

By: Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services

To: Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee –  
18 November 2008

Subject: **THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME**

Classification: Unrestricted

---

Summary: This paper provides an overview of current activity in the Supporting People Programme.

---

## **Background**

1. (1) This is the fourth six-monthly report on the Supporting People Programme. The main issues reported to the May meeting concerned the strategic review of long-term housing, the strategic review of older people's services, the Local Area Agreement, and Area Based Grant, the Audit Commission Inspection and the current work programme.

(2) The Programme will be concentrating in the next six months on preparations for the next five year strategy, which will include a strategic review of investment, the finalisation of the delivery of the Audit Commission Action Plan, and continuing to deliver its targets in relation to the Local Area Agreement. The Programme will also be ensuring that service user involvement and consultation is a key deliverable within the next couple of years, this will include a strategy specifically targeted at service user involvement and consultation.

## **The strategic review of long-term supported housing**

2. (1) The strategic review of long-term supported housing complements the strategic review of short-term housing which was completed in March 2007. The essence of the strategic review was to evaluate existing provision by client group, incorporate current needs analysis, and identify any priorities for change/development.

(2) The Supporting People Programme is recommending that longer term supported housing becomes part of the choice-based lettings initiative. This means that the ability to access these services will be broadened out considerably by participation in this scheme. Choice based lettings mean that anybody can apply for a long-term supported housing scheme providing they are on a housing register. They can be on a number of different housing registers. Only those who meet the criteria for the scheme would be considered. It should help to eliminate restrictive practices that are sometimes applied by providers in enabling access into supported housing schemes. For instance some providers only allow nominations into schemes from Health or Adult Social Services.

(3) There are four services that have been recommended for de-commissioning by the Supporting People Programme. This is because the providers are:

- not providing housing related support.
- they are not promoting independence.
- The client group mix is highly inappropriate and is detrimental to service users.

- The service users no longer require housing related support.
- The provider is providing social care to individuals who breach grant conditions i.e. they are highly unlikely to maintain any form of independent living. Community and Local Government Department Supporting People Grant Conditions will not allow the Programme to fund service users who are ostensibly the statutory responsibility of Kent Adult Social Services, and are never likely to achieve any form of real independence.

(4) There are five services which should be reviewed, with the possibility of de-commissioning the services. This is because the providers are:

- Not providing housing related support.
- The provider is providing social care to individuals who breach Community and Local Government Department Supporting People grant conditions i.e. the service users concerned are highly unlikely to maintain any form of independent living.

(5) The six services labelled as being for single homeless or generic should be remodelled as short-term services. This is because they are effectively operating as short-term services.

(6) The monitoring and review process needs to emphasise outcomes for individuals. That is that providers are actively seeking to promote independence, and not dependence.

(7) The strategic review of investment as part of the five year strategy will need to consider whether or not future funding should be invested in long-term accommodation based services, or that service users should be encouraged to live independently with social care inputs under the auspices of self-directed support. This is particularly relevant in trying to steer providers away from shared facilities wherever possible within short-term and longer term supported housing.

### **Older Persons Strategic Review**

3. (1) The Programme has now separated the costs of alarms from housing related support. The cost of alarms has been fixed at £1.50 per household unit per week. This was agreed by the Commissioning Body in June 2008. The Programme is currently negotiating with providers on the costs of housing related support for older people. This has been set at £10.11 per household unit per week. The majority of providers have accepted the revised contract values.

(2) Older people and other vulnerable people will benefit from the funding of handy person services across Kent for at least the next two years.

### **The Local Area Agreement/Area Based Grant**

4. (1) The Supporting People Programme is currently delivering its targets in relation to the LAA2.

(2) The Programme is also subject to performance monitoring from the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG), and it is envisaged that this will continue for the foreseeable future, in addition to the LAA.

(3) It was previously reported to ASSPOC that from April 2009 the CLG has advised that the main grant will be put into Area Based Grant. This situation remains, and the Commissioning Body has continued to express a desire to remain in place in order to sustain an un-ring-fenced Programme.

## **Audit Commission Inspection**

5. (1) The Programme has made good progress in delivering the Audit Commission Action Plan, following the Inspection of the Programme in September 2007.

(2) The Programme has completed the actions outlined in the action plan relating to the following:

(i) **Strategic Approach.**

- Needs Analysis reflecting the needs of minority ethnic and hard to reach groups.
- Refreshing the five year strategy.

(ii) **Improve performance management and governance of the programme.**

- Performance management has been given a higher profile within governance meeting agendas.
- All members of governance bodies are provided with comprehensive guidance and induction.
- The Programme continues to involve the wider body of elected members in the development of the Programme.
- All plans clearly set out the expected impact and outcome of each proposed action.
- The Programme continues to work with other Supporting People Partnerships to develop further bench-marking and ensure more in-depth and meaningful comparative analysis.
- Ensuring that the financial impact of all decisions taken in relation to the Programme is clearly set out in Commissioning Body reports.
- Carefully planning all major public consultation exercises.

(iii) **Improve access and information in relation to the Programme.**

- Ensuring that no providers apply restrictive access and referral arrangements and that all of them comply with the Programme's agreed reconnection policy.
- Ensuring all documents are printed with the relevant strap lines
- Providing clear information to providers about financial incentives available to encourage improvement.

(3) **Service User Involvement.**

- Developing a service user involvement strategy which includes clear measurable outcomes in consultation with users and advocates.
- Ensuring that service users have an opportunity to influence decision-making and participate in governance, performance management and procurement (some of these objectives have already been met (performance management and procurement)).

- (4) Actions which remain on-going are
- (i) **Strengthen the strategic approach to Supporting People.**
- A county-wide move-on strategy. This would enable all service users to move on successfully from supported housing generally to their area of origin. This is being developed with the Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing), a multi-agency partnership of health, housing, social care, and Supporting People.
- (ii) **Improve access and information in relation to the Supporting People Programme.**
- Ensuring that frontline staff employed by the partners provide consistent and informed approach to the Programme.
  - Undertaking mystery shopping of all telephone and frontline access points to the Programme across the County and taking steps to address any shortfalls in performance.
- (5) These actions should be completed by the end of the financial year, with the possible exception of the inclusion of service users in decision-making and Governance. This is a longer term project which will require considerable thought and discussion to ensure that it is meaningful, and is approached in a way that service users want to adopt.

## **Service User Involvement and Consultation**

6. (1) The Programme has recruited a Service User Involvement and Consultation Officer. This role is in order to ensure that service user involvement and consultation are centre stage within the programme, and a component part of everything the Programme does.

(2) The Programme has made considerable progress in developing services that meet the needs of service users via monitoring and review visits which have included ex-service users as monitoring and review officers. The Programme has also involved service users:

- in tender evaluation
- in specifications
- in recruitment
- in website and leaflet design and content
- service user conferences delivered by service users
- in a service user publication
- in service user qualifications via the Open College Network
- in strategic reviews
- in the previous five year strategy

## **Floating Support Referral Mechanism**

7. (1) A new Access Database is being implemented which is capable of dealing with the volume of floating support referrals that are being received. This is particularly important given that the Programme is increasing the capacity of and tendering for floating support contracts for the next two years, to reflect the needs identified.

## **Self Directed Support**

8. (1) A Self Directed Support pilot for longer term supported housing (excluding older people's services) is being initiated. This is to see how easily accommodation-based services which are owned by housing associations, and in some cases managed by them, could be involved in changing the way that housing related support is delivered. This reflects the fact that the majority of long-term supported housing includes client groups who are the statutory responsibility of Kent Adult Social Services. KASS is embracing the concept of self directed support, and it is important to see if the Programme can successfully align itself with the aims and objectives for client groups that are held in common by KASS, and the Programme.

## **Recommendations**

9. (1) Members are asked to NOTE and COMMENT on the contents of this report.

**Claire Martin**  
**Head of Supporting People**  
**Ex1179**

### *Previous Committee References:*

The Supporting People Programme – Report to Adult Services Policy Overview Committee, 30 May 2008, Item B3.

The Supporting People Programme – Report to Adult Services Policy Overview Committee, 16 November 2007, Item B5

The Supporting People Programme - Report to Adult Services Policy Overview Committee, 24 April 2007, Item B5