

OUTCOME OF DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S REVIEW OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE FUNDING OF COMMUNITY ALARMS/TELECARE SERVICES

Meeting: Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Date: 3rd October 2019

Cabinet portfolio: Councillor Chris Ludlow

Report by: Assistant Director for Housing

For publication

Purpose of reviewing the topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To update Members on Derbyshire County Council's review of its eligibility criteria for funding people receiving a community alarm/ telecare service.
What are the objectives of the review?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To review the impact of DCC's decisions on Chesterfield Borough Council's Careline service, and its clients.
Progress to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">DCC has completed its consultation and set out a new eligibility criteria from 1 November 2019.

1.0 Background

1.1 Derbyshire County Council (DCC) has provided funding for community alarms (known as Careline in Chesterfield) and telecare across Derbyshire since the Supporting People programme was introduced in April 2003.

1.2 Over 5700 clients across Derbyshire benefit from this funding, 87% of clients are eligible for funding as they receive Housing Benefit or Enhanced Pension Credit. An

eligibility criterion was agreed by DCC's in November 2018.

- 1.3 Chesterfield Borough Council (CBC) has a contract with DCC to monitor funded community alarms/telecare services in Chesterfield until March 2021.
- 1.4 At 31st August, 2019, CBC monitored 938 DCC funded clients (80% are CBC tenants), receiving £2.58 per client per week (over a 52 week period), equating to a projected annual income of £125K - this currently equates to 18% of CBC's Careline's income.
- 2.0 **DCC's Eligibility Criteria for funding community alarm and telecare services**
- 2.1 DCC carried out a consultation exercise between November 2018 and February 2019 on proposals to implement new eligibility criteria for the funding of community alarms and telecare services, with a focus on supporting adults with an eligible health and social care need, as defined by the Care Act, 2014.
- 2.2 In June 2019, DCC's Cabinet decided to implement their new eligibility criteria from 1st November, 2019.
- 2.3 Following representations during the consultation period from provider's current clients and their representatives, DCC amended its original proposals for existing clients who are currently receiving DCC funding.
- 2.4 For any client who receives DCC funding on or before 31st October 2019 due to their entitlement to either housing benefit or enhanced pension credit, or following a DCC Fairer Charging assessment, they will continue to receive funding:

- 2.4.1 whilst they remain living in their current property, and remain eligible under the current criteria;
- 2.4.2 if they have to temporarily move to another property (for example, during any refurbishment works, or in an emergency situation), and they then return to their current property.

2.5 From the 1st November, 2019:

- 2.5.1 Eligibility for this funding will be determined through an assessment carried out by DCC, and using the new criteria;
- 2.5.2 If a currently funded client moves permanently to another property, a new assessment will be carried by DCC, using the new criteria.

3.0 **Impact of DCC's decisions**

- 3.1 Over 900 clients in Chesterfield, most of who live in social rented properties, will continue to receive funding for the community alarms/telecare service whilst they remain in their current property.

It is likely that a high proportion of those clients would not have received funding under the new eligibility criteria.

DCC's amendment to its original proposals will therefore positively benefit a high number of potentially vulnerable people living in Chesterfield, and throughout Derbyshire.

- 3.2 Funding from DCC for community alarms/telecare services provides a significant level of income to the service:

3.2.1 DCC's decision to allow existing clients to continue receiving funding means CBC's income will not be adversely affected in the short term.

3.2.2 It should be noted that DCC is currently carrying out a review of its activities and funding for community alarms/telecare services, and expects to introduce any changes from 1st April 2021.

CBC has a contract with DCC for these services up to 31st March 2021.

3.2.3 It is expected the new eligibility criteria will reduce the number of new DCC funded clients. The impact will be a reduction in the current level of DCC income for community alarms/telecare services over the next 18 months and potentially a reduction in the number of people receiving the service.

3.2.4 Over the 6 month period March-August 2019, 59 new clients have been eligible for DCC funding, whilst 63 DCC funded clients have terminated the service (this is primarily due to either death or moving to residential/nursing care).

The number of DCC funded clients, and thereby income from this source, has remained static over the last five years – 979 clients in October 2014, 938 clients at the end of August 2019.

3.3 From the 1st November, 2019 new clients will only benefit from DCC funding for this service if they are eligible under the Care Act criteria, following an assessment by DCC.

An adult meets the eligibility criteria if:

- Their needs are caused by physical or mental impairment or illness;
- As a result they are unable to achieve specified outcomes which includes managing and maintaining nutrition, maintaining personal hygiene, managing toilet needs, being appropriately clothed, being able to make use of the home safely maintaining a habitable environment, developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships.
- As a consequence there is likely to be a significant impact on the persons' wellbeing.

3.4 The future funding for community alarms/telecare services will be part of a package of assistance that DCC will determine within an overall Care assessment.

The service will not be age restricted.

3.5 Providers have requested examples of how this assessment will determine eligibility for funding for a community alarms/telecare service.

3.6 DCC plans to carry out a review of each Care Act eligible client on an annual basis, or wherever there is a change in people's circumstances.

3.7 There will be an impact on people who will not be eligible for assistance under the new DCC criteria, and who may not be in a position to pay for a community alarms/telecare service.

3.8 The weekly cost of CBC's Careline service, including the provision and maintenance of equipment, and falls

recovery service (for non-injured fallers) is £6.00 per week (2019/20)

4.0 **Future plans**

4.1 Ongoing review of the impact of DCC's eligibility criteria change on CBC's Careline service.

4.2 Review the impact of any further proposed changes made by DCC as part of its review of community alarms/telecare services.

4.3 To monitor the impact of clients who:

4.3.1 Are not eligible for DCC funding after 1st November, 2019

4.3.2 Lose eligibility for DCC funding if they move permanently to another property.

5.0 **Conclusion**

5.1 DCC has changed its eligibility criteria for the funding of community alarms/telecare services from 1st November, 2019.

5.2 Existing clients who receive DCC funding will continue to receive the funding whilst they remain in their current property.

5.3 DCC's decision will have an impact on the level of funding CBC receives for this service over the next 18 month period.

5.4 DCC is currently carrying out a review of its activities and funding for community alarms/telecare services, and expects to introduce any changes from 1st April 2021.

5.5 CBC's has contract with DCC relating to community alarms/telecare services to 31st March, 2021.

6.0 **Suggested scrutiny activity**

6.1 To review the impact of DCC decisions on:

6.1.1 CBC's Careline service;

6.1.2 Clients who will not be eligible for funding after 1st November 2019.

Document information

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Background documents These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
DCC Cabinet Report – 8 November 2018 – Consultation on Eligibility Criteria for Community Alarms and Telecare Services https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/meetings-decisions/meetings/cabinet/cabinet-8-november-2018.aspx	
DCC Cabinet Report – 6 June 2019 – Outcome of the Consultation on Eligibility Criteria for Community Alarms and Telecare Services Cabinet 6 June 2019 - Derbyshire County Council	
Appendices to the report	
None	