



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

## Notice of Non-Key Executive Decision

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| <b>Subject Heading:</b>                   | Assistive Technology Charging Consultation   |
| <b>Decision Maker:</b>                    | Barbara Nicholls, Strategic Director of People   |
| <b>Cabinet Member:</b>                    | Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Care Services   |
| <b>ELT Lead:</b>                          | Barbara Nicholls, Strategic Director of People   |
| <b>Report Author and contact details:</b> | Daren Mulley, Senior Commissioning Manager<br>E: <a href="mailto:daren.mulley@havering.gov.uk">daren.mulley@havering.gov.uk</a>  |
| <b>Policy context:</b>                    | At a local level, this consultation supports Havering Council to meet its People Theme priorities in its Corporate Plan 2022/23 – 2026/27. This plan sets out how the Council intends to invest and transform the borough with an emphasis on improving the lives of vulnerable children, adults and families. |
| <b>Financial summary:</b>                 | The finance to hold this consultation will come from existing Council resources.   |

**Key Executive Decision**

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| <b>Relevant OSC:</b>                                 | People   |
| <b>Is this decision exempt from being called-in?</b> | The decision will be exempt from call in as it is a Non-key Decision |

**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

**People - Things that matter for residents X**

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place.

## Part A – Report seeking decision

### **DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION**

For the reasons set out in this report, the Director is recommended to agree to undertaking a consultation on the proposal to introduce charging for those people who receive funded assistive technology as a standalone service (i.e. not part of an Adult Social Care funded package of care).

### **AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE**

Second Tier Manager may (g) To undertake consultation with the Council's customers and relevant stakeholders, in accordance with the Council's consultation procedures, in order to establish: (i) levels of customer satisfaction with the Council's services (ii) the public and stakeholders' responses to consultation documents, strategies and surveys.

### **STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

Telecare (also called assistive technology) is a service that helps to support people to live independently, it gives an additional system of support that Telecare clients and their carers can use to receive emergency support 24 hours a day. Telecare refers to the use of sensors and alarms, they are used to signal when someone is in distress and needs assistance, either automatically or when triggered by the user. Personal alarms are supplied as pendants, wrist straps, or belt units and linked via a base unit to a telephone line and a help centre. Over the years, this technology has been supplemented by a range of sensors and alarms, some linked by mobile phone, including activity, door, and bed or chair occupancy sensors, detectors of falls or epileptic seizures, medication management systems, and detectors of household hazards including fire, smoke, carbon monoxide, domestic gas and floods.

Rising costs and increased demand for services have added continued pressure on the Council's budget, consequently the Council has been looking at ways to make savings and recover some of the costs of delivering some services. In the Council's budget setting for the 2023/24 financial year, one MTFs savings was proposed regarding the existing Adult Social Care spend on telecare. It was proposed that the subsidy for telecare users not in receipt of care packages will be removed. This means that this cohort of telecare users would need to pay for their telecare service directly. If the proposed charges are introduced and all affected users paid the relevant charge, it is estimated that the Council could save an estimated £300k in 2024/25 and £350k full year effect 25/26

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The Council therefore wishes to consult with existing Telecare clients who are currently in receipt of a telecare service funded by the Council with no other package of care to comment on the proposals to start charging for the Telecare service. This is approximately 925 people. It is acknowledged that the majority of telecare clients are older people and may be less able to pay the charges, in which case they would be able to request a financial assessment which could result in the Council continuing to pay for the service.

In more detail, between April and May 2024, planned activity includes;

- a) Sending out a letter and survey to telecare users by post
- b) Giving telecare users 4 weeks to complete and return their survey (s.a.e. provided).
- c) Collate, analyse and respond to the survey responses.
- d) Use the findings from the survey to help inform the Council's decision to introduce the proposed charges.
- e) Include the findings from the survey to inform the development of an Equalities Impact Assessment .

If the Council decides to introduce charges, everyone affected will be notified in writing, and given information on how to pay and amount they will be expected to pay.

### **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

**1. Do nothing:** The impact of not delivering the saving will have an impact on the Council's MTFS savings plan and Adult social Care budget.

### **PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION**

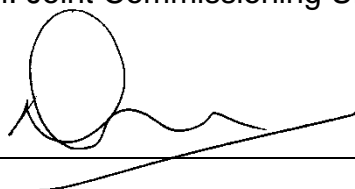
The pre-decision consultation has involved engaging with a number of stakeholders to prepare this report. This includes Legal and Finance.

### **NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER**

Name: Daren Mulley

Designation: Joint Commissioning Unit

Signature:



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Date: 25th March 2024

## Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The proposal to consult is a reasonable one given the number of users in receipt of a free service at present.

The elements of a lawful consultation are that it is conducted at a time when proposals are formative, the consultees are given sufficient information and time to comment meaningfully and then that all the results of the consultation are conscientiously considered before a final decision is taken.

In general terms it is lawful to charge to recoup the costs of provision for a service that the Council is not statutorily bound to provide. There are service users for whom telecare is part of their care and support packages. It would not be lawful to charge a flat rate for this service to this group, although service users may have to make a financial contribution to their overall package.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

This decision paper is seeking approval to undertake a consultation on the proposal to introduce charging for those people who receive funded assistive technology as a standalone service. The costs arising from the consultation will be met from within existing resources.

Following the consultation, there will be further work to determine the achievable savings.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)**

There are no implications or risks anticipated by the consultation that affect Council staff

### **EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;

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(iii) foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are: age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

The action undertaken in this proposed consultation will help inform the writing of an Equalities Impact Assessment to assess the impact of the proposal on the needs of all potentially affected users and protected characteristics.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

This consultation will minimise the impact on the environment by employing digital solutions to reduce the need for manual recording and disposable materials.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## **APPENDICES**

None

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**Part C – Record of decision**

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

**Decision**

Proposal agreed

**Details of decision maker**

Signed



Name: Barbara Nicholls

CMT Member title: Strategic Director of People

Date: 02/04/2024

**Lodging this notice**

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Democratic Services, in the Town Hall.

**For use by Committee Administration**

This notice was lodged with me on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_