

TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: PURCHASE OF COMMUNITY ALARM DISPERSED UNITS – TENDER OUTCOME
FROM: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
DATE: 15 JANUARY 2004	REF: JN/CC/TB	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the tender returns for the purchase of 1000 dispersed Community Alarm Units, and to advise Committee that the tender has been progressed in accordance with the delegated powers given to the Director of Administration.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Social Work Committee on the 28th August 2003 approved the purchase of a further 1,000 dispersed Community Alarm Units, as detailed in the report "Service Developments 2003-04", section 3.6

3 TENDER RETURNS

3.1 Four UK Based manufacturers and suppliers of Community Alarm Units were invited to tender, these being:

- i. Initial Shurrock
- ii. Tunstall Telecom
- iii. Attendo Systems
- iv. Cirrus Communication Systems

3.2 The deadline for submission of tenders was noon on Thursday 30th October 2003.

3.3 All four companies submitted tenders by the prescribed deadline.

4. ANALYSIS OF TENDER RETURNS

4.1 All tenders were opened in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

4.2 The tenders were evaluated against a specification given to companies within the tender documentation.

4.3 The areas examined were:

- (i) Price: Hardware, Maintenance Costs and Response Times Comparison of Systems
- (ii) Compatibility with existing NLC Equipment
- (iii) Past Experience
- (iv) Reliability

4.4 An examination of the tender documentation submitted indicated that all four systems met the specification as outlined in the tender document. Indeed, three exceeded the specification in differing aspects of Smart Technology.

5. FINANCE

5.1 With regard to the price:

i.	Initial Community Care	£86,000	per unit	£86.00
ii.	Tunstall Telecom	£90,000	per unit	£90.00
iii.	Attendo Systems	£104,000	per unit	£104.00
iv.	Cirrus Communication Systems	£99,750	per unit	£99.75

5.2 All tenders include the 2 year on site maintenance arrangements asked for in the specification.

5.3 Any subsequent maintenance contracts will be dealt with as per North Lanarkshire Council's Contract Standing Orders.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 In determining which tender would be considered best value, factors which were deemed critical to the process were compatibility with existing Call Centre Equipment, reliability, past experience of all companies products and after sales service within North Lanarkshire.

6.2 The Social Work Department has had experience of working with 3 of the companies who submitted tenders Cirrus Communication Systems being the exception.

6.3 On receiving the sample units supplied by the tendering companies these were subjected to a 16 point test.

6.4 In respect of Attendo Systems , albeit on a relatively small scale, the experience has not been positive. after sales advice and support has been lacking. The reliability of the unit purchased at the time was deemed to be of a poor standard. Attendo have produced a new unit (The Horizon). On this occasion Attendo submitted the highest bid.

6.5 Initial Community Care have provided the Eclipse dispersed alarm unit in the past. This unit was regarded as being sturdy and very well made. The unit does however have a relatively high failure rate in comparison to other types of unit. The battery life on the unit has also been a cause for concern. Home support workers also commented on difficulties when programming the unit and the time the programming took. Initial provided the lowest bid for the tender on this occasion.

6.6 Experience of Tunstall Telecom has been positive in terms of after sales advice, support and response to operational requirements and reliability. Tunstall have responded to the requests for lower prices by changing the spec on a new unit (compact EL) to meet the requirements of the service, eliminating features not used in North Lanarkshire. This unit has retained the look and build quality of the LifeLine 1000. Tunstall Telecom submitted the second lowest price.

6.7 This is the first occasion which Cirrus have been asked to tender for dispersed community alarm units. Cirrus do not manufacture units but supply and service others products including those of British Telecom. Cirrus tendered with the option of two units both for the same price.

BT Touch 1000

This unit incorporates a telephone with the alarm unit. The unit also has voice features which alert the service users to problems such as power failure and phone line failure. The unit is well designed and looked not unlike any other modern telephone. Staff were impressed by its feature and its ease of operation.

Smart Call Carephone C2400

No instructions came with this unit and it was therefore not tested.

The tender from Cirrus Communications was second highest.

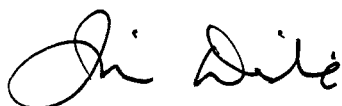
7 RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Albeit the Tunstall Telecom bid was higher in unit cost, taking into consideration the reliability, longevity and superior operation of the equipment, it is considered the Tunstall Telecom bid offers best value. It is recommended to committee that Tunstall Telecom be awarded the contract to supply the 1,000 dispersed units.

Whilst acknowledging the additional functionality of the various systems, at the present time the basic requirements outlined in the specification effectively and efficiently meet the support needs of in excess of 90% of current service users. Reliability and the costs involved both monetary and in staff time of replacing faulty units was a major factor in the recommendation.

7.2 Committee is asked to:

- i. note that in accordance with the delegations given to the Director of Administration, this purchase is being progressed after consultation with the Convenor.
- ii. note the terms of this report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
November 2002

*For further information on this report please contact Jim Nisbet, Manager, Older Peoples Services
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background papers are available from Jim Nisbet, Manager Older Peoples Services, Tel:01698 332051.