costs, and to continue to participate in those activities which promote social inclusion and independence.

We are therefore asking for clarification on the following points:

1. Does the County Council's Charging Policy allow discretion to enable people who are making a contribution to their care costs to retain a level of income higher than the Government set minimum?
2. Can an individual apply to the County Council to have their individual care contribution reviewed and the level of their minimum income guarantee increased in the light of increases to their day to day living costs, rather than a substantial change to their financial circumstances?
3. Can the County Council apply its discretion to enable a higher rate of income to be retained above the minimum income guarantee by all those who make a care contribution, rather than on a case by case basis?
4. If so does the County Council have any plans in place to consider utilising this discretion?

Could you please respond within a maximum of 20 working days, so by 22.02.2023. We look forward to the response to the points above so that we are able to provide the appropriate information to people as part of our signposting function.

Yours Sincerely,



John Taylor
Director Healthwatch Worcestershire

c.c. Cllr Adrian Hardman
c.c. Mark Fitton
c.c. Kerry McCrossan