

By email only

Our Ref: AWDRES26_27
Date: 18 March 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

Adults with Disabilities Residential Care Uplift 2026/27

We are writing to confirm Essex County Council's position regarding the increase in care fees for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism, physical impairment and/or sensory impairments. Proposed changes to fees will take effect from 6th April 2026.

In line with acknowledged pressures on staffing costs and general inflation we have calculated an increase in fees is required to keep pace with inflation on packages in Essex. Please refer to the Uplift Approach section of this letter to understand how the uplift is to be apportioned to packages within Essex and any further action you may need to take.

Uplift Approach

As with the increase in the past few years, this is not being applied as a blanket increase to all packages and we want to engage with providers that we have not yet spoken to understand the cost breakdowns of these packages so they can be benchmarked with Care Cubed, which is the tool we use to benchmark all new and existing AWD residential packages in Essex.

The uplift will be applied immediately and automatically to packages that have been made at homes where we have benchmarked the fees through Care Cubed in the recent past and have agreed the package is in scope for an increase, if you have not been benchmarked within the last year or are unsure then please contact us using awd.procurement@essex.gov.uk and will support accordingly.

Where this point is not met, you will be required to complete a cost breakdown to ECC detailing the current costs of delivering the care package in 2026/27. This will then be entered into Care Cubed to identify the benchmarked rate and whether an uplift is appropriate in each case.

Where there is no further action for you to take the uplifts will be automatically applied.

Complex Residential Framework

Where you have applied and been successfully appointed to the Essex County Council Complex Residential Framework, fees for homes that have been submitted as part of this contract will also be subject to a maximum increase of 3.55%, provided this does not then exceed the benchmarking requirements built into the contract.

You do not need to take any further action in respect of framework packages, and uplifts will be applied automatically.

Non-Automatic Uplifts

Packages placed within homes that are not included on the Complex Residential Framework will be subject to an increase of up to 3.5%. Communication will be issued to providers that have packages that fall into this category, but where communication is missed it is the responsibility of the provider to check package values within the payment system to ascertain if an uplift has been applied, or not.

Before an uplift is awarded to non-framework packages, providers will be required to contact the Council and will then be taken through the application process for the uplift to these packages. When awarded the new uplifted fee will be backdated a maximum of 3 months prior to the request being made by the provider or to the 6th of April if requested prior to the end of June 2026.

Please contact awd.procurement@essex.gov.uk to start this process.

Out of County Placements

This uplift applies to packages placed within the Essex Administrative Area only, and any package placed outside of this, including Southend and Thurrock unitary authorities will be approached in a different manner.

Essex County Council will commit to uplifts for any out of county packages up to the offer of the host authority for the home on application by the provider for an increase to the package and the deadline for this is 31st March 2027.

Upon application, Essex County Council will require the provider to complete a full pricing breakdown before an increase is awarded. This will then be used to benchmark the package using Care Cubed to define whether an uplift will be awarded, and the appropriate level of the uplift. When awarded the new uplifted fee will be backdated a maximum of 3 months prior to the request being made by the provider or to the 6th of April if requested prior to the end of June 2026.

Please contact awd.procurement@essex.gov.uk to start this process.

Joint Funded Packages

Where a placement commissioned in full or part by Essex County Council is part-funded by an Integrated Care Board (ICB), an automatic uplift has not been applied.

Where an uplift is requested or required on a joint-funded package the provider is required to contact Essex County Council to enable us to engage with the respective Integrated Care Board. The intent is to drive closer collaboration between Essex County Council and ICB partners in respect of the application of uplifts across services.

Contact for uplifts on joint-funded packages must be made within the 2026-27 financial year.

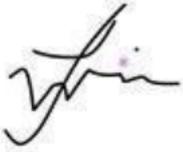
Additional Provider Support

We would like to take the time to thank you for your support through the past 12 months and the exemplary care that has been provided to adults within your services and for the support provided to staff throughout this time.

Should you have any queries regarding the uplift approach for 2026/27 please get in touch with us directly at: awd.procurement@essex.gov.uk

The Council is committed to supporting the market to deal with financial challenges and reduce costs for care providers. Care England and ECC are promoting a variety of initiatives designed to solve problems deal with challenges and reduce costs for care providers to supplement uplifts offered this year. These initiatives can be found via Care England's website and Essex County Council's Provider Hub at the following link: [Provider Support & Offers | Provider Hub | Essex \(essexproviderhub.org\)](#).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zoe Harriss', with a small purple mark above the 'i'.

Zoe Harriss
Head of Procurement
Procurement Services

W: www.essex.gov.uk