

22nd April 2013**Agenda Item: 4****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR JOINT COMMISSIONING,
QUALITY AND BUSINESS CHANGE****TENDER FOR REPLACING THE INFOCARE SYSTEM****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek member approval to commence the first stage of the tender process to replace the current home care electronic monitoring system, InfoCare, with a new electronic system which will provide the Council with information to assist in the monitoring of outcomes and actual hours delivered to the service user.

Information and Advice

2. The current InfoCare system is used by the independent sector providers with whom the Council has a contract to provide home care services. The system is used to record the actual duration of time spent delivering care to the service user, enabling the Council to achieve best value by only paying for care delivered.
3. The system works by the care worker logging in and out of a small box unit sited in the service user's home, connected to the landline. Details of the call are then transferred via the landline to the Council's IT servers. This information then informs the Council as to the level of payment to be made to each of the home care providers.
4. Prior to implementation, the process was to pay providers on manual invoices submitted to the Council. This was both time consuming and complex, requiring significant input from administrative staff. In addition, there was no way of checking the duration claimed had actually been delivered, and this often resulted in paying for services not received.
5. Service users, who contribute to the cost of their care, also benefit from the Council's use of InfoCare, as they are contributing for actual services received.
6. In addition to visit data, the InfoCare system has also provided the Council with qualitative data, which has been used by Service Organisers and Market Development Officers to monitor the quality of care provided to service users, and to inform work with providers to improve the services they deliver.

7. Changes in the business such as the increase in Extra Care facilities and the government targets for increased personalised budgets, mean that electronic monitoring will need to adapt to collect monitoring and charging information from a much more diverse range of providers and organisations.
8. There is also the potential to offer the electronic monitoring system to service users and their carers in receipt of a Direct Payment to give peace of mind to families and ensure efficient use of personal budgets.
9. InfoCare has been used by the Council since 4th October 2008 to pay providers of home care and has proved to be successful in achieving efficiencies, but it is recognised that technology has advanced significantly over recent years, and electronic systems now have the capability to monitor more flexible services such as social inclusion activities, care delivered in extra care facilities and the night response service.
10. The Council is now approaching the end of its contract with InfoCare which presents the opportunity to test the market and source a system better suited to the changing needs of the business.
11. The Council is also in the process of considering a range of options for how Home Care Services, (care delivered in the service user's home), extra care housing and preventative focussed support can be delivered more efficiently and effectively. These contracts come to an end in March 2014. The tendering exercise for the new electronic monitoring system will need to be completed prior to this date, to ensure sufficient time to plan the transition of systems.
12. Whatever model of Home Based service is adopted, there will still be a need to have a robust electronic monitoring system in place. It would be helpful to have a new monitoring system identified prior to the invitation to tender for the Home Based service is released.
13. The intention is to procure the new electronic monitoring system through the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) framework. The framework offers a fast, low cost method for the procurement of electronic monitoring solutions and is available for use by any local authority or public sector body in the UK.
14. It is anticipated, that using this framework to procure the new system, will take approximately 6-8 weeks. This will enable the Council to identify the preferred solution in sufficient time for it to be included in the Home Based services invitation to tender.

Other Options Considered

15. Consideration has been given to adopting a devolved approach where the provider purchases their own electronic monitoring system and provides the Council with details of the care delivered via an electronic feed. This approach would mean the provider would bear the cost of purchasing the system, however, the Council will not own the data and therefore the integrity of the data received cannot be guaranteed. In order to capture the data collected by providers, the Council's existing internal systems and resources would require significant redevelopment which would offset any initial savings.

16. In addition, prior to using InfoCare to pay providers, the Council operated a system of paying providers based on information they submitted via a return process resulting in payment for undelivered hours.
17. Under European Union Procurement Rules and under its Financial Regulations the Council is required to tender for this provision. To keep the InfoCare system is not an option as the existing contract expires in March 2014 and will need to either cease or commence the re-tender process.

Reasons for Recommendations

18. The contract with the supplier of the InfoCare system, Tallon, comes to an end in March 2014.
19. Since the implementation of the InfoCare system in 2008 technology has advanced considerably and other systems may better suit the business as we move towards commissioning and payment on outcomes.
20. It is the optimum time to invite expressions of interest, to put in place new electronic systems which:
 - a) enable the service user to have greater choice and control
 - b) provide staff with the tools to empower their day to day working
 - c) help realise value for money for the overall service provision
21. Greater efficiencies can be realised in terms of identifying variations of commissioned hours against actual care delivered over time to highlight packages for review and potential reduction. This level of information would be resource intensive using manual systems such as submission of timesheets.
22. Electronic reconciliation of commissioned against actual care delivered enables the authority to pay providers electronically reducing the need for costly manual processes.
23. The Council will have more information to monitor the activity of providers to ensure continuity of care for the service user as the identity of the carer would be reported via the electronic system.
24. The continued use of electronic means of recording and paying for actual care delivered is recommended in order to ensure best value for the taxpayer and for service users and carers.

Statutory and Policy Implications

25. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

26. The purpose of the proposed new system is to ensure that we can improve monitoring the service provided to service users and carers.

Financial Implications

27. The existing InfoCare contract costs £210,000 per annum to maintain and the Council anticipates this maintenance cost to remain the same.
28. It is, however, anticipated that there will be one off implementation costs associated with the purchase of the monitoring devices. The cost will be met from the ICT Reserve and/or the ICT Social Care Reform Grant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) It is recommended that approval is given to commence the tendering process for a new electronic monitoring system to replace the InfoCare system.

CAROLINE BARIA

Service Director Joint Commissioning, Quality and Business Change

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Sue Dumelow
Team Manager Business Support South
Email: sue.dumelow@nottsccl.gov.uk
Tel: 0115 8546214

Constitutional Comments (NAB 21.03.13)

26. The Adult Social Care and Health Committee has authority to approve the recommendation set out in this report.

Financial Comments (CLK 11.04.13)

27. The financial implications are contained within paragraphs 27 and 28 of the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

ASCH116