

Committee Name: Cabinet

Committee Date: 08/09/2021

Report Title: The extension of an awarded contract for warden call upgrades to sheltered housing schemes

Portfolio:	Councillor Harris - Deputy leader and social housing
Report from:	Executive director of community services
Wards:	All Wards
OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	

Purpose:

To consider an extension to an awarded contract for warden call upgrades to sheltered housing schemes

Recommendation:

To approve the extension of an awarded contract for warden call upgrades to sheltered housing schemes with M English Security Ltd

Policy Framework

The Council has three corporate priorities, which are:

- People living well
- Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment
- Inclusive economy

This report meets the great neighbourhoods, housing and environment corporate priority.

This report addresses good quality housing strategic action in the Corporate Plan.

This report helps to meet People living well adopted policy of the Council.

This report helps to meet housing, regeneration and development objective of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

Report Details

Identification of need and background

1. The council operates 26 sheltered housing schemes across the city, all of which provide a warden call system to each resident. The system ensures that in the event of an emergency or unplanned event such as a fall, the resident can speak to a person at the council's alarm centre who will arrange appropriate help.
2. The existing system hardware (excluding that at St James House) had been in place for more than twenty years and the equipment had reached or exceeded the recommended life expectancy, so the systems required upgrading with new equipment and modern software. Each sheltered scheme had been placed in a programme, prioritised according to age of system and current reliability.
3. In June 2019, Cabinet agreed to award a contract to M English Security Ltd to undertake site installation works. The contract was valued at £700,000 for the whole programme and Cabinet specifically agreed to award the contract to 31 October 2021.
4. In March 2020, the programme was put on hold due to the Covid-19 outbreak. Works re-commenced in August 2020 but there have been, and still are, understandable challenges for M English Security Ltd in accessing dwellings due to the pandemic and as a result it has not been possible to complete the work to the originally scheduled deadline of 31 October 2021.
5. The Sheltered Housing Team Leader has advised that a good working relationship has been established with M English Security Ltd. This has enabled a very streamlined process for each scheme with minimal disruption to tenants taking place during the upgrade installation. M English Security Ltd are professional and understand the needs of our tenants who have said they have been treated with respect and are extremely happy with the engineers. As a result, it is considered that the best option is to extend the contract term to allow M English Security Ltd to finish the work.
6. Advice has been sought from NPLaw who have advised that although no further budget is being sought nor a change in supplier, the request for the extension requires cabinet approval as it is contrary to the original Cabinet decision agreed on 31 October 2021.

Procurement process and timeline

7. The contract award for the budget required to enable the remaining site installations up to 31 October 2021 was approved by Cabinet on 12 June 2019 (as at Point 3 above). The overall cost for the whole upgrade programme was estimated to be £700,000.

8. Out of the £700,000 award value, the actual cost of upgrades carried out by M English Security Ltd up to the upgrade at Harry Perry Close (due for completion in September 2021) is at £317,652.
9. The estimated value of outstanding schemes and upgrades to be completed is £345,000.00. The completion of this outstanding work will keep the council under the original £700,000 budget.
10. When Cabinet agreed to award the contract, it specifically agreed to do so up to 31 October 2021. Due to the complications as a result of Coronavirus (as set out above), it has not been possible to complete the work at this point. The original contract with M English Security Ltd allowed for the Council to extend the term of the contract and there is no requirement to formally re-tender the contract at this stage. It is estimated the upgrades to be included in this contract will be concluded prior to **31 March 2025**.
11. M English Security Ltd have confirmed they have the capacity to carry out the remainder of the upgrades programme required to 31 March 2025.

Consultation

12. The Portfolio holder Councillor Harris – Deputy Leader and Social Housing has been briefed on this proposal. In addition, the process of designing and programming the Warden Call Upgrade scheme has involved detailed discussion with NCC Heads of Service, NCC Housing officers, NCC Procurement, NCC Finance and Electrical Engineers within the Major Works section within NPS Norwich Ltd.
13. This proposal is not subject to Leaseholder Consultation. There are no Leaseholders in Sheltered Housing accommodation.

Implications

Financial and Resources

14. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2019-22 and Budget.
15. The value of the total award remains at **£700,000** and no further budget is being sought for the variation of this contract. Out of the £700,000, £317,652 has currently been spent and the remaining works are estimated to be £345,000.
16. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources.

Legal

17. This contract will be in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Statutory Considerations

Consideration:	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	Neutral
Health, Social and Economic Impact	There is a significant positive impact for tenants (both physically and mentally) to be able to rely on a Warden Call system that is efficient and reliable. It allows carers to react quickly in urgent situations and will at times be instrumental in saving lives or preventing injury. It provides the assurance that a call for assistance will be responded to quickly.
Crime and Disorder	Neutral
Children and Adults Safeguarding	The supplier and all associated sub-contractors must adhere to the councils Safeguarding Policy statement.
Environmental Impact	Neutral

Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
Operational	Slippage or non-delivery of the programme by M English Security Ltd.	A Senior Electrical Engineer in NPS Norwich Ltd. will act as the Contract Administrator for this scheme. This will involve regular update meetings, site visits and monitoring etc. M. English Security Ltd. have undertaken a substantial amount of upgrades to date and their performance has been excellent. They have stated that they have capacity to deliver the programme up until the end of the contract in 2025.
Financial	Additional costs	As above, cost control and expenditure will be carefully managed by NPSN Ltd.

Compliance	Non-compliance of installed systems.	The upgrades are designed to comply with current standards. Installation, inspections, and commissioning will be carried out by NPSN Ltd.
Security	Risk to residents and their possessions during the upgrade works.	The supplier and all associated sub-contractors must adhere to the councils Safeguarding Policy statement. Contractors and NPSN Ltd. will work closely with the Sheltered Housing Manager to ensure that clear communication takes place with tenants to provide assurance that security will be maintained at all times.
Legal	Non-compliance with legislation could result in a sub-standard installation. In addition, legal non-compliance may result in delays	NPLaw have been consulted regarding the proposed programme. All works will be compliant with current regulations and standards.
Professional and reputational	The installation of sub-standard, poorly executed installation of upgrades will have a negative impact on tenants and would be detrimental politically and reputationally to the council	As detailed above this programme has been carefully and thoroughly planned, designed and procured. The contractor has already completed part of the programme to a very high standard. The focus will be on maintaining these high standards for the duration of the contract.

Other Options Considered

Do nothing:

18. The current contract ends on 31 October 2021.
19. Warden call systems ensure that vulnerable adults have access to help when needed. It is essential to the wellbeing of our vulnerable tenants (especially in the light of increased anxiety due to the isolation caused by the Covid 19 Pandemic) that this Warden Call facility to access help is maintained with systems that are reliable and effective.
20. **Identify a new procurement route for a new supplier to provide the works from 01 November 2021:** The delays to the programme are not related to the performance of M English Security Ltd who have provided an excellent service to date and undertaken their role as supplier in a professional and efficient manner. The Covid 19 Pandemic has had an impact on service delivery. The procurement was competitively tendered in 2019 and M English Security Ltd represented the best value at that time.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

21. The Council is being recommended to continue with M English Security Ltd. as the supplier of Warden Call Upgrades and that the contract be varied with a revised end date of 31 March 2025. The contract will continue to include clauses which allows the Council to vary the terms of the contract.
22. The **Report Details** above outline the high quality of service provided by M English Security Ltd. In addition, value for money is still achieved with maintaining the existing supplier.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

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