

REPORT

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

To: Supporting People in Kent Commissioning Body

19 March 2009

Subject: Kent Supporting People Provider Charter

Classification: Unrestricted

For Decision

Summary: The report presents the draft Kent Provider Charter that sets out the commitments that the Kent Supporting People Programme makes to service providers.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Providers play a key role in the development and delivery of housing-related support services.
- 1.2 Successful delivery of the Supporting People Programme continues to require strong and effective contributions from service providers and good partnership working between providers, commissioners and the Supporting People team as day-to-day administrators of the programme.

2.0 Context

- 2.1 The national Supporting People Strategy '*Independence and Opportunity*' acknowledges the important role of building and maintaining successful partnerships with service providers including ensuring that providers have the support they require.
- 2.2 The strategy also stresses the use of charters as a mechanism to clarify:

- Respective roles and responsibilities roles of Administering Authorities and providers, including responsibilities relating to communication with service users
- What is expected from service providers
- How the Administering Authority will involve service providers in developing the programme and will maintain that involvement

2.3 The development of a provider charter was included in the Kent Supporting People Annual Plan 2008-09.

3.0 Key elements of the Kent Provider Charter

3.1 The Kent Supporting People team is committed to delivering excellent customer service. The Charter recognises that service providers are not only partners but also customers.

3.2 The Charter sets clear and accessible standards for how Supporting People will work with service providers:

- The Supporting People team's service standards and commitment to keeping service providers informed and involved
- What is expected from service providers
- Importance of feedback from service providers
- Monitoring and reviewing arrangements

4.0 Consultation

4.1 The team has sought views from service providers via the provider forums and the Executive Board of Providers.

5.0 Equality Impact Assessment

5.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and found that the Provider Charter has a low impact.

6.0 Financial Impact Assessment

6.1 There is a low financial impact relating to the Provider Charter. This relates to the monitoring of the targets, potential complaints, and additional expenditure in relation to letters of acknowledgement.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The Kent Provider Charter clarifies the respective responsibilities of the Supporting People team and service providers and sets out the Supporting People team's service standards.

7.2 The Core Strategy Development Group accepted the report and provider charter and recommends their acceptance by the Commissioning Body.

8.0 Recommendations

The Commissioning Body is asked to:

- (i) Agree the Kent Provider Charter

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Appendix 1: Draft Kent Provider Charter

Background Documents:

Kent Supporting People Annual Plan 2008-09

National Supporting People Strategy '*Independence and Opportunity*', 2007

Appendix 1

Draft

KENT SUPPORTING PEOPLE

PROVIDER CHARTER

What the Provider Charter is

The Kent Supporting People team is committed to delivering excellent customer service and recognises that service providers are not only our partners but also customers. This Provider Charter sets out what providers can expect from the team which manages the Supporting People Programme on behalf of the Supporting People partnership including contracting for high quality services with providers of personalised housing-related support to be delivered to clients of the programme. Partnerships operate on a reciprocal basis and the Charter also sets out what we expect from providers in turn.

The purpose of the Charter is to:

- Promote partnership working with providers
- Clarify the partners' respective responsibilities
- Set the standards that providers can expect from the Supporting People team and that the team expects from providers

Who we are and what we do

Supporting People is a government programme designed to help vulnerable people to live independently through the provision of housing-related support services. It is a grant that is paid to Kent County Council and is administered by the Supporting People team. The team commissions services from providers to deliver housing related support and monitors and reviews the services to ensure they are of high quality and meet clients' needs.

Housing-related support can be delivered in different ways including floating support across tenures, accommodation-based where support is attached to a specific property, community/social alarms and through the services of Home Improvement Agencies.

Our vision and values

The Kent Supporting People programme delivers services under the overall vision of

Working in partnership to provide high-quality, cost-effective and flexible housing-related support services for the vulnerable people of Kent which promote independent living, facilitate social inclusion and keep them safe and secure. It is envisaged that housing-related support services will in time complement other service provision across the county.

Our commitments to you

We aim to achieve the standards set out below. In all our dealings with you, team members will:

- Treat all providers fairly and equally
- Be courteous and respectful at all times

- Be professional, open and honest and accept responsibility for our actions
- Identify themselves at all times by name
- Respond quickly and accurately to requests for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act. If your query is more complex, we will let you know how long it will take us to give you an answer
- Respect your right to confidentiality
- Ensure that when we send documents for important meetings they are received by providers five clear five working days before meetings. This is commensurate with standard custom and procedure of Kent County Council.

If you write to us we will:

- Answer your letter within 5 working days - if we cannot reply within this time we will acknowledge your letter, in writing or by telephone, and give you a date by which we expect to give you a more detailed response
- Sign all our letters with our name and job title, together with contact details

If you telephone us:

- We will deal with all incoming calls promptly, taking messages for colleagues as necessary and we will advise by email that a call has been received
- We will return all telephone calls and answer phone messages within 48 hours, unless we have told you otherwise
- Outside office hours you can leave messages on our answer phone

If you email us:

- We will acknowledge your emails within 3 working days – if a more detailed reply is required, we will send the acknowledgement, and a more detailed reply within 10 working days

Keeping you informed and involved through:

- The Executive Board of Providers
- The local forums for providers in east and west Kent
- The Kent ERoSH Group (Essential Role of Sheltered Housing)
- The inclusion of provider representatives on the Core Strategy Development Group
- Providing you with a website which is regularly maintained and updated with accurate and relevant information
- Sending you the quarterly Supporting People newsletter
- Sending you a quarterly contracts newsletter
- Offering you training sessions/workshops when appropriate
- Supporting People induction pack

Our service standards – what is important to us

Integrity - we do what we say we will do and act with probity
Responsibility – we are accountable for our actions
Fairness – our decisions will be free of bias and self interest
Respect – we have high regard for you as partners in Supporting People
Accuracy and timeliness of information – we will provide accurate, relevant and comprehensive information
Confidentiality – we will treat all information as confidential (except in line with the Freedom of Information Act)
Access – we will be accessible to you and provide information in plain English (or other formats as required)
Effective partnerships – we aim to consult widely to ensure that your views are properly considered when developing or reviewing strategies, policies or services

We ask that you

- Provide high quality services that meet the provisions of the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework, the criteria of the Kent Supporting People Eligibility Policy and promote the strategic objectives of the Supporting People partnership
- Provide high quality services that support achievement of the outcomes framework
- Adhere to the terms and conditions of the Supporting People contract
- Meet privacy and confidentiality obligations including record keeping
- Enable clients to be involved in shaping policies, designing services, evaluation and recruitment and ensure their views to be taken into account
- Work collaboratively in delivering services and liaise with other relevant organisations for the benefit of clients
- Incorporate safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children in your everyday working practices, in line with Kent and Medway Adult and Child Protection Procedures

You can help us get it right

We welcome your comments on the service we provide. We use them to help us improve our service.

We want to know if:

- You have received outstanding or poor service from us
- You feel we are not meeting our commitments and standards
- You have suggestions on how we can improve our programme and service delivery
- You are dissatisfied with the way you are being treated

You can give feedback by contacting us – contact details below.

Monitoring and reviewing

The Charter will be reviewed in March of each year to make any changes that may be needed to ensure that we continue meeting our responsibilities.

We publicly account for our operations by publishing the Provider Charter and will publish information on our compliance with the Charter and our service performance.

Supporting People Contact Details

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