

**Meeting:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025  
**Classification:** Part 1  
**Key Decision:** Yes  
**Title of Report:** Homecare Contract Extension

**Executive Director:** Mark Harvey, Executive Director Adults and Communities  
**Report Author:** Nicola Mickleburgh, Lead Commissioner  
**Executive Councillor:** Councillor Maxine Sadza, Portfolio Holder for Social Care and Healthier Communities.

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. This paper seeks agreement from Cabinet to extend the Care and Support at Home care contract for up to 24 months to allow further time to conduct a comprehensive procurement process with an improved service specification.

## **2. Recommendations**

### **that Cabinet:**

- 2.1. Approve the extension of the Care and Support at Home contract for up to 24 months (or any part thereof) until 31st March 2027 as needed to allow timescales for a robust procurement exercise for a future contract framework.
- 2.2. Delegates authority to the Executive Director for Adults and Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Healthier Communities to decide on the exact length and terms for which the extension is granted.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. On 1st May 2017, the Council entered into a 5-year Homecare services contract with the option to extend for any period or periods of up to five years in 12 month blocks to April 2027. In 2024, the Council extended the contract until 31st March 2025.
- 3.2. The Care Act 2014 places responsibility on all local authorities to promote individual well-being, prevent needs for care and support whilst placing a responsibility on all local to delay and reduce the need for care and support. Through reablement, prevention and enablement Southend-on-Sea City Council are adhering to these responsibilities.

- 3.3. In the City of Southend-on-Sea, we have a growing ageing population and an increasing demand on our care and support at home and our reablement services.
- 3.4. Throughout its tenure the Home Care Contract has enabled the Council to accomplish its responsibilities to provide care to individuals in their own home in an efficient, structured, and timely way.
- 3.5. The Homecare Market Share Analysis shows there are 28 providers currently offering Homecare Services under Adult social care contracts, with 11 providers managing less than 300 hours.

#### **4. Reasons for Decisions**

- 4.1. Learning from recent tenders for Social Care services we have recognised that Southend-on-Sea is a desirable addition to the provider market, with a recent tender having just short of 100 applicants. The ability to utilise the extension period as needed, ensures the Council has the time and ability to conduct a thorough tender exercise prior to contract expiry and consider all providers responses as per procurement best practice.
- 4.2. Extending the homecare contract ensures the current service continues while any future procurement takes place.
- 4.3. The Council is committed to supporting the people of the city to be independent and enabled to live the best life possible in a place they call home. The extension of the existing contracts is necessary to ensure that there is seamless continuity of care services to those people who are reliant on them.

#### **5. Other Options**

##### **5.1. Do nothing / do not extend**

It would be possible to spot-purchase any number of providers to deliver Homecare in the city as an alternative to the existing framework contract, yet this approach would present an increased risk to the effective oversight of the quality and safety of Homecare provision to people in need of care and support living in Southend-on-Sea.

There is also a risk that we would not be able to control contract price and care package costs of only reliant on market spot purchases.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1. The expenditure proposed through the contract extension will be contained within existing budget resources. The anticipated budget for 2025/26 is £15.5M.
- 6.2. The Strategic Commissioning team continues to work with Finance colleagues to ensure there is economic sustainability in Home Care provision.

#### **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1. The Council has a legal duty under the Care Act 2014 to provide the services delivered by this contract to those who need it. The Council also has a legal duty to ensure that the way in which its legal functions are delivered represent Best Value.
- 7.2. Under the Terms and Conditions of this contract, the Council can extend the Initial Term for any period of up to five years in 12 month blocks or any part thereof, by giving at least six months prior notice in writing.
- 7.3. A break in service provision would breach the Council's statutory duty and leave vulnerable people at risk. Therefore, the most expedient measure is to extend the existing contract.
- 7.4. The terms and conditions of the contract will remain the same, except the price paid for the services may be revised, as agreed between the Council and the service Provider. The contract provides for an annual Price Review if requested by either party with documentary evidence to support the request which should be on best value terms and in accordance with the general level of competitiveness of the market at the time of the request. No adjustment to the Price is to be higher the Consumer Price Index (or other agreed index). No adjustment shall constitute a material change to the Contract.

## **8. Policy Context**

- 8.1. The Care Act 2014 places a legal responsibility on the Council for the assessment and provision of support for adults who are unable to achieve two or more of the outcomes specified in the regulations under the Care and Support eligibility criteria:
  - Managing and maintaining nutrition
  - Maintaining personal hygiene
  - Managing toilet needs
  - Being appropriately clothed
  - Being able to make use of the adult's home safely
  - Maintaining a habitable home environment
  - Developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships
  - Accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering
  - Making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport and recreational facilities or services
  - Carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child.
- 8.2. Homecare is one of the main care and support options to meet eligible needs - to enable adults aged 18 and over to maintain their independence and quality of life in their own home.
- 8.3. The primary function of homecare services is to deliver personalised care and support that maintains and improves wellbeing, independence, and resilience appropriate to individual resident circumstances, prevailing state of health, and personal aspirations - to live a full life as possible: safe and independent at home.

8.4. The Council is responsible for local market shaping to encourage quality, choice and sufficiency of provision and contingency planning in case of provider failure. The care and support provision are delivered by local Homecare providers who are registered with, and inspected by, the Care Quality Commission (“CQC”).

**9. Carbon Impact**

9.1. There is no further anticipated impact from this contract extension

**10. Equalities**

10.1. There is no anticipated impact as a result of this extension, however an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken for any provision following a new tender exercise.

**11. Consultation**

11.1. We continue to be working with internal colleagues within Adult Social Care and consulting with our Homecare Provider market.

11.2. Work is also continuing with people who use our current Homecare Service to ensure we have a holistic approach towards a true “outcomes-based” model.

**12. Appendices**

N/A

**13. Report Authorisation**

<b>This report has been approved for publication by:</b>		
	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Executive Director(s)	Mark Harvey	06/12/2024
S151 Officer	Joe Chesterton	06/12/2024
Monitoring Officer	Susan Zeiss	06/12/2024
Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Maxine Sadza	06/12/2024