

Budget Proposals 2014/15 and 2015/16: Equality Impact Assessment (EIA): Community Alarms

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Executive Lead(s):	Cllr Christine Scouler	Date:	6th February 2014

The council and its partners are facing a significant challenge in the savings it needs to make over the next couple of years. This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been developed as a tool to enable business units to fully consider the impact of their proposals on the community. As a council we need to ensure that we are able to deliver the savings that we need to make while mitigating against any negative or adverse impacts on particular groups across our communities.

This EIA will evidence that the Council have fully considered the impact of the proposed changes and has carried out appropriate consultation on those changes with the key stakeholders. This EIA and the evidence provided within it will allow Councillors to make informed decisions as part of the decision-making process regarding the council's budget.

Executive Lead / Head Sign off:

Executive Lead(s)	Cllr Christine Scouler	Executive Head:	Caroline Taylor/Dr Sonja Manton
Date:	6th February 2014	Date:	6th February 2014

Summary from Overall Budget Proposals:

Proposals – Outline	Savings for 2014/15 and 2015/16		Implementation Cost <i>Include brief outline + year incurred</i>	Delivery <i>When will this proposal realise income / savings</i>	Risks / impact of proposals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Potential risks</i> • <i>Impact on community</i> • <i>Knock on impact to other agencies</i> • <i>If statutory service please state relevant legislation section and Act together with any statutory guidance issued.</i> 	Type of decision		
	Income £	Budget reduction £				Internal	Minor	Major
Community Alarms: funding alarms as part of personal budgets.		£96,000 (£48k 14/15 £48k 15/16)	Medium	2014/15 & 2015/16	<p>This does not alter eligibility for a community alarm; however alarms are currently funded from a separate budget over and above the funding of 'community care'. This proposal means that in future alarms will be funded from the personal budgets allocated to each individual.</p> <p>The circumstances and needs of each individual service user will be reassessed as part of a formal review process.</p> <p>A discussion will then take place with each individual to agree how the needs identified could be met. This will include consideration of whether a community alarm would be beneficial or helpful.</p>		X	

Section 1: Purpose of the proposal/strategy/decision

No	Question	Details
1.	<p>Clearly set out the proposal and what is the intended outcome.</p>	<p>The outcome of this proposal is twofold:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that all current clients who are currently in receipt of a social care funded community alarm or TeleCare package: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have an appropriate Fair Access to Care Services [FACS] eligible need b. That the provision of the community alarm or TeleCare package is the most economic and appropriate way to meet that need c. That the cost for the community alarm or TeleCare package is met from the client Resource Allocation System [RAS] allocated budget. The RAS is the method that is used during the assessment process to calculate the personal budget that can be used to support their needs. 2. To ensure that all future clients: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have an appropriate FACS eligible need b. That the provision of the community alarm or TeleCare package is the most economic and appropriate way to meet that need c. That the cost for the community alarm or TeleCare package is met from the client RAS allocated budget <p>In December 2012 a proposal was submitted by Torbay and Southern Devon Health and Social Care Trust and accepted by Torbay Council. The proposal outlined that a Community Alarm would be provided only for a period of 3 months.</p> <p>Following internal consultation of the policy and the process and also after reviewing the current provision of community alarms we would like to clarify and simplify the process. This will remove the previously agreed 3 month free of charge offering as it has not been required and has been a source of confusion.</p> <p>The new proposal will be easier to implement as it follows the standard FACS assessment criteria and ensures that those in most need are still eligible.</p>

2.	Who is intended to benefit / who will be affected?	<p>The key stakeholders affected by this proposal are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Clients who are already in receipt of a funded community alarm or TeleCare package:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Approximately 550 Community Alarm only clientsb. Approximately 225 TeleCare and Community Alarm clients2. Clients who in the future will require the provision of a funded community alarm or TeleCare package:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Approximately 10 Community Alarm only clients per yearb. Approximately 50 TeleCare and Community Alarm clients per year3. Frontline Care Professionals who will need:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. To undertake a review of current funded Community Alarm and TeleCare users and assess that there is a FACS eligible need that is met by the provision of an alarm or TeleCareb. Assist the client in making choices about how they may want to fund the provision of an Alarm or TeleCare as part of their personal budget4. Staff at the Community Alarm Centre that will have to invoke the new process
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Section 2: Equalities, Consultation and Engagement

Torbay Council has a moral obligation as well as a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, promote good relations and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

The **Equalities, Consultation and Engagement** section ensures that, as a council, we take into account the Public Sector Equality Duty at an early stage and provide evidence to ensure that we fully consider the impact of our decisions/proposals on the Torbay community.

Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

No	Question	Details			
3.	Have you considered the available evidence?	<p>Research was undertaken prior to this proposal being submitted to the Council in December 2012 and below is a summary of how other Local Authorities provide community alarms.</p> <p>Should a client decide that they do not want to fund the provision of an Alarm or TeleCare through a personal budget or do not have a FACS eligible need then they will be signposted to other benefits that may allow them to fund the service privately.</p>			
		LA	Policy	Install Cost	Weekly Rental
		Devon County Council	If you are over 65 and need a community alarm because you are at risk, it is very possible that you would qualify for Attendance Allowance. This is a non-means-tested benefit designed for people who need help with daily tasks.	No Published Costs. DCC refer clients to external market	No Published Costs. DCC refer clients to external market
		Bournemouth Borough Council	You can apply for a full financial assessment to see if you are entitled to any benefits that may help towards the cost of the service. Please contact Care Direct for more information.	£ 30.00	£ 2.99
		BANES	There are some discounts available for those receiving means tested benefits.	£ 30.00	£ 3.60

No	Question	Details			
		South Somerset	Installation cost waived if client is on Income support, Pension Credit, Incapacity Benefit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit	£ 31.95	£ 3.65
		Cornwall County Council	No mention of benefits or free provision of Alarms	£ 40.54	£ 3.30
		Bristol City Council	No mention of benefits or free provision of Alarms	£ 25.00	£ 3.46
4.	<p>How will / have you consulted on the proposal?</p>	<p>Following the previous agreed scheme, on-going advice has been sought from the Occupational Therapy /Social Care leads and the Heads of service.</p> <p>We have reviewed the current demands of the service to see how this would impact future clients.</p> <p>The revised proposal will follow the Care Trusts ratification process.</p> <p>Each person that currently has an Alarm or TeleCare will be reviewed as part of an individual assessment so consultation and feedback will be completed during the process and acted upon where required.</p> <p>Due to the nature of this proposal it would not be appropriate to undertake a blanket consultation process as each individual's circumstances and potential outcome will be different.</p> <p>This proposal was however included with the Consultation Questionnaire that was completed by the community. This was available in hard copy and via the Council's Internet site.</p> <p><i>Please see appendix one for results of the consultation.</i></p>			
5.	<p>Outline the key findings</p>	<p>Feedback from the council led consultation highlighted that for certain individuals there may be an issue of affordability whereby the most vulnerable clients may not be able to fund an alarm. The current proposal ensures that clients will receive a Fair Access to Care Assessment (FACS) and an appropriate financial assessment.</p>			

No	Question	Details
6.	What amendments may be required as a result of the consultation?	<p>None.</p> <p>This proposal will ensure that as part of our Social Care provision each individual with an alarm will receive a personal assessment. Where appropriate vulnerable clients will have the opportunity to include the cost of an alarm as part of their allocated budget.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that some clients will have to make a choice on the services that they wish to receive in order to remain within their budget but as part of the current financial climate this is unavoidable.</p>

Positive and Negative Equality Impacts

No	Question	Details		
7.	Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups			
		Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact
	Older or younger people	A proportion of the 770 current users may establish that they are able to claim additional benefits such as Attendance Allowance.	There could be a financial impact on a proportion of the current 770 users who after review may not be deemed to have an eligible need and will be required to fund the service themselves at £2.99 per week	The predominant supply of a Community Alarm is provided to people who are generally over 65
	People with caring responsibilities		Carers could potentially rely on a community alarm in order to allow them to leave the cared for person on their own for short periods of time, allowing the carer respite or the ability to go about routine tasks such as shopping etc. Without this there may be a need to provide alternative and potentially more expensive support packages such as domiciliary care. However this should be mitigated as the client may be FACS eligible and the alarm funded as part of their care package.	
	People with a disability	People who are registered disabled will pay a lower fee for the alarm as they will not be required to pay the VAT	There could be a financial consequence to people with a disability who after an assessment are found not to have an eligible need that requires an Alarm or TeleCare and realistically this would be assessed on case by case basis.	

No	Question	Details	
			<p>It is more than likely that a person with a disability will have a community alarm, however where this is the case and they meet FACS criteria then the cost of the community alarm will be included as part of their care package based upon on their entitlement as calculated by the Resource Allocation System. If their overall package of care exceeds the RAS calculation then the client may need to top up with personal funds.</p>
	Women or men		No differential impact on this group
	People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME)		No differential impact on this group
	Religion or belief (including lack of belief)		No differential impact on this group
	People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual		No differential impact on this group
	People who are transgendered		No differential impact on this group
	People who are in a marriage or civil partnership		No differential impact on this group
	Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave		No differential impact on this group
	Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)		<p>If individuals have to purchase their own alarms, depending on their personal circumstances this may negatively impact upon their financial position.</p>

No	Question	Details	
	Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)		There are no anticipated public health impacts
8a.	Cumulative Impacts – Council wide (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified above)	Inevitably some clients may be affected by more than one of the proposed Council changes. As all clients who are receipt of services are reviewed then any individual substantial client impact will be assessed by the care professional.	
8b.	Cumulative Impacts – Other public services (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified above)	At present we are unaware of any other partner organisation proposals that would adversely affect this proposal	

Section 3: Mitigating action

No	Action	Details
9.	Summarise any negative impacts and how these will be managed?	Each person that currently has an Alarm or TeleCare will be reviewed as part of an individual assessment so any potential negative impact will be considered and addressed on a case by case basis.

Section 4: Monitoring

No	Action	Details
10.	Outline plans to monitor the actual impact of your proposals	<p>If a client decides to fund the Alarm or TeleCare via their personal budget and this is provided by our own Community Alarm service then this will be recorded and monitored via:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recorded in Paris as an outcome from the assessment and included in the clients Care Plan and Care Package2. Recorded in the Community Alarm database as a social care funded provision <p>If a client decides to fund the Alarm or TeleCare via their personal budget and has this provided by an independent Community Alarm service then this will be recorded and monitored via:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recorded in Paris as an outcome from the assessment and included in the clients Care Plan and Care Package. <p>If a client is not eligible for a funded service and decides to fund privately through our own Community Alarm service then this will be recorded and monitored via:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recorded in Paris as an outcome from the assessment.2. Recorded in the Community Alarm database as a private funded provision <p>If a client is not eligible for a funded service and decides to fund privately through independent Community Alarm service then this will be recorded and monitored via:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recorded in Paris as an outcome from the assessment.

Section 5: Recommended course of action –

No	Action	Outcome	Tick ✓	Reasons/justification for recommended action
11.	State a recommended course of action	Outcome 1: No major change required - EIA has not identified any potential for adverse impact in relation to equalities and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken		<p>The reasons for recommending this option is due the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In most cases a community alarm has been provided to meet an identified need. 2. This proposal is bringing the provision of the alarm in line with a clients assessed and agreed personal budget 3. Therefore this proposal will still allow the provision of a funded community alarm as part of an overall care package. This is over and above what is provided by neighbouring local authorities. 4. A Community Alarm or TeleCare will be provided either as a funded service : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If they meet FACS criteria then the cost of the alarm can be funded via their personal budget as part of their overall care package within their RAS allowance 5. If A Community Alarm or TeleCare cannot be funded through Social Care then the service can be contracted by the client through a number of different providers in the following ways: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If they are eligible for additional benefits such as Attendance Allowance they may decide to use some of this benefit to fund their alarm b. If they do not meet any FACS criteria then they can fund an alarm themselves from any provider as there is an established market to choose from

				<p>6. If a client has high needs then it is more than likely that they will have TeleCare as part of a community alarm and hence this will be provided as part of their package of care under their FACS entitlement.</p> <p>The standard process for dealing with exceptional circumstances (escalation to professional leads and general managers) will be used to ensure that the most vulnerable clients are not disadvantaged.</p>
		<p>Outcome 2: Adjustments to remove barriers – <i>Action to remove the barriers identified in relation to equalities have been taken or actions identified to better promote equality</i></p>		
		<p>Outcome 3: Continue with proposal - <i>Despite having identified some <u>potential</u> for adverse impact / missed opportunities in relation to equalities or to promote equality. Full justification required, especially in relation to equalities, in line with the duty to have 'due regard'.</i></p>		
		<p>Outcome 4: Stop and rethink – <i>EIA has identified actual or potential unlawful discrimination in relation to equalities or adverse impact has been identified</i></p>		

Appendix One:

Community Alarms: Funding alarms as part of personal budgets

This proposal does not alter eligibility for a community alarm. This proposal means that in future alarms will be funded from the personal budgets allocated to each individual. The circumstances and needs of each individual service user will be reassessed as part of a formal review process. A discussion will then take place with each individual to agree how the needs identified could be met. This will include consideration of whether a community alarm would be beneficial or helpful. This is expected to save £96,000 over two years.

Do you support this proposal?	Number	Percent
Yes	310	75.8
No	73	17.8
No response	26	6.4
Total	409	100.0

57 respondents made comments related to the proposal. These have been summarised into themes below:

Category	Examples of comments – where respondents said ‘No’ above
Affordability	<p><i>“Realistically people who need alarms may not be able to afford them.”</i></p> <p><i>“Surely the people who need this service are the most vulnerable & may not be able to afford this.”</i></p> <p><i>“Older people will choose between an alarm and eating/heating...”</i></p> <p><i>“But consideration as to the ability of the person to pay should be given.”</i></p>
Will impact on vulnerable people	<p><i>“More pressure on older vulnerable people just when they need support”</i></p> <p><i>“Many who have alarms are vulnerable people and many have limited financial resources.”</i></p> <p><i>“The council has a duty of care as responsibility to and for all vulnerable people.”</i></p> <p><i>“We have a high proportion of vulnerable people living on their own for whom a community alarm would be a life saver.”</i></p>
Cost of implementation	<p><i>“...Suspect greater cost to administer proposal than assumed.”</i></p> <p><i>“..This is a preventative service...if help is timely, further falls, deterioration of mental health etc are prevented saving far more than the cost of the service.”</i></p>

Category	Examples of comments – where respondents said ‘No’ above
	<i>"If individuals had to pay for alarms out of their own budgets they would be less likely to have one putting themselves at risk of. Hospital admission and increasing the pressure on A&E services."</i>
Other	<i>"I have an alarm but no personal budget, I would feel insecure without it..."</i>