

## Record of operational decision

<b>Decision title:</b>	To approve a direct award for the Technology Enabled Care Service (TECS)
<b>Date of decision:</b>	18 July 2025 (updated 9 October 2025)
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Paul Walker (Chief Executive)
<b>Authority for delegated decision:</b>	<p>Under Part 4 Section 2 (4.2.52) special urgency of Herefordshire Council's Constitution:</p> <p>If because of the date by which a decision must be taken, paragraph 4.2.49-51 (general exception) cannot be followed, then the decision can only be taken if the decision maker (if an individual) or the chairperson of the body making the decision, has obtained the agreement of:</p> <p>(a) the chairperson of the relevant scrutiny committee; or</p> <p>(b) if there is no chairperson of the relevant scrutiny committee or in his / her absence, the chairperson of the council, or</p> <p>(c) in the absence of the chairperson of the relevant scrutiny committee or the chairperson of the council, the vice-chairperson of the council</p> <p>that the making of the decision is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred.</p>
<b>Ward:</b>	Countywide
<b>Consultation:</b>	<p>The following internal representatives / teams and external organisations have been engaged with as part of this emergency process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader of the Council</li> <li>• Cabinet Member Adults, Health and Wellbeing</li> <li>• Chairperson Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee</li> <li>• Corporate Director Community Wellbeing</li> <li>• All Age Commissioning Team</li> <li>• Legal Team</li> <li>• Procurement Team</li> <li>• Finance Team</li> <li>• NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB)</li> <li>• Wye Valley (NHS) Trust</li> <li>• Directors of Adult Social Care Services (ADASS)</li> <li>• Local Government Association (LGA)</li> <li>• TEC Services Association (TSA)</li> <li>• National TECS providers</li> </ul>
<b>Decision made:</b>	To approve a direct award to Careium UK Limited for Herefordshire's Technology Enabled Care Service (TECS), including reactive and proactive call monitoring.

	<p>This is in the event that the current provider, NRS Healthcare, is unable to continue delivering the service on behalf of the council and ICB.</p> <p>The service will be delivered by Careium UK Limited until 31 March 2027. The contract value is £565,000 per year or £941,666 over the full lifetime of the contract.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>	<p>The Technology Enabled Care Service is a joint contract between Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) and both organisations have a statutory duty to provide community equipment, including telecare, as set out in the Care Act 2014.</p> <p>The council and ICB have been advised by the current TECS provider, NRS Healthcare, that it is experiencing significant financial challenges, which will impact on its viability to continue delivering its services both in Herefordshire and across the UK beyond July 2025.</p> <p>The council and ICB have considered different service options and developed an emergency contingency plan, in the event this occurs, to ensure service continuity both now and in the future for Herefordshire's residents.</p> <p>The direct award to Careium UK Limited will provide service continuity and stability to ensure the council and ICB continue to observe their statutory duties and provide technology related equipment and call monitoring to meet the assessed eligible health and social care needs of people in Herefordshire. As Careium UK Limited has another contract with Herefordshire Council and confirmed it has capacity to provide the TECS contract, the council is confident the provider will be able to successfully mobilise at pace to ensure continued service delivery.</p>
<b>Equality considerations:</b>	<p>Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:</p> <p>A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act</li> <li>b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it</li> <li>c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</li> </ul> <p>The provision of this service will have no negative impact on any group with a protected characteristic. The service is available to anyone with an assessed eligible health or social care need, in order to maintain users' safety and independence. Therefore, it positively helps to advance equality of opportunity between different groups.</p>
<b>Highlight any associated risks / finance / legal / equality</b>	<p>There are some associated risks with a direct award to Careium UK Limited, however the decision complies with Schedule 5, Paragraph 13 (Urgency) of the Procurement Act 2023.</p>

<b>considerations:</b>	The Commissioning Manager sought advice and guidance from the council's Legal and Procurement Teams prior to recommending the service change.
<b>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</b>	<p><b>Do nothing:</b></p> <p>This option is not recommended, especially as the current provider has indicated it may not be able to continue providing the service in Herefordshire beyond July 2025. The council and ICB have a statutory obligation to provide community equipment, including telecare, for those with an assessed eligible health or social care need. The service also forms a crucial part of the council's prevention agenda, as it helps keep residents safe and independent in their own homes and communities for longer, delaying the need for more formal health and / or social care interventions.</p> <p><b>Run the service in partnership with another council:</b></p> <p>This option was investigated, but is not recommended at this time. Following emergency meetings with neighbouring councils, it has been confirmed that this cannot be achieved in the short or medium term, particularly where there are operational service differences or where an external provider is already contracted.</p> <p><b>Bring the service in-house:</b></p> <p>This option is not recommended. Technology related equipment, especially new emerging proactive equipment can require specialist knowledge for installation, maintenance and repair. As the council will potentially have a short time frame to mobilise this service, there are less risks involved if it is contracted through a national provider. Even if the equipment element was brought in-house, the council would still need to contract with a national provider for an ARC (Alarm Receiving Centre) for all its call monitoring, therefore it is more prudent to offer both service elements to a single external provider to ensure service continuity and stability.</p>
<b>Details of any declarations of interest made:</b>	None.

Signed: Paul Walker

Date: 18 July 2025 and 9 October 2025

This record of operational decision was updated on 9 October 2025 to include the contract value.