

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Health and Wellbeing Select Committee	
MEETING DATE:	23 rd May 2018	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Community Equipment	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		

1 THE ISSUE

This report provides an update on the current Community Equipment services available to residents of Bath and North East Somerset. It also outlines a project underway to review all community equipment services and develop an up to date policy for the provision of community equipment. The review will inform the re-procurement of the service under a new contract from April 2019.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Select Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the update on Community Equipment provided.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 There are no direct resource implications to this report. The full resource implications of community equipment recommissioning will be set out as part of the recommissioning process.
- 3.2 There is a pooled budget arrangement in place for community equipment, totalling £675,730 in 2017-18, which is funded 70% by the Clinical Commissioning Group and 30% by the Council.
- 3.3 The budget currently funds:
 - (1) The Sirona care & health Community Equipment Store (the main store which orders and delivers both standard and specialist equipment. This can be

anything from relatively small continence aids and mobility aids to hospital beds and mobile hoists);

- (2) Part funding of the West of England Care & Repair Home Improvement Agency (providing internal and / or external rails to properties and minor adaptations such as wheelchair ramps, this service is jointly commissioned across Bristol and South Gloucestershire);
- (3) Part funding of the Independent Living Centre in Semington, Wiltshire (a demonstration centre for equipment which has a number of items installed that people can try out [through floor lifts, beds, assistive technology etc.], staffed with an Occupational Therapist who can provide specialist advice, this service is also funded by Wiltshire and Mendip);
- (4) Part funding of the Red Cross short term wheelchair loan service (this provides wheelchairs for up to 3 months for individuals who may need them either while they wait for a specialist chair, or while they recover from a short term illness / injury, this service is not fully funded as it requests donations / contributions from the people who use the service).

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The Council has a duty under the Care Act to provide equipment and minor aids free of charge. The NHS also has a duty under the NHS Act to provide equipment. Both of these are currently administered via the Community Equipment Store operated by Sirona care & health CIC.
- 4.2 The Council also has a duty under The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act to provide adaptations via the Disabled Facilities Grant. These are currently administered by West of England Care & Repair via the Home Improvement Agency.

5 THE REPORT

Background

- 5.1 Community Equipment is a vital service which supports people to maintain or increase their independence in a range of different ways. One of the key aims of the Council and CCG is to support more people to remain at home and to do this, consideration and review of the community equipment service is essential to ensure it is fit for purpose and able to respond to increasing numbers of people living at home, especially returning home from hospital without delay.
- 5.2 Community Equipment is also an area of support which can cross over with other related offers to help people remain at home (e.g. assistive technology) and this project aims to give clarity where required for people living in Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) and also providers accessing the service.

Purpose

- 5.3 The scope of the project on Community Equipment is to:

- (1) Develop and publish an all-age health and social care community equipment policy.
- (2) Review the provision of community equipment in Bath and North East Somerset, make recommendations for improvement and subsequently procure under new contract arrangements from April 2019.

Timescale

5.4 The Community Equipment Policy is due to be published in Summer 2018.

5.5 It has been developed following consultation with stakeholders including people with lived experience of the equipment services, Occupational Therapists (adults and children's), District and Tissue Viability Nurses, Speech and Language Therapy and adults and children's commissioners.

5.6 The review and subsequent procurement of the community equipment services is scheduled to complete in Spring 2019. This will include further appraisal of the options to develop the assistive technology offer in B&NES.

Current progress

5.7 Initial work on this project was to agree the focus and key stakeholders.

5.8 Discussions have been had within the region, and in some depth with Wiltshire, for our Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) footprint. Following these discussions, it is felt that a more local offer tailored to B&NES' residents and their needs would be appropriate, although we will continue to work closely with Swindon and Wiltshire to share good practice and learning. Therefore the new Community Equipment service contract will be for B&NES residents only.

5.9 As part of the review the Community Equipment Store is being asked to complete an activity tracker which details every request coming through to the service and what the outcome is. This will help inform both the revised policy but also the service specification for equipment, to make sure that key priorities can be met (such as keeping people at home through the Falls Response service and helping people leave hospital when they are ready, without experiencing delay).

5.10 A full project plan is being developed to implement the procurement of the Community Equipment service which will be accompanied by further opportunities for people with lived experience of the equipment services to guide the development of the service specification.

5.11 Key learning from the project so far that will inform the procurement include:

- (1) The Community Equipment services are a key and growing part of the system facilitating hospital discharge and enabling people to live independently in their own homes.
- (2) The services are currently operating fairly separately and so efficiencies could be realised by ensuring contracts align with outcomes for people. For example currently an individual could be visited by one service dropping off a piece of equipment and then subsequently by a different service that installs the equipment.

- (3) The system is fairly fragmented at the moment with equipment purchasing happening across a number of settings. For example the process for ordering equipment for children is different to that for adults. Rationalising and standardising this will bring efficiencies.
- (4) The system needs to be overseen by someone with the specialist skills needed to understand the types and levels of equipment, and what represents value for money for the public purse.

5.12 Key priorities for the Community Equipment policy are to ensure that it is

- (1) aligned across adults, children's and health services.
- (2) Care Act compliant and is also co-terminus with other legislation such as moving and handling and Housing legislation.

Equipment Amnesty

5.13 The Store has run an equipment amnesty for the month of April, which was advertised widely throughout health and social care channels.

5.14 At the time of writing a small amount had been returned to the Store from this amnesty.

5.15 The Store writes out to all the individuals who receive equipment after 3 months and then again annually after this to ask the person if they still need / want the equipment. If the equipment is no longer needed the Store can collect, recycle and reuse the equipment.

Recycling

5.16 The equipment service currently cleans, disinfects and recycles around 90% of the equipment that is out on loan and returned.

5.17 Equipment that is 'dirty' (i.e. it has been on loan to a person and is returned after use) cannot be put straight back into the main store building, as before it can be sent out again it needs to be decontaminated.

5.18 In order to be decontaminated, items that have been returned must be stored in the 'dirty' area of the Store. Due to space constraints, it is not always possible to keep the items waiting to be cleaned inside the Store building, so some items remain outside the building while they wait to be cleaned and recycled.

5.19 The size and appropriateness of the current site is therefore also under review.

5.20 The RUH also has an agreement with the Store for people to return walking aids. There is an issue at the moment with the volume of walking aids being returned and this is currently being discussed with the RUH and the Store to ensure that a solution can be found for the aids which are being kept outside the store.

6 RATIONALE

- 6.1 The Committee is asked to note the update on Community Equipment and the forthcoming policy being prepared for summer 2018, together with the procurement due to be completed by April 2019. .

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 As set out in this report, the Community Equipment Policy, which is due to be published in Summer 2018 has been developed following consultation with stakeholders including people with lived experience of the equipment services, Occupational Therapists, Nurses, Speech and Language Therapy and adult and children's commissioners.
- 8.2 The engagement undertaken as part of the *Your Care, Your Way* community services review, including with service users and carers, has significantly influenced the outcomes to be achieved including through the recommissioning of the Community Equipment Services.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations will be undertaken once the project plan and PID is agreed, and once the procurement is decided, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

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Background papers	<i>None</i>
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