

9 November 2022		ITEM: 10 Decision: 110625
Cabinet		
Contract to Supply, Install, Maintain & Repair Telecare Equipment		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Deborah Arnold, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adults and Health		
Accountable Assistant Director: Tania Sitch, Interim Assistant Director Adult Social Care and Community Development		
Accountable Director: Les Billingham, Interim Director Adult Social Care		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

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

This report as recommended by Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, is to seek Cabinet approval to reprocure this service via an open tender.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That Cabinet agrees with HOSC's recommendation to go to market to reprocure the contract to supply, install, maintain, and repair telecare equipment.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 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.

- 2.2 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 equipment at any one time.
- 2.3 The contract for these services is to increase focus on early intervention and prevention via the Technology Enabled Care (TEC) programme, as this has help mitigate demand and the additional impact that the pandemic has placed upon the service.
- 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. The procurement exercise will enable the Authority to embed digital device piloting and testing into the contractual requirements to enable Subject Matter Experts to identify cost effective solutions to meet future needs and requirements.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

There are three options considered below:

- 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, 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.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The current contract will be expiring, and this provision is required to fulfil our statutory requirements under the Care Act (2014).

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

- 5.1 Engagement has taken please with Thurrock's TEC leads around Provider performance requirements and have reviewed the current contract specification's fitness for purpose in meeting the needs of Thurrock residents.
- 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%.
- 5.3 Health & Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the procurement of services to supply install and maintain telecare equipment on 1 September 2022 and have recommended that Cabinet support this.

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.

This not only fulfils the Authorities obligations under the Care Act (2014) to prevent, reduce and delay but also links into its overarching objectives to keep vulnerable people within their local communities to provide better, longer terms outcomes.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

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

The funding for the provision of the contract was set at £107,364, and formed part of the 2022/23 ASC base budget. This agrees with the value quoted under para 2.2.

Three options are presented within the report under paragraphs 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3. The recommended option within paragraph 3.3 represents that which is most financially viable. The alternative options will result in both direct and or indirect additional financial costs to the department, and do not present any wider long term financial benefit to the Council.

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

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 and 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**

N/A

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