

BRIEFING NOTE

Agenda Item no. 8

TO: Social Care & Inclusion Panel

DATE: 12 July 2012

Community Alarms Charging Policy

Purpose

This briefing note has been written in response to Councillor Enquiry, requesting an update on the implementation of Community Alarms charging policy.

Current Position

The introduction of the Community Alarms charging commenced in via an incremental process from September 2011, with an annual bill issued to citizens who were not in receipt of social care community based services. Payment options were monthly at £12.50, or a one off annual payment with a discount of £10 applied, making the total annual payment £140.00. The charge was introduced is for the emergency response service, as opposed to the community alarm itself or other telecare equipment. As at 25 June 2012 1755 citizens have either paid in full or via monthly instalments, raising £207K income to date.

Following the introduction of the charge, a proportion of citizens have chosen not to continue with the service and have requested the telecare equipment is decommissioned. A review of the service users circumstances are undertaken prior to decommissioning the alarm. This includes, where appropriate, involvement from Welfare Rights Team.

Following Council decision made on 22 February 2012 with effect from 1st April 2012, to cease charging citizens aged 80 or over, an exercise is currently underway to refund citizens who made a one off annual payment in advance. There are 673 of these clients who will be refunded between £58.36 and £116.68 at a total cost to the Council of £46K.

Citizens aged 80 or over who pay for the service via a monthly option have been advised to cease payments and refunds are in the process of being issued to those people. There a campaign currently being planned, to promote the availability of free telecare support to citizens aged 80 and over across the borough.

Author

Anne Doyle

Service Manager

☎ 07983 612424

Doyleanne@walsall.gov.uk

