

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 15 October 2025
Subject:	Care at Home – Request for Contract Extension and Re-Tender	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform	

Summary

The Care at Home service supports the vulnerable people of Bury with their assessed needs under the Care Act 2014. This includes support with personal care, moving and handling, nutrition and hydration, and medication.

The Council spend on Care at Home in 2024/25 was c.£11.257m. The service supports approximately 700 people each day and delivers circa 10,000 hours of home care each week.

Care at Home contracts normally last 3, 4, or 5 years so the expenditure incurred over these periods of time are significant and for this reason, the process of designing the specification and identifying providers is in depth, comprehensive, and lengthy.

The current service was commissioned in October 2021 for a period of 3 years with an option to extend by a further period or periods of up to 24 months provided that the total term of the contract does not exceed a total of 5 years.

A 12-month extension was granted by Cabinet in 2024 for all providers that were meeting contractual obligations.

Market engagement and consultation was completed in the winter of 2024, and the plan was to complete an open tender process with new contracts commencing in October 2025. Although the open tender process commenced as planned, it was completed under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 as market engagement and consultation commenced before the new 2023 Procurement Act came into place.

There were an unprecedented number of tender applications, with almost 200 requiring review. The applications were scored and moderated, but it was decided that the scoring mechanism was unsuitable to handle the high volume of applications. It was therefore decided to abandon the current process, request an extension for 12 months as permitted under the providers current contract, and re-run the tender under the Procurement Act 2023. This will allow for much greater flexibility and ensure a fair and robust outcome.

Recommendation(s)

1. Approve a further 12-month extension for providers that are meeting contractual obligations until 24 October 2026 (x8 Lot 1 providers covering the following

zoned areas: North, East, West, Prestwich, and Whitefield. x5 Lot 2 providers covering the full borough and acting as a backup to pick up care packages when Lot 1 are unable to).

2. Delegate finalisation and sealing of the deeds of extension required to give effect to the contract extensions to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Executive Director of Health and Adult Care.
3. Approval to commence the re-tender (open tender process) for a new Care at Home service to start in October 2026 for a period of 5 years with the option to extend for one year plus one year, at a cost of approximately £11m a year.
4. Delegate the authority to approve the service specification to the Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning.
5. Return to Cabinet in Summer 2026 to request approval to contract awards.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

The Council has a legal duty to follow Procurement Law and fair purchasing processes and must complete a re-tender process within the extended contract period to ensure compliance with the legislation (Procurement Act 2023). Additional benefits include a new contract and service specification with updated quality requirements enabling us to ensure high standards for the customers, clearer key performance indicators for robust contract monitoring, and a broader scope for innovation.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Alternative options are not applicable due to Procurement Law and the requirement to complete a re-tender exercise (Procurement Act 2023). Should the Council decide to do nothing, we would risk being non-compliant with the legislation.

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Background

The main aim of the Care at Home service is to provide proactive and personalised care within the individual's home and community. This means that the service provider should work in a person-centred way and respond to a person's changing needs to preventing crisis situations from occurring. This should address the person's social-care related quality of life as well as their wider wellbeing in line with their assessed needs and individual outcomes.

The key principles behind this service include reducing, preventing, and/or delaying the need for further care and support, promoting the statutory principle of individual wellbeing, and introducing positive behavioural change to encourage independence where possible in line with the Let's Do It! Strategy and a strengths-based approach to support.

The Council has a legal duty to follow Procurement Law and fair purchasing processes and must complete a re-tender process within the extended contract period to ensure compliance with the legislation (Procurement Act 2023). Additional benefits include a new contract and service specification with updated quality requirements enabling us to ensure high standards for the customers, clearer key performance indicators for robust contract monitoring, and a broader scope for innovation.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

In line with the Let's Do It! Strategy, the new Care at Home model will support people to live independently and well at home for as long as possible:

Local: Support people to live independently in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

Enterprise: Opportunities for any capable local suppliers to join the Care at Home provider framework.

Together: Improve health and well-being by working with communities and residents.

Strengths: The promotion of personal resilience and capabilities, and also the current and potential social and community networks, to make sure that people stay connected and independent.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

A full EIA has been completed which has highlighted potential impacts across several characteristics. All impacts have been considered and mitigating actions will be put in place to remove these impacts. With mitigations there are no adverse equality impacts. No direct impact on Looked After Children.

Please see Appendix 1 for Equality Impact Assessment.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

The Care at Home model is streamlined across the 'zoned areas' to ensure unnecessary travel by providers does not take place. Part of the tender process will include a requirement for providers to demonstrate how they will support the Council's target to be carbon neutral by 2038. No direct impact on biodiversity.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
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The Council will not be compliant with the Procurement Act 2023.	The Community Commissioning Team will maintain close communication with the Head of Procurement and Legal Services to ensure a robust plan is in place for compliance with the Procurement Act 2023.
Legal challenges from providers that were provisionally successful in the first open tender exercise (now abandoned).	Successful offers were provisional only and not formally signed off.
Providers who were given detailed feedback from the first open tender exercise will be at an unfair advantage.	The ITT and process for selection will be changed significantly.
Current providers may not wish to accept a 12-month contract extension.	This is a low risk, and the Community Commissioning Team is confident that all providers will accept the 12-month extension. However, should one or two not accept, there is capacity amongst other current providers to pick up the work.
Confusion amongst stakeholders regarding the abandoned open tender exercise.	A Stakeholder Map and Communication Plan will be completed and followed by the Project Team to ensure clear and consistent information is shared with all relevant stakeholders. Along with a CHEST notification, and letters to current providers, further comms with providers will take place under market engagement.

Legal Implications:

Procurement have been consulted with and working with the client department for in respect of this matter. Legal will be consulted in respect of the terms and conditions.

Financial Implications:

1. The Council spent £11.257m on Care at Home in 2024/25. The 12-month contract extension will be funded from existing budget provision within the Adult Community Care budget and therefore no additional resource/funding is required.
 2. As part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle Finance and Budget holders will track the expenditure linked to the Home Care package activity, ensuring that all expenditure aligns to the funding provided.
 3. Any financial risks/pressures identified will be highlighted to the Director of Adult Social Services as part of the monthly budget monitoring conversation whereby an action plan will be deployed to mitigate any financial risks/ pressures.
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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers:

N/A