

CABINET MEETING 14 APRIL 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Procurement of Replacement Equipment for Sunderland Telecare

Author(s):

Executive Director Health, Housing and Adult Services

Purpose of Report:

This report seeks Cabinet's endorsement of the decision to procure replacement telecare equipment from Tunstall in line with the requirements of BT 21CN Programme.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended to endorse the decision to procure replacement telecare equipment to ensure Sunderland Telecare services are compatible with BT new communications network, the '21CN Programme'.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?

Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

Approval of decision to procure replacement telecare equipment from Tunstall to ensure that services to customers are compatible with BT 21CN Programme and the required deadlines.

Tunstall were selected after a 'Mini Competition' was undertaken by the Northern Housing Consortium (NHC) with all Suppliers on the NHS PASA Telecare Framework, that was over £250,000.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

The BT 21CN Programme is being implemented by BT throughout the UK, to replace its entire communications network, therefore Sunderland Telecare must provide equipment to citizens of Sunderland which is compatible with 21CN.

To ensure a safe and effective response to customers, Sunderland Telecare must replace significant numbers of telecare units.

The replacement equipment must be procured from the existing provider, Tunstall (in accordance with the NHC 'Mini Competition') to ensure the best service to customers; at a discounted price to the Council; and in line with timescales.

Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? Yes

Is it included in the Forward Plan? Yes

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:
Health & Well Being

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, HOUSING & ADULT SERVICES

PROCUREMENT OF REPLACEMENT EQUIPMENT FOR SUNDERLAND TELECARE

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet's endorsement of the decision to procure replacement telecare equipment from Tunstall in line with the requirements of BT 21CN Programme.

2 DESCRIPTION OF DECISION

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to endorse the decision to procure replacement telecare equipment to ensure Sunderland Telecare services are compatible with BT new communications network, the '21CN Programme'.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The next generation British Telecomm (BT) 21CN communications network will be implemented throughout the UK over the period 2008-2011. BT is the only major provider in Europe to replace the entire network simultaneously. The benefits are significant to both end users in the ability to access additional services and also the provider in reduced operating costs along with the opportunity to increase revenue generation from these new services.
- 3.2 This new 21CN network means the way information is passed around the network is different to that currently employed on its current network. This difference can cause operational and reliability issues for all telecommunications equipment, including care alarm services. This has required the Council's Sunderland Telecare to consider this significant impact on its services to customers and to identify what is required to ensure compatibility with 21CN, prior to BT rolling out this programme of network changes.
- 3.3 Sunderland Telecare must transfer to 21CN otherwise its telecomm functions will no longer operate in a reliable way which will have an inevitable impact on the quality of service to its customers, many of whom are vulnerable. These problems will result in failures in the service as follows:
- Incomplete information when a call comes in to the Contact Centre
 - When a person activates their alarm this may not raise an alert

- Liability issues associated with the failure of the systems provided by the Council
- 3.4 In order to assist in this process, Tunstall conducted an extensive programme of equipment testing at the BT national laboratory. The results of this testing have been used to identify the equipment operated by Sunderland Telecare which will be affected by migrating to the new BT21CN network.
- 3.5 This exercise identified a significant amount of current Tunstall equipment, used by Sunderland Telecare which would require upgrading/replacing in line with BT timescales for switching to the new 21CN network, from April 2010.
- 3.6 In 2008, Sunderland Telecare made the decision to fit, for all new customers, the Tunstall Connect Plus unit, which is currently the highest specification lifeline unit on the market. This lifeline unit offers the best value in terms of warranty and in terms of being the most robust system for managing any additional peripheral equipment attached to the unit. This Unit is already fully compatible with 21 CN, so will not need to be replaced.
- 3.7 The use of the existing NHC Contract was used to ensure that best value from the existing provider was achieved.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The total cost of replacing the equipment is £477,000, analysed as follows:
- Hard Wired Systems at an estimated cost of £200,000
 - 2,000 Dispersed units (1,000 to be used from bonded stock) at an estimated cost of £277,000

These costs will be met from a combination of Health Housing and Adult Services existing Capital Programme of £60,000, Supporting People contribution £100,000, with the remaining balance of £317,000 met by a revenue contribution from Health Housing and Adult Services existing Revenue Budget.

5 CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 Sunderland Telecare has over 16,500 telecare connections in the homes of the Sunderland citizens, many of whom are vulnerable. In line with the nationally negotiated PASA agreement, HHAS procured Tunstall, after a 'Mini Competition' was undertaken with Northern Housing Consortium (NHC), to supply the telecare capital equipment required to ensure a safe and effective service to its customers.

- 5.2 Due to the requirements of BT 21CN programme a significant amount of telecare equipment needs to be replaced to ensure that the highest standards of service for people are maintained and developed.
- 5.3 HHAS has already embarked on a programme of providing new Tunstall lifeline units to its customers, which are already compatible with 21CN and also 1,000 of these new units are held in bonded stock with Tunstall to meet demands.
- 5.4 An additional discount has been negotiated via the NHC rates, with Tunstall to replace the current outdated units. Tunstall already has the infrastructure and processes in place to respond in line with the timescales required by BT.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 The BT 21CN Programme is being implemented by BT throughout the UK, to replace its entire communications network, therefore Sunderland Telecare must provide equipment to citizens of Sunderland which is compatible with 21CN. To ensure a safe and effective response to customers, Sunderland Telecare must replace significant numbers of telecare units.
- 6.2 The replacement equipment must be procured from the existing provider, Tunstall (in accordance with the NHC 'Mini Competiton') to ensure the best service to customers; at a discounted price to the Council; and in line with timescales.

7 RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 Corporate Procurement, Corporate ICT, Health Housing and Adults Services Staff and Legal Services have been informed of the position with regards to the procurement.
- 7.2 A replacement programme has been agreed with Gentoo for all of their properties with hardwired systems which are not compatible with 21CN. These systems will be replaced by individual dispersed units for all those tenants who are eligible for a Telecare Service. Where required, Gentoo will pay for a tenant to have a BT line installed and will cover the cost of any repairs following the removal of hard wired equipment.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Sunderland Telecare Paper '21CN Compatibility' July 2009.

