

Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Increased charges for the Careline Service
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>The City Council has an in-house telecare service, the commercial part of this service is known as ‘Careline’</p> <p>The Careline service is the provision, maintenance, and monitoring of a telecare device in the customer’s home. The device enables the customer to raise an alarm in an emergency situation. The alarm is sent through to the Council’s 24 hour monitoring centre and an appropriate response is arranged.</p> <p>At any one time there are approximately 2,000 customers who are being charged a weekly monitoring/responding fee. In addition to this any new customer to the service is charged a one-off ‘installation’ fee which covers the cost of setting up the service in the customer’s home.</p> <p>Any Southampton resident can purchase the Careline service.</p>	
Summary of Impact and Issues	
The proposal is to increase the one off installation charge and the ongoing monitoring/responding charge on a 3 year phased basis in order to move towards a full cost recovery model	

Potential Positive Impacts	
<p>Applying this increase in charges will enable the in-house provision to move towards financial sustainability into the future.</p> <p>It will ensure that the Council can continue to offer this valuable and highly regarded service, offering good value for money (with charges remaining lower than competitors in the market)</p>	
Responsible Service Manager	Sarah O'Brien
Date	29 February 2024
Approved by Senior Manager	Lisa Haynes
Date	29 February 2024

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	Client base includes a high proportion of older people (over the age of 60)	Whilst this proposal will have a financial impact on customers, it will remain lower than other telecare service providers. If the service is withdrawn due to unsustainability this will leave vulnerable people with limited alternatives, that are more costly within the private sector. Perhaps leaving them without any kind of telecare service. The Council offers a number of ways to pay, including dd, standing order – this helps many customers to budget more effectively

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Disability	A number of physically and mentally disabled people rely on the service	As above
Gender Reassignment	n/a	
Care Experienced	The service delivers care and support that enables people to remain independent in their own home. Customers may opt out of the service if the charges become unaffordable to them	Offering different payment methods Phasing in the charging increases over 3 years SCC continuing to place itself amongst the cheapest telecare providers in the market, keeping charges to a minimum without the requirement of making profit
Marriage and Civil Partnership	n/a	
Pregnancy and Maternity	n/a	
Race	n/a	
Religion or Belief	n/a	
Sex	n/a	
Sexual Orientation	n/a	
Community Safety	A possible impact of increasing charges is that customers may choose to stop receiving the service. This would have safety and wellbeing implications	As above
Poverty	Affordability remains a concern, particularly for those on welfare benefits and low incomes	For those customers with ASC eligible needs, the charges of Careline are offset against their client contributions as part of a financial assessment.
Health & Wellbeing	The service promotes and supports independence, health and wellbeing.	

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Other Significant Impacts		

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