

REPORT

By: Caroline Highwood - Director Resources, Kent Adult Social Services

To: Supporting People in Kent Commissioning Body

18 December 2008

Subject: **Eligibility Policy**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

For Decision

Summary: **This report presents an amended and simplified Kent Eligibility Policy based on Grant Conditions for Excellent Authorities 2008/09 as requested by the Commissioning Body in September 2008.**

1.0 Introduction

A revised Eligibility Policy was presented to the Core Strategy Development Group in August 2008, and subsequently to the Commissioning Body in September 2008. The Commissioning Body raised two specific issues. The first related to the distinction between housing management roles and responsibilities and housing related support, and the second to the ability of 16/17 year olds to receive a service. In the light of this it was felt that it was necessary to review the entire eligibility policy, and to adjust the layout in order to make it absolutely clear what can or cannot be delivered within the Programme. It is also worth noting that service specifications for the Programme provide a clear-cut description of what is or is not eligible.

2.0 Context

2.1 The revised eligibility policy contains an introduction which sets out the context of the Programme and a description of what welfare services are. The subsequent pages describe examples of welfare services, but this is not intended to be definitive. The Programme will consider requests on an adhoc basis in order not to fetter discretion with regard to the use of grant money for Excellent Authorities. The exclusions within the policy are now clearly set out under specific headings which clarify their status as;

- Statutory services (these are the same as in the current version of the Kent Eligibility policy)
- Personal and General Social Care (these are the same as in the current version of the Kent Eligibility Policy)
- Landlord Duties (these have been adjusted to provide greater clarity of role)
- Other Exclusions (these have been adjusted to provide greater clarity of role)
- General Service Conditions (this is a new inclusion)

There are two other sections which define exactly what a short-term service is and what local connection means in the context of grant conditions.

2.2 Where it is clear that a request has been made to incorporate a service which is set out as exclusion within the policy, it will not be possible to provide this service via housing related support. An example of this which is pertinent to the Programme is the inability of the programme to fund the actual physical provision of an alarm, or to maintain an alarm, or to extensively test the alarm for functionality. This would be considered to be a housing management function. What is permissible is to fund a service to an individual service user that enables a response to an alarm being triggered, and to test the alarm to ensure that when a service user triggers it, the alarm actually functions i.e. testing the line. This is incorporated within the service specification for alarms which was agreed by the Essential Role of Sheltered Housing (EROSH), Service Users, and the Commissioning Body in June 2008.

The policy can be found at Appendix 1.

3.0 Service User Consultation

3.1 The Eligibility Policy has to comply with Grant Conditions that are determined by government. Service users have been consulted on service specifications. Service users have also been consulted on the Local Connection Policy. This consultation took place during the strategic review of short-term supported accommodation. The majority of those involved expressed views in line with the local connection section of the amended Kent Eligibility Policy.

3.2 As part of the strategic review of long-term accommodation-based housing-related support services, service users were consulted on the kind of support they receive. Service users expressed a wish for independence as promoted through the Supporting People Programme and as defined within the Kent Eligibility Policy 2008.

4.0 Equality Impact Assessment

An initial screening of the Kent Eligibility Policy has been carried out and found that the Policy has a low impact since any restrictions to accessing Supporting People services contained within the Eligibility Criteria are in line with those contained within Grant Conditions for Excellent Authorities.

5.0 Financial Impact Assessment

There is no anticipated financial impact of the policy on the programme in Kent since its purpose is to ensure compliance with Grant Conditions.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed amended Kent Eligibility Policy 2008/09 complies with Grant Conditions for Excellent Authorities 2008/09 and its adoption will ensure that Supporting People funded services are not in breach of grant conditions.

6.2 The Core Strategy Development Group noted the contents of the report and the Kent Eligibility Policy itself on 11 November 2008 and agreed to recommend it for adoption to the Commissioning Body.

7.0 Recommendation

The Commissioning Body is asked to:

- 1) Agree the Kent Eligibility Policy 2008

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Background Information:

Department of Health, 'Supported Housing and Care Homes', Guidance (2002).
Kent Supporting People Eligibility Criteria, February 2006
Kent Eligibility Policy September 2007
Grant Conditions for Excellent Authorities 2008/09

Appendix One: Kent Eligibility Policy 2008