

## EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD SHEET

**Name of decision maker: Cllr Janice Marshall**

**Portfolio: Housing**

**Date of Portfolio Holder Decision: 19 January 2007**

**Title of Decision:**

**Extension of Community Alarm Monitoring Contract with Tunstall Response Ltd**

**Decision made and reasons:** To extend the contract with Tunstall Response until such time as Hertfordshire County Council's Supporting People Review of Community Alarm Services has been completed and commissioning/funding arrangements are known. The contract extension period is to be subject to review every 6 months.

**Reports considered: (here reference can be made to specific documents)**  
Background report attached.

**Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders Consulted:**

C.Farrar, Head of Housing  
G Miles, Repairs and Maintenance Manager  
Herts County Council Adult Care Services, Supporting People

**Monitoring Officer/ Chief Financial Officers Comments:**

**Monitoring Officer: No comment to add.**

**Chief Financial Officer: No comment to add.**

**Options considered and reasons for rejection:** The contract would, in normal circumstances, have been re-tendered. However, it would be imprudent to undertake this at present due to uncertainty around the future of commissioning and funding of community alarm services in Hertfordshire.

**Portfolio Holders Signature:**

**Date:**

**Details of any interests declared and any dispensations given by the Standards Committee:**

### For Member Support Officer use only

Date Decision Record Sheet received from portfolio holder: 17/1/07

Date Decision Published: 19/1/07 Decision No: PH/006/07

Date of Expiry of Call-In Period: 26 January 2007

Date any Call-In received or decision implemented:

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### BACKGROUND

1. Following completion of a Best Value Review of the Council's community alarm service, the contract for the provision of the monitoring aspect of the service was tendered and awarded to Tunstall Telecom Ltd (Tunstall Response). The contract commenced on 1 October 2001 and was let on a three year basis with the option to extend to five years subject to satisfactory performance. The full term of the contract expired on 30 September 2006.
2. While some operational and performance issues have arisen during the course of the contract, performance has generally been good and service user feedback has always been very positive.
3. The future commissioning and funding of community alarm services in Hertfordshire is currently subject to a strategic review by Hertfordshire County Council Adult Care Services (Supporting People). While the present arrangement is that services are provided locally by a number of individual providers which include local authorities and Registered Social Landlords, indications are that the review is likely to recommend a single or fewer larger service providers who will be commissioned and funded to provide community alarm services across the county. This will ensure consistency in terms of quality and cost for Hertfordshire service users and reduce the overall charge to the Supporting People grant.
4. Although a definitive date for the completion of the strategic review is not yet known, this is a priority task for the Supporting People team and it is likely to be completed within the next year or so. It would therefore be imprudent for the Council to enter into a new fixed term contract for the provision of monitoring services at this time. Tunstall Response are willing to continue providing services on the same contractual terms and conditions as previously agreed, with the exception of cost. Current and new charges offered by Tunstall (to take effect from 1 January 2007) are as follows:

Service	Current cost	Cost from 1 January 2007
Community Alarm	£8.32 per unit per annum Total: £25,292.80 pa	£10.40 per unit per annum Total: £31,616.00 pa
Out of hours repairs	£5,257.20 per annum	£6,243.66 per annum

While these increases appear excessive if measured against the rate of inflation over the five year term of the contract (25% and 18.8% respectively), the new charges offered by Tunstall remain lower than the lowest competing tender received in 2001 by a total of £12,569.30. The increase in the community alarm monitoring charge equates to an increase from 16p per unit per week to 20p per unit per week

5. The increased cost to the Council for the provision of these services will necessitate a review of the Supporting People charge in respect of support services provided to sheltered housing tenants and of the charge made to Lifeline customers, to take effect from 1 April 2007. Similarly, provision will need to be made within the housing repairs budget to take account of the increased cost of the out of hours response service.

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6. A continuation of the provision of community alarm monitoring and out of hours repairs response services by Tunstall Response represents a practical solution at the present time. It provides the Council with value for money and vulnerable service users with continuity. The proposed agreement with Tunstall provides for an initial extension of the contract for a term of six months, at which point further extensions will be negotiated if this is required by the Council.