

To: Cabinet –1st February 2010

By: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member, and Amanda Honey, Managing Director, Communities

Subject: The Kent Supporting People Programme and the Five Year Supporting People Strategy 2010-2015

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

The report presents a draft strategy for the Supporting People Programme for 2010-15 for endorsement and recommendation for approval to the Kent Supporting People Commissioning Body.

FOR DECISION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Supporting People Programme is funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) awarding local authorities an annual allocation of funding for services to enable vulnerable people to maintain their housing situation, and therefore continue to live within the community and contribute to the overall well being of life within those communities. In Kent in 2009/10 the Programme is expected to spend just under £35 million on housing related support services. The Programme is a key contributor to the Local Area Agreement supporting a range of indicators including for example, skills, health, mental health reducing offending and alcohol and drug misuse.

1.2 The Programme has been working within a 5 year plan which draws to a close in 2010 and a new medium term strategy is therefore now necessary. This report provides a resume of the Programme, and the context within which a proposed new strategy has been developed. An executive summary is attached at Appendix one. A full version is available via the following weblink:

www.kent.gov.uk/communityandliving/housing-related_support/policies_and_strategy.aspx

2. THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME

2.1 The Programme seeks to promote independence and the prevention of the breakdown in independent living. It delivers, within a commissioning based framework, housing-related support services in short and long term accommodation, “floating support” and Home Improvement Agency/Handyperson services.

2.2 Floating support is currently delivered to 23,000 people across 21 client groups and is provided within any housing tenure to deliver housing related support for a period of up to two years. The service user profile reflects individuals and

groups known to Adult Social Services, Communities, Children, Families and Education, Probation, Housing and Health.

2.3 Housing related support provides the following services:

- Understanding tenancy or occupancy agreement
- Managing debt, budgeting and applying for benefits
- Getting on with neighbours
- Life and social skills
- Setting up home and resettlement
- Staying safe at home
- Dealing with other agencies
- Taking up daytime activities; training, education employment

2.4 The Home Improvement Agencies and the handyman services are funded in conjunction with district housing departments, other fee income, charitable funding, and in some cases health funding. The service enables people within the owner occupied and private rented sectors to remain living independently through the provision of adaptations and minor or major repairs. Services are also provided within the social rented sector.

2.5 Home Improvement Agencies/Handyman services have developed a range of ancillary services including gardening and decorating via social enterprise opportunities alongside services for people who have been or could be the victims of crime. The 2010 - 2015 strategy will be actively encouraging such developments within Kent.

2.6 The 2010 - 2015 Supporting People Strategy, which is outlined below and also summarised in Appendix One, has been developed after extensive consultation and needs and supply analysis. It explicitly recognises that the forthcoming years will herald significant changes - a potential change of government, economic uncertainty and a challenging financial backdrop that may lead to a reduction in funding levels of £4 million by 2011/12. In 2010 the Programme will be allocated within the Area Based Grant although the Audit Commission has already made explicit the expectation that the Programme will continue to deliver services within the existing Outcomes Framework, that the commitment to the Programme should be maintained and that it will continue to be an element for evaluation within the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

3. THE KENT SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGY 2010 - 2015

3.1 The Supporting People vision is:

“Working in partnership to deliver well planned, value for money, high quality housing support services for vulnerable people”.

3.2 The proposed 2010 – 2015 strategic objectives are:

- To target resources on clearly evidenced support needs of vulnerable people living in Kent’s communities

- To commission services that help the Programme's partner agencies to deliver their priorities, contribute to achieving targets prioritised by the Local Area Agreement
- To generate additional income to reduce reliance for funding on the Programme e.g. charging for handyperson services.
- To deliver efficient services that demonstrate value for money
- To improve fair access and diversity to existing services
- To ensure vulnerable people move on to independent living in a timely fashion
- Service user involvement is at the core of the Programme

3.3 The commissioning priorities for additional services will be:

- Young people at risk (including young offenders)
- People who have mental health problems as well as substance misuse problems (dual diagnosis)
- Single homeless people
- Families with support needs (including teenage parents)

3.4 The 2010 – 2015 Strategy has identified the key activities necessary to achieve the delivery of the commissioning priorities these are set out below identifying the basis of the actions and the drivers for change:-

- Decommission services that are not strategically relevant. Strategic relevance means that the service meets an identified need and delivers an appropriate level of performance including the outcome for service users.
- Limit the maximum hours of support within long term supported housing and limit the duration of floating support to one year. Long term supported housing services are currently delivering up to 17.5 hours of housing related support per service user per week and for a period of a maximum of two years. The consultation has resulted in a consensus that to continue with this level of support is excessive and the strategy will seek to address this conclusion.
- Review both the Eligibility and Reconnection policy. The Supporting People Programme has an eligibility policy which endeavours to ensure that the services delivered are housing related support and are not, for instance, health or social care provision. The reconnection policy seeks to connect people who have lived in supported housing back to their originating district/borough.
- Redress the balance between accommodation-based services and floating support provision and within the capital and revenue funding available determine the most appropriate services. The Homes and Communities Agency provides capital grant funding to develop schemes and the Supporting People Programme revenue funds support within those schemes.
- Re-tender all floating support services including consideration of an option to withdraw specialist provision from certain client groups and redefine the process for the procurement of services across Kent.

- Access opportunities for the joint funding of services including revenue funding from other statutory and non-statutory agencies.
- Manage the Programme to prevent any practice that restricts access to and/or throughput within services.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 This report outlines the strategic priorities and actions within the Kent 5 Year Supporting People Strategy 2010 - 2015. It summarises the strategic objectives and commissioning priorities for the next five years and outlines the necessary actions required to achieve the objectives.
- 4.2 The Strategy is currently subject to consultation, the consultation period ending 1st February 2010. This first draft of the Strategy was received by the Supporting People Commissioning Body on the 16th December 2009 and a planned sign off of the Strategy is scheduled for March 2010.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Note and comment on the contents of the report.
- (ii) Recommend the attached draft Strategy for Supporting People 2010-15 to the Supporting People Commissioning Body for approval

Contact officer:-

*Claire Martin
Head of Supporting People
01622 221179
Claire.martin@kent.gov.uk*

Background Information:

Five-Year Kent Supporting People Strategy 2005-2010
Annual Plans 2003-2008
Strategy Refresh, June 2008
Commissioning Body Report Developing the Supporting People Strategy 2010-2015

Appendix 1: Summary of the Draft Kent Supporting People Strategy 2010-15

The document has been posted on the Kent County Council website
www.kent.gov.uk/supportingpeople