

**Executive Member Decision Session –Housing and Adult Social Services      27 April 2010**

Report of Assistant Director Service Delivery & Transformation, Adults, Children and Education

**CYC Home Care – Keyless Proposal**

**Summary**

1. This report seeks the Executive Members approval to complete the implementation of a policy to discontinue key holding of customers' keys in our in-house Home Care Services.
2. Home Care Services currently key hold in excess of 2500 sets of keys for customers who are, for a range of reasons, unable to facilitate access to their properties (e.g. bed bound, poor mobility, risk of falling).
3. This paper discusses: -
  - The current position - the issues associated with key-holding
  - The desired position - A proposal to extend our current policy for new customers to all existing customers to become non key-holding
  - The implications for existing customers
  - The benefits to CYC Home Care Services
4. If approved the transfer to a completely keyless service would be completed by the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010.

**Background**

5. City of York Council currently holds keys for approximately 2500 existing customers. However, new customers to the service are now actively supported to consider the best method of enabling access to their property. These are listed as follows: -
  - a) Access facilitated by the customer
  - b) Access facilitated by a named individual nominated by customer
    - Neighbour
    - Friend
    - Relative
  - c) Coded key safe installation (see below)
  - d) Coded manual / electronic door lock installation
6. The majority of new customers are able to facilitate access using either method a) or b) above and do not resort to the use of a key safe. We anticipate that the majority of the approximately 2500 existing customers

for whom we hold keys will similarly not require a key safe as we became key-holders largely because of it being a traditional practice to do so.

7. Key holding results in service inefficiencies and associated additional cost to the council. These are listed as follows: -
  - **Travel Time vs. Customer Facing Time** - Across the in-house provided care services approximately 20% of worked hours are spent engaged in travelling. By reducing travel time we can increase the time we spend working face to face with customers. Our Home Care services are expected to increase the % of worked hours spent as customer facing time, as this will enhance the in-house services' competitiveness with independent providers of Home Care via a reduction in unit cost per customer. Additionally, augmenting the proportion of customer facing time will allow more customers to use the service and reduce our waiting list. Travel is one of the areas where Home Care must become more efficient. A significant proportion of this travel time is associated with key collection/return at CYC bases.
  - **Mileage cost** – We incur excessive mileage costs associated with these additional journeys to and from the offices to collect customer's keys at the start and end of rounds of customer visits.
  - **Effectiveness** – Some customers are on most occasions able to facilitate access. However, there are occasions where care workers cannot gain expected access to a customer's property and time delays can be incurred if keys are not immediately available in with vicinity to the property (e.g. a key safe). Keys may need to be obtained back at a CYC base or via a relative. This can result in lengthy delays to service provision. In some instances, this has taken place in situations of medical emergency where the customer has become unwell or is unconscious. In these situations time is of the essence.
  - **Reduced liability to City of York Council** – whilst CYC Home Care take every precaution to be responsible for customer keys, there have been instances of loss where CYC has been required to meet the expenses of replacement key sets and door locks.
  - **Electronic Monitoring of Home Care** – the move to a completely key-less service is crucial to the current More For York project to introduce an electronic monitoring system to both the in-house and external providers of home care services. The operation of a key-less service is essential to gain the full benefits from the introduction of this new system in December 2010. If we continue to hold customers keys we will lose the expected increased reductions in the number and length of journeys and the flexibility in staff rostering. All external providers of home care already operate a full key-less service and so are ready to take advantage of this new system.

## Consultation

8. In reviewing current arrangements we have considered the experience and practice of other providers and other Councils.

9. Practice of Independent Providers of Home Care - Frequently CYC customers move from CYC provided services to Independent providers of Home Care in York (Goldsborough, Riccall or York Helpers). Such transfers of care provision may take place following access to short periods of intensive re-ablement within CYC. All the independent providers of Home Care in York do not hold customers keys and insist on alternative arrangements being established (the methods described in 2.2). If CYC were to mirror such approaches this would ensure more seamless transitions and continuity of approach for our customers.
10. Practice of Other Councils – We have compared practice in other Council provided Home Care Services and found that the vast majority have already moved to a key-less service with none of the six services we contacted in our region being key holders. This situation is mirrored nationally and particularly in those areas where electronic monitoring systems have been introduced. Feedback is that most consider CYC's practice to be outdated and associated with high levels of risk.
11. All the six Council's approached thus far have instituted alternative methods as described in paragraph 2.2. There are some variations amongst councils regarding funding of key safes. Again the majority require the customer to fund the cost. Some Council's provide funding for key safes / coded door lock installation in the same way as other items of assistive equipment.
12. Safer York Partnership – Discussions have taken place with the chair of the partnership, and similar to other keyless council provided services across the region there are no concerns regarding the level of risk associated with the use of key safes providing they are insurance approved, properly installed and sited. The local services who currently install key safes meet these requirements and can advise customers accordingly.

### **Options:**

13. The alternative access arrangements being recommended are as follows: -
  - a) Access facilitated by customer
  - b) Access facilitated by a named individual nominated by customer
    - Neighbour
    - Friend
    - Relative
  - c) Coded key safe installation (see below)
  - d) Coded manual / electronic door lock installation

### **Analysis**

14. Access facilitation via any of the suggested alternatives listed in paragraphs 4 above would adequately address the inefficiencies and associated additional costs outlined in section 3 of this report. Analysis of practice within other providers is included in earlier sections of this report.

## Corporate Priorities

15. The Corporate priority which this proposal is in line with is as follows: -

Effective Organisation – this move to a completely key-less service is essential to the delivery of the savings and benefits arising from the More For York Project on the Electronic Monitoring System for Home Care. It is also essential to the ability of the in-house service to reduce its unit costs and deliver more time to work face to face with its customers.

## Implications

- **Financial**

16. It will be the responsibility of the individual customer to meet the costs associated with ensuring access to their home for care staff and therefore there are no financial implications to the council. The following paragraphs outline some of the costs and options that will be available to those existing customers for whom the council currently hold keys.
17. The background section of this report identifies that the current system leads to additional cost due to travel time and other delays in gaining access to the property to deliver the care. The Home Care Service budgets are set on the basis of efficiencies already being achieved and this proposal will contribute to the overall delivery of those efficiencies. No new savings will be released for investment in other areas.
18. The costs associated with the equipment and installation Options c) and d) outlined in section 4 above operating for all new customers are shown in the table below. These would apply to existing customers who choose these methods from within the 2500 customers for whom we currently hold keys. However, it must be noted, that not all of these customers would necessarily opt for c) or d). New customers, as referred to earlier, are already engaging in the alternative arrangements listed above.
19. In the City of York two key safe installation options are currently in operation. These are via Age Concern York and the York Home Improvement Agency. The two options are summarised as follows: -

	<b>Age Concern York</b>	<b>York Home Improvement Agency</b>	
<b>Equipment Cost</b>	£30	£15	£31
<b>Fitting Cost</b>	Included in cost above	£20	£20

20. Age Concern York – have confirmed that they are able to cope with a managed rise in demand for installations. However, if this organisation received a high volume of referrals Age Concern would need temporary additional funding for the administrative work associated with this. Any contribution made would need to be identified from within existing budgets.

21. York Home Improvement Agency – Installation of key safes is via the Handy Person's Service (funded by CYC). Two key safe options are listed above – both are functional and safe options. York Home Improvement Agency report that they would be able to manage additional demand.
22. If agreed the service would plan to support existing customers for whom keys are held to select an alternative arrangement from the options proposed. The timescale for completion of these transfers is anticipated to be 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010.

### **Human Resources (HR)**

23. There are no HR implications.

### **Equalities**

24. There are no equalities implications. Moving to a keyless mode of operation would ensure equity between current and new customers. The service currently operates a 2 tier system – encouraging new customers towards the alternative arrangements shown above.

### **Legal**

25. There are no Legal implications.

### **Crime and Disorder**

26. There are no Crime and Disorder implications.

### **Information Technology (IT)**

27. There are no Information Technology implications.

### **Property**

28. There are no Property implications.

### **Other**

29. No other known implications.

### **Risk Management**

30. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks identified in this report are additional administration costs associated with a higher than expected number of existing home care customers opting for the key safe option.
31. A delay in the completion of all existing customers having in place alternative access arrangements by the end of December 2010. This will result in the service still holding keys for some customers which will impact on the introduction of the Electronic Home Care Monitoring System benefits realisation.

32. These risks will be actively monitored and managed by operational service managers to reduce their likelihood and mitigate any impacts arising to the organisation

**Recommendations**

33. Members are asked to approve the extension of the current practice of non key holding in CYC Home Care to all its customers and operate a range of alternative property access arrangements.

Reason: The move to a completely key-less service is essential to the delivery of the savings and benefits arising from the More For York Project on the Electronic Monitoring System for Home Care. It is also essential to the ability of the in-house service to reduce its unit costs and deliver more time to work face to face with its customers.

**Contact Details**

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		<b>Report Approved</b>	Yes	<b>Date</b> 12 April 10
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<b>Wards Affected:</b> List wards or tick box to indicate all				<b>All tick</b>
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