

Report of the Portfolio Holder- Housing

Speech Call Units and Lifeline Service Update1. Purpose of Report

To update Cabinet on the work undertaken to review the Council's Speech Call Units and Lifeline Service.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE to:

- 1. Continue with the current arrangements for Speech Call Units within Council owned properties**
- 2. The installation of Lifeline Digital at nine schemes, with the capital contribution of £120,000 being added to the Capital Programme in 2024/25 and funded from prudential borrowing, be approved.**
- 3. Consider extending the Lifeline Service to include a visiting service.**

3. Detail

In November 2023 Cabinet considered a report regarding the Speech Call Units in the Council's Independent Living schemes and the Lifeline Service, which provides similar equipment to private tenants and home owners. Cabinet approved a project to investigate alternatives to the current arrangements for both services.

A review has begun, which has involved a number of meetings and site visits with our current supplier. The review has also considered the requirements for the digital switchover of telephone lines from analogue to digital, and the importance of ensuring that the equipment meets future requirements.

Initial research has also been undertaken into a possible way the Lifeline Service could be developed, to both improve the service offer to customers and increase the income to the General Fund.

The details of the review, and progress so far are included in the **Appendix**.

4. Key Decision

This report is not a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

Not applicable.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

There is no budgetary provision within the Capital Programme 2024/25 for the cost of installing Lifeline Digital at nine schemes as outlined in the report. If Members were minded to approve the upgrade scheme, a budget of £120,000 (including contingency) would be added to the Capital Programme 2024/25 with the cost to be funded by prudential borrowing. The impact of this borrowing on the HRA would be an annual budget pressure of circa £29,000 for five years, including the cost of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and borrowing interest.

The ongoing business as usual costs of operating the Lifeline Service will continue to be met within existing resources.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

9. Union Comments

Not applicable.

10. Climate Change Implications

The climate change implications are contained within the report.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable

13. Background Papers

Nil.