

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL
COUNCIL – 21 NOVEMBER 2016

Recommendation from the Cabinet on 1 November 2016:-

Proposed Increase to Communal Facilities Charges for Sheltered Housing Residents and Life-line Charges for Council Tenants (Minute 86.1)

The Cabinet considered proposed changes to the current charges for the communal facilities and services provided to tenants living in sheltered housing schemes.

The recommended increase of 5% equated to an increase of 45-50p per week and had not been increased once Hertfordshire County Council withdrew supporting people funding.

This included beginning to charge tenants (on a three year phased introduction) living on sheltered schemes before 2003 and therefore, due to changes in the County's funding regime, had never paid any charges towards the communal facilities at their scheme. This would result in the introduction of a charge amounting to just over £3 per week each year for the next three years. After three years these tenants would be subject to an agreed annual price increase to achieve parity with other Council sheltered housing residents. This currently applied to 212 tenants.

These two payments were not applicable to tenants who received housing benefits.

It was also proposed to increase the cost of the Lifeline service (alarms) to Council tenants living in general needs properties by 12p per week to begin the process of bringing their charges in line with private residents who used the same service. Currently private tenants paid 33% more than Council tenants for this service. Private tenants currently paid £3.07 per week and Council tenants paid £2.08 per week.

As part of this service residents were visited every six weeks.

The Cabinet **RECOMMENDS** the Council to approve these proposals to increase the communal facilities charges and the charges for the "Lifeline" alarm service.