
REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: SPECIAL – BUDGET	AGENDA ITEM: 6
DATE OF MEETING:	11th JANUARY 2018	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (CORPORATE RESOURCES)	OPEN
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SUBJECT:	LONE WORKER DEVICE	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	NONE	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM05

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 To approve the purchase of an IT solution, Solo-Protect, to enhance the health and safety management arrangements for employees of the Council who are assessed at risk due to the requirement to lone work or undertake work activities where there is an increased risk to their health and safety – working out of hours for example.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To outline the benefits of using an IT based lone working system to improve the health and safety management arrangements used by the Council.

3.0 Detail

Lone Working

- 3.1 Whilst working alone is perfectly legal, any employer owes all staff a duty of care, and as such they need to consider the risks to that worker's health and safety in the workplace.
- 3.2 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) define lone workers as “those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.” An organisation will need to consider and put in to place adequate and appropriate control measures to mitigate any risk to employees.
- 3.3 The Council has a range of control measures in place to mitigate such risk that includes provision of mobile phones for staff, call in arrangements and other local methods developed to meet the needs of the service.
- 3.4 To enhance the arrangements, an IT based solution, Solo-Protect, has been identified that is both easy to use, effective and following discussions at the Health and Safety Committee is recommend to be implemented across the Council.

Solo-Protect – Lone worker system

- 3.5 In 2002, Craig Swallow (MD of Solo-Protect) attended a Suzy Lamplugh Trust event focused on Lone Worker Safety. With a background in telecommunications, and an idea based around a wearable device to improve staff safety, he developed a system, around the delegate name badges and the first steps towards the Solo-Protect device were established.
- 3.6 The Solo-Protect solution has since been widely used in the UK and worldwide. A number of local authorities, NHS Trusts, Housing Associations and internationally recognised organisations have recognised the benefits of using the solution and implemented as part of their health and safety management arrangements for their workforce.

Solo-Protect – the solution

- 3.7 The solution is basically a two-way audio lone worker device uniquely styled as an identity badge. It's easy to wear, discreet to use and always within reach by a lone worker. It is also accredited with the British Standard for such devices (see 3.10)
- 3.8 Equipped with Global Positioning System (GPS) commonly used in Sat Navs and other directional IT solutions it enables the wearer to be instantly located when the device is activated and support summoned. It also has an automatic incapacitation alarm (commonly referred to as 'Man Down') if for any reason the device cannot be activated by the wearer but the device is moved to a different position – this can also help to summon assistance if the wearer is knocked unconscious or collapsing due to ill health.
- 3.9 When the system is activated, an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) staffed by fully trained employees is able to listen in to conversations and then determine if support is required for the wearer. Due to their unique relationship with the Police any calls are responded to quicker by the Police when compared with 999 calls. This ensures that the wearer is not put at increased risks when summoning support and the decision of when to request support is taken by staff that are trained to recognise when this is appropriate.

Standards for Lone Working Solutions

- 3.10 The British Standard for Lone Worker Device Services [BS 8484:2016] is the benchmark for a credible lone worker solution in the United Kingdom. The standard is important for three key reasons:
 - It determines the category of Police response a lone worker receives. A BS8484 approved solution is escalated directly into the relevant control room one level higher than a 999 call.
 - It gives a clear indication about whether or not, the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) element of a solution is accredited to EN 50518 (The European Standard for Alarm Receiving Centres).
 - It indicates that a supplier is on a financial footing to successfully deliver your solution for the duration of a contract.

Data Protection Act (1988)

- 3.11 A fundamental consideration when recording conversations and the storage and handling of data relates to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1988. The first data principle deals with fair & lawful processing. Section 29 (1) (a) of the Data Protection Act 1988, outlines the exemptions to this principle that includes for the purpose of the prevention and detection of crime and the protection of persons at work for the reasons of Health & Safety. The solution offered by Solo-Protect is fully compliant with the DPA.

Health and Safety Committee

- 3.12 The Committee, at its meeting held on 25 October 2017, received a report on this device and the benefits it would provide to the Council and its workforce. The Committee, that includes Elected Member and Trade Union representatives, supported the implementation of Solo-Protect and the development of local arrangements around where and how it would be used for staff.
- 3.13 Those service areas that have lone workers have also been consulted and have also given their support for the introduction of the proposed solution.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The annual cost for the supply of 20 devices is £4,440 based on a three year service contract with the option to opt out after 12 months. It is therefore proposed to review the appropriateness of this system before continuing into years 2 & 3 of the service contract. The cost will be charged to and financed from the Corporate Health and Safety Budget.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 The provision of an IT based solution will enhance and promote a positive safety culture at the Council and provide an additional control measure for those staff that are identified as lone workers.

6.0 Background Papers

- 6.1 Supporting information produced for the Health & Safety Committee held on 25th October 2017 can also be referenced.