

Title of meeting: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 8 March 2022

Subject: Developing the Telecare Service

Report by: James Hill - Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

Report Author: Paul Fielding - Assistant Director - Housing
Ellie O'Day - Telecare & HomeSafety Manager

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

1.1. To update councillors on the work undertaken to develop the telecare service into a new Safe At Home service, including the new branding, service contractors, service offer and plans to maintain a sustainable service.

2. Recommendations

2.1. That councillors recognise the developments in the Telecare service, the new service offer, and agree to the changes proposed.

2.2. Approve the financial fees for the new service, that are set on a cost recovery basis.

2.3. That officers bring back an update report before the end of 2022 on the progress of the new service, and also outline how community and voluntary groups could be used to support service users to stay safe in their own home.

3. Background

3.1. Portsmouth City Council supports those who are elderly or vulnerable in a range of different ways, and the Private Sector Housing Service provides several services to help people stay safe in their own home. Helping people to live in their home is not only financially beneficial for the individuals, but also the preferred option in most cases, enabling people to remain within their environment and community.



- 3.2. It is predicted that the number of people who are over 85 years old will grow faster than any other age group, and by 2037 that there will be approximately 1.4 million households nationally with a person who is 85 or over.
- 3.3. In Portsmouth the population is forecast to increase from 212,700 to 222,300 by 2026 of which the age group 65-84 is anticipated to increase of 10.7% and 85+ will rise by 9.1%. Therefore, helping this section of our society to live happily and safely at home is more vital than ever.
- 3.4. Whereas currently majority of older people live as a couple, by 2037 it is estimated that 66% of people who live alone will be aged 65 and over. Helping people to feel safe in their home, knowing that they are monitored in the event of something going wrong, especially if living alone, meets a vital priority of the council and the city.
- 3.5. Nobody predicted the pandemic and its requirement for people to stay at home more, and the unfortunate need for people to be isolated from their loved ones. Services provided by the council were vital in ensuring that people do not feel isolated.

4. Current Telecare service

- 4.1. Where people may be vulnerable in their home, the city council has provided a chargeable Telecare service which places technology in the home to help minimise incidents which may place somebody at risk. This may be as simple as key safes to enable access by relatives and carers, or the installation and maintenance of analogue equipment which consists of a range of detectors and sensors that will raise an alarm to support an individual in an emergency.
- 4.2. Much of this technology is linked, via the customer's phone line, to a call monitoring centre that can check with the customer if everything is alright and, if in doubt, call a relative, health worker or other support.
- 4.3. To date this service has been aimed at those who are elderly, but is open to all that need it and the demand for Telecare services has gone up as a consequence of the pandemic. In June 2019 the service had 32 new installations, whereas in June 2020 there were 55.
- 4.4. When a new customer (or their relative or social worker) contacts the service, a conversation is had to establish what sort of services and technologies would be best for them. The team of trained engineers assess the customer's need to ensure the appropriate safety equipment and technology is issued to support independent living and hospital discharge for all residents within Portsmouth. Regular assessments and monitoring of the customer enable a proactive approach to support.

- 4.5. The established in-house Telecare service currently supports approximately 1100 self-paying residents who live independently across the city, although this is a dynamic equilibrium with customers regularly leaving and joining the service.
- 4.6. It also supports a number of customers referred through Adult Social Care (currently around a quarter of our referrals are received directly from Adult Social Care) and has also provided support to those living in the city council's Sheltered Housing service. Due to the infrastructure required within these blocks, that service is undertaking a separate project for its telecare needs, but will maintain links, and these services remain an option for Sheltered Housing residents.
- 4.7. The service is a charged for service on a cost-recovery model that contributes to fixed overheads, as well as funding the direct costs of the service.
- 4.8. As a 'life-saving' critical service, Telecare services continued to be delivered by the team throughout the pandemic, with officers taking all precautions to ensure that they, and their vulnerable customers, were not put at risk. In addition, the Private sector Housing team supported vulnerable residents in the spring/summer of 2020 by making additional calls to all private customers to ensure that their equipment was working fully, and to offer the opportunity to 'check in' with somebody when many had not seen another person for weeks/months. The feedback from customers about this was really positive
- 4.9. The highest number of private customers are aged between 81-90 and just over half live in the PO4 or PO6 postcode areas. Approximately half of the private customers need the Basic Telecare Package. This requires the customer to have at least two people who live locally to respond to emergency calls both day and night.
- 4.10. However, some people do not have contacts (friends or family) who are available at night and therefore the council can step in to support. Almost four in 10 of self-funded customers pay for the 'Night Response Service.' Where the council will, if called out by the Response Centre, attend the customers home between 9pm-6am
- 4.11. The current service, equipment has been purchased from Le Grand, the Customer Management System (CMS) has been provided by Jontek, and the alarm receiving centre (ARC) has been provided, through Jontek, by Southampton City Council.

5. Need to develop the current service

- 5.1. In 2019 an initial review of the service identified opportunities to improve the service.
- 5.2. Senior leaders believed that the city council wasn't making the best use of assistive technology, and that that awareness within frontline Adult Social Care staff was limited.

- 5.3. The Housing Service and Adult Social Care, agreed the use of the Systems Thinking method to undertake a review and understand how the current system is operating. This highlighted several areas for improvement, and these were due to be Redesigned when the pandemic began.
- 5.4. The purpose of the Telecare service was found to be "**Help the customer stay safe and living independently in their own home**", supporting the delivering of the corporate priority 'Make Portsmouth a city that works together, enabling communities to thrive and people to live healthy, safe and independent lives'.
- 5.5. The service is now reviving the Check work, and this creates the opportunity to realign with outcomes of that work with the hospital discharge service, also provided by Private Sector Housing Service, which helps to provide simple physical adaptations when people leave hospital and return to their own homes.
- 5.6. In addition to the need for a redesigned service, there were some business weaknesses identified as follows:
- 5.6.1. Contractual - There was no formal contract in place between the city council and its hardware and call centre providers. Whilst this has not resulted in any service failure to date, it did present a risk which could be mitigated. In addition, it didn't guarantee that the best services were being provided to the city council.
- 5.6.2. Technical - The current technical infrastructure does not meet the needs of the service or customer. The current CMS does not support staff to work remotely. More importantly, in 2025 the traditional, Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) will be switched-off and replaced with a digital 'all-Internet Protocol' network. The current equipment is analogue and will therefore become obsolete after 2025.
- 5.6.3. The service as it is today presents an identified risk in terms of IT supportability, and its reliance on our network and its connections in the Civic.
- 5.6.4. Awareness of the service could be improved with Adult Social Care, NHS, Housing, HIVE Portsmouth, Emergency services and many more.
- 5.6.5. Identity - The service did not have a single, coordinated and recognisable branding which can be used to promote the service to those who are unaware of it.
- 5.6.6. Customer growth - A review of the service provided in a similar sized area shows that the number of people who may want this service could be significantly larger.
- 5.6.7. Cost recovery - The service charges have not been increased in the last four years. This has resulted in a service that is not making its full contribution to costs or allowable charged corporate overheads.

6. Project for service development

- 6.1. A project team was created (called The Independent Living Project) led by Private Sector Housing to take forward the service improvements. The project began in January 2020 with the creation of the project mandate and the establishment of the Project Board, chaired by the Assistant Director for Housing. The Board consisted of the customer and support services, and linked to colleagues within adult social care, local authority housing and wider.
- 6.2. The project continued throughout the Covid pandemic and a temporary post of Lead Project Officer was recruited in July 2021 with funding from the Better Care Fund.
- 6.3. The main desired outcomes from this project were
 - 6.3.1. Core Service: Ensure contracts are legal and sustainable, and that the service provision is sustainable and reliable, and to reach out to further vulnerable residents in the city and grow relationships with both internal and external stakeholders.
 - 6.3.2. Stakeholder or customer: To provide the most effective service, with a wide range of relevant equipment, help to understand customer's needs, behaviour patterns and trends and support independent living further and help avoid or delay a decline in customers wellbeing and health.
 - 6.3.3. Organizational capability: To provide a recognizable brand with easy to access online capability. To ensure that the IT systems are suitable.
 - 6.3.4. Financial: Ensuring that the service met the budget expectations.
 - 6.3.5. Resource: Ensure that the team see benefits from smarter technology.
- 6.4. Given the specialised technical nature of the hardware, software and service required, and feedback from the soft market testing, it was determined that an outsourced contracts offered the best solution for the city council and customer.
- 6.5. Working with the city council's Procurement Team, and through the Gateway process, an invitation to tender went live on the InTend platform at the start of October 2021 for the provision of new digital equipment, CMS and ARC. Soft market testing showed that this combined approach was more likely to attract interest, and competitive bids, from the leading systems providers.
- 6.6. The procurement followed all of the city council's rules on social value with both successful suppliers gave strong examples of how they are supporting social value within their own geographic area, and scoring was weighted for quality and pricing with the highest combined scoring suppliers being successful. Legal, Finance and IT representatives have been involved throughout.

6.7. New contracts have now been awarded and will begin on 01 April 2022. The new equipment contract is for a contract term of four years and the CMS and ARC with initial contract terms five years. The difference reflects the speed with which the technology develops, and the city council needs to ensure that it can update its technology provider at appropriate intervals.

6.8. Contract measures include key performance indicators and service level agreements. Service credits which will be applied to the contract in the event of systems being unavailable (or system downtime). There are different service credits applied dependant on severity of any issue with the systems

7. Outcomes of the project

7.1. New supplier of digital equipment - Chiptech

7.1.1. Chiptech are an international company, who manufacture all of their equipment in-house, from design & build to supply.

7.1.2. They have a large range of over 250 digital devices and offer a wider variety of equipment compared with the current supplier. The fully digitalised kit allows the service to look at customer behaviour patterns and trends.

7.1.3. Efficient equipment with quicker installation time allowing us to grow our service and support more vulnerable residents in the city

7.1.4. Chiptech regularly work with Astraline (see below). They are also members of the TSA (TEC services association) an industry regulator.

7.1.5. The proposed contract is projected to cost marginally less than our current equipment supplier over the term of the four year contract.

7.2. New Customer Management Software and Alarm Receiving Centre supplier - Astraline

7.2.1. Astraline have experience with delivering a digital changeover for their existing clients (including Cambridgeshire County Council)

7.2.2. They also hold a leadership role with TSA

7.2.3. They offer a web-based software which will allow the team to work more flexibly in delivering the service. This is an important factor for the service with regard to business continuity planning.

7.2.4. The proposed contract is projected to cost more than our current supplier over the term of the five year contract. However, based on the most recent customer projection figures, it is anticipated that the service would generate sufficient income to meet its annual cash limit.

7.3. New Identity and Brand



- 7.3.1. Market research, undertaken by the city council's research and engagement team as part of the project, showed that the majority of respondents agreed that the name 'telecare' accurately represents the service (62%). However, there were those who did not understand the name. As part of the creation of a new identity, suggestions on renaming the service were considered. Also, the service did not have an independent website which outlines what the service is, how much it costs and how it can be accessed.
- 7.3.2. It was also identified that the service did not have a single, coordinated recognisable identity which could be used to promote the service to those who are unaware of it.
- 7.3.3. A publicly available survey was carried out, targeting service users, next of kin (NOKs) potential customers and health professionals, to understand what was needed from the brand, and test some design concepts for improvement.
- 7.3.4. 44% felt that the current term "Tele" was confusing and should be removed as they believed this was for 'Telecoms' or 'Television' and the terms "safe" and "home" were suggested for use in the name of the new service.
- 7.3.5. A new identity - **Safe at Home** - was developed and tested with key audiences. The colours that have been chosen are dementia friendly colours and mirror the city's recognisable blue colouring. The new equipment provider will also be branding the base units with the new Safe at Home identity.
- 7.3.6. Led by the marketing and corporate communications team, the service will target a press preview and soft launch of products in w/c 21 March, with final product catalogue available to order from 1 April. Therefore, from 1 April 2022 the Telecare, and associated services (hospital discharges etc) will all come under the Safe At Home identity and the service will go live to customers in the city.

7.4. Service for customers

- 7.4.1. Existing customers and new customers will enjoy a new service offer designed to meet the purpose to **"Help the customer stay safe and living independently in their own home"** including;
- 7.4.2. A new website is in development. When launched in April 2022, will initially offer an overview of the Safe at Home offering, along with a catalogue of the new digital equipment available - making it easier for customers to find the right equipment to help them stay independent. Improvements to the website will be rolled out throughout 2022 as work is completed.
- 7.4.3. The new digital equipment will work pro-actively rather than reactively, will carry the Safe at Home identity and will be a fully digitally enabled solution. The



new smarter way of working and technology will look at customer's behaviour patterns and trends and enable the service to grow relationships with internal and external stakeholders by supporting independent living and customer well-being, whilst remaining GDPR compliant.

7.4.4. A 'menu' of service options are being developed to be clear to the customer what services are available, and at what charge. This will help to ensure that the customer is getting the right service. Details of the service can be found in Appendix 2 with the key points of the council's service being as follows

- ✓ **24/7 monitoring:** Customers are provided with a digital device, which automatically connects to a UK based 24-hour monitoring centre if you have a fall, become unwell or need urgent assistance.
- ✓ **Response Service:** For those that require the service, Safe At Home can provide the service of a response team which, if deemed necessary as a result of a callout, will attend your property, provide help and support and, if required, contact the Emergency Services.
- ✓ **Equipment:** Digital base units are provided which can be paired with a wide range of peripherals including personal help devices with GPS location and fall detection to suit the user's needs.
- ✓ **Maintenance:** Included in the weekly price, the in-house team offers repairs and maintenance on all equipment in the event the TEC needs to be replaced or upgraded.
- ✓ **Phone line:** The new digital equipment operates over the 3G/2G cellular network at no additional charge to the customer. Hardwired options will also be available.
- ✓ **Cancel at any time:** The customer can, at any time, give notice to the Council to end the contract and rental of equipment and request removal of the equipment.

7.4.5. **Fees and charges:** All weekly fees include cover for repairs and maintenance, call outs, cancellation, and collection charges. One off fees are applied when equipment is installed.

7.5. Broader use of Safe at Home

7.5.1. In addition to the Technology Enabled Care, the Safe at Home team also offers a **Homesafety Service** for vulnerable adults and children where a range of equipment and advice can be supplied based on the customers individual needs and lifestyle to support independent living and safety in the home. This service is offered to both Portsmouth and Gosport residents.



7.5.2. The service also works closely with Adult Social Care to identify new customers who would benefit from the and supply, installation and maintenance of sensory equipment in the home.

8. Timetable for delivery

- 8.1. The developments outlined are all aimed at making the service better for current service users and attract more people to take up the service if needed.
- 8.2. Since the announcement of the award of the contracts on 5th January 2022, officers have been working with both contractors to ensure that the mobilisation period is fully utilised and that the new contracts can start when current arrangements end.
- 8.3. The new contracts for equipment, Customer Management System and Alarm Receiving Centre will commence from 1st April 2022.
- 8.4. The roll out of new digital equipment for new and existing customers (including mop-up and review) will begin on 01 April 2022 and is aimed to be completed by end of March 2023, with customers who face immediate digital switchover issues being upgraded as required. The new customer management system and alarm receiving centre will also go live from 01 April 2022.
- 8.5. The new website prototype is complete and currently being tested.
- 8.6. The service name will change from Telecare to Safe at Home from 01 April 2022, and a marketing campaign will begin to attract new customers.

9. Reasons for Recommendations

- 9.1. As outlined within the report, provision of services to help those who are elderly or vulnerable to stay safe within their own home is an additional service provided by the city council at a charge. The continuation and expansion of these services will enable more people to stay safe within their home and meet the coprortae and city priority
- 9.2. For a number of reasons outlined within section 5 of this report, a continuation of the existing service is not viable. The service needs to be made more secure and sustainable, with better ways for customers to access the service, and a clearer identify that can be promoted as widely as possible.
- 9.3. The new fee structure for the new service has been designed based upon a full cost recovery model. If the new fees are not implemented from 01 April 2022 there will be two major impacts The city council, as a local authority, has statutory powers to charge for the provision of discretionary services under section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 and sections 1 and 3 of the Localism Act 2011. These are powers to charge on a cost recovery basis only and do not in themselves permit the city council to trade on a commercial basis i.e. for profit.



9.3.1. The service will risk running at a deficit

9.3.2. There will be significant resources required to input the new costs into Fusion over a period of time, rather than in a single upload. These resources will either come from within the existing service, and therefore slow down customer response, or result in additional costs.

10. Integrated Impact Assessment

10.1. An integrated impact assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix 1.

11. Legal Implications

11.1. There are no direct legal implications from the recommendations contained in this report.

11.2. With regard to the new fee structure, the city council can set the level of charge for a discretionary service provided the income from charges does not exceed the costs of its provision. It is a policy consideration for the city council whether or not it wishes to recover its full cost in providing the service.

11.3. The contracts have now been awarded following the procurement process as advised in the body of the report, and Legal Services will arrange the execution of the same with the respective suppliers as appropriate.

12. Director of Finance's comments

12.1. Fees and Charges for the Telecare service are reviewed periodically to ensure that they recover the cost of running the service, this is often limited to an inflationary increase. With the implementation of the new digital service the need has arisen to fees and fee structure as the product has evolved.

12.2. Under a full cost recovery model, there is a requirement for the service to cover the direct costs of the service, whilst continuing to make a contribution towards allowable fixed overheads. The new charges, set out in Appendix 3, reflect the cost of the service, as well as the equipment that is needed.

12.3. Costs are set to ensure that based on an estimated number of Service Users the fees set allow the Council to recover the costs of running the service. There is a risk that the number of customers fall short of estimates which means not all costs of the service are recovered, or that costs increase higher than had been anticipated.

12.4. To ensure that fees and charges remain current, it is proposed that annual fees may be varied from April by the Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services and S151 officer by up to, but no more than, the Consumer Price Index

(CPI) +1%, based upon CPI in the previous December on a full cost recovery basis.

- 12.5. If proposed increases are significantly greater than general inflation, as measured by CPI, this will need a formal report to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Preventing Homelessness.

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Signed by Paul Fielding, Assistant Director **Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services**,
on behalf of
James Hill, Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Integrated Impact Assessment
- Appendix 2: Service outline and new branding
- Appendix 3: Fee structure and policy for fee changes

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
TEC Services Association website	TSA - the voice of TEC (tsa-voice.org.uk)
Astraline website	Personal Alarm Service Astraline
Chiptech website	Chiptech UK - Your Digital Telecare Partner

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: