

Meeting of:	Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, 07 November 2023
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Healthy Living and Social Care
Report Title:	Telecare Services Update
Purpose of Report:	To update Members on the work of the Telecare Service over the last 12 months and advise members on Service Developments following the Telecare Service Review
Report Owner:	Director of Social Services
Responsible Officer:	Operational Manager – Locality Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Head of Adult Services / Vale Alliance; Service Development Manager.
Policy Framework:	This report is consistent with the Policy Framework and Budget
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare continues to be an integral element of the Care and Support services available to people across the Vale of Glamorgan. It enables people to live independently at home for as long as possible by offering reassurance and support to family carers. Telecare provides valuable information regarding the health and wellbeing of citizens to professionals and family; and provides responsive access to emergency support when needed. • The Telecare Service has started and is still undergoing a large-scale transformation programme to improve its base technology and prepare the service for the 2025 Telecommunications switchover from analogue to Digital signalling. • In the past 12 months the following significant changes have been made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The old analogue Telecare computer databased use to receive alarm calls, known as the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) has been replaced, with a fully digital version. ○ A 24/7 emergency falls response service with St John Ambulance has been introduced for all telecare customers. ○ A programme to replace the analogue devices in customer homes with digital units has commenced with 41% of all old analogue devices being replaced to date. ○ The services offered to citizens have been revised into four products which are easier to understand. ○ The service has been rebranded from TeleV to Vale Telecare which is more fitting to its vision, mission and purpose. 	

Further service improvements are planned.

Recommendations

1. That Scrutiny Committee consider the work and future developments of the Telecare service.
2. That Scrutiny Committee receives annual updates on the work of the Telecare Service.
3. That Scrutiny Committee considers the changes and advances that are planned for the service and provides any comments to officers to inform future developments.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To appraise Members on the challenges, opportunities and strategic direction of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Telecare Service.
2. To keep Members apprised of the work of the Telecare Service and associated developments.
3. To ensure that Scrutiny members have the opportunity to review and inform the planned developments for the service.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Telecare Service supports citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan to live independently in their homes through the provision of an accessible alarm system that alerts carers/professionals in times of need. The Telecare Support Team is responsible for the promotion and development of the service and the installation and maintenance of the Telecare equipment. Once installed, all telecare alerts are responded to by the Contact One Vale Telecare Operators 24 hrs per day, 365 days per year.
- 1.2 Telecare makes use of a digital base unit connected with two mobile SIM cards, which link a personal pendant and a range of environmental sensors to the 24/7 monitoring centre at Contact One Vale.
- 1.3 The Telecare Service is now offered through four product packages:
 - 1.3.1 Vale Telecare Essential: The ESSENTIAL package gives customers peace of mind with the benefit of a falls response 24 hours a day, across 365 days a year. The product contains: Digital base unit and pendant; an additional pendant on request; wrist strap; Lanyard; 24/7 monitoring; No fixed contract; no equipment fee; and St John Ambulance Fall Response. This costs £5.40 per week excluding VAT.
 - 1.3.2 Vale Telecare Bronze: The BRONZE package consists of the essential package with a choice of two additional sensors from a selection. This costs £6.10 per week excluding VAT.
 - 1.3.3 Vale Telecare Silver: The SILVER package consists of the essential package with a choice of four additional sensors from a selection. This costs £7.20 per week excluding VAT.

- 1.3.4 Vale Telecare Gold: The GOLD package consists of the essential package plus an individualised plan consisting of additional suite of sensors (5 or more) and associated equipment to meet the individual needs. This costs £7.80 per week excluding VAT.
- 1.3.5 In addition, the Vale Telecare Community Alarm is available to tenants in designated council housing where hard wired alarms are provided and paid for through rent payments.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

2.1 Telecare Service Review Recommendations

2.1.1 Following the review as given in the last update report, the following has been completed:

- Procurement and implementation of a digital Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC).
- Evaluation of emerging digital Telecare devices to support people to live safely with reduced restrictions and greater reassurances. A new digital device is now procured for our standard offer.
- Implementation of a Rapid Response Falls Service for all customers.
- Review and development of the Telecare management and support structures to ensure sufficient governance and support of Telecare Support Officers and Telecare Operators.

2.1.2 **Alarm Receiving Centre:** Adult Services implemented its new digital alarm receiving centre called UMO (trade mark) from a leading Telecare provider called Enovation UK on 1st August 2022. It is worth noting that the Vale of Glamorgan Telecare Team is the first service in Wales to move to a full digital platform supported by the national Telecare body Telecare Enabled Care (TEC) Cymru. This change prepares the service for the national digital telephony change and allows for a wider range of devices to be connected, including the potential for integrating health monitoring devices, often known as “telehealth”.

2.1.3 **Rapid Response Falls Service:** Using Regional Integration Fund (RIF) funding in October 2022 the Vale Telecare Service entered into an agreement with St John Ambulance to provide a falls response service across the Vale of Glamorgan. From its inception this has been a phenomenally successful service leading to an increase in customer numbers but also a high avoidance of customer admissions to hospital following a fall.

The current estimate of ‘avoided’ costs, using TEC Cymru calculations to the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust and to the NHS of the service to the end of August was £662,744. This saving takes into account the reduction in ambulance transfers and hospital stays that is predicted to have occurred in the absence of the falls service.

We are also now working on an electronic mobile application that will enable St John Ambulance to report fall data direct to Health for follow-up activity. This is

currently done through manual means; however, automation will improve speed of data transfer and more accurate reporting.

- 2.1.4 **Management and Support Structures:** As part of the review of the telecare structure and the implementation of a new telecare system, it was decided to invest in the addition of a System and Stock Officer. This additional officer acts as an interface between C1V Telecare Operators and Telecare Support Officers on both the new alarm receiving centre platform and new devices that are being purchased.

The role has had a beneficial impact on the process of bringing on board new customers, improving system data following the platform's upgrade, and the role is now being expanded to look at new and innovative technology offers that can be made to citizens.

- 2.1.5 **Stock control:** the implementation of the UMO alarm receiving centre is allowing the service to track stock by uploading it to the new platform and allow stock rationalisation on-line. The most recent stocktake has led to the identification of several items that were obsolete or had reached their end of life.

A new annual approach to stocktake was trialled in April 2023, that identified not only the asset value of stock within the service but also that in-situ with customers. This process used a depreciation approach to give an improved value of telecare assets reported to finance and audit departments.

Further improvements in this process will be used in April 2024, where it is expected that the analogue replacement programme will result in higher stock values across the service.

- 2.1.6 **Website, product and charging structure:** A project has commenced to look at the creation of a distinct Vale Telecare website linked to the council's website. This is due partly to the rebranding of TeleV and TeleV+ to Vale Telecare. However, it is also intended that the website site will have an electronic application form, allowing citizens and internal staff to apply for a telecare package on-line. It is hoped that this will allow an integration with C1V to automate and reduce manual paperwork within the application workflow.

- 2.2 **Closing Hard-Wired Schemes:** A number of Vale housing schemes have Telecare hard wired into the buildings. Vale Telecare has begun the process of replacing hard wired devices in housing schemes with new digital devices. This process will provide a person-centred approach, where each resident will be able to make an informed decision regarding their personal needs. However, there are five major sheltered schemes which require further work to develop a solution to their aging technology and the impending telecommunications digital switchover.

- 2.3 **Two-year Team Plan:** Following the successful changes over the past 12 months, a team plan has been developed that will build upon current success and enable continuous improvement of the service. The plan includes twelve projects as follows:

- **Process Manual:** To develop a set of Standard and Emergency Operating Processes across telecare and C1V telecare operations. By developing these processes consistency and quality will be built into the telecare system.
- **Marketing Campaign:** To continue to invest in telecare, a customer base of approximately five thousand customers is required, compared to our current level of two thousand three hundred and eighty. Telecare currently invests little in advertising and marketing. Over the next two years it should invest in local advertising and reaching out to social care and health to highlight the advantages of the service to citizens to increase customer numbers.
- **Base Cost Model:** Telecare must ensure a tight grip on costs. New devices are more expensive than previous analogue versions. Therefore, the service must continually review its cost model with finance to ensure sustainability and cost effectiveness.
- **Hard Wired Schemes Replacement:** The five major schemes that will be left once distributed installations have been dealt with will require a technology and property review to determine replacement activity and costs.
- **Telecare Services Association (TSA) Accreditation:** The TSA is a national advisory body for Telecare that offers a Quality Standards Framework for Telecare services. At the present time, the current telecare service is not TSA accredited. The new platform and service changes offer an ideal opportunity to assess accreditation needs and begin the process.
- **On-line Application Forms.** The team is working with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Business Improvement Team to create an online application form to enable on-line applications alongside existing methods to improve service accessibility.
- **Innovative Device and Proactive Care Trials:** The new UMO Alarm Receiving Centre offers the ability to use a wide range of technology. The need exists to set up trials of devices and set up new products outside of Telecare Essential, Bronze, Silver, and Gold packages.
- **Health Based Products Pricing Model.** New pricing models will be required outside of the current four products. Work is required to develop cost models to price new products.
- **Improving Current Telecare Products:** The new UMO Alarm Receiving Centre and new digital devices offer several opportunities to increase what telecare is able to offer. Discoveries around both need to be explored to add to the current product offer with minimal investment.
- **Workforce Planning:** A workforce plan is required with the opportunity to take on a telecare apprentice given retirement of a staff member in the next two years.
- **Partnership Improvement:** Telecare now has several key partners. We intend to collaborate with them to continuously improve the service.
- **Data Use and Performance Management:** Working with TEC Cymru, a telecare dashboard has been created that gives information about all aspects

of the service. Telecare will develop a data strategy and approach to use data driven insights for service improvements.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

3.1 Long Term

3.1.1 The Council's commitment to developing the Telecare service represents a focus on the long-term wellbeing of individuals using the service and the sustainability of social care by reducing or delaying demand on care and support services.

3.2 Integration

3.2.1 The Telecare service supports an Active and Healthy Vale by providing safeguards and early warnings to enable people to live independently. The service operates from the Contact Centre which provides not only social care but access to a range of community health services.

3.3 Collaboration

3.3.1 The Telecare service is a collaboration between social services, the Council's contact centre and the UHB through the provision of telecare products.

3.3.2 Telecare has three key partners; Vale of Glamorgan County Council, Enovation UK Ltd, and St John Ambulance.

3.4 Prevention

3.4.1 Telecare is known to support people to live independently and give confidence to carers so they can take a break. This helps to maintain people's caring relationships which in turn has a positive impact on the wellbeing of the carer and the person being cared for.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

4.1 Any obsolete stock is disposed of sensitively and recycled where possible.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

5.1 The Telecare service continues to perform within budget and develop a reserve fund for future equipment maintenance and costs. Any service developments to improve the service and increase the number of Telecare users must remain within budget.

5.2 The Rapid Response Falls Service was externally funded by RIF in 202/23. The Telecare Service will seek further grant funding to sustain the 24hour service but aims to become self-sustaining by attracting new customers.

5.2.1 The additional costs associated with the digital switchover will need to be met from within the Telecare revenue budget and the Telecare reserve fund.

Employment

5.3 There are no employment implications as a direct result of this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

5.4 There are no legal implications as a direct result of this report.

6. Background Papers

Report to Healthy Living & Social Care Scrutiny Committee – 8th November 2022; 8th June 2021; 14th January 2020.