

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

Community Select Committee

9 March 2022

TITLE:	Handy Van Service
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Damien Greenhalgh- Deputy Leader & Executive Councillor for Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure
CONTACT OFFICER:	David Smith – Head of Communities and Climate Change
WARDS INVOLVED:	All

Appendices Attached – Appendix A: Practical Resources in Derbyshire, Appendix B: Update from Connex Community Support.

1. Reason for the Report

1.1 To update Councillors on the termination of the County Handy Van Scheme and future arrangements.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That Councillors note the contents of the report.

3. Executive Summary

3.1 The contract for delivery of the Derbyshire Handy Van Scheme ends on 31 March 2022. Alternative arrangements have been put in place, some of which are interim arrangements to allow for consultation and subsequent development of redesigned services.

4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The report links to the Council's objectives of supporting local communities under Aim 1: Supporting our communities to create a healthier, safer, cleaner High Peak

5. Alternative Options

5.1 None identified

Neil Rodgers
Executive Director (Place)

Web Links and Background Papers

Health and Care Bill

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-care-bill-factsheets/health-and-care-bill-information>

Department of Health & Social Care, People at the Heart of Care

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1037594/people-at-the-heart-of-care_asc-form-accessible.pdf

Department of Health & Social Care, Joining up care for people, places and populations

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1055687/joining-up-care-for-people-places-and-populations-web-accessible.pdf

Derbyshire County Council, Consultation on changes to the eligibility criteria for the community alarm system

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/consultation-search/consultation-details/changes-to-the-eligibility-criteria-for-the-community-alarm-system.aspx>

Derbyshire County Council, Older People's Independent Living Services Consultation and Review

[Independent Living.pdf \(derbyshire.gov.uk\)](#)

Contact details

David Smith

Head of Communities and Climate Change

david.smith@highpeak.gov.uk

6. Detail

- 6.1 The Derbyshire Handy Van Scheme was introduced around 2008 to address affordable warmth with a focus on cold and damp homes. The initial scheme was externally funded for 3 years following a successful funding bid that was led by High Peak Borough Council. The funding was 'unlocked' through Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service (DFRS) offering the vehicles as a gift in kind.
- 6.2 Once the initial funding had ended, Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and DFRS took over funding for the scheme. DFRS took on responsibility for the lease hire of the vans, their maintenance, insurance and fuel. DCC took on responsibility for staffing and ancillary equipment.
- 6.3 Over time, some of the work that was carried out by the scheme was transferred to other commissioned services and other activities were ended

because of working at height restrictions and asbestos testing regulations. The scheme thus moved away from its original purpose of providing practical support but without formal review.

- 6.4 The breakdown of Handy Van service activity for the whole of Derbyshire in recent years was around 43% Safe and Well Checks, 40% community alarm installation and maintenance, and 17% practical tasks.
- 6.5 Connex have been commissioned to provide the Handy Van Service in High Peak and Derbyshire Dales. The current County contracts had been extended but cannot be further extended beyond the end of March 2022. The vehicles that are used to provide the scheme are also approaching the end of their viable lifespan which has resulted in increased maintenance costs in recent years.
- 6.6 In 01/09/20 to 01/08/21, there were 596 cases in the area covered by Connex (which includes High Peak and Derbyshire Dales). Out of those cases, 49 were to deliver practical tasks, which resulted in 56 actions be carried out. These actions included:
- furniture assembly, dismantling or removal
 - Installation or set up of mirrors, pictures, light bulbs, shelves
 - Investigate or repair; toilet roll holders, cupboards, doors and drawers, shower rail, curtains, fix bird table
 - Maintenance; bleed radiator, re-seal bath/shower
- 6.7 The policy and legislative environment has developed in recent years and continues to do so:
- The Health and Care Bill is currently progressing through Parliament
 - The Government published its People at the Heart of Care, Adult Social Care Reform White Paper in December 2021.
 - The government's proposals for health and care integration were published in February 2022.
- 6.8 DCC (and DFRS) have stated that as the contract was coming to its natural end, and because clients were accessing provision on an ad hoc basis (not receiving an ongoing regular service,) the partners concluded that they were not required to undertake a consultation on ending the scheme and that there was no requirement for a decision report to be posted in the public domain. The County Council is however currently consulting on proposals to make changes to the community alarm element of the Assistive Technology service, to ensure that the eligibility criteria is fair and equitable across Derbyshire (closes 1 May 2022). DCC's Cabinet will also be asked on 10 March 2022 to approve a 12-week consultation on the future provision of the Older People's Independent Living Services (OP ILS) and Falls Recovery Service (FRS).
- 6.7 In light of the above, DCC and DFRS concluded that they could no longer support the scheme in its current form and needed to take the opportunity to consider current and future service demands across the County. Appendix A

provides details of practical resources that are available to carry out the tasks previously delivered by the Handy Van Scheme. In brief:

- The assistive technology (AT) element will be part of the new overarching AT service that is being developed;
- Safe and Well checks will be taken back in-house by DFRS to reflect their revised geographical footprint and new risk stratification priorities
- Practical tasks are covered by a range of existing offers including; Simple Services, Derbyshire Trusted Trader, and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

6.8 Community Alarms and Telecare will be installed and maintained through an alternative provider from the 1 April whilst the consultation about Assistive Technology and Telecare is undertaken. Existing customers will continue to receive their services pending any changes. It is recognised that the service will experience some capacity issues as the interim arrangements are put in place. The service will triage calls to ensure that available capacity is targeted to the most urgent cases.