

# CABINET

15 NOVEMBER 2024

## REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PARTNERSHIPS

### A.11 TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL'S CARELINE SERVICE REVIEW: RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND NEXT STEPS

#### PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

##### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To report to Cabinet the results of the recent consultation on the future of the Council's Careline service; and seek its decision as to how it wishes to proceed in light of these consultation results and other updated information. This report recommends, as a variance to the Cabinet's currently adopted preferred option, that the Council explores further the response received from Colchester City Council as part of the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance to create a combined telecare service that aligns with the Alliance's aims and objectives for an integrated health-system approach.

##### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Careline service was established in 1987 and provides monitoring and response/lifting for approximately 1,859 service users in Tendring, including our sheltered housing residents. Continuing the core Careline service requires significant investment, creating cost pressures amid budget constraints. The findings of a 12-month review of the service were reported to the Cabinet on 26 July 2024 along with five potential options for the future of Careline, including information on their financial, equality and other implications.

Those options are summarised as follows:

- **Option 1** – Maintain current position (*remain in the market, which will require on-going financial support*);
- **Option 2** – Provide an Out-of-Hours Council service only (*leave the market, focussing on the Council's core business and ceasing telecare and response/lifting*);
- **Option 3** – Reduce shift pattern to 6 hourly shifts (*remain in the market, staffing changes required, which will require on-going, additional financial support*);
- **Option 4** – Remove the responder/lifting service (*remain in the market, removal of one element of the service, which will require on-going, additional financial support*); and

- **Option 5** – Termination of third-party contracts (*remain in the market and service Tendring District Council residents only via the Careline scheme, which will require on-going, additional financial support*) and cessation of the TSA accreditation.

At that July 2024 meeting, the Cabinet resolved to agree, in principle, the adoption of Option 2 as its preferred option – i.e. ceasing telecare and lifting/response services, focusing solely on Out-of-Hours and CCTV services. An extra £300,000 was allocated to support service users transitioning to alternative provisions, along with a further £446,000 to support other potential one-off costs.

To properly address the Council's duties around best value for its residents, a consultation exercise was carried out to invite feedback from customers, residents and other key stakeholders including organisations that the Council provides services to under contracts. Consultation has also been carried out with TDC staff impacted by the potential changes, albeit acknowledging that a final decision on the future of the service has yet to be made.

The six-week consultation exercise ran between 19 August and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024. As part of the consultation process, almost 4,000 letters were issued to the 2000 (approx.) Careline service users and their next of kin, each with a unique customer number with the aim of tracking responses and guarding against the possibility of double-counting. The consultation exercise was publicised through a variety of communication channels with the aim of obtaining a positive level of response. Separate communication to Sheltered Housing Scheme residents provided assurances that their 24-hour emergency assistance would remain unchanged at this time.

1,062 submissions were received in response to the consultation, which is considered a good level of response from which reliable feedback can be gauged. Full details of the consultation and engagement strategy can be found under the 'consultation and engagement' heading below and in Appendix A. The consultation Questionnaires can be seen at Appendix B.

Some of the notable messages coming back through the consultation responses are summarised as follows:

Of the 1,062 responses: -

- 589 were from Careline users (56%)
- 395 were from friends or family of users (37%)
- 78 were from the public or others (7%)

In respect of future options for the Careline service, 72% (the clear majority) of respondents stated a preference for Option 1; with 10% preferring Option 2; 6% preferring Option 3; 7% preferring Option 4 and 5% preferring Option 5. This indicates a clear preference amongst service users and their next of kin for maintaining Careline in its current form. However to do so would, as explained in the July 2024 Cabinet Report, require considerable ongoing financial

support from the Council with competing calls on its resources.

Service users were asked if they would be prepared to pay an increased fee for a telecare only service. 48% of respondents said they would be prepared to pay more, but the levels of increase being suggested as being agreeable by those respondents would not, on current analysis, be sufficient to eliminate the current projected shortfall in revenue. An increase in fees, as indicated, would also result in Tendring District Council charging customers at a rate above current market levels thus not offering best value for money. With 48% of respondents indicating a willingness to pay increased fees, it follows that 52% of customers would not be prepared to pay an increase and would potentially seek alternative provision if fee increases were introduced.

With the Cabinet's preferred Option 2 in mind, 60% of the service users that responded to the consultation indicated that they would, if necessary, be willing to move to an alternative trusted provider but 80% of those stated that they would want assistance with that process to make the best decision.

Both during and following the consultation exercise, there has also been some contact from third party organisations either expressing an interest in potentially taking on all or part(s) of the Careline Service or otherwise inviting discussion about how a service could be delivered in an alternative way through partnerships or other means.

There have also been early discussions following the response to the consultation, and acknowledging the Council's role as a partner to the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance, to explore the potential to work with Colchester City Council, through its trading company Colchester Commercial (Holdings) Ltd, on their proposal to establish one combined telecare service to serve the whole of the North East Essex area. This option could support the Alliance's objectives for an integrated health-system approach that works in harmony with NHS health provision and the emergency services. This option might offer a potentially positive and direct response to the consultation feedback – particularly in light of the strong preference from service users to retain a Careline Service, albeit with a limited appetite to pay higher fees; some willingness to transfer to an alternative trusted provider; and a clear request to provide support to service users through any transition.

However, the detail of this opportunity should be explored to establish if it could offer the proposed potential benefits in terms of continuity, security and value for money for existing Careline users; retention of job opportunities for staff under local authority terms and conditions; and the achievement of economies of scale that could address current concerns around the budget and Tendring residents having to subsidise the Careline service. It is important to stress that with any proposed joint working, the implications of the proposed delivery model must be properly assessed to establish whether this is a viable option. It is therefore recommended that additional time is incorporated into the timetable for exploring this opportunity in more detail, along with other third-party proposals, before the Cabinet commits to implementing a preferred approach.

Alongside carrying out the consultation exercise, Officers have also continued to review, in further depth, a number of the contracts that Careline has in place for the provision of services to external bodies. On further consideration and with the agreement of the Leader of the Council on 24 October 2024 it was decided to serve notice to terminate the largest of the Careline contracts - that with AE Partners Ltd (YourStride). The detailed reasons to support the decision to terminate the YourStride contract (giving 16-weeks' notice) are exempt information and retained in Part B however, a summary is set out in the Monitoring Officer's section of this report.

As a consequence of that contract coming to an end in February 2025, it is necessary to revisit a number of the financial assumptions in terms of the options highlighted above, to provide the most up to date position, with the aim of presenting these to the Cabinet in early 2025 before any final decisions on the future of Careline are taken. The revised assumptions are still expected to demonstrate that all options, apart from preferred Option 2, will still require ongoing budgetary support and subsidy.

Currently, Option 2 remains the preferred option pending further consideration of the financial and other implications as well as the results of the consultation. However, as a variation on that preferred option, it is also proposed that more time is incorporated into the overall programme for completing the review of Careline to allow for the full and proper exploration of the proposals described above and elsewhere in this report.

Given the significant impact of third-party contracts on resources and the budgetary position of Careline (as demonstrated through the urgent decision to terminate the YourStride contract), it is also proposed that Officers are authorised to continue reviewing other existing third-party contracts and, where necessary, proceed to vary or terminate them accordingly before and without prejudice to any final decision of Cabinet as to the future of Careline.

It is proposed that the preferred Option 2 is revisited in early 2025 for Cabinet to make its final decision and that, at this stage, the previously suggested date for implementation is adjusted from the end of March 2024 to the end of June 2025. Although there may be some savings secured through the termination of the YourStride contract and review of other third party contracts, it is likely that there will be an additional cost from this change in timescales which would need to be considered alongside the exploration of the collaborative working with partners highlighted earlier. It is therefore difficult to provide an expected cost at this stage, which will therefore need to be reviewed as part of the planned report in February 2025.

Option 2 (or the potential variation) provide that any remaining service at Tendring would focus solely on the Council's Out-of-Hours and CCTV services. Officers have been carrying out further exploration of different ways in which an out-of-hours service could continue to be provided by the Council across different permutations of retaining the operation in house, outsourcing and/or redistributing duties across different services. The approach to be taken, having particular regard for the Council's statutory duties to provide telecare services for its sheltered housing tenants, will be an operational matter for Officers to conclude following further analysis and the final strategic decision from the Cabinet on the future of Careline.

## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**It is recommended that Cabinet:-**

- a) takes into consideration the outcome of and feedback from the recent customer, resident and stakeholder consultation on the future of Tendring Careline – that was based upon balancing best value principles with the needs of our existing customers, who now have a wider range of options available on the open market, at more comparable rates than the Council can continue supplying the service for;**
- b) notes the decision to terminate the third-party contract with AE Partners Ltd (YourStride) which, irrespective of the Cabinet’s resolution in respect of d) below, will reduce the pressure on the capacity of Tendring Careline – which, for some months, has been dealing with a growing and increasingly unmanageable volume of calls from residents outside of Tendring; and bring about a cost saving to the Council;**
- c) delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Communities in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio for Partnerships to review and if necessary, vary or terminate other third-party contracts at suitable timely junctures as part of the move towards the fulfilment of any final preferred approach;**
- d) confirms that, having considered the content of this report, it still wishes to continue, in principle, with the preferred option (Option 2) of ceasing the telecare and lifting/response provision of the Careline Service, in its entirety, including service delivery under third-party contracts with remaining service provision solely relating to the Council’s Out-of-Hours and CCTV service – albeit subject to (e) below;**
- e) delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Community, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, to explore further the third-party proposals that were submitted to the Council through the consultation;**
- f) subject to (e) requests that third parties be invited to put forward a formal detailed proposal for further exploration within one month of this decision (i.e. by close of business Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024) as starting point for Tendring District Council’s consideration;**
- g) requests that the Portfolio for Partnerships reports to Cabinet in February 2025 to provide an update on the opportunity explored in line with e) in respect of the third-party proposals, as well as an updated recommendation for a final Cabinet decision on the future of Careline informed by updated financial analysis and with a detailed transition plan;**

- h) subject to g) above, acknowledges that there may be additional costs arising from the change in timescales set out in this report, and requests that the financial impact is included within the report to Cabinet in February 2024; and**
- i) delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Community in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio for Partnerships, to assess different options for the continued provision of Out-of-Hours and CCTV service and to implement any necessary changes, as necessary, following the Cabinet’s final decision on the future of Careline.**

**REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Given the changing market context, the recommendations are based on what is considered to be the best option for both service users and the Council. Several other providers on the open market offer a like for like service, at a comparable price. Furthermore, Essex County Council provides a free of charge service, if a resident is referred to them through a statutory provider, such as Adult Social Care or a health care provider. It is also important to highlight the continuing capacity challenges the authority faces in meeting the needs of a range of service users, including those supported by third-party contractual arrangements.

However, feedback recent customer, public and stakeholder consultation has presented alternative approaches that warrant more detailed and proper consideration and it is proposed that additional time is incorporated into the programme and next steps in order for that consideration to take place. It is also necessary to factor in the full implication of terminating the YourStride contract when carrying out that further work along with any changes that might need to be made to other third-party contracts.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The five options subject of the recent consultation were set out in full within the report to Cabinet of 26 July 2024 and associated appendices. The alternative approach to that set out in the recommendation would have been to push ahead with a final decision on the future of Careline in line with preferred Option 2, but that would not have allowed time now suggested as necessary to give proper exploration of the proposals from third parties. As a partner to the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance, it is important to establish if there is an opportunity to further delivered against its aims and objectives for an integrated health-system approach. At the same time other third-party proposals put forward through the consultation should be explored too.

## PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

### DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The Careline service was established in 1987 and provides a high-quality service that provides monitoring and response/lifting for approximately 1,859 service users in Tendring, including our sheltered housing residents.

A revised Corporate Plan and Vision was approved by Full Council at its meeting on 28 November 2023. One of the six included themes is Financial Sustainability and Openness, with a commitment to continue to deliver effective services and get things done whilst looking after the public purse; that means carefully planning what we do, managing capacity and prioritising what we focus our time, money and assets on.

In the Plan and accompanying Vision, the authority has made a commitment that tough decisions will not be shied away from, but will be taken transparently, be well-informed, and based upon engagement with our residents. The recommendations set out in this report reflect initial consideration of the feedback from the recent consultation on the future Careline and the need to take additional time to carefully consider next steps in light of updated information.

### OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT (including with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and other stakeholders where the item concerns proposals relating to the Budget and Policy Framework)

The Best Value Duty relates to the statutory requirement for local authorities and other public bodies defined as best value authorities in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999 (“the 1999 Act”) to “*make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness*”.

In practice, this covers issues such as how authorities exercise their functions to deliver a balanced budget ([Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992](#)), provide statutory services and secure value for money in all spending decisions.

The Council, as a best value authority is also required, pursuant to [section 3 of the 1999 Act](#), to consult on the purpose of deciding how to fulfil the Best Value Duty. This is the stage at which consultation will best assist the authority in deciding how to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement, however, a consultation exercise has been conducted with the service users, next of kin and key stakeholders providing them with information about the reasons for the proposed option for the Council to cease providing telecare/lifting/response provision and available options and alternative service providers.

All careline customers and their next of kin were contacted via letter with an enclosed hard copy of the consultation questionnaire and a postage pre-paid envelope for return. A total of just under 4000 letters were sent, each with a unique customer number with the aim of

tracking responses. A reminder letter was also sent out ten days before the close of consultation along with a second copy of the consultation questionnaire. In addition, the consultation questionnaire was available for completion online.

A total of 1,062 responses were received, of which 789 were returned hard copy forms and 273 were completed online. In addition, multiple stakeholder groups were contacted via email and encouraged to complete their feedback via an online form (see Appendix C for the full list of stakeholder groups)

The consultation period ran from 19<sup>th</sup> August to 30<sup>th</sup> September.

From checking against customer number information, it appears there is limited duplication of response for each service user (that is, it appears that either the service or the next of kin responded in more than 90% of cases). It is considered that the level of response to the consultation is such from reliable and useful conclusions can be gauged. Appendix A provides a more detailed record of the responses received for each question in a series of graphs and 'word clouds'.

Notable results from the consultation are set out as follows:

### **Total response**

Of the 1062 responses: -

- 589 were from Careline users (56%)
- 395 were from friends or family of users (37%)
- 78 were from the public or others (7%)

### **Regarding the future of the Careline service**

Overall, 72% of those who answered the consultation questionnaire stated their preference as **Option 1** (to maintain current position - remain in the market, which will require on-going financial support).

- Option 2 (the Cabinet's preferred option): 10% - (Provide an Out-of-Hours Council service only - leave the market, focussing on the Council's core business and ceasing telecare and response/lifting).
- Option 3: 6% - (Reduce shift pattern to 6 hourly shifts - remain in the market, staffing changes required, which will require on-going, additional financial support).
- Option 4: 7% - (Remove the responder/lifting service - remain in the market, removal of one element of the service, which will require on-going, additional financial support).
- Option 5: 5% - (Termination of third-party contracts - remain in the market and service Tendring District Council residents only via the Careline scheme, which will require on-going, additional financial support) and cessation of the TSA accreditation).



### **Benefits of Service** (*multiple choice, user can select more than one answer*)

- Peace of mind – 947 (89%)
- Tackling loneliness – 152 (14%)
- Ability to alert a loved one in case of an incident – 814 (77%)
- Having someone able to come and help me (responder service) – 809 (76%)
- Helping me get back up (lifting service) – 645 (61%)
- Reliable service – 762 (72%)
- Other – 144 (14%)

### **Trusted Alternative Provider**

- 60% of respondents would be prepared to move to a 'trusted' alternative provider.
- 20% would not.
- 13% are unsure.
- 7% did not answer.

### **Support During Transition**

- 80% of respondents stated that they would need support during transition.
- 12% are unsure or it does not apply.
- 8% did not answer.

### **Willing to pay an increase in Fees** (current fees are £30.55 per month)

- 48% (502) would pay a fee increase.
- 220 selected £31-£35.
- 138 selected £36-£40.
- 144 selected £40+.

353 of respondents stated that they would not be willing to pay a fee increase. 207 have stated 'other' or have not answered.

### **Stakeholder Responses**

A total of 10 Stakeholder were responses received –

### **Stakeholder Consultation Response Summary**

- Option 1: Chosen by 7 respondents (70%)
- Option 2: Chosen by 1 respondent
- Option 3: Nil respondents
- Option 4: Chosen by 1 respondent
- Option 5: Chosen by 1 respondent

## **Consultation Impact:**

### **Customer Terminations**

Between the start of the consultation and publication of this report, 126 customers have left the Careline service. Only 10 of these terminations appear linked to the Cabinet decision to carry out consultation on its preferred option. The remaining 116 departures are due to reasons such as moving into care or passing away. Customer terminations are slightly higher than the usual turnover, but not significantly so.

### **Staff Headcount**

Staff numbers have reduced by 14% since the start of the consultation (from 46 to 40). This reduction is higher than usual turnover rates, however one of the staff members has secured employment elsewhere in the Council. To cover remaining shifts, the Council continues to rely on third-party provision.

### **Overall summary of consultation feedback**

The consultation has resulted in a response from more than half of service users or their next of kin. The vast majority of those who responded chose options in a sequence of the 'least change to the most change', resulting in Option One being the highest preference and Option Two being the lowest. User satisfaction with the service is high and having a service that is local is clearly highly valued. For any change, service users have clearly stated that they will require assistance with any transition and as such a careful transition plan is being developed.

Although almost half of service users said they would be prepared to an increased fee for a telecare only service, the amount of fee increase was modest and half of respondents did not confirm that they would accept an increase.

Direct feedback from stakeholders was low and the response rate was disappointing despite sending reminders. Of those who did respond, the chief concern was for the well-being of the service users affected and ensuring that their welfare needs are met.

As a result of the consultation, the organisation has received proposals from some stakeholders regarding suggested future options for the service, including passing over delivery of the service to alternative providers via a number of different paths. One such approach is from Colchester City Council wishing to explore the opportunity of creating a combined service for North East Essex that aligns with the aims and objectives of the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance for an integrated health system approach.

## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)**

<b>Is the recommendation a Key Decision (see the criteria stated here)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If Yes, indicate which by which criteria it is a Key Decision</b>	<b>✓ Significant effect on two or more wards</b> <b>✓ Involves £100,000 expenditure/income</b> <b>✓ Is otherwise significant for the service budget</b>
--	------------	--	---

	<p><b>And when was the proposed decision published in the Notice of forthcoming decisions for the Council (must be 28 days at the latest prior to the meeting date)</b></p>	<p><b>7 October 2024</b></p>
--	---	------------------------------

## **Best Value**

In practice this covers issues such as how authorities exercise their functions to deliver a balanced budget (Part 1, Local Government Finance Act 1992), provide statutory services and secure value for money in all spending decisions.

As a best value authority the Council is also required, pursuant to s.3 of the Local Government Act 1999, to consult on the purpose of deciding how to achieve the Best Value Duty. This is the stage at which consultation will best assist the authority in deciding how to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement.

Therefore, a consultation exercise was conducted with the service users and other key stakeholders, when they were provided with information about the reasons for the proposed option for the Council to cease providing telecare/lifting/response provision and available options and alternative service providers.

### Best Value - The general duty

- (1) A best value authority must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- (2) For the purpose of deciding how to fulfil the duty arising under subsection (1) an authority must consult—
  - (a) representatives of persons liable to pay any tax, precept or levy to or in respect of the authority,
  - (b) representatives of persons liable to pay non-domestic rates in respect of any area within which the authority carries out functions,
  - (c) representatives of persons who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and
  - (d) representatives of persons appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions.
- (3) For the purposes of subsection (2) “representatives” in relation to a group of persons means persons who appear to the authority to be representative of that group.

(4) In deciding—

(a) how to fulfil the duty arising under subsection (1),

(b) who to consult under subsection (2), or

(c) the form, content and timing of consultations under that subsection, an authority must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

The rationale behind the requirement to consult when proposals are at a formative stage. If consultation is to be meaningful, it needs to be undertaken at a point where the mind of the decision-maker is still open to change and can, therefore, be influenced by the responses to the consultation. A decision-maker can consult upon a preferred option and even a decision in principle, provided that its mind is genuinely open.

It is acceptable for the decision-maker to have a preferred option before consultation begins, but there must be genuine potential for that preference to change as a result of the consultation. Case law has demonstrated that care is required if a consultation strategy entirely excludes certain options from the debate.

Unless consultees have some idea of the decision-maker's rationale for the proposals put forward or the key factors that are likely to be important in the decision-making process, it may be difficult for any effective response to be made. Therefore, consultees should be made aware of the basis on which a proposal for consultation has been considered and will be considered afterwards. They should be aware of the criteria that will be applied by the decision-maker when considering proposals and the factors that will be decisive or of substantial importance at the end of the process.

**JUDICIAL REVIEW** – whatever decision the Council makes there is always the possibility of an application for Judicial Review being made to the Administrative Court of the High Court. JR considers the lawfulness of a decision, action or failure to act by a public authority, e.g. the Council. Essentially the grounds for making an application for JR include three heads: illegality, irrationality and procedural impropriety. The meaning of illegality is clear but irrationality can also be defined as “unreasonableness” and the usual definition of that is “ a decision so unreasonable that no reasonable [decision maker] could ever have come to it” , whilst procedural impropriety mainly involves alleged breaches of natural justice including that no-one should be a judge in their own cause and the right to a fair hearing where each side is heard.

The results of any application for JR are usually a “quashing order” that quashes the decision subject of the JR that then has to be re-considered and re-made by the original decision maker; a mandatory order that requires the defendant to carry out a particular duty, often to re-consider the original decision; or a prohibitory order that acts in a similar way to injunctions preventing the public body from acting or continuing to act in a way that is unlawful.

<b>X</b>	<b>The Monitoring Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:</b>
----------	--

Tendring District Council entered into a Supply of Services Agreement' ("the Contract") with AE Partners Ltd ("the Customer") YourStride in June 2018 (and varied in January 2023), although no recorded and/or published decisions have been located to establish the authority being relied upon and reasons for doing so. Under the Contract, the Council is the Supplier and is paid by the Customer to provide a 24/7 monitoring service on behalf of the private company for registered users of the personal alarm watch. This Contract is being serviced by the Council's Careline Service ("Careline"),– which can typically require follow-up calls being made to nominated family members or other contacts, relevant support services or the emergency services.

At 7 October 2024, the number of YourStride registered users had reached a level in excess of 9,400 and it has been growing at a rate of between 500 and 600 per month over the last six months. Under the terms and conditions of the contract, the Council currently has no control over the number of users and is contractually obliged to register and serve any new customer purchasing the YourStride product.

It is currently estimated that Careline receives a call every 15 seconds from YourStride customers and that these represent around 83% of all calls handled by the Council's Careline Service. Careline is having to rely heavily on external and casual support to manage the volume of work generated under this contract. On 22 October 2024, enquiries were made as to how many residents in Tendring formed the 9,400 registered users, the Careline Manager has confirmed this to be 35 with an addition of 22 users purchasing watches directly from the Council.

It is acknowledged that the position largely remains the same as in July 2024 when the future of Careline was reported to Cabinet, in that the Contract is costing the Council more in staff resources and system costs than the income being generated. However, the scale and rate of the increased YourStride registered users are resulting in significant strain on the resources of the Careline Service and the Council. The Tendring tax-payer is effectively having to subsidise, at a growing rate, a product provided through a private company to residents living outside of the Tendring District, whom are paying a subsidised fee.

It is not certain which legal authority and powers were relied upon to enter into the agreement with AE Partners Ltd to provide the YourStride contract, the business case and reasons for doing so and the rationale behind departing from the Council's published Fees and Charges for this service area. The Supply of Services Agreement is not the Council's standard format, as required within the Constitution and a decision to enter the legal agreement has not been supported by a recorded and published decision.

The law states that where a public body carries out a consultation, whether because it is required or chooses to do so, it must consult properly. The basic requirements of an adequate consultation are interchangeably referred to as the 'Sedley criteria' and the '*Gunning* principles, and have been endorsed by the Supreme Court. They are that:

- the consultation must be undertaken when proposals are still at a formative stage;
- sufficient reasons for the proposal must be given to allow intelligent consideration and response;
- adequate time is given for consideration and response; and

- the product of the consultation is conscientiously taken into account in the decision-making process.

A significant body of case law has built up in which these principles have been applied by the courts. Notwithstanding this, the courts are continuing to be kept busy with judicial review challenges on the role consultation has or has not played in public bodies' decision-making.

It is uncontroversial to say that any consultation that is undertaken is of little use if the outcome of the consultation is not duly considered and taken into account within the decision-making process. It is not enough to simply pay lip service to the principle of consultation; the responses to the consultation need to be given full and proper regard.

Precisely what this entails will be informed by the circumstances of the case. Also, while public bodies must be able to demonstrate that the outcome of the consultation has been taken into consideration that does not necessarily mean that they have to disclose the internal workings of their decision-making processes or the information used to assess the responses to the consultation.

The outcome of the consultation on the options set out in the Cabinet's Decision made in July 2024 are being reported to Cabinet in this report prior to decisions being made on the future of the Tendring Careline Service. The urgent decision from the Leader was based upon the scale of the increased registered YourStride users, which are now taking 83% of Careline's resources to respond to, with only 35 of those 9500 users being Tendring residents. The Customer (YourStride) has responded to the consultation exercise and believes Option 2 is the only viable option.

The Customer has also rejected any proposal to vary the contract and the only course of action to protect the Council is to terminate the Contract, in accordance with its terms and conditions requires 16 weeks-notice. The decision enabled the notice to be served for termination to take effect in 2025. The Customer did however offer a proposal to be explored.

The proposal referenced as being received from Colchester City Council, was submitted by its commercial holding company, which is assumed to be trading for commercial purposes. The implications of any potential proposal and understanding the delivery model must be fully understood and assessed, whilst ensuring that any procurement legal requirements are observed. Further legal implications and the necessary decision making will be advised upon once the detailed proposals are received.

## **FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The report to Cabinet of 26 July 2024 set out the recent financial performance of the Careline Service which identified that in 2023/24, the Council had to subsidise the service by £0.403m for that financial year; with a forecast subsidy for 2024/25 totalling £0.521m.

The five options for the future of the Careline service set out within the July 2024 report were accompanied by financial analysis – with options costed based on each aspect of the service,

including staffing, working patterns, service contracts, Out-of-Hours and the Telecare Services Association (TSA accreditation). The outcome of that financial analysis for each option was summarised as follows:

<b>Option</b>	<b>Potential Budget Required (£)</b>	<b>Potential Cost Pressure Required (£)</b>	<b>Potential One-off Costs required (£)</b>	<b>Alternative Providers in the Market</b>	<b>Comments/Considerations</b>
1	487,538	262,468	286,830	Yes	Recruitment/Retention challenges would remain along with challenges of a competitive market.
2	151,934	(72,956)	746,000	N/A	N/A
3	350,303	125,413	306,830	Yes	Recruitment/Retention challenges would remain along with challenges of a competitive market.
4	425,577	200, 687	378,395	Yes	Recruitment/Retention challenges would remain along with challenges of a competitive market.
5	403,435	178,545	286,830	Yes	Recruitment/Retention challenges would remain along with challenges of a competitive market.

Option 2 was agreed by the Cabinet as the recommended option and an additional £300,000 was set aside for transitional costs which would include contacting service users and/or their next of kin to explain the impact of the change and provide information about alternative providers; exploring redeployment options for affected staff; and the termination period for Careline customers as per their contracts with the Council. An additional amount of £446,000 was also agreed to support other potential one-off costs.

Following the recent consultation, the Cabinet is being asked to consider extending, by three months, the period for completing the review of Careline – allowing time for the consideration of a potential opportunity for working with Colchester City Council to establish a combined service for North East Essex and proposals from other third-parties – as per the recommendations. The addition of three month has a potential cost implication for the Council that would not have been factored into any of the five options considered previously – however, it is considered prudent to invest the additional time in exploring the North East Essex opportunity and other proposals from third-parties before the Cabinet makes a final decision, as they have the potential to offer significant benefits that positively and directly respond to the feedback from the consultation.

Based on the historic performance of the service, a sum of £296,000 was included within the 2024/25 budget to meet the on-going increased subsidy of the service whilst the review was

undertaken. In terms of the financial position to date in 2024/25, there is currently a reduced 'call on' this funding due to increased income from the Your Stride contract alongside reduced employee costs, which reflect on-going recruitment and retention issues. Although this may look positive from a purely financial perspective, as set out elsewhere, it is not sustainable from a service provision position, hence the recent termination of the contract. Although this position will undoubtedly change over the rest of the financial year, it does potentially allow funding to be 'freed up' to support the potential additional cost of the proposed extension to the timescales highlighted above.

With the above in mind, it is difficult at this stage to estimate the actual net cost of extending the timescales. It is also important to highlight that in the immediate term, there may also be opportunities to utilise the one-off money totalling £0.746m mentioned earlier to support the approach proposed, which would need to be considered alongside the work associated with exploring the option of potential collaborative working with partners, that in turn could provide opportunities to reduce the use of this one-off funding.

It is therefore important to bring these relatively complex financial strands of the on-going review of the Careline Service together for inclusion within the proposed report to Cabinet in February 2025. It is however prudent at this stage to acknowledge that there may be net additional costs associated with the proposals set out within the report, which can also be considered as part of future financial performance reports and budget setting activities as required to ensure that necessary and timely adjustments to the budgets can be made.

With the proposal to extend by three months to consider the North East Essex opportunity and other proposals for the Cabinet to take a final decision in February 2025, with implementation completed by the end of June 2025, it is proposed that the financial assumptions for the five options (and any other alternatives) are revisited and that the most up to date financial position, including the impact from the termination of the Your Stride contract are reported to Cabinet in February 2025.

The Cabinet will therefore be able to make a final decision in February 2025 on the basis of updated financial assumptions and a clearer understanding of the North East Essex opportunity or other alternatives and their financial and other implications.

<b>X</b>	<b>The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:</b>
----------	---

No further comments.

#### **USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY**

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;	Full financial information was presented to the Cabinet in July 2024 for the five options – however, for the reasons stated above it is
--	---



	proposed that this information will be revisited to inform any final decision from Cabinet in early 2025 on the future of Careline.
B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including; and	This is a Key Decision (of which notice was published on 7 October 2024. A range of options for the service are identified in this report and it is recommended that additional time is incorporated into the work programme to ensure all reasonable options are given full and proper consideration before the Cabinet settles on a final decision for the future of Careline.
C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.	Full financial information was presented to the Cabinet in July 2024 for the five options – however, for the reasons stated above it is proposed that this information will be revisited to inform any final decision from Cabinet in early 2025 on the future of Careline.

#### **MILESTONES AND DELIVERY**

It is recommended in this report that three months additional time is incorporated into the work programme to explore the opportunity to work with Colchester City Council to establish a combined service for North East Essex and to implement any final decision taken by the Cabinet in early 2024. The milestones for delivery are revised accordingly in the table below:

<b>Milestone Description</b>	<b>Planned Date</b>
Consultation period	19 <sup>th</sup> August to 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 – <u>completed</u> .
Review Options for Out of Hours Provision	Currently ongoing
<b>Cabinet report update report</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>
Communications disseminated as appropriate following Cabinet decision	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Colchester City Council invited to submit formal proposal for a combined North East Essex service (assuming agreement to recommendation f).	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Proposal to be received from Colchester City Council (assuming agreement to recommendation f).	16 <sup>th</sup> December 2024
Consideration of North East Essex proposal and other alternative third-party proposals	From 17 <sup>th</sup> December to 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2025.
<b>Report to Cabinet for final Decision</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> February 2025</b>
Staff consultation commences	March 2025

Sheltered Scheme Users - possible consultation	March 2025
Staff consultation closes	End of April 2025
Transfer of Out-of-Hour's service and CCTV monitoring if applicable	30 June 2025
Transfer of service users to alternative provision(s)	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2025 onwards
Implementation of Transition Plan to monitor and record 'destination' and outcomes for service users	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2025 onwards
Closure of current service (if applicable)	30 June 2025

Should any Cabinet decision be called in for scrutiny, all timescales may need to be adjusted accordingly which could result in an approximate addition of between four and six weeks.

The Trade Union will continue to be updated at all times on the review process including the potential impacts on staff and service users. It has offered support throughout the process.

#### **ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION**

The response to the consultation indicates a clear preference from service users and their next of kin to maintain Careline in its current form – however this is considered to be unaffordable with significant ongoing financial support required. Whilst the consultation feedback does indicate that some service users may be willing to pay more for a telecare only service, the majority are not willing to pay more and the extent to which some people are prepared to accept a fee increase would not be sufficient to address the financial issues at hand. The Cabinet therefore may have to make a difficult decision that runs counter to the popular view – for which communications will be key.

However, a decision to build additional time into the work programme to allow full and proper consideration of Option 2b is a potentially positive and direct response to the feedback received to the consultation. However, until proper analysis of this opportunity has been carried out and any implications and liabilities to the Council have been fully assessed and understood, it might not be appropriate for the Cabinet to commit to a final decision on the future of Careline.

The delay in making a final decision is justified in responding positively to the consultation, exploring opportunities that might offer benefits in security for service users and staff and allows for the financial implications of different options to be recalculated in light of the recent urgent decision to terminate the YourStride contract. However, delay will incur some costs on the Council into the early part of the 2025/26 financial year – albeit a cost offset in part by the saving secured through the termination of YourStride.

A decision to delay a final decision pending the outcome of further consideration of third-party proposals including that from Colchester City Council will require careful communications with service users, staff and other stakeholders – at what will be an unsettling time. However, it is in the best interest of those service users, staff, stakeholders and Tendring residents that time is taken to reflect on the feedback from the consultation and to give full and proper consideration to potential alternative approaches and updated financial information before a final decision is taken.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty (The Public Sector Equality Duty, “PSED”) on the Council in the exercise of their functions and is applicable when making decisions to have due regard to the needs to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful.
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or sexual orientation. The Acts states that notably, ‘marriage and civil partnership’ is not considered a relevant protected characteristic for advancing equality of opportunity (b) and fostering good relations.

Equality Impact Assessments (“EqIA”) were conducted for each of the five options provided within the Cabinet report of 24 July 2024. As it is proposed to incorporate additional time into the work programme to give further full and proper consideration to the opportunity for a combined service with Colchester for North East Essex and for a further report for a final decision to come back to Cabinet in February 2025, along with updated financial analysis for the options, it is also proposed that the EqIAs for the options are revisited and reported back to Cabinet at that time.

The Equality Impact Assessment presented to the Cabinet in July 2024 identified that the proposals outlined in that report may potentially affect both service users and staff, particularly in relation to disability and age. It was also identified that it would be crucial to address any associated impact through any proposed transitional arrangements, with the corresponding costs specified in the financial analysis within the July 2024 report. Several key principles will need to guide the approach, as follows:

- Feedback from service users as part of the consultation.

- The use of data to determine support for individual service users .
- To regularly review and update the Equality Impact Assessments as required.
- To ensure clear Communication to both Service Users and staff.

In proposing additional time for the full and proper consideration of the proposals put forward by Colchester City Council and other third-parties, Officers will return to these principles in any report presented to the Cabinet for its final decision in February 2025.

Of note, as part of the recent consultation, the following question was asked:

Do you consider that you have a Protected Characteristic\* as defined in the Equality Act (2010) that adversely affects your daily life?

*\*Age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation*

The answer options were 'yes', 'no' and 'prefer not to say'. Of those who answered this question, 40% responded 'yes'.

This further emphasises the importance of ensuring that an effective transition plan and associated support is developed to ensure that all service users and next of kin receive that support in a way which is suitable and, so far as possible, personalised, to meet their needs.

## **SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS**

Social Value is defined through the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and requires all public sector organisations (and their suppliers) to look beyond the financial cost of a contract and consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of an area.

This is not relevant to the proposed recommended Option 2, as the Council will not be commissioning or procuring services. The current Careline Service users would have the ability to choose directly from a number of alternative providers on the open market, who are experienced and competitive in delivering telecare services.

Further consideration will need to be given to the opportunity outlined in this report of working with Colchester City Council as part of the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance to explore the possibility of combined service for the North East Essex area as well as considering other third-party proposals. Potential social value benefits could include a positive contribution to the achievement of a more integrated health system approach, continuity and security for existing Careline service users, opportunities for job retention and better value for money for tax-payers. These considerations will need to be fully and properly assessed before any final decision is taken by the Cabinet in due course in relation to the future of Careline.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2050**

No specific implications for reporting at this time; but moving forward any final decision on the future of Careline may have implications for property and fleet which, in turn, may also have implications around carbon usage and reduction.

**OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS**

**Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.**

**Crime and Disorder**

N/A

**Health Inequalities**

The service enables residents to maintain independent lives and there are a number of other providers offering comparable services. A focus of the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance is supporting communities in having more active and healthy lifestyles and moving towards a more integrated health system approach. The opportunity to explore the opportunity of a combined Careline service for North East Essex has the potential to support these aims and objectives and is therefore recommended for full and proper consideration before the Cabinet takes any final decision on the future of Tendring Careline.

**Subsidy Control (the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and the related Statutory Guidance)**

Since the legislation came into force in January 2023, public authorities must assess whether they are providing subsidies within the definition of the Act, which equates to financial assistance conferring an economic advantage to one enterprise over another. An assessment of the contract price agreed by the Council when the contract was entered into demonstrates that the Council has been subsidising third-party contractors.

The decision has already been taken to terminate one such contract, the YourStride contract with AE Partners Ltd and it is recommended that Officers continue reviewing third party contracts to vary and/or terminate as necessary and for the financial implications of different options for Careline be revisited and

	re-reported to Cabinet as part of any February 2025 report.
<b>Area or Ward affected</b>	All

### **PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

#### **BACKGROUND**

Tendring’s Careline Service (*Careline*) has been operational since 1987. When it was established, it provided a unique service to Tendring, allowing service users to maintain independent living through 24/7 monitoring and response. The service has been highly regarded by both customers and their family members. However, the telecare landscape has since changed, with several alternative providers now in the market offering similar services (*including telecare and lifting/response*) at comparable fees – as reported to the Cabinet in July 2024.

Careline is an in-house service (*not a state entity, or Local Delivery Vehicle*) which allows service users to remain living independently in their homes. An additional lifting service was established in 2016, which allows responders to lift service users, if appropriate, providing complementary support to Emergency Services.

In addition to its regular operations (*as outlined above*), the Careline team supports the authority’s Out-of-Hours service. This service provides a Council response to resident queries including Housing, Environmental Health, Emergency Planning, and CCTV during evenings, weekends, and bank holidays. It should be noted that the Out-of-Hours service is a completely separate working function to the Careline service. Outside of Out-of-Hours arrangements, CCTV is currently monitored by the Careline team and footage is downloaded as requested by Essex Police.

The current Careline Service also enables the organisation to fulfil its legal obligation to provide a telecare service for all of its Sheltered Housing tenants. As well as the required telecare service, Careline carries out resident welfare checks at the weekend and Bank Holidays, which involve an optional monitoring check on each resident called ‘I am ok’ to check for a response. If residents do not respond, then the Careline staff endeavour to contact the resident.

At its meeting in July 2024, Cabinet expressed a preference for Option Two of the five options presented which is to provide an out of hours council service only. In meeting the organisation’s Best Value requirements a public consultation was carried out from 19<sup>th</sup> August to 30<sup>th</sup> September, the full details of which are covered elsewhere in this report.

Careline holds a number of contracts of varying detail and complexity ranging from ‘informal’

to fully contractual. The majority of its contracts are for the delivery of a telecare service, the largest of which is with the aforementioned AE Partnerships Ltd. On 24 October 2024, the Leader of the Council on the advice of the Director of Planning and Community and the Council's Monitoring Officer, took an urgent decision to give 16-weeks' notice to terminate the 'YourStride' contract with AE Partners Ltd. For reasons of commercial sensitivity, the full reasons for that decision was set out in a confidential Part B report. However, in summary it was determined that the terms of the contract were allowing for rapid and unmanageable increases in third-party service users increasing significantly the pressure on the staff resources of Careline for which the cost is not met by the income. That contract will formally end in February 2025.

In light of the issues identified in relation to this particular contract, it is proposed that delegated powers are given to Officers to carry out a full review of all other third-party contracts being served by Tendring Careline and for those contracts to be varied and/or terminated accordingly – and for the financial implications to be reflected in a revised set of assumptions to be reported to Cabinet in February 2025 to inform its final decision on the future of Careline. This means progressing, in the short term, with elements of Option 5 i.e. terminating third-party contracts as necessary and then for Cabinet to take a final decision on the future of Careline informed by updated financial analysis taking into account the impact of such terminations.

Careline also holds a number of contracts for supply of service, such as telephony equipment and call alert systems in services users' homes. Appropriate notice will be given to terminate or not renew these contracts. However, should the decision be made to retain the inhouse provision of the Out of Hours, Sheltered Housing response and CCTV monitoring some of the contracts will be adjusted according the level of need.

A transition plan will be developed which will take account of the needs based upon Cabinet's decision for its preferred option and next steps. Every effort will be made to ensure that service users and next of kin receive the support they require to enable them to transition smoothly to the alternative provider of their choice; or to a combined service for North East Essex with Colchester if that opportunity is found to be a suitable and viable proposition. Either way, discussions have also started with Essex County Council to identify ways in which the two organisations can work collaboratively to support those service users who are eligible and wish to transfer to their telecare service. As appropriate, discussion will be opened up with other providers to ensure a smooth handover of all service users in a timely manner.

Human Resources have been meeting with staff and further meetings will be scheduled as required. A full consultation plan is being drafted and will be finalised following Cabinet's final decisions on how it wishes to progress.

Through the consultation, the Council has received enquiries from third-parties regarding taking over the service as well as the suggestion from Colchester City Council of a combined service serving North East Essex. This is not a straightforward process and each proposal will be carefully considered to ascertain whether it truly represents a 'like for like' proposition and

whether it would meet the Best Value requirements as previously described. From initial assessments, it appears that the North East Essex combined service opportunity could have the most potential to achieve this, however more time is needed to review all proposals and for a full proposal to be received from Colchester City Council (and others if appropriate) for consideration. It is proposed that Officers will bring forward their recommendations to Cabinet in February 2025.

Pending the full and proper consideration of these alternative proposals along with an update of the financial analysis for all the options, it is recommended that Option 2 remains the Cabinet preferred option. Option 2 refers to providing an Out of Hours service. At present, this service, along with telecare support for TDC Sheltered Housing residents, is provided within the Careline Service. Out of Hours calls average 547 per month and Sheltered Housing calls average 600 per month.

Out of Hours calls cover a wide can range which includes but is not limited to, homelessness, emergency planning and dangerous structures. The call handler will assess the call and try to signpost the person if possible. As necessary they will also contact the relevant on-call Officer. Calls can last up to twenty minutes depending upon their nature.

To fulfil its legal obligation as a provider of Sheltered Housing, the organisation is obliged to ensure that all tenants have a telecare service provided. At present the service has 261 units of accommodation, with more to be added with the opening of Honeycroft and Spendells, bringing the total to 305. At present the telecare service is provided by Careline. An additional monitoring service for Sheltered Housing tenants, referred to as 'I'm ok', is also covered by Careline in the evenings and at weekends and Bank Holidays

In the financial information accompanying the July 2024 Cabinet report, Option 2 assumed a budget of £152,000 for the provision of the Out of Hours service. Additional funding is available for the provision of the Sheltered Housing support via Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funding and had not been included within the aforementioned figures.

Officers have been carrying out some preliminary research into potential options for maintaining Out of Hours and Sheltered Housing telecare provision out of hours service that could include full retention in house or outsourcing either in full or in part. The advantages and disadvantages of different approaches in financial and other terms require further consideration and analysis and it is recommended that delegated authority is given to Officers in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Partnerships to continue exploring options and to determine the best approach for implementation following the Cabinet's final decision on the future of Careline.

## **PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS**

**26 July 2024: Cabinet:** Report of the Partnerships Portfolio Holder - A.8 - Tendring's Careline Service Review Decision: RESOLVED that Cabinet –



(a) notes the outcome of the review of the service as set out in the Portfolio Holder's report (A.8) and its appendices and agrees the decision, in principle, to adopt Option 2, that is to cease the telecare and lifting/response provision of the Careline Service, in its entirety, including service delivery under third-party contracts and that the remaining service provision will solely relate to the Council's Out-of-Hours and CCTV service;

(b) approves the necessary consultation to be undertaken with customers, residents and key stakeholders. This consultation to be based upon balancing best value principles with the needs of the Council's existing customers, who now have a wider range of options available on the open market, at more comparable rates than the Council can continue to supply the service for;

(c) delegates the format and design of the consultation to the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, in consultation with the Assistant Director (Partnerships) and the Assistant Director (Governance);

(d) agrees the Communication and Engagement Plan with an overriding objective to encourage and support active engagement with services users to understand the principles of Option 2 and the alternative providers available, as well as understanding why Option 2 is the preferred option;

(e) requests that the outcome of the consultation be reported back to the Cabinet in either October or November 2024, for a decision as to the future provision of Careline Services (telecare/lifting/response service), which will include a detailed transition plan as necessary; and

(f) subject to the associated funding being agreed as part of report item A.9 elsewhere on the agenda, sets aside a total budget of £0.746m to meet the potential implementation costs.

Reasons for Decision: Cabinet was satisfied that:-

(i) given the changing market context, the recommendations of the Portfolio Holder were based on what was considered to be the best option for both service users and the Council;

(ii) several other providers on the open market offered a like for like service, at a comparable price. Furthermore, Essex County Council provided a free of charge service, if a resident was referred to them through a statutory provider, such as Adult Social Care or a health care provider; and

(iii) it was also important to highlight the continuing capacity challenges the Authority faced in meeting the needs of a range of service users, including those supported by third party contractual arrangements.

**25 October 2024: Decision by the Leader of the Council:** A decision by Leader of the Council and Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder on 25 October 2024:

Termination of Tendring District Council's Supply of Services Agreement with AE Partners Ltd (trading as 'YourStride) in respect of services provided by the Council's Careline staff.

Decision:

(a) following consultation with the Section 151 and Monitoring Officers, to make an urgent decision, on behalf of the Cabinet, to authorise immediate notice being served on AE Partners Ltd giving 16 weeks prior notification to terminate the Supply of Services Agreement between them and the Council;

(b) that the Directors for Governance and of Planning and Communities be authorised to take the necessary administrative steps to enable this decision to be implemented as soon as possible and without further delay to the Council; and

(c) notification of such decision will be reported to Members accordingly.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Cabinet Report July 26<sup>th</sup> 2024

#### **APPENDICES**

- A. Responses from Consultation
- B. Consultation Questionnaires
- C. List of Stakeholder Groups

#### **REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gary Guiver Carol Magnus</b>
<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Director for Planning and Community Organisational Development Manager</b>
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:gguiver@tendringdc.gov.uk">gguiver@tendringdc.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:cmagnus@tendringdc.gov.uk">cmagnus@tendringdc.gov.uk</a>