

Corporate & Community Services



Date:	27 October 2025
Location:	Not Applicable
Responsible Officer:	Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Lisa Begley, Homecare Coordinator
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
SharePoint Reference:	N/A
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	<u>Attachment 14.2A – Summary of indicative Support at Home prices</u>

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

To seek Council approval to amend the Home Care Service fees following the upcoming changes in the aged care system and a comprehensive service review.

Background

The aged care system is transitioning on 1 November 2025 from the Home Care Packages framework to the new Support at Home model. This change affects funding structures, service delivery, and fee arrangements.

Consultants from QCI consulting from Adelaide were engaged through a grant funding program (SDAP) to review the Shire's Home Care services, including operational processes, staff training, and service delivery. It has been identified that the Shire's current fees are below the national average for comparable services.

The consultants conducted a comprehensive review of our Home Care packages, including:

- Service processes and package management
- Staff capability and training (including on-site training from external Home Care consultants from interstate)
- Fee structures compared to national benchmark.

One of the key findings was that the current fees for Home Care services are below average, particularly when compared to medium-to-high range fees in comparable regional services.

Comment

The revised fees will ensure:

- Sustainable service delivery
- Compliance with new aged care funding arrangements
- Fair and equitable charges reflecting service quality and staff expertise

Public notice of at least 7 days is required for any amendments to adopted fees and charges, with the proposed schedule coming into effect on 4 November 2025.

The table below outlines a national comparison of service fees, together with the proposed adjustments for Dowerin Home Care.

Dowerin Home Care Suggested Charges from 4 November 2025					
Type of Service	Per	Lower	Upper	Median	DHC
Care management	Hour	\$80	\$150	\$120	\$150
RN Nursing	Hour	-	-	-	\$150
Social support and community engagement	Hour	\$82	\$110	\$99	\$100
Respite	Hour	\$85	\$112	\$99	\$100
Transport	Km	-	-	-	\$1.60
Domestic assistance	Hour	\$83	\$109	\$95	\$100
Home maintenance and repairs	Hour	\$85	\$120	\$103	\$100
Meal delivery	Meal	\$11	\$22	\$15	\$20
Meal preparation	Hour	\$82	\$110	\$97	\$100
Therapeutic services for independent living	Full cost recovery				
Allied health (physio, chiro, podiatry etc)	Full cost recovery				
Transport – other supplier (St Johns, Patches)	Full cost recovery				

Consultation

Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer

Lisa Begley, Homecare Coordinator

Susan Dew, Senior Homecare Administration Officer

Solomon Mwale, Manager Corporate Services

Vitish Guddoy, QCI Consulting (Service Development Assistance Panel (SDAP) program)

Statutory Implications

Local Government Act

6.16. Imposition of fees and charges

- (1) A local government may impose* and recover a fee or charge for any goods or service it provides or proposes to provide, other than a service for which a service charge is imposed.*
 - * Absolute majority required.*
- (2) A fee or charge may be imposed for the following –*
 - (a) providing the use of, or allowing admission to, any property or facility wholly or partly owned, controlled, managed or maintained by the local government;*
 - (b) supplying a service or carrying out work at the request of a person;*
 - (c) subject to section 5.94, providing information from local government records;*
 - (d) receiving an application for approval, granting an approval, making an inspection and issuing a licence, permit, authorisation or certificate;*
 - (e) supplying goods;*
 - (f) such other service as may be prescribed.*
- (3) Fees and charges are to be imposed when adopting the annual budget but may be –*
 - (a) imposed* during a financial year; and*
 - (b) amended* from time to time during a financial year.*
 - * Absolute majority required*

6.17. Setting level of fees and charges

- (1) In determining the amount of a fee or charge for a service or for goods a local government is required to take into consideration the following factors –*
 - (a) the cost to the local government of providing the service or goods; and*
 - (b) the importance of the service or goods to the community; and*
 - (c) the price at which the service or goods could be provided by an alternative provider.*
- (2) A higher fee or charge or additional fee or charge may be imposed for an expedited service or supply of goods if it is requested that the service or goods be provided urgently.*
- (3) The basis for determining a fee or charge is not to be limited to the cost of providing the service or goods other than a service –*
 - (a) under section 5.96; or*
 - (b) under section 6.16(2)(d); or*
 - (c) prescribed under section 6.16(2)(f), where the regulation prescribing the service also specifies that such a limit is to apply to the fee or charge for the service.*
- (4) Regulations may –*
 - (a) prohibit the imposition of a fee or charge in prescribed circumstances; or*
 - (b) limit the amount of a fee or charge in prescribed circumstances.*

6.18. Effect of other written laws

- (1) *If the amount of a fee or charge for a service or for goods is determined under another written law a local government may not –*
- (a) *determine an amount that is inconsistent with the amount determined under the other written law; or*
 - (b) *charge a fee or charge in addition to the amount determined by or under the other written law.*
- (2) *A local government is not to impose a fee or charge for a service or goods under this Act if the imposition of a fee or charge for the service or goods is prohibited under another written law.*

6.19. Local government to give notice of fees and charges

If a local government wishes to impose any fees or charges under this Subdivision after the annual budget has been adopted it must, before introducing the fees or charges, give local public notice of –

- (a) *its intention to do so; and*
- (b) *the date from which it is proposed the fees or charges will be imposed.*

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority: Our Community

Objective: Continue the delivery of the Home and Community Care service

Outcome: 1.4

Reference: 1.4c

Asset Management Plan

Long Term Financial Plan

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Failure to fulfil statutory regulations or compliance requirements
Risk Category	Financial Impact
Risk Description	No noticeable regulatory or statutory impact
Consequence Rating	Minor (2)
Likelihood Rating	Almost Certain (5)
Risk Matrix Rating	Low (4)
Key Controls (in place)	
Action (Treatment)	
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Not Rated

Financial Implications

Increased fees will support the sustainability of the Home Care Service and allow ongoing investment in staff training, service improvements, and compliance with the Support at Home model.

Voting Requirements

☐

Simple Majority

☒

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation 14.2

That, by Absolute Majority in accordance with the local government act 1995, Council increases the fee for Home Care services as below:

Type of Service	Per	DHC
Care management	Hour	\$150
RN Nursing	Hour	\$150
Social support and community engagement	Hour	\$100
Respite	Hour	\$100
Transport	Km	\$1.60
Domestic assistance	Hour	\$100
Home maintenance and repairs	Hour	\$100
Meal delivery	Meal	\$20
Meal preparation	Hour	\$100
Therapeutic services for independent living	Full cost recovery	
Allied health (physio, chiro, podiatry etc)	Full cost recovery	
Transport – other supplier (St Johns, Patches)	Full cost recovery	