

1 September 2022		ITEM: 10
Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Contract to Supply, Install, Maintain & Repair Telecare Equipment		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Cllr Deborah Huelin Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health		
Accountable Assistant Director: Les Billingham, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care and Community Development		
Accountable Director: Ian Wake, Corporate Director Adults Housing and Health		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report outlines the statutory duty under the Care Act 2014 to supply Assistive Technology those with eligible need to help support people live independently in their own home while minimising risks such as falls, gas leaks etc. Under the Care Act (2014) the Authority has an obligation to provide equipment, including telecare and adaptations costing less than £1000.

This report seeks views from the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a proposed recommendation to Cabinet that the procurement for this service should go to market as an open tender.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the recommendation to go to market to procure the contract to supply, install, maintain and repair telecare equipment.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The current contract is held by Red Alert for a cost of £107,364 per annum and issues over 700 pieces of telecare equipment per annum, while having over 2600 pieces of actively used pieces of equipment at any one time.
- 2.2 The contract price for these services have remained static for the last 5 years, this is despite an increase focus on early intervention and prevention via the Technology Enabled Care (TEC) programme, as well as the additional impact that the pandemic has placed upon the service.

- 2.3 Adult Social Care adopts a strength-based approach, focusing on the strengths and abilities of the individual and aims to connect them to support from friends, family and the wider community. By adopting an ethos of providing the right care at the right time in the right place, this equipment services enables individuals to remain at home and part of their local communities.
- 2.4 Consideration must be given to Digital Transformation as more than 95% of current base units and peripherals deployed are reliant on the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) which is being phased out, as a national initiative, by December 2025.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Do nothing – let the contract expire on 31 August 2023 (not recommended)

- 3.1.1 This would, without any subsequent action, result in a breach of the Authority's statutory requirements. This would result in an increase in demand on traditional services and / or a reliance on spot arrangements for individual pieces of equipment that would reduce the purchasing power of the Authority and present challenges to maintaining the supply chain for telecare equipment.

3.2 Extend current contract (not recommended)

- 3.2.1 The contract has utilised all extension options and has been extended up to 50% of the contract value. Therefore, unless the procurement regulation changes this is not a viable option to pursue.

3.3 Procure the services via a tender process in the open market (recommended)

- 3.3.1 While this niche market is expanding and diversifying quickly, the mass purchase, storage and installation of TEC systems is not a resource the Authority presently has nor has the money to invest in and develop as a commercial model. Additionally sourcing a specialist Provider via a tender process will enable access to skills and knowledge that will assist in directing the digital transformation solutions in TEC the Authority will have to undertake in the next few years.
- 3.3.2 Additionally, the current level of funding should be given consideration given the increased focus and demand of these services to achieve savings upstream. Also, the Authority will have to factor in the impact of digitalisation and the increase on base costs that our outlined by our current Provider, Red Alert, using our current levels of demand and existing market solutions available in Appendix 1.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The current contract with the provider, Red Alert, is coming to an end and a new contract to fulfil the statutory duty is required.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Engagement has taken place with Thurrock's TEC leads around Provider performance and have reviewed the current contract specification's fitness for purpose. Feedback around the Providers responsiveness and professionalism was very positive, and the TEC leads feel this specification and what is provided under the contract is suitable and appropriate.
- 5.2 June 2022 customer satisfaction survey, which is a 25% sample of monthly activity, returned another 100% rating across 6 key measures. This is in keeping with the results seen for the financial year 2021/22 which saw an overall satisfaction rating of 99.92%.

6. Impact on corporate policies priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The contract to Supply, Install, Maintain & Repair Telecare Equipment:

People – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**
Strategic Lead Finance Corporate Finance

The funding for the provision of the contract will be contained within the directorates existing budget allocation.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Mark Bowen**
Interim Head of Legal Services

The recommendation if agreed is for a procurement process to enable a statutory duty to be discharged and is legally sound.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager Community Development
Adults Housing and Health

The provision of this contract will support Council to uphold responsibilities set out in the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. The supply of equipment to support residents is also in line with regulations set out in the Care Act (2014) and the Children and Families Act (2014).

Social value has been considered as part of the commissioning process for this service and will be monitored as part of the standard contract review cycle with the agreed supplier.

7.4 **Other** implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder or Impact on Looked After Children

N/A

8. **Background papers used in preparing this report** (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

N/A

9. **Appendices to the report**

Appendix 1 – Digital TEC Costing and Log Analysis

Report Author:

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