

North Somerset Council Decision

Decision Of: Director of Adult Social Services
With Advice From: Section 151 Officer Head of Commissioning
and Head of Strategic Procurement
Directorate: Adult Social Services



Decision No: ASC034

Subject: Implementation of Single Reablement Pathway to support National Discharge to Assess Model for Hospital Discharge

Key Decision: Yes

Reason:

This decision is a key decision as the costs associated with the decision are more than £500,000

Background:

In 2015 the council recommissioned its domiciliary care, deciding to move from a number of spot purchase providers under a framework agreement to four geographical single contracts with one provider in each area. These Support to Live at Home contracts were written with reablement provision being considered the initial community-based offer of Service to everyone assessed as eligible for domiciliary care regardless of their funding status for the initial period of six weeks.

The council's in-house reablement team START were transferred to the independent sector through the process of commissioning the Support to Live at Home contracts.

When considering the contracting arrangements, it was agreed that the council would not specify the model for reablement delivery or contract a separate service. The rationale being that the best quality domiciliary care offer would have reablement running through the heart of it and not just as a service for the first six weeks. It was hoped that by all staff being required to understand and work in a reabling way, our clients would benefit more, and independence would be increased.

The contracts were written with the aim of the Support to Live at Home providers setting package levels for reablement and working collaboratively with the council care managers and therapists to develop their approach and skills. This aim was not realised, and it has proved difficult to embed reablement into the mainstream offer and with changes to providers and staff whilst providers have suffered from a lack of dedicated therapy input, the reablement offer, although existing, has not been the dynamic service hoped for.

Reablement supports the council priorities:

- A thriving and sustainable place
- A council which empowers and cares about people

Decision:

To direct award a contract to Access Your Care Limited until 4 September 2023, the reablement element of the existing Support to Live at Home contracts to enable the council to work with a single partner to develop an effective and best value reablement service. Following the approval of the DTA business case that funds these services to also extend the existing Wellness Service contract and North Somerset Community Care Rapid Response contract to 4 September 2023 to ensure these services are integrated immediately so that the services can be retendered as one from that date.

Reasons:

The need for social care to support acute health services has never been so great. Potential changes at Weston General Hospital and consistent demand across BNSSG acutes and community-based health and social care services are increasing and a shortage of therapist within Sirona and domiciliary care staff are a challenge to support flow of hospital discharge.

The changes to the national Discharge to Assess pathways support the need to consolidate the current reablement service and delay the Care Act assessment, which at present occurs pre the reablement intervention and this would better placed post reablement activity. The recognition of the importance of robust reablement capacity is recognised as a key influence on reducing length of stays on existing DTA Pathways and the system wide DTA business care pressure recognises the need to invest NHS funding in reablement capacity. This investment funding is awaiting sign off with BNSSG. The existing handover from DTA to domiciliary care providers via the Councils Assessment and Reablement Team has been somewhat disjointed. The proposed Sirona hand-off, direct to a reablement partner, will not lend itself to the current split area-based model.

Our vision is to strengthen the relationship with health, social care and provider staff and develop a wraparound preventative service offer, with a single dedicated domiciliary care provider who:

- Builds strong and effective relationships with the DTA pathway staff;
- Understands reablement and builds a skilled workforce, working closely with council occupational therapy staff;
- Has a strengths based approach to providing care and support;
- Supports the TEC-first approach by undertaking a TEC assessment for every service user;
- Actively case manages and reviews outcomes on a daily and weekly basis;
- Can provide alternatives to traditional care and support to maintain service user's independence in a more creative and innovative way;
- Engages with the council's Housing Related Support and voluntary sector commissioned services to consider the ongoing and longer term social and mental wellbeing of the service user and their carer/s.

The reablement team would need to be able to be responsive and assess service users in a timely way to support the Discharge to Assess pathway. The provision for double up care calls would need to be available as they are frequently requested in Reablement.

As referenced, the single provider must be one who understands the strengths-based, person-centred approach required to provide effective reablement. The reablement pathway will also complement our TEC assessment service, for which close working with our reablement partner and Sirona will be crucial to this important TEC pathway. All suitable reablement clients will receive a fast-track TEC assessment and access TEC services to maximise their independence and improve wellbeing outcomes. The reablement pathway will also be supported by a strengthened Home from Hospital service meeting appropriate non-social care barriers to successful discharge.

Based on our strong understanding of the local domiciliary care market, Access Your Care is the most suitable provider to work with the council on this contract and the only provider with the capacity and will to implement changes at the pace needed for our community. The reasons being:

- Access Your Care is in the process of novating the Support to Live at Home contract held by Alliance Living Care. This contract ends on 4 September 2023;
- The reablement staffing model under this contract is a separate team, with an ex-council in-house Reablement team leader;
- They are a small independent company where decision-making and process changes can be made instantaneously. This will support with the developmental aspect of the contract;
- They have staff working across North Somerset through spot purchase and private work to support with further recruitment to the Service.

We also propose to merge the Wellness Service and North Somerset Community Care Response Service into this developmental Service offer, which are both currently provided by Access Your Care. Both of these existing commissioned services will further strengthen the preventative aspect to the reablement pathway.

The Wellness Service will offer an overview to ensure the TEC offer is supported and support a less intrusive and resource heavy alternative to a care visits. For example, it will

- Form part of a step-down approach to service users regaining independence with a view to being completely withdrawn or;
- Can offer longer term support where a service user may just need prompting or checking on.

The North Somerset Community Care Response Service supports the council's Carelink Service as a 24/7 emergency response to alarm calls. By integrating the services, Access Your Care can;

- Provide overnight planned calls as part of a reablement package where appropriate. This would divert some service users from going into DTA Pathway 3 beds, providing better outcomes.
- Support the council OTs and the TEC hub by their Trusted Assessors being able to order small kit and supporting with any TEC installations.

- Extend the Wellness Service current service availability to 10pm and 7 days per week.
- Provided an emergency response to Wellness Service welfare calls where concerns arise.

By undertaking a developmental contract for the period up until the Area 1 Support to Live at Home contract is recommissioned, we will be able to tender for a longer-term contract whereby we know;

- The level of staffing that ensures best value for the Council.
- The most effective and efficient pathway from Discharge to Assess.
- The most effective and efficient level of input and joint working with NSC staff.
- The pathway for working with and accessing TEC.
- The pathway for working with an improving outcomes for reablement with the voluntary sector and other partner agencies.

We are aware from bench marking in preparation for a re-tender of the North Somerset Community Care Response Service that there is no other domiciliary care provider, locally or regionally, who could provide the extent of the proposed developmental service.

Options Considered:

1. To vary all Support to Live at Home contracts to specify that a separate reablement team is established.

It has been determined that this will not currently be financially viable. It may be an option for future recommissioning of the Support to Live at Home contract should the developmental contract establish a need.

2. To tender for a reablement contract.

The pressures within the health and social care system do not afford the time for a full tender. We have been awaiting the outcome of the DTA business case in order to determine the level of funding available. Now this has been agreed, we must establish a Reablement offer with immediate effect. A full tender would take at least four months to prepare, tender, evaluate, award, and implement. We also feel that without fully understanding the demand and the full pathway/process for the most effective reablement service, tendering a contract will not offer best value to the council.

3. To undertake an expression of interest within the existing Support to Live at Home providers.

As detailed above, it is felt that Access Your Care, replacing Alliance Living Care the only strategic provider in a position to provide the breadth of service required to develop an integrated and effective service offer. The other two strategic providers do not currently have sufficient local infrastructure to be able to meet the requirements set out in this paper.

Financial Implications:

There are no additional financial costs associated with NSC as all additional resources and existing services are fully funded via the NHS Discharge to Assess business case, the Better Care Fund and Ageing Well NHS recurring funding.

The contracts will run until 4 September 2023 and, assuming any new / additional resources are applied from 1 December 2021, allowing for time to recruit to posts, the indicative resources, costs, and funding sources for each of the next three financial years are as follows.

Contract element	Current Resources	Future Resources
Reablement Service	None	2 Team Leaders; 2 Coordinators; 14 Reablement Workers; 1 Therapist
Wellness Service	112.5 hours a week @£18.14 per hour	187.50 hours a week @£18.14 per hour
Response Service	£2.16 per Carelink user per week, plus call outs	£2.16 per Carelink user per week, plus call outs

Contract element	2021/22 Cost	2022/23 cost	2023/24 cost	Funding
Reablement Service	£231,333	£694,000	£289,167	CCG (Discharge to Assess Business Case)
Wellness Service	£129,701	£176,865	£73,694	CCG (Discharge to Assess Business Case)
Response Service	£336,960 + call outs	£336,960 + call outs	£140,400 + call outs	Council base budget
TOTAL	£697,994	£1,207,825	£503,260	

Legal Powers and Implications:

Given that the council is responding to national changes in pathways to support hospital discharge, and these services are urgently needed to be expanded to prevent the multiple challenges facing health and social care this Winter, to strengthen capacity and prevent a silting of community capacity. Additional capacity for reablement will be provided by NHS funds to strengthen these changes. Therefore, these changes will be implemented as a direct award to Access Your Care. This decision is covered by the following exceptions to Contract Standing Orders;

6.3.2 reasons of extreme urgency mean that normal time limits cannot be met, including as a result of unforeseen emergency or disruption to Council services. This may include for

example, storm damage to public buildings. Not having sufficient time to tender may not in itself constitute urgency.

The need for the council to respond to the pressures within the health and social care system is urgent. We feel it is not in the council's best interest to tender for a Reablement service quickly and be in a position where the level of service either puts the council in a detrimental financial position or does not offer enough service to support the system.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications:

We will work with Access Your Care ensure that Packages are planned in the most geographically efficient way possible, although travel across the whole of North Somerset will be required.

A Social Value schedule will form part of the contract that reflects the council's Social Value policy.

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/business/tenders-procurement/procurement-strategy/our-social-value-policy>

Consultation:

This decision is a key element of BNSSG CCG Winter Planning assurances and will therefore be supported financially. AYC will work closely with Sirona our community health provider and build on existing relationships. Discussions with our other strategic providers have taken place and if necessary, a full staff consultation process will follow with any staff that choose to transfer to the single reablement service, however this may not be necessary given the demand for domiciliary care in these areas.

Risk Management:

Challenge

We will manage the risk of challenge from the other Support to Live at Home providers by supporting them to understand the wider context and by directing them to the existing unmet Packages in their areas/s. They will also need to ensure the capacity to take ongoing Packages from Access Your Care. The Support to Live at Home contracts are spot purchase and reablement may still be required of the other providers, therefore this proposal does not constitute as a material change to the Support to Live at Home contract.

We are aware that TUPE may apply to three staff working for the other two strategic providers due to their current roles being focussed on reablement. These staff, if TUPE transferred, will be incorporated into the reablement team within the planned staffing model and budget.

Service failure

Contract performance indicators will support with ensuring the provider implements a robust service offer. PI's will also be aimed at capturing information to support future contracting arrangements and tender exercises.

There is the potential for the reablement service to get blocked by the Support to Live at Home providers being unable to transfer service users at the end of their reablement journey. We have recently been awarded funding from Accelerator Fund to boost

recruitment to the Support to Live at Home Providers and will also use it to support recruitment for this contract. This will generate approximately 14,000 hours of additional domiciliary care resources going forward.

Equality Implications:

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes – Summary. Positive impact only identified.

Corporate Implications:

None

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

None.

Signatories:

Decision Maker(s):

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JEW'.

Title: Director of Adult Social Services

Date: 20 December 2021

With Advice From:

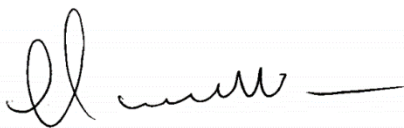
Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Amiss'.

Title: S151 Officer

Date: 20 December 2021

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Elmer'.

Title: Head of Strategic Procurement

Date: 20 December 2021

Footnote: Details of changes made and agreed by the decision taker since publication of the proposed (pre-signed) decision notice, if applicable: