

## REPORT

**By:** Angela Slaven – Director of Youth and Community Support Services, Communities Directorate

**To:** Supporting People in Kent Commissioning Body

21 September 2010

**Subject:** Finance Report

**Classification:-**

### For Decision

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**Summary:-** The Kent Supporting People Programme Team funding was withdrawn by the Communities and Local Government Department. The Commissioning Body needs to agree a methodology which will enable the Programme to continue to be administered by the Team.

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#### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Supporting People Team has been funded since its implementation phase by the Communities and Local Government Department (CLG). The administration grant which amounted to £735,000 was removed by the new coalition government in June 2010. The CLG still expects the Programme to be managed by administering authorities. A letter was received in August confirming that there was an expectation that data for Supporting People Local Systems (SPLS) uploads to CLG would continue to be required, and that the team would still receive client record information and outcomes information from the University of St Andrews.

#### 2.0 Context

2.1 The Supporting People Programme has responsibility for administering the Commissioning Body's work plan, paying providers, contracting, tendering, performance management, quality, adult and child protection, complaints, policy and strategy, and service user involvement and consultation. It administrates the centralised floating support database. It is a key contributor to housing policy, strategy, and operational issues, including the Kent Housing Group, the Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing), and the Public Health Observatory, as well as within the County Council itself.

#### 3.0 The Current Situation

3.1 The Programme has accumulated over £9,682,296 in reserves over time. These have been delivered by de-commissioning strategically irrelevant services, terminating contracts where the service users were at risk, and where housing related support was not being delivered. The current value of these reserves is £6,843,527. There will be a further draw down of these reserves in this current financial year amounting to £3,455,497. The Commissioning Body agreed that the reserves should be utilised in order to meet the

increasing demands of the floating support referral mechanism which is now receiving referrals at over 500 a month. This will leave a residual amount of reserves which can be applied to meet the costs of the Supporting People Team. This amounts to £3,388,030. The expectation is that there will need to be a draw down of £659,905 in this financial year to meet the staffing costs and normal day to day costs incurred in order to manage the Programme. This will leave a reserve of £2,728,125.

3.2 The Supporting People Team delivered efficiencies in staffing levels during this financial year by not recruiting to three posts (contracts and payments assistants and the Senior Finance and Information Technology Officer). Staffing levels are now down to 13 Full Time Equivalents, with an additional member of staff who is a part time officer who conducts audits and specialist work relating to the implementation of the strategy and contractual issues. This follows a recommendation by both the CLG and internal audit that performance management data should be verified by visiting providers to cross check the information they submit to the team. This work has contributed to the accumulation of reserves.

3.3 The current staffing costs of the team are £561,300 for 2009/10. The Programme has also spent £10,400 on an agency worker who was briefly employed to deal with the increase in floating support transactions following the Commissioning Body decision to expand floating support to try and address the increase in referrals for domestic abuse and substance misuse. The Programme will also incur £88,205 of other costs relating to the day-to-day operational management of the Programme, including for example paper and printing. The £88,205 also includes expenditure of £1300 on vouchers and travel expenses for service users who have been consulted on different aspects of the Programme, including the strategy. This expenditure represents 1.86% of the entire budget allocated to the Programme.

#### **4.0 The Future**

4.1 The Programme will be subject to the impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review, and the allocation of grant within Area Based Grant. The Team will need to reflect the size of the Programme it takes forward, whilst balancing the economies of scale that can be realistically achieved given the administrative requirements of the Programme. These are ostensibly the duties and responsibilities set out above. It is therefore proposed that the Team endeavours to find efficiencies in the next financial year which can meet the costs of the team.

4.2 The Kent Team is continuing to maintain a national profile in the way that the Programme is managed. The Commissioning Body agreed to a payment by results regime for sheltered housing. The CLG is interested in working with the Kent Team to build on some of the work that has already been achieved. This relates to the Kent Team working with them on a payment by results pilot, and seeing how it could be further developed.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

The Supporting People Team has achieved considerable success in managing the Programme from its inception through to its Steady State. The County Council continues to meet the expectations of the CLG and to continue its commitment to funding and

administering housing related support via area based grant. It requires a small complement of officers to achieve this.

## **6.0 Recommendation**

1) The funding for the Kent Supporting People Team should be met within the expenditure of the designated funding resource in line with other baseline budget management within the County Council.

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**Appendix One. Supporting People Team Structure**