REVIEW BY THE FAMILIES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING SELECT COMMITTEE: Exploring our offer of Assisted Living Technologies for our residents

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Jane Palmer

Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care

Officer Contact(s)	Anisha Teji, Democratic Services

Papers with report	Final review report

HEADLINES

Summary	To receive the final report detailing the review by the Families Health and Wellbeing Select Committee in 2022, which looked at the Council's offering of Assisted Living Technologies (ALT). The review makes some recommendations for Cabinet to consider.

Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of: Our People. It also supports the Council's digital connectivity strategy.

Financial Cost	There may be additional financial costs arising from the recommendations, therefore, any service changes arising from these that are to be taken forward will need to be fully costed, funded from within approved budgets and considered further by Cabinet Members as part of the budget planning process

Relevant Select Committee	Families, Health and Wellbeing Select Committee

Relevant Ward(s)	All

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet welcomes the Committee's review into the Council's offer of Assisted Living Technologies, notes the recommendations in their attached report and agrees that their implementation be considered further, and taken forward as appropriate, by the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care, in conjunction with officers.

Reasons for recommendation

To consider the report of the Families, Health and Wellbeing Select Committee's review into exploring the Council's current offering of Assisted Living Technologies.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet could decide to reject some or all of the Committee's recommendations or pursue alternative routes in which to progress the objectives of the review.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

At the Families, Health and Social Care Select Committee's meeting on 3 June, it was unanimously agreed to undertake a review into exploring the Council's offering of Assisted Living Technology and how this could be improved.

ALT is used as an important facet in helping people to maintain independence and improve social care and health outcomes. It is utilised to promote independent living and support people in need of care to live longer at home, in homely environments and in their communities. The types of ALT products available on the market varies and is developing every day to meet the changing needs to users. Products range from aid memoirs and gadgets to pendants to personal alarms. The review explored in detail how residents interact with these products and how services can be improved generally.

Terms of Reference for the review

The following Terms of Reference were agreed for the review:

1. To understand the Council's current offer with regard to Assisted Living Technologies;
2. To understand the demand and take up of services and explore the limitations residents encounter in accessing Assisted Living Technologies;
3. To explore the national setting and best practice around the implementation of ALT within local authorities and amongst the care sector;
4. To assess the ALT work that is currently taking place across Adult Social Care and to explore possible areas for improvement and future development by both inhouse and external care providers;
5. To review how the current Telecare Line service works from end to end and suggest ways by which the installation and repairs process could be streamlined;
6. To explore any lessons that may have been learnt in relation to ALT following the Covid-19 pandemic;
7. To influence or propose any emerging Council plans, guidance or policies with respect to the use of ALT;
8. Subject to the Committee's findings, to make any conclusions, propose actions, service and policy recommendations to the decision-making Cabinet.

Information gathering and witness sessions

The Committee noted the positive work undertaken by the Council on its ALT offer to residents over the years. Through a range of information gathering sessions, Members sought to explore this offer in more detail, seeking out the views of a variety of stakeholders and users and to investigate how it could be enhanced further to benefit users.

The Committee undertook a site visit to Park View Court, met with representatives of relevant voluntary sector groups, took part in a virtual reality head-set session and importantly, commissioned a survey to service users, their families and service providers. Through this, and other case studies, Members were able to gain a deep understanding into the experiences of people that relied on ALT, including those with learning disabilities, people with dementia and children and young people. By seeing the latest product demonstrations, the Committee were also able to review how ALT could be taken forward in the future and be adaptive to digital technologies.

The Committee concluded their review and the final report, supported by reasonable and practical recommendations, at their meeting on 2 February 2022 for submission to Cabinet. The Committee's recommendations are based around two themes: *Tailoring to residents' changing needs* and *Looking to the Future*. Notably, the Committee put forwards the principle that ALT should be considered as a wider preventative measure in order to improve resident outcomes and independent lives, whilst also being truly transformative in the delivery of services.

Cabinet Member and Officer Comments on how the recommendations will be considered and implemented

The Committee's report will support the Council in further developing opportunities for the introduction of Assisted Living Technologies as part of service development, the wider digitalisation agenda and work with external partners such as the Hillingdon Health & Care Partnership.

Turning to the specific recommendations from the Committee, the Cabinet Member and Officers note these, will consider them further and how they can be best implemented going forward. Initial consideration of this by officers are set out in the Table below as examples / information only.

Select Committee Recommendation	What the recommendation could entail	How these could be implemented
That, in developing and reviewing social care packages for individual residents, requests that officers implement a checklist in 2022 that takes into account both the current ALT offer but also allows for future refinements should the need arise and as technology develops.	• Developing an updated triage document for use by Hillingdon Social Care Direct regarding the residents needs for technology. • All residents presenting for social care or generalised support if they have a disability or age-related support requirements to be advised of the availability of telecare at the first point of contact. • Training to refresh the knowledge and skills of the workforce to be completed. • A regular overview and audit of both the triage and uptake of the service to be completed, with performance and outcomes data to be monitored, demand and tend analysis to take place quarterly to plan for availability of new equipment and technology and how best this can be launched and implemented as a standard item.	• The Community Development Manager will arrange an initial meeting with the Social Care Direct & Social Care staff to develop an updated triage and needs checklist regarding the use or need for telecare. • All social workers in both Adults and Children's social care to attend an information and awareness session on the promotion and use of updated technology and how this will promote independence and manage demand. • The Community Development Manager will develop a business case for the procurement of new equipment following specific research into the needs of Hillingdon residents and the outcomes of Q1 & Q2 data collection on current use and future requirements.
Agrees that officers develop a narrative to support communications to tackle misconceptions about Assisted Living Technology and engender confidence in its usage on the part of service users and families; and that also identifies how barriers and costs to the take up to Assisted Living Technology may be managed.	• Develop a programme of external engagement with residents regarding the use of assistive technology, consider forming a user group or attending existing forums to engage residents to consider new and open market technology that they may wish to use. • Improve the Council's core offer and information on the website, where and how to access and explore developing self-help access for minor equipment, including the setting up of payments for services etc. • Produce clear programme of engagement with all social care providers in Hillingdon to ensure that they fully understand the refreshed offer, that every resident who has the reablement service must be triaged and offered telecare as a starting point of managing their future needs and that providers should report on usage and demand through their contract monitoring of service user care. • Use results from survey as a starting point.	• Set up internal working groups to assess understanding and provide clear and simple guidance and training. • Work with internal comms team to develop a comms plan to get the message out across the council. • Use available resources such as the Tunstall Digital Resources pack which is designed to help the Council communicate what the digital transition will mean for service users, example press releases, letter templates & FAQ flyers and film. • Other resources include Skills for Care and the West London Alliance. This will ensure officers can link into the wider Digitisation Working Group and not just Social Care and give out the same message across all services.

Select Committee Recommendation	What the recommendation could entail	How these could be implemented
Welcomes the feedback received as part of the Committee's review, and recommends that the Council continues to listen to the views of service users families and carers, rather than during periodic reviews of the service, as a means of increasing confidence in residents and improving the ALT offer.	• Ensure that feedback is regularly sought, analysed and used to shape and feed into the work plan. • Offer multiple options for feedback, including face to face, over the telephone in writing and online.	• To provide regular updates on feedback received and what we've done in response with real life examples of 'you said, we did'. • Provide follow up examples of the outcome of the positive effects of listening to and responding to feedback and how this improves residents' lives.
Agrees that officers conduct a training needs analysis in 2022 to identify relevant staff that may need to gain a greater understanding of ALT and how it works for users, including use of the Virtual Reality headsets and other appropriate training.	• Conduct a training needs analysis to measure the current skills and understanding of staff and develop a plan to upskill/refresh • Ensure all relevant staff, including housing, Social Care Direct, sheltered housing staff and health colleagues have a good understanding of ALT, our current offering, resources available. • Research with the provider how the VR technology could be developed to use in other areas of the Council's operation, as well as ALT support.	• When the current skills/knowledge base is established, officers can develop a clear plan to provide training in a range of areas and in different formats to best meet the needs of staff. • Use resources available from Tunstall, Apello, Skills for Care, West London Alliance to help staff understand why they need to be part of the digital drive, overcoming barriers to engagement, generating staff buy in, programme plans for continued engagement. • Review and assess impact of training and identify any gaps or further needs, especially as new technology is developed. • (Note: As part of the Digital Connectivity Steering Group a business case for digital skills and inclusion is being developed).

Select Committee Recommendation	What the recommendation could entail	How these could be implemented
Reviews its approach to Assisted Living Technology alongside the wider London Borough of Hillingdon's digital strategy and digital connectivity strategy, seeking out the future benefits to service users that full fibre, the "internet of things" and digital inclusion can offer.	• ALT possibilities will be introduced to the wider Council departments by the Community Development Manager to ensure that we are joined up in our support and service offer to residents. To be reviewed across the Council and not just in Social Care. A wider plan needs to be considered, which includes Social Care along with other areas. • Wider engagement will take place with Public Health, Hillingdon Health Care Partners (HHCP) and link to the JSNA work of the Public Health team and the Health & Wellbeing Board to ensure that the needs of residents and future planning are considered to manage independence and demand. • The implementation of Fibre broadband improves the effectiveness & reliability of the technology, and the Community Engagement Manager will link directly with the digitisation project team to ensure that this gives opportunities for the improved offer and usage. • The availability of 5G, sim only equipment to be more widely used and explored in areas where the coverage of Fibre is yet to reach. • Embrace use of home technology using digital solutions in all areas of life, so it becomes second nature.	• Case studies of individuals and community groups that have got online for the first time or have moved to improved systems and benefitting as a result and discuss any other local considerations re: coverage, take up, barriers for the council and its partners to address. • Consistent work with the Voluntary sector organisations to ensure that they understand and support the use of technology, social prescribing and the social value impacts of this. • The Community Development Manager will contribute to social care contract specifications to ensure that this is considered as an essential part of promoting independence and managing risk in all appropriate procurements. • The procurement of both hard wired and sim only equipment to be considered to ensure fair access to all. • Ensure that there is a full link up between digitisation progress from within the Council and the wider LGA groups. • Promote access to the reduced tariffs for broad band offered by Virgin, 02 and other phone providers to those on Universal Credit to ensure a fair access to all and the ability to be able to promote self help by using telecare technology.
Agrees that officers work with providers of ALT technologies to take a consistent approach in	• Market testing/warming of specialist suppliers will be undertaken during 2022	• Develop an overarching specification using the feedback and demographic data on requirements, for the procurement of a lead provider and supplier of ALT equipment.

	The use of now mainstream equipment such as Alexa, Google home hubs, Apple devices & watches to be considered in relation to self-help/purchase information	Develop website communications, engagement with users and join up with the digitisation plan for the operation of the Council, ensuring that system development includes the self-service option for telecare for residents.
moving systems online to improve the effectiveness of service monitoring and delivery 'in sync' with health and social care partners.	• Links to Telehealth must be made with the GP confederation and HHCP to support the self help health monitoring such as diabetes, blood pressure, epilepsy etc… • A link with the Community Matron's and Care Home Matrons who cover the health care of those in care settings to understand how the use of tablets that are allowing for remote health care monitoring, virtual GP appointments and virtual ward rounds.	• Carry out a review of health monitoring and build on this and other areas of remote monitoring and supervision in the Council.
Select Committee Recommendation	**What the recommendation could entail**	**How these could be implemented**
Agrees to continued liaison with Brunel University and other sources of research and development to ensure the ongoing evolution of the Assisted Living Technology strategy continues to be informed by emerging good practice.	• Develop greater links with the research team and the medical school at Brunel to establish a partner relationship in developing an understanding of the needs of Hillingdon residents.	• The Community Development Manager will engage with and regularly form a working group with colleagues and partners from Brunel to participate in the research, trial, feedback process on equipment. All of which will be intrinsically linked to the digitisation working group to support any infrastructural needs.
Notes that ALT can be an important preventative tool to a wider range of vulnerable residents, not only those in older years or with dementia.	• Develop a programme linked to the VR training for three target groups. • Children with disabilities, Autism & ASD/EBD (Emotional Behaviour Disorders) • Adults with Autism • Adults in need of cognition support	• Focus work during 2022 on the promotion and improved uptake and use of the noted 3 groups by developing an engagement programme with the social work teams, providers of services and residents to gain confidence and experience in the use of equipment for managing independence, risk and demand.

Select Committee Recommendation	What the recommendation could entail	How these could be implemented
Therefore, supports the principal that an ALT offer should be a consideration at all relevant major resident contact points with the Council, including universal services (not solely social care) and asks officers to prepare an implementation plan for this during 2022, for consideration by the Cabinet Member.	• Universal information at all contact/touch points within the Council and around the Borough • Signposting to Universal services, info & advice.	• A full strategy on the use of assistive technologies will be drafted for implementation during Q3 of 2022 for consideration first by the Cabinet Member and Leader to decide how to take forward. This strategy will be based on needs derived from the JSNA, population health data and be intrinsically linked to the digital strategy of the Council. • Equipment will be sustainable, using good ratings for energy and ensure that it is recycled and reusable and has a good future lifespan.

Financial Implications

There may be additional financial costs arising from the recommendations, therefore, any service changes arising from these that are to be taken forward will need to be fully costed, funded from within approved budgets and considered further by Cabinet Members as part of the budget planning process.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

The recommendations will further strengthen the Council's offering of Assisted Living Technology to increase independence and to allow residents to live at home for longer.

Consultation carried out or required

The Committee sought a wide range of internal witness testimony, as set out in the report.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial implications contained in this report.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.