

Report for: CABINET

Date of Meeting:	4 June 2024
Subject:	Report of the Public Access Working Group
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Jane Lock, Cabinet Member for Working Environment
Responsible Officer:	Lisa Lewis, Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement
Exempt:	No
Wards Affected:	N/A
Enclosures:	Public Access Working Group Report

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

This report is to present the findings of the Public Access Working Group and subsequent recommendations from the Community PDG to Cabinet.

Recommendation(s):

That the Cabinet approve the installation of an intercom for use by the public when Phoenix House is closed (available office hours only); as recommended by the Community PDG of 26 March 2024.

Report

- 1.0 On the 26 March 2024 the Community PDG approved a report of the Public Access Working Group and agreed to recommend to Cabinet the installation of an intercom for use at Phoenix House.
- 1.1 The working group had met to discuss and assess current practice and impacts on vulnerable residents of the opening hours at Phoenix House.
- 1.2 The Working Group report is attached which outlines what was discussed and agreed. The outcome of which is the recommendation above.
- 2.0 The cost of the intercom solution is approximately £1,000.

- 2.1 The intercom will work by simply lifting the handset. The customer will then be automatically connected to the contact centre at which point the following will be determined:
- Do they have a current appointment
 - Do they require an appointment
 - An assessment will be made to determine if the customer requires immediate assistance
- 2.2 The intercom will be available for use during standard working hours when the building is closed to the public, i.e. when the interior doors are closed. It should be noted that it is not intended for access to the building requests by staff or members unless by prior arrangement.
- 2.3 At the Community PDG's request note taking facilities will be provided.
- 3.0 In addition to the above recommendation the working group has requested that the Parking Services working group consider a request to establish 1 hour free parking for Blue Badge holders. This request has been passed to the relevant service managers by the Head of Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement.
- 3.1 Should the intercom installation be authorised, a review will be done six months after installation to confirm usage. A verbal report will be given at Community PDG.
- 3.2 The working group agreed, that on the submission of this report that the group would be disbanded. Further issues/concerns around accessibility will be referred to the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion group.

Financial Implications – See paragraph 2.0

Legal Implications - None

Risk Assessment – Low Risk – the inclusion of an intercom solution ensures that customers in crisis are able to speak with an officer during office hours but when the building is closed.

Impact on Climate Change - There is no impact or opportunity for improvement/adaptation in conjunction with MDDC Climate Action Plan.

Equalities Impact Assessment - The proposed provision of an intercom improves MDDC access for those that are vulnerable or with protected characteristics that may impact on their ability to transact with the council.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151
Date: 21/05/24

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 21/05/24

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director
Date: 21/05/24

Performance and risk: Steve Carr
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager
Date: 14/05/2024

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Lisa Lewis, Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement
Email: llewis@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 234981

Background papers: Access Vulnerable Customers Comm PDG Working Group Report