

**CABINET
13 DECEMBER 2022**

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

**TITLE OF REPORT: CARELINE – IN-HOUSE PROVISION FOR COMPLEX
INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE**

REPORT OF: **SERVICE DIRECTOR CUSTOMERS**

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: CLLR JUDI BILLING, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

COUNCIL PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval for the Careline service to expand the in-house installation and maintenance service to include complex installation and maintenance services alongside the non-complex services already provided.
- 1.2 This service is currently being provided by an external company under a contract with an end date of 31 March 2023.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Cabinet approves the addition of complex installations and maintenance to Carelines in-house service from 01 April 2023.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The details are contained in the Part II report

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. The details are contained in the Part II report.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1. The Executive Member for Community Engagement, Cllr Judi Billing has been consulted as has the Deputy Executive Member, Cllr Chris Lucas.
- 5.1. The Shadow Executive Member, Cllr Simon Bloxham, has been consulted and is supportive of this approach.
- 5.2. The Leader of the Council, Cllr Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg and Executive Member for Finance and IT, Cllr Ian Albert have been consulted and support this approach.

- 5.3. The Strategic Lead, Assistive Technology at Hertfordshire County Council has also been consulted.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on the 10 October 2022.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. Careline has been providing Telecare services since 1982 both within the County of Hertfordshire and nationally for other councils, registered social landlords and private entities. The service is well respected within the field of Telecare and has built a reputation for offering a good quality of service within the security of a local government regulated environment.
- 7.2. Careline has been contracted by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) since 2014 under a SE9EA agreement to provide countywide provision of Assistive Technology (AT) services. The service relies on the provision of technologies within the service users dwelling. Since that time HCC decided to make Careline its sole provider of Assistive Technology services and a new five-year agreement was entered into in 2021.
- 7.3. Careline acts as HCC's delivery, installation, maintenance, response and monitoring partner for the implementation of AT solutions throughout the County. Careline and HCC work in partnership to service the legacy solutions whilst developing new and innovative models of support utilizing data analytics, machine learning, artificial intelligence etc, to predict and resolve potential crises before they develop.
- 7.4. The new contract with HCC in 2021 saw an additional 3,300 clients transfer across to Careline and with this brought additional requirements for maintenance services.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. Careline has been contracted since 2014 under a SE9EA agreement by HCC to provide countywide provision of Assistive Technology services. The service relies on the provision of technologies within the service user's home. These are installed by technicians who carry out in person visits to the service user's home. Additionally, there are some ancillary support elements that are conducted either at the time of installation or through the life of the service provision such as form filling and battery replacements.
- 8.2. When the service expansion took place during 2021, the client base increased by 3,300, the service transfer completed successfully and introduced technician skills into the team to deal with switching devices from analogue to digital ahead of the national 2025 switchover deadline.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. The provision and management of the Careline function is delegated to the Service Director Customers except those reserved to Council, Cabinet or a Committee as set out at 14.6.7 b (i) of the Constitution.

- 9.2. Under the terms of reference for Cabinet, the Constitution states at 5.6.3 that Cabinet are to take decisions on resources and priorities, together with other stakeholders and partners in the local community.
- 9.3. Additionally, at 5.6.15 that Cabinet oversee the provision of all the Council's services other than those functions reserved to the Council.
- 9.4. Under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 the Council has a general 'best value' duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 9.5. Whatever the course of action the Council decides to take, it will be necessary to engage legal support in terms of engaging with the incumbent provider regarding possible staff transfer pursuant to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE), if applicable, either to the Council (if the service is brought in-house in line with this recommendation) or any replacement/alternative provider.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The details are contained in the Part II report

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The details are contained in the Part II report

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2. This report recommends NHC providing a service to users of Careline who in the main will have a protected characteristic, the recommendation to bring the service in-house will ensure those with a protected characteristic are able to receive the support of the Careline service and benefit from the independence the service affords its users.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. The Social Value Act and "go local" requirements do not apply to this report.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. An Environmental Impact Assessment has previously been undertaken and the environmental impacts of the proposal are positive, the positive impacts include the use of electric vehicles, potentially less driving through more efficient routing of jobs and increased levels of equipment refurbishment to reduce landfill.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

15.1 The details are contained in the Part II report

16 APPENDICES

16.1 None

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 None