

**KENT
SUPPORTING PEOPLE
STRATEGY
2010-2015

(SUMMARY)**

Kent Supporting People Programme

1. Strategic Context

The Supporting People Programme is a delivery vehicle for the strategic objectives of partnerships across the County of Kent to enable vulnerable people to maintain their housing situation, manage their finances, co-exist successfully in their community, acquire independent living skills, stay safe, liaise with other agencies, and access training, education, and employment. The Programme is closely inter-linked to other statutory and non-statutory agency strategies that aim to achieve similar or overlapping objectives. The Programme facilitates the delivery of the Local Area Agreement and contributes to achieving the Kent Partnership's jointly agreed targets relating to housing and independent living.

Current Service Delivery

The Supporting People Programme currently supports over 23,000 vulnerable people in a wide range of client groups. More than half of the grant is spent on what might be termed 'traditional' client groups such as older people with support needs, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems and people with physical/sensory disabilities. Other services support groups such as single homeless people, young people at risk and people fleeing domestic abuse. Client groups with relatively minimal client group specific provision are people misusing alcohol and/or drugs, offenders, homeless families with support needs and gypsies and travellers.

With regard to types of services, the programme delivers as follows:

%	Units	Funding
Accommodation based	30.24%	63.96%
Community Alarm	40.43%	2.67%
Floating Support	18.21%	29.60%
Home Improvement Agency	11.13%	3.78%

The Programme inherited services which were not commissioned by the Supporting People Programme. The Programme has strategically commissioned accommodation based, handyperson and floating support services during the last five years. However, client group specific services are not equally distributed across districts/boroughs according to identified need or levels of deprivation. Therefore accommodation based services are provided in circumstances which mean that in some districts service users have to move across boundaries to access services. In addition to this the Communities and Local Government department has a grant funding stipulation that short term supported services are open to anybody in the country.

Finance

The Supporting People Programme forecast a spend of £35 million in 2009/10 and 2010/11 utilising the accumulated reserves and meeting the commitments to the steady state contracts within the current Supporting People Strategic Plan.

The next Comprehensive Spending Review may well result in the implementation of the national Supporting People funding distribution formula which in its purest form would see the programme in Kent losing up to four million pounds. The 2010 – 15 Strategy will aim to address delivery and re-prioritise services identified in the needs analysis to vulnerable groups requiring a significant shift in contractual arrangements

and commissioning. The Programme plans to realign resource expenditure including reducing average and total cost of delivering housing related support, decommissioning services that are not a priority and seeking additional funding from joint commissioning partners.

Developing the Strategy

The draft strategy has been produced by the Kent Supporting People team with the assistance of and using information from a wide range of organisations. The Programme recognises the potential of a limited and reducing Supporting People grant and the need to redefine the priorities for service delivery and this may conflict in some instances with local area priorities and demands. There have been extensive consultations which included one to one meetings with representatives from partner organisations, focus group meetings and the use of a survey with service users, workshop with members of the Commissioning Body including elected members, and a consultation conference with members of Supporting People bodies (e.g. service user panel).

Vision and Strategic Objectives for 2010-2015

The Programme's vision for the next five years is:

Working in partnership to deliver needs led, value for money, high quality housing support services for vulnerable people.

In addition the programme aims to ensure that these services are;

- **accessible to those who need them**
- **promote independence and well being**
- **enable people to take control over their lives**
- **participate fully in the social and economic life of their communities**
- **complement services delivered by statutory and non-statutory agencies.**

In order to achieve that vision the following strategic objectives have been set:

- (1) To target resources on clearly evidenced housing related support needs of vulnerable people living in Kent's communities that prioritise service delivery for those most in need ensuring that Supporting People funded support meets the criteria set out in the Kent eligibility policy.
- (2) To commission services that enable partner agencies to deliver their priorities, contribute to achieving targets prioritised by the Local Area Agreement and use resources and funding available across the key strategies to deliver better outcomes for service users and partners, in particular the enhancement of social capital and reduction in social inequality through the promotion of social and economic inclusion.
- (3) To generate additional income to reduce the reliance on the Programme
- (4) To deliver services that are efficient and demonstrate value for money, operate to best value principles, and achieve locally and nationally defined quality standards, and challenge services that underperform.

- (5) To improve fair access and diversity to existing services and ensure that services are flexible and accessible to the wider local communities.
- (6) To ensure that vulnerable people do not become dependent on support and that they can maximise their independence by moving on to independent living in a timely fashion and capacity building in their communities.
- (7) Service user involvement and consultation will be at the heart of the programme, as will enabling services users to no longer require the services within the Programme

Commissioning Priorities

The priorities for new service development are based on analysis of need, consultation with partner agencies and a methodology prioritising risk. Overall, the priority areas for service delivery and resource allocation are identified as client groups who are at high risk of harm to themselves or to the community if services are not provided, for whom there are relatively few services either in the county as a whole or in particular areas, and who have few advocates in the form of organisations with statutory responsibilities.

These groups are young people at risk (including young offenders), people who have mental health problems as well as substance misuse problems (dual diagnosis), single homeless people and families with support needs. There is also a need to strategically review the housing related support needs of Minority Ethnic communities including Gypsies and Travellers.

Overall Direction of Travel

The Supporting People programme will:

- Focus on ensuring that the services funded are clearly defined as housing-related support, meet the intended outcomes of maximising independence and are explicitly linked into the priority targets of the Local Area Agreement. Eligibility criteria for housing-related services will be reviewed and explicitly define high, medium and low support levels as well as be explicitly linked to required outcomes.
- The Programme will prioritise services that focus on prevention and help people to stay in their own accommodation. More emphasis will be placed on assisting service users to link to social and economic resources in the community as a route to greater independence.
- Resources will be targeted more effectively on those in need of support rather than on people living in particular types of services/accommodation. This is particularly true for older people with support needs. Currently services are mainly targeted at older people in sheltered accommodation whereas the vast majority of older people live in other accommodation in the community.
- The Supporting People Programme will prioritise short-term rather than long-term supported housing.

- There will be more emphasis on time-limited objectives and practical interventions such as those delivered by Home Improvement Agencies / handyperson services to sustain independence.

Over the lifetime of the strategy, any investment in new services will have to be funded at least in part by savings generated through decommissioning other services and priority will be given to short-term accommodation based and floating support services.

Delivering the Strategy

The Strategy will be delivered using a range of mechanisms and tools:

- Keeping service users at the heart of the programme, including capacity building and person-centred support planning
- Enhanced partnership working, with partners involved from identifying need to commissioning services
- Pursuing an efficiency agenda, including improving service efficiency, effectiveness and the use of and access to resources, benchmarking, new commissioning approaches

Governance

The Supporting People Programme is an inter-agency programme. It is envisaged that current governance arrangements will continue:

Kent County Council is the Administering Authority which provides the legal and administrative base for the programme. The Commissioning Body provides strategic direction and is comprised of representatives of all the local authorities in Kent, the Probation Board, the two Primary Care Trusts, Adult Social Services and other Kent Directorates, and elected members from both district and county councils.

The Core Strategy Development group has a similar representation on a more operational level and is responsible for undertaking detailed policy and analytical work identified as needed to develop and implement the Supporting People Programme.

The Supporting People Team supports these structures and carries out the day to day work of the programme,

Interfaces with other Regulatory Programmes

Supporting People is embedded in the current Local Area Agreement (LAA) through delivering on the National Indicator 141 and will ensure that it is included in the next generation of LAA. Responsibility for delivering the LAA sits with the Kent Partnership. Supporting People is already represented on the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. However, the programme's agenda and objectives span the targets of other boards such as Public Health Board and Children's Trust.

The Supporting People Programme will in future be regulated and inspected by the Audit Commission as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). The assessment will pay particular attention to how well an area meets the needs of vulnerable people including those not in receipt of statutory services who need additional assistance to ensure equity of access to services.

The contributions of the Supporting People Programme will be important evidence and will be measured by the CAA using the following: -

- Inspection findings of housing support providers and local authorities
- Analysis of data from the outcomes framework
- Progress against NI 141 and NI 142 and other national indicators that Supporting People contributes to
- Area based intelligence from a range of partners including service users