

Benefits of CIPFA Financial Assessments Benchmarking Club

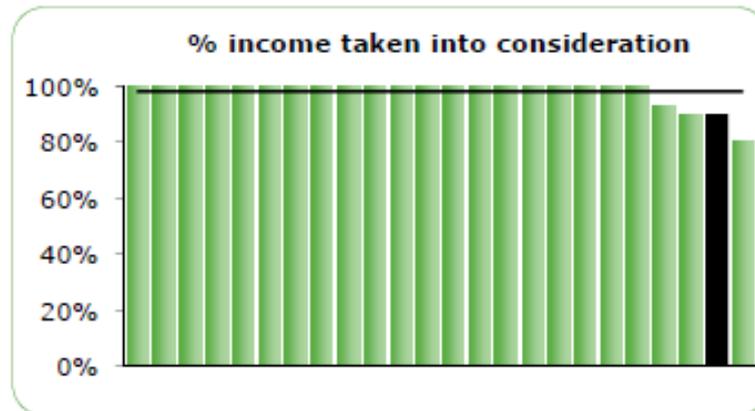


Essex County Council

How We Used The Data

- In the context of an ongoing financial challenge in adult social care over the medium term due to demographic pressures from an ageing population, reduced funding from central government compounded by other impacts such as the National Living Wage, ECC undertook a review of its Non-Residential Adults Charging Policy.
- Having identified a number of options based on the permitted latitudes within the statutory guidance, the benchmarking data helped us to focus on which options to develop and take forward.
- For example, we were assessing the amount people could pay based on 90% of their assessed income. The benchmarking highlighted that we were an outlier here, with most participating authorities taking 100%.

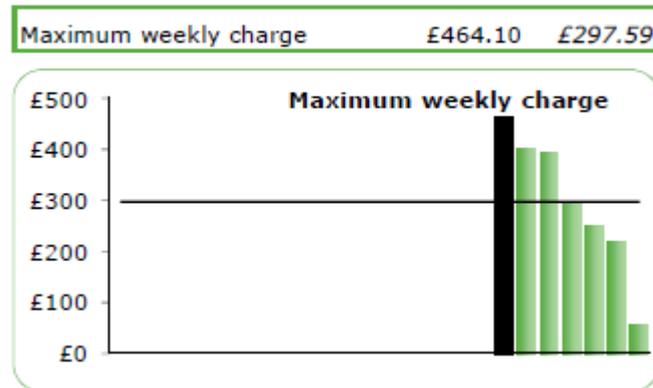
DISP. INCOME TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION FOR CONTRIBUTION ASSESSMENT



How We Used The Data

- Similarly we could see that whilst we had the highest maximum weekly charge among participating authorities, in actual fact most of the members did not have a maximum weekly charge at all.

MAXIMUM WEEKLY CHARGES



- The benchmarking club also ran a Review Meeting which provided an opportunity to network with colleagues at other authorities and to expand upon the information provided in the benchmarking report.
- This opportunity proved invaluable for us to discuss options we were exploring that had not been covered in the benchmarking questionnaire, such as reviewing our upper limit on personal capital.



How We Used The Data

- Having initially used the benchmarking data to help develop our proposals, it was also referenced in a range of papers related to this project, including the final Cabinet Paper which was agreed in December 2015.
- Being able to include this supporting information in these papers helped to provide the relevant stakeholders with the assurance they needed over the proposals, and that they were taking good evidence-based decisions.
- Being a member of the club also provided us with the opportunity to feedback on the questionnaire and to help shape some of the questions for the following year's return. This meant that we could suggest areas we would have liked to see further details on, to help to maximise the benefits of the final report and ensure we can continue to share best practice with colleagues at other authorities.