

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET: 13 JANUARY 2011

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

**RECOMMENDATION FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE EXISTING
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONTRACT FOR AN INTERIM 6 MONTH PERIOD**

Executive Summary

This report provides a recommendation to roll forward the current Assistive Technology contract for an interim 6 month period until the end of September 2011. Cabinet agreement was made on 18 March 2010 for the Assistive Technology contract to go out to tender during 2010 and extend the existing contract for up to 14,500 people, under its existing terms. The current contract is due to expire as of March 2011. This involves a key decision which was first identified in the Forward Plan dated September 2010.

1 Background

- 1.1 Assistive Technology, which includes Telecare, frequently uses simple and discreet technology to help individuals live safely and independently, whilst also providing carer support. The service is provided via personalised assistive technology packages which can be used in a variety of ways to support individual needs, with assistance being available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year via connection to a response centre.
- 1.2 Wirral Assistive Technology service provision is via a contract with Seniorlink Eldercare. The contract started in April 2008 and is due to continue until March 2011.
- 1.3 On 18 March 2010, Cabinet agreed an Invest to Save Bid of £8.9m in Assistive Technology, over three years and also for the contract for Assistive Technology to be re-tendered in 2010. The work on the re-tender has been undertaken and was due to go out to advert in November.
- 1.4 The funding of Assistive Technology in years 2 and 3, via Invest to Save programme is subject to the demonstration of efficiencies in year 1, of which 50% are cashable savings and 50% are avoided costs.
- 1.5 A financial evaluation of the programme has been undertaken in conjunction with the Department of Health, Care Services Efficiency Delivery Unit. The demonstrated avoided costs for the period 1 April 2008 to 30 June 2010 of £1,017,475 in Social Care and £95,430 in NHS provision (through the avoidance of hospital admissions).

- 1.6 The creation of cashable efficiencies is closely linked to the Personalised Budget Programme and as a result Assistive Technology has been embedded throughout the whole self directed assessment process. A robust evaluation is now required to be able to evidence the expected cashable efficiencies, following the full roll out of the Personalised Budget Programme, which began in November 2010.
- 1.7 With the agreement and implementation of the self directed assessment process, the Department of Adult Social Services is now able consider and clarify the focus of Assistive Technology, to be able to maximise the potential cashable efficiencies. It is expected that this work will impact on the recommendations of future funding options for Assistive Technology. To enable time for this work to be undertaken and to provide ongoing Assistive Technology service provision, it is proposed that the contract with the current provider be extended for 6 months.

2 Reasons to recommend 6 month extension of Assistive Technology Contract

- To enable the Department of Adult Social Services to consider the future funding options for Assistive Technology ensuring the focus of service delivery is defined to maximise cashable efficiencies.
- To allow the prepared tender specification to be adapted accordingly and to allow the time required to undertake the tendering and transfer process, as required.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 The contract value for the six month period is estimated at £300,000. This allows for the provision of maintenance, monitoring and response for the 3,000 anticipated users of Assistive Technology at April 2011, and can be funded from the existing base budget for Assistive Technology.

4 Staffing Implications

- 4.1 There are no known staffing implications.

5 Equal Opportunities Implications/Health Impact Assessment

- 5.1 The expanded service via the Invest to Save Programme is being offered to individuals of all ages and ability, living in Wirral. The service has been subject to an equality impact assessment to ensure that all people can access the new service. The service will have positive health implications for people as they are designed to avoid crises.

6 Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 People supported by Assistive Technology will be among the most vulnerable in our society and may be exposed to greater risks than the rest of the population. These risks can be mitigated to an extent through the direct provision of Assistive Technologies and the contract specification.
- 6.2 Assistive Technology is an effective way of reducing people's fears of living alone and contributes to their, and their community's safety,

7 Local Agenda 21 Implications

- 7.1 National indications are that new technologies aimed at supporting people in their own homes for longer are cost effective, and more energy efficient than traditional support services

8 Planning Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct planning implications.

9 Anti Poverty Implications

- 9.1 Assistive Technology is currently delivered free of charge to people in Wirral so there are no anti-poverty implications, however the introduction of charges is being considered as part of the current consultation.

10 Social Inclusion Implications

- 10.1 The outcome targeted by this service is to enable people to remain independent at home, and is therefore critical to including people in mainstream society who may otherwise be excluded.

11 Local Member Support Implications

- 11.1 Services are provided in all wards of Wirral.

12 Background Papers

- 12.1 Assistive Technology Invest to Save Bid - Cabinet Report 18 March 2010

13 Recommendations

- 13.1 That;

Agreement is given to extend the existing Assistive Technology contract for a period of six months until 30 September 2011.

HOWARD COOPER
Interim Director of Adult Social Services