

Meeting of:	Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, 05 November 2024
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
Report Owner:	Director of Social Servies
Responsible Officer:	Operational Manager – Locality Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Head of Adult Services
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. Telecare enables people to live independently at home for as long as possible by offering reassurance and support to family carers; by providing valuable information relating to the health and wellbeing of citizens to professionals and family; and by providing early/timely access to emergency support. • The Telecare Service continues to roll out a large-scale transformation programme to improve its base technology and prepare the service for the 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 long-standing Telecare Team leader retired leaving a vacant position. - A new Telecare Team Manager position has been created and recruited to. The new manager will start on 1st November 2024. - A mini review of the Team Leader position is taking place in light of the new Team Manager appointment and the emerging demands of the service to inform future recruitment of this critical role. - The re-brand and restructured charging framework has been embedded (attached as Appendix). 	

- A further programme of change is planned that will improve the service further to include increasing the range and scope of Vale Telecare to consider opportunities across housing tenure, telehealth and geographical boundaries.

Recommendations

1. That the Scrutiny Committee consider the work and future developments of the Telecare service.
2. That the Scrutiny Committee endorses the developments to the Telecare service described in this report.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To appraise Committee Members on the challenges, opportunities, and strategic direction of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Telecare service.
2. To ensure Committee Members have the opportunity to consider and comment on the direction and actions being taken to develop 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 as well as the installation and maintenance of the Telecare equipment. Once installed, all telecare alerts are responded to by the Contact One Vale Telecare Operators 24hrs per day, 365 days per year.
- 1.2 Telecare makes use of a digital base unit connected via dual-sim technology, which can link to a personal pendant and a range of environmental sensors; these link to the 24/7 monitoring centre at Contact One Vale.
- 1.3 The four Telecare product offerings of ESSENTIAL, BRONZE, SILVER and GOLD have been in place for over a year. While they offer a clear range of services, the Bronze and Silver options are attracting only a small number of customers. As a result they will be reviewed over the next 12 months with a view to combining them into one product.
 - 1.3.1 Vale Telecare Essential: The ESSENTIAL package gives customers peace of mind with the benefit of fall 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. **Currently there are 1674 customers.**
 - 1.3.2 Vale Telecare Bronze: The BRONZE package contains: Digital base unit and pendant; an additional pendant on request; wrist strap; Lanyard; 24/7 monitoring; No fixed contract; no equipment fee; St John Ambulance Fall Response, A choice of two additional sensors from a selection. This costs £6.10 per week excluding VAT. **Currently there are 22 customers.**
 - 1.3.3 Vale Telecare Silver: The SILVER package contains: Digital base unit and pendant; an additional pendant on request; wrist strap; Lanyard; 24/7 monitoring; No

fixed contract; no equipment fee; St John Ambulance Fall Response, and an additional four sensors or a mobile alarm device and two sensors. This costs £7.20 per week excluding VAT. **Currently there is 1 customer.**

- 1.3.4 Vale Telecare Gold: The GOLD package contains: Digital base unit and pendant; an additional pendant on request; wrist strap; Lanyard; 24/7 monitoring; No fixed contract; no equipment fee, St John Ambulance Fall Response and an additional suite of sensors and equipment to meet individual need. This costs £8.32 per week excluding VAT. **Currently there are 136 customers (131 are subject to a Care & Support Plan).**
- 1.3.5 In addition, a further category exists called the Vale Telecare Community Alarm within the council's sheltered housing schemes, where hard wired alarms are provided and paid for through rent payments and depending on devices are categorised as Essential, Bronze, Silver, and Gold to maintain the product and pricing structure. **Currently there are 320 customers with an additional 206 pendants for cohabiting residents and communal areas and toilets making 526 in total.**
- 1.3.6 There is a significant turnover of Telecare customers each year. For example, during the last 12 months the service gained 542 customers but lost 407 customers leading to an increase in overall customer base of 135. This is largely due to people moving onto other forms of care and support, but may also be down to the cost of living challenges forcing people into difficult financial decisions. We will use the next 12 months to survey leavers to better understand the reasons people leave so that we can make informed decisions about any potential new product packages.
- 1.3.7 With this in mind, Vale Telecare will amend the ESSENTIAL package to consisting of an alarm unit and pendent, giving access to the 24-hour call monitoring, with no additional sensors or access to the Falls Response Service, at a cost of £4.00 per week, rebrand the old Essential package as Bronze at £5.40 and merge the current Bronze and Silver to create Silver package at £7.20 and retain the Gold package.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

2.1 Telecare Service Review Recommendations

- 2.1.1 Following the Telecare Service Review, the following has been completed:
- Procured and implemented a digital Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC).
 - Explored and evaluated emerging digital Technology Enabled Care devices to support people to live safely with reduced restrictions and greater reassurances. A new digital alarm unit is now procured for all new customers.
 - Implemented a Rapid Response Falls Service for all customers.
 - Reviewed and developed the Telecare management and support structures to ensure sufficient governance and support of Telecare Support Officers and

Telecare Operators, including the introduction of a new System and Stock Officer to oversee the new Alarm Receiving Centre digital platform.

- Reviewed and developed Telecare processes to ensure streamlined stock control to improve stock transparency, minimise waste and delay in installations.
- Reviewed and modernised product structure and charging models.
- Closed all hard-wired schemes, (except the local authority sheltered accommodation) schemes and moved to distributed Telecare taking advantage of current and emerging technology.

2.2 The following items from the review are still being pursued:

- Review and modernise the service website and create an on-line application process.

2.3 Telecare Service Review Progress

- **Alarm Receiving Centre:** Adult Services implemented its new digital alarm receiving centre called UMO from Enovation UK Ltd on 1st August 2022.

This has allowed a greater range of digital sensors to be made available in people's homes and has enabled the team to site the devices around the home to enable improved communication with the call centre.

- **Rapid Response Falls Service:** The team continue to contract with St Johns Ambulance to provide a 24/7 Falls Response Service. In the 12 months leading up to end August 2024, the service responded to 1246 falls at home, transferring 140 people to hospital, with an average call response time of 27 minutes, 38 seconds. This equates to 11.2% of fallers being taken into hospital.

The current estimate of 'avoided' costs to the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust and to the NHS of the service in the 12 months to the end of August 2024 was in the region of £750,000. This is a cost estimated from having no ambulance transfers or hospital stays necessitated by 'long lies' of fallers.

- **Management and support Structures:** The team has benefitted from an investment of a new Telecare Team Manager position with a clear priority to increase customer numbers by renewed promotion of the service, streamlined access and payment options alongside an increased range of services including telehealth and exploration of commercial customers such as housing associations and other local authorities. The new manager will be in place from 1st November 2024.
- **Website, product and charging structure:** The new product offering of ESSENTIAL, BRONZE, SILVER, and GOLD has seen limited success during the last 12 months, leading to an increase of only 135 customers, 98% of whom chose the ESSENTIAL package. As the more expensive options have remained unpopular, we will introduce a more affordable option and realign the ESSENTIAL, BRONZE, SILVER and GOLD packages as described in paragraph 1.3.7.

- **Care and Support GOLD packages:** Vale Telecare currently supports 131 customers with a GOLD package included as part of their Care & Support Plan and taken into account as part of their community care charge up to the care at home cap of £100 per week. Essentially this means that the council funds these GOLD packages as the cost of a domiciliary care package of over 3 hours per week will cost more than the £100 cap. This currently costs the council $131 \times £7.80 \times 52 = £53,133$ per year. It is proposed that all GOLD customers are charged a flat fee for telecare, which will provide an additional funding stream for the service. To ensure that no customer is left disadvantaged by this proposal, a Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 review will be undertaken to consider this transition.
- **Closing Hard-Wired Schemes:** Vale Telecare has concluded 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 telecare needs.

However, the five Vale sheltered housing schemes require further work with Vale Housing to develop a solution to their aging technology and the impending telecommunications digital switchover.

2.4 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. This work was stalled during 2024 due to the absence of the Telecare Team Leader but will be given high priority over the next 12 months.
- **Improved website:** The rebranding of telecare offers the opportunity to promote the service in the Vale. Through the improvement of the Telecare webpages and on-line application form the Vale aims to increase customer recognition and improve customer conversion rates from applications. The website development is listed as a priority with Vale Digital Services.
- **On-line Application:** An on-line application form has been developed by Vale Digital Services offering a 12-month up-front payment scheme. This is currently being tested and is due to be launched in November 2024.
- **Marketing Campaign:** The Team is working with the council's business improvement team to develop a Vale Telecare marketing campaign to follow the implementation of the on-line application form and updated webpage. The team is aware that it must also invest in local advertising and local social media to highlight the advantages of the service to citizens to increase customer numbers.
- **Staff Capability:** As stated above, the new UMO digital alarm receiving centre (ARC) can link with a wide range of sensors and personal health and

wellbeing monitoring equipment that require additional knowledge and skills. The Telecare Support Officers undertake specific training on the use of the ARC and new devices and sensors and are currently testing a new product that monitors an individual's wellbeing at home by monitoring movement across a 24-hour period, enabling health and social care professionals to develop greater insight into an individual's level of activity, leading to more informed care decisions.

- **Call Handling Staff Capability:** The new digital alarm receiving platform and devices require additional staff capability and skills improvement. This requires a review of staff training needs and the development of a new training programme for operators. This work has already started, with the roll out of safeguarding training for all Operators, to ensure a consistent approach to potential adults at risk using the service.
- **TEC Services Association (TSA) Accreditation:** 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 began the process.
- **Health Based Products Pricing Model:** As discoveries take place into new and novel technologies, new pricing models will be required outside of the current four products. We will explore opportunities with health partners, who will ultimately be the customers for telehealth products and be responsible for analysing and responding to the monitoring data.
- **Improved Citizen Assessment Process:** Once a telecare microsite and on-line application form are developed, Telecare should develop an on-line self-assessment process to link customers with the service that better matches their needs.
- **Workforce Planning:** A workforce plan highlighted the need to take on a telecare apprentice given retirement of a staff member in the next two years. The Telecare QuickStart Apprentice was appointed in September 2024, with a view to offering young person the opportunity to learn the skills for work or even become a Telecare Support Officer.
- **Partnership Improvement:** Telecare now has several key partners. We have developed our inter-departmental partnership with Vale Digital Services in the creation of the on-line application process.
- **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 continue to develop the dashboard and use the data to gain insights for service improvements, particularly as the customer base grows.

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 provider partners in Enovation UK Ltd, Chiptech International 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 for which in turn has a positive impact on the wellbeing of the carer and the person being cared.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

4.1 There are no Climate Change and Nature Implications as a direct result of this report.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

5.1 In preparation for the Telecommunications switchover, the team has invested in digital SIM based alarm units for new customers and is running a programme to replace old analogue units for new digital units. This has impacted on the team's ability to grow its reserves. In 2022/23 the team transferred £180,923 to reserves, whereas in 2023/24 the team took £30,419 from reserves. This was as a result of the Falls Service costs over and above RIF funding, plus additional equipment purchases. Any service developments to improve the service and increase the number of Telecare users must remain within budget. We are currently projecting a further withdrawal of £104,000 from Telecare reserves this financial year, due to continued equipment investment.

5.2 The Rapid Response Falls Service is currently part externally funded by the Regional Integration Fund of £114,000, with £135,000 funded through customer

fees. Based on the Essential Telecare rate of £5.40 pw, the service would become self-financing with an additional 1500 customers, taking into account the cost of the Falls Service, the additional Telecare in-home alarm units required and staff resource to service the increase in 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

Reports to Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee: 7th November 2023; 8th November 2022; 8th June 2021; 14th January 2020.

SILVER

The **SILVER** package gives you and the people around you peace of mind with the benefit of fall response 24/7/365. But now includes the option of a mobile tracking device or additional sensors for greater safety.

- Digital base unit;
- Digital pendant;
- Additional pendant on request;
- Wrist strap;
- Lanyard;
- 24/7 monitoring;
- No fixed contract;
- No equipment fee;
(*T&Cs apply)
- Fall Response;
- A choice of four additional sensors from a selection or two sensors from a selection and a mobile alarm device.

GOLD

The **GOLD** package gives you and the people around you peace of mind with the benefit of fall response 24/7/365. As well as extensive safety and health options that provide our fullest cover for peace of mind and security in the home.

- Digital base unit;
- Digital pendant;
- Additional pendant on request;
- Wrist strap;
- Lanyard;
- 24/7 monitoring;
- No fixed contract;
- No equipment fee;
(*T&Cs apply)
- Fall Response;
- Additional sensors from a selection that meet individual need (no limit on number).

VAT

If the person using the equipment/service has any long-term medical conditions or any disability you pay zero VAT for our service.

Terms & Conditions

*No equipment fee for Monthly Lease Plan. Pending equipment is returned to us, we'll stop your charges and refund any monies owing.

If you have an **Assessment** by health and social care professionals, you may be able to access the GOLD service by meeting critical or substantial eligibility criteria. **Depending on circumstances clients may have to contribute towards the cost of the service.**

For more information about Telecare and the different packages please contact the Team via C1V (using the details at the end of this leaflet).

What do I do next?

For more information about Telecare services, or to request an Information and Application Pack, call Contact OneVale (C1V) on 01446 700111.

More specialised information requests are referred on by C1V to the Vale Council's Telecare Support Officer, who is also able to visit individuals in their homes to discuss the best Telecare solution for them

Contact
Holwch

VALE of GLAMORGAN
BRO MORGANNWG

OneVale
UnFro

01446 700111
www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

If you require this leaflet in an alternative language or format, please contact the Innovation and Information Team on **01446 704851**

Leaflet reference: SS/72/APR23



Telecare in the Vale of Glamorgan



PACKAGE OPTIONS

www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

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What is Telecare?

'Telecare' refers to a range of services and devices which use technology to enable vulnerable people to live with greater independence and safety in their own homes. Telecare may be the only service an individual receives, or may complement other services as part of a care package.

Telecare devices may be linked to the 24-hour a day, 365-days a year monitoring centre at Contact OneVale (CIV) in Barry, where trained operators are quickly alerted to an accident or emergency and take appropriate action – whether by contacting our falls response service, by contacting emergency services, contacting a nominated carer or relative (a "key responder"), or simply by providing assistance and reassurance.

Alternatively, bespoke Telecare services may be directly linked to an on-site personal-carer via a pager, or may be 'stand alone' (eg an automatic reminder to take medication).

Benefits of Telecare

- a friendly and dignified service;
- simple to use equipment;
- provides peace of mind for the individual and their relatives/friends;
- eases the pressure of family or carer commitment and time;
- reduces the level of support required to remain living at home;
- provides a range of packages to suit individual needs and circumstances;
- where appropriate, ensures that help is available at the touch of a button, 24-hours a day, 365-days a year, with instant access for falls response or emergency services personnel (where a key safe is fitted, or a key-holder is available);
- where appropriate, reports incidents to ensure a comprehensive health and social care service is provided (eg to the client's GP).

Who can benefit from Telecare?

Telecare is available to any member of the community, of any age, who would like to feel safer or more secure in their own home. This may include:

- individuals with disabilities;
- individuals living with serious or chronic illnesses;
- individuals leaving hospital following major or minor surgery or illness;
- individuals who feel vulnerable or insecure;
- individuals at risk of domestic violence.

Telecare in the Vale of Glamorgan

There are four packages for Telecare in the Vale. These are as follows:

ESSENTIAL

The **ESSENTIAL** package gives you and the people around you peace of mind with the benefit of fall response 24/7/365.

- Digital base unit;
- Digital pendant;
- Additional pendant on request;
- Wrist strap;
- Lanyard;
- 24/7 monitoring;
- No fixed contract;
- No equipment fee;
*(*T&Cs apply)*
- Fall Response.

BRONZE

The **BRONZE** package gives you and the people around you peace of mind with the benefit of fall response 24/7/365. With the addition of two additional sensors for added peace of mind.

- Digital base unit;
- Digital pendant;
- Additional pendant on request;
- Wrist strap;
- Lanyard;
- 24/7 monitoring;
- No fixed contract;
- No equipment fee;
*(*T&Cs apply)*
- Fall Response;
- A choice of two additional sensors from a selection.