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To: Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee – 1 April 2009

Subject: **THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME**

Classification: Unrestricted

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

Background

1. (1) Since the last report to the Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee (ASSPOC) the Audit Commission action plan and the strategic review of older people's services has been completed. The Local Area Agreement is also a key priority, and the targets are currently being achieved. The Programme is also contributing to finding solutions to the usage of bed and breakfast for vulnerable people from a range of client groups across Kent.

(2) This report sets out the other key areas of activity and development currently underway.

The Supporting People Five Year Strategy and the Strategic Review of Investment

2. (1) The Programme is currently concentrating on preparations for the next five year strategy, which will include a strategic review of investment. There is enormous potential for all key stakeholders to take a long hard look at the Programme and determine whether or not the services that it is funding are needs led, and can be delivered within the budget that is allocated by the Communities and Local Government Department.

(2) The Programme will be holding a conference for members of the Commissioning Body, Core Strategy Development Group, the Executive Board of Providers, and the Service User Panel. There will be meetings held with the Inclusive Forums for Providers. There will be a questionnaire which will be posted on the website for key stakeholders, providers and service users. Meetings are currently being booked with providers to discuss the questionnaire prior to the end of April. There will be meetings held with Health, Housing, Probation, and Adult Social Services in June. The objective is to have an open and consultative process which will enable stakeholders to feel that they have made a real contribution to the strategy, and the way the Programme is delivered into the future.

(3) The questionnaire is trying to look at every element of current service delivery and establishing whether or not the right strategic fit is in place. The programme will also be trying to ensure that the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry are enshrined within the decision-making process that takes place in relation to finalising the strategy. The questionnaire will examine for example how services should be delivered.

Members of ASSPOC will have an opportunity to answer the questionnaire, or be interviewed as a group, or individually in relation to the questionnaire.

(4) The Five Year Strategy and the Strategic Review of Investment will need to reflect the challenging economic circumstances that the country finds itself in, and ensure that the programme is delivered within the budget that is available to the Administering Authority as efficiently and effectively as possible. Providers will need to be challenged in streamlining their costs and overheads for instance by working together.

The Strategic Review of Long-term Housing

3. (1) The Programme will be finalising the strategic review of long-term housing by the end of 2009. The strategic review of long-term supported housing is the final strategic review of the programme prior to the over-arching strategic review of investment as part of the five year strategy. The objective was to ensure that services were strategically relevant, and to ensure as far as possible equity of access and supply across the County. Consultations are currently taking place with key stakeholders in relation to the draft recommendations. The outcome of this review will be fed into the developing five year strategy for implementation. Recommendations will be presented to the Core Strategy Development Group in August, and then to the Commissioning Body in September 2009.

Service User Involvement and Consultation

4. (1) The Programme regards service user involvement and consultation as central to ensuring that service users access services that are needs led and appropriate. The Programme has relied on external agencies in the past to deliver this objective. However it was felt that until and unless an officer was based within the team, we would not be able to meet our true aspirations. To this purpose the Programme has recruited a Service User Involvement and Consultation Officer. The new officer is re-engineering the service user panel, and will be consulting with service users on the service involvement and consultation strategy. A service user charter will be delivered in consultation with service users as well.

(2) The Chairman of the Service User Involvement Panel is now a member of the Core Strategy Development Group. The representation of a service user on the Core Strategy Development Group was a key aspiration of the Audit Commission, and indeed the Programme's.

(3) The Programme is also delighted to have an ex-service user as a member of the current staff complement as a monitoring and review officer. This officer was formerly one of the Programme's service user involvement workers. These workers assist the monitoring and review officers in reviewing services. It is a great satisfaction to have seen a service user make the journey from receiving services to helping to review them, and then having sole responsibility for reviewing them.

(4) The consultation of service users will form a key element of the formulation of the next five year strategy, and the strategic review of investment. The Programme will continue to ensure that service users are involved and consulted on every element of the Programme.

Self Directed Support

5. (1) There is an expectation by the Communities and Local Government Department that Supporting People Programme evaluate their service provision in relation to Self Directed Support. Therefore as part of the wider service transformation being undertaken within Kent Adult Social Services a Supporting People Self-Directed Support Project Board has been established. The ultimate objective of the project board is to secure a pilot within a long term supported housing scheme. The outcome would be to enable service users to collectively purchase a housing related support service of their choice. The Housing Association Charitable Trust is supporting the Programme in implementing this.

Conclusion

6. (1) This has been a period of consolidation for the Programme. The Strategic Review Programme is now nearly at an end, and has made an impact on strategic commissioning within the Programme. The Audit Commission action plan has been completed. Significant progress is being made in relation to the Local Area Agreement, and service user involvement and consultation. The next major challenges are the finalisation of the five year strategy, strategic review of investment, and progressing self-directed support.

Recommendations

7. (1) Members of the Policy Overview Committee are asked to NOTE and COMMENT on the contents of this report.

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Previous Committee References:

The Supporting People Programme – Report to Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee, 18 November 2008, Item B4.

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

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

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