

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 09 September 2026
Subject:	Care at Home – Request to Delegate the Authority to Contract Awards	
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 2025/26 was c.£12.426m, 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 approximately 5 years, the expenditure incurred over this period is 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.

The extension periods were granted by Cabinet in 2024 and 2025, and during the past 2 years the Community Commissioning Team has engaged with all key stakeholders:

- A 6-week public consultation ran from Monday 04 November to Sunday 15 December 2024 and the analysed consultation findings along with desktop research informed the updated service specification.
- Following pre-market engagement with providers on 09 December 2025, a further 3-week customer consultation ran from Monday 18 May to Sunday 07 June 2026 regarding a proposal to change the payment model.

The Community Commissioning Team and the Corporate Procurement Team are now in a strong position to run an open tender exercise under the Procurement Act 2023 with the Conditions of Participation stage already underway. The approval to commence this open tender process for a 5-year contract with the option to extend for a further 2-year period was approved by Cabinet in October 2025. The approval to delegate the authority to approve the service specification to the Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning was also approved by Cabinet in October 2025.

Recommendation(s)

1. Delegate the authority to contract awards to the Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning and the Executive Director of Health and Adult Care.
2. Delegate finalisation and sealing of the contracts to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning and the Executive Director of Health and Adult Care.

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 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.

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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 equality impact assessment has been completed. The analysis identifies the different characteristics of residents impacted and how they could be impacted through this procurement.

It's unlikely people using the service will see a change in service provision however anxieties in the continuity of the care providers/trusted relationships have been identified. Efforts will be made to minimise disruption and allay anxieties of people using this service ahead of any potential changes.

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 are unsuccessful could result in delays to the process.	The re-tender process will include a vigorous process including 2 stages of evaluation and moderation to mitigate legal challenges as much as possible.
Delays to contract awards could result in the Council being 'out of contract' for a short time with incumbent providers.	Incumbent providers have a duty under their current contract (up to 12 months after the contract end date) to ensure a safe handover to new providers.

Procurement Implications:

Procurement being run in compliance with the Procurement Act and currently at the Conditions of Participation evaluation stage. Contract anticipated to be awarded December 2026/January 2027.

Legal Implications:

Cabinet can delegate the contract award decision under the Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegations. Approving the recommendation would enable the award decision to be made by the delegated decision maker within the parameters already agreed by Cabinet, and in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. The delegated officer must ensure that the procurement has been conducted lawfully and in accordance with the published evaluation criteria. Delegation avoids the need to return to Cabinet and does not present additional risk, provided that the award is within the scope of the approvals already given.

Financial Implications:

The estimated annual expenditure associated with the Care at Home framework is approximately £12.426 million, equating to an estimated £62.130 million over the potential five-year contract term. As this is an activity-based contract, actual expenditure will vary according to demand levels for services and the impact of annual inflationary uplifts. Consequently, the values outlined represent current estimates rather than fixed contractual commitments.

The Adult Social Care budget continues to face significant financial pressures in 2026/27, requiring all commissioned services to demonstrate clear value for money and support the Council's wider financial objectives. The recommissioning of the Care at Home service therefore needs to secure a sustainable, high-quality model of provision that contributes to bringing expenditure back into alignment with the

approved budget and supports delivery of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings targets.

The recommission of Care at Home represents a key element of the Council's strategy for managing future demand and expenditure. While the new contractual arrangements are expected to deliver efficiencies and improved cost control, the principal financial benefit arises from enabling residents to remain safely within their own homes and communities, thereby reducing reliance on more costly forms of care provision, including residential and nursing placements.

Maintaining sufficient capacity within the Care at Home market is also critical to supporting timely hospital discharge and preventing unnecessary admissions to long-term care settings. Access to high-quality domiciliary care enables residents to maintain independence for longer, improves outcomes, and contributes to demand management across the wider health and social care system.

In addition, sufficient contracted Care at Home services reduce the need for spot purchasing arrangements, which typically attract higher hourly rates. The recommissioned service is therefore expected to deliver both financial and operational benefits whilst supporting improved outcomes for residents.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers:

N/A