

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 20 JANUARY 2011  
 title: CHANGE TO SUPPORTING PEOPLE FUNDING  
 submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
 principal author: RACHAEL STOTT

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Committee of a change to how Supporting People funding is allocated. Almost all of the Supporting People grant funds support for people in sheltered accommodation, namely the warden service. In contract 76% of households of pensionable age in Lancashire are owner-occupiers and therefore currently are unable to access Supporting People funding.
- 1.2 This lack of support available to owner-occupiers has been considered by the Commissioning Board. The report attached is a review of the options available as to how community based support can be delivered.
- 1.3 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
- Council Ambitions – To meet the identified housing need across the borough.
  - Community Objectives – To ensure the elderly can remain in their own homes.
  - Corporate Priorities - None
  - Other Considerations - None

## 2. SUPPORTING PEOPLE – SERVICE REVIEW

### **National Policy Drivers – personalisation and public sector funding cuts**

- There is a Government focus on offering older people choices for all aspects of their support (personalisation). Giving older people the opportunity to choose from a menu of support options was important for both providers (73% in favour) and stakeholders (90% in favour).
- There is a general background of reductions in public funding.

### **Increasing number of older people**

- In Lancashire there will be a 40% increase in the number of older people (65+) over the next 15 years which will require services to be appropriately targeted.

### **Meeting the needs of a diverse population**

- Both providers and stakeholders expressed concerns about how well the sector meets the diverse needs of older people with over a third of each group stating these needs were not met very well.
- In terms of ethnic origin, our research reveals that there is a discrepancy between the profile of the local population and the current profile of those people

accessing support with 0.8% of people moving into services from BME communities compared to 1.45% of the local population.

- The research shows an overrepresentation of women moving into sheltered accommodation when compared to the local population.
- There is also an overrepresentation of disabled older people moving into sheltered accommodation when measured against the local population. However this is not evenly spread across the county. In the North there is a very small variance only 6% above the local figure, whereas in the East this far more significant running at 86% above the local figure.

### **Lack of support available to people in private sector/home owners**

- Almost all of the SP Grant funds support for people living in sheltered accommodation. In contrast 76% of households of pensionable age in Lancashire are owner occupiers.
- There is overwhelming support from stakeholders and providers for services being provided to people in all tenures (i.e. home owners, private tenants, social housing tenants etc).
- When asked what support older people needed when in their own homes 35% said adaptations, 16% said handyman, and only 2% said support from a warden / support worker.
- 83% of older people who were not living in sheltered accommodation said that they wanted to stay in their own home with help

### **Occupancy Levels**

- During the course of our research providers brought up the issue of voids and hard to let properties. Current figures show an occupancy rate across Lancashire of nearly 98%. In order for us to have a clearer understanding of this issue additional data needs to be collected to highlight any issues.

### **Needs of people living in services**

- 11% of people who responded to the questionnaire don't receive visits or calls.
- 34% of people responding to the questionnaire said that they had moved into sheltered accommodation for the support of the scheme manager/warden/support worker.
- 37% of residents responding to questionnaire felt that the support from a warden was amongst the three most important factors in making their home a good place to live. Safety and security had the highest response rate (46%).
- After having experienced living in sheltered housing, over 81% of older people would not have stayed in their home even if support had been available (from meetings held by scheme managers in sheltered housing schemes and from service user questionnaire).
- 88% of service users were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the support service that they receive and 92% of people were satisfied with the housing that they receive

## Conclusion

- Owing to the increasing number of older people and the pressure on public funding, services must be targeted at those people in greatest need.
- Currently, we appear to be funding some people who don't need or want support, whilst at that same time providing limited opportunities for home owners and private sector tenants.
- There is the need to identify the most appropriate option for targeting services more appropriately whilst not losing the preventative focus of housing support services

### 3. CRITERIA/STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Given that the findings and recommendations from the review will impact on a significant number of older people, it is vitally important that the decision making process is transparent and robust.

At the outset, it was decided that we would identify the desired outcomes for people using services and then assess the ability of all options/ service models to deliver those outcomes.

There was general agreement that the outcomes should be based on Lancashire's Strategy for an Ageing Population owing to the significant level of involvement of older people in determining those outcomes. However, given that these are generic outcomes for all services, it has been necessary to supplement them with some more specific strategic outcomes which have emanated from the research undertaken to date and the requirement for all public sector procurement to deliver value for money. VFM can either be seen as a criteria in its own right or as a cross cutting criteria i.e. the service model which delivers all of the other criteria at the lowest price.

#### Access

##### **What is the criterion?**

- Information regarding Housing Support Services for older people **must** be freely available.
- Arrangements for accessing services **must** be easy to understand and use.

##### **When assessing the options, what are the key issues to consider in relation to access?**

- Information is easily available.
- Older people understand the access arrangements to services.
- Older people find access routes are easy to use.

##### **Why has access been included as one of the criteria?**

*Lancashire Strategy for an Ageing Population Outcome 2: Older People should have access to mainstream services*

Aims:

- Older people will have access to good quality information, advocacy and advice.
- Older people will have improved access to services.

### **Support**

#### **What is the criterion?**

- Housing Support Services for older people **must** promote the wellbeing and independence of individuals and be preventative in nature

#### **When assessing the options, what are the key issues to be considered in relation to support?**

- Promotion of independence.
- A co-ordinated housing management and support service.
- Continuity of support staff.

#### **Why has support been included as one of the criteria?**

*Lancashire Strategy for an Ageing Population - Outcome 3: Older people should be healthy and well*

Aims:

- Older people will be physically, mentally and emotionally healthy.
- Older people will have good social networks.
- Older people will have access to a range of activities.

### **Personalisation**

#### **What is the criterion?**

- Individuals **must** have choice and control over their support.

#### **When assessing the options, what are the key issues to be considered in relation to personalisation?**

- Eligibility for service is based on need, whilst maintaining a focus on prevention.
- Services are tailored to meet individual needs through provision of a menu of support options.
- Individual elements of support have separate charges. (definition of element still required).
- Services are sufficiently flexible to respond to changing needs.
- Individual budgets available for people who are in receipt of social care (further investigation required)

#### **Why has personalisation been included as one of the criteria?**

*National Government Agenda – Putting People First and the Coalition Government's Vision for Social Care*

*Research for this Review (Right Housing Right Support)*

- 91% of stakeholders feel there should be more choice.

- 44% of providers suggested increasing choice through a menu of options and 73% of providers stated that older people should be able to choose from a menu of support options with varying costs
- 51% of service users overall were in favour of choosing the type of support and frequency of calls/visits
- 55% of stakeholder and 54% of providers believe that additional tasks should be funded by the SP Grant

### **Accommodation**

#### **What is the criterion?**

- Older people living in social rented accommodation **must** have access to decent homes that provide the safety and security they need.
- Older people who own their homes or live in private rented accommodation **must** be supported to access appropriate advice and assistance in connection with the condition, safety and security of their housing.

#### **When assessing the options, what are the key issues to be considered in relation to accommodation?**

- Social rented accommodation meets the decent homes standard.
- People living in private sector accommodation are supported to access appropriate advice and assistance regarding the condition of their housing.

#### **Why has the standard of accommodation been included as one of the criteria?**

*Lancashire Strategy for an Ageing Population - Outcome 4: Older people should feel safe and supported*

Aims:

- Older people and carers will receive suitable support.
- Older people will feel safe at home and in the community.

*Research for this Review (Right Housing Right Support)*

- Safety and security was cited as the most important thing in making your home a good place to live by service users.

### **Tenure**

#### **What is the criterion?**

- Support **must** be available to older people in all tenures.

#### **When assessing the options, what are the key issues to be considered in relation to tenure?**

- Capacity to deliver a service to people living in all tenures (i.e. including private rented sector and owner occupiers).

#### **Why has tenure been included as one of the criteria?**

*Research for this Review (Right Housing Right Support)*

- 100% of stakeholders and 92% of providers supported funding older people who don't live in sheltered accommodation.

## **VFM**

### **What is the criterion?**

- Housing Support Services for older people **must** deliver value for money in terms of the cost effectiveness of services (cost of delivering desired outcomes).

### **When assessing the options what are the key issues to be considered in relation to VFM?**

- Cost of administration.
- Services targeted at people in greatest need thereby preventing the need for more intensive and costly interventions.

### **Why has VFM been included as one of the criteria?**

- Local authority duty to provide value for money.
- Public sector funding cuts.

## **Meeting the diverse needs of the local community**

### **What is the criterion?**

- Housing Support Services for older people **must** meet the diverse needs of the community (in terms of the equality act; issues for people living in rural communities and the level of dependency of those people needing services).

### **When assessing the options, what are the key issues to be considered in relation to meeting the needs of a diverse community?**

- Where appropriate, schemes are a local hub for community activities.
- Provision of communal activities for existing service users.
- Services are sufficiently flexible to respond to the diverse needs of the local community (e.g. development of specialist service).

### **Why has meeting the diverse needs of the local community been included as one of the criteria?**

*Lancashire Strategy for an Ageing Population - Outcome 5: Older people should have the opportunity to make a positive contribution*

#### **Aims:**

- Older people will be able to contribute to community life.
- Older people will be able to build links with younger people.
- Older people will be free from discrimination.
- Older people will play an active part in decision making.

#### *Research for this Review (Right Housing Right Support)*

Over one third of providers and stakeholders think that we are not meeting the diverse needs of the community very well.

#### 4. OPTIONS

The following options have been assessed against the above criteria, which have been broken down into three categories:

- Service models
- Number of providers
- Community alarms

Home Improvement Agencies are not included in the options. As outlined elsewhere in this Report, a separate decision making process will take place during the summer of 2011 regarding the future shape of HIA services.

Additional work is required regarding extra care, however the criteria outlined above would still appear to be relevant.

##### **Service Models**

###### Option 1: Status Quo (support fixed to specific accommodation)

This option would retain the current arrangements whereby all services, apart from 3 small pilots, have contracts which fix the support to specific accommodation. This means that there is no flexibility for providers to offer a service to people living in the local community.

###### Option 2: Flexible contracts would be issued enabling providers to offer support to people living in specialist accommodation for older people/sheltered housing and to general needs tenants, private sector tenants or owner occupiers

This option would result in changes to existing contracts in order to give greater flexibility to all providers to offer a service to older people living in schemes or within the community. The contracts would be capped at around the current level of spend or utilisation\*.

(\*The contract currently reflects the number of flats within the service and not the number of people who are entitled to financial assistance. However, if the contracts are more flexible, the maximum will need to reflect current budgetary spend or the number of people currently receiving financial support and not the physical capacity of the scheme. This is to ensure that there is not an increased financial risk to the commissioners.

There are two ways of achieving this option:

*Approach A - Change all contracts to community based support (?name still to be determined) to provide flexibility and agree incremental change with providers to ensure that services operate in line with the agreed criteria/strategic outcomes (listed above).*

In this option, service users would be advised that providers are being given more flexibility to offer support to people living in the local community in order to make services available to home owners and tenants not living in sheltered accommodation.

Following service user consultation where appropriate, the most suitable local approach to achieve the strategic outcomes would be agreed between the support provider, local commissioners and Supporting People Team.

For example, it could be agreed with an individual provider that in order to release capacity to support people in the private sector some or all of the following actions will be undertaken:

- an improved assessment process to ensure that only people who need the support receive it;
- reviewing the extent to which the method of support is appropriate (are visits being provided, but residents would be happy to replace some of the visits with calls);
- identifying spare capacity in schemes where managers support fewer people;
- understanding the housing benefit implications of support potentially not being a condition of the tenancy in individual schemes.

*Approach B - Change all contracts to community based support to provide flexibility and clearly communicate to all residents that support is no longer linked to the tenancy.*

Residents who are assessed as being eligible for support would be able to access the services which they need, whilst those people who only want the companionship or security of specialist accommodation can choose not to access or pay for support.

***The key difference between the two methods is that Approach A would be more incremental involving individual decisions being made in different schemes, whereas Approach B is more of a high profile uniform change involving amendments to both tenancy agreement and the marketing of schemes.***

Option 3: A mixture of contracts would be issued including both support fixed to specific specialist/sheltered accommodation and flexible community based support

This option would result in different types of contracts being offered to providers. Some providers would receive a contract which stipulates that support is fixed to specific accommodation, whereas other providers would receive a contract for flexible community based support.

Commissioners would, in this option, be required to determine the overall shape of services within an area before contracts are issued and the providers would have less flexibility to develop their services in response to changing needs.

## **Number of Providers**

### **Option 1: One provider per geographical area**

All housing support for older people in a particular geographical area (could be district or PCT footprint or other geographical area) would be delivered by one organisation. The provider would be selected through a mini competition of those organisations which had been accepted on to the Framework Agreement (i.e. preferred provider list) and wish to tender for the service.

The provider would deliver support in line with the preferred service model (as outlined above).



## **Option 2: Multiple providers**

Multiple providers of housing support would be retained and the model of support delivered would be dependent on the service model selected.

### **Community Alarms**

Contracts with sheltered housing providers include funding for the provision of community alarm services. Some organisations operate their own control centre, whilst others sub contract the work to external providers.

Supporting People funding is used to pay for the maintenance, call monitoring and response service.

The procurement of the maintenance and call monitoring requires further consideration.

However, with regard to the provision of out of hours/emergency response services, it is recognised that currently there is no equity in terms of the services being delivered to tenants. Some providers deliver a twenty-four hour response service, whilst others only operate a key holder contact service.

Therefore, options have been identified in order to assist us to procure this service in a different way:

Option 1: Continue to procure as part of the SP contract for housing support.

Option 2: Investigate the option for utilising an existing social care crisis/rapid response service.

Option 3: Supporting People Team procures one out of hours response service either across the County or for each of a number of specified geographical areas.

## **5. RECOMMENDATION**

The Supporting People Commissioning Board is proposing the following option on the basis of the attached assessment and general discussion regarding the most appropriate approach to adopt.

### **Service Model - Option 2, Approach A**

**Flexible contracts would be issued enabling providers to offer support to people living in specialist accommodation for older people/sheltered housing and to general needs tenants, private sector tenants or owner occupiers.**

**Approach A - Change all contracts to community based support (need to agree on most appropriate name ?community/?individual support /?personalised support) to provide flexibility and agree incremental change with providers to ensure that services operate in line with the agreed criteria/outcomes (listed above).**

The contracts would be capped at around the current level of spend or utilisation.

The contract currently reflects the number of flats within the service and not the number of people who are entitled to financial assistance. However, if the contracts are more flexible, the maximum will need to reflect current budgetary spend or the

number of people currently receiving financial support and not the physical capacity of the scheme. This is to ensure that there is not an increased financial risk to the commissioners.

In this option, service users would be advised that providers are being given more flexibility to offer support to people living in the local community making services available to home owners and tenants not living in sheltered accommodation.

Following service user consultation where appropriate, the most suitable local approach to achieve the strategic outcomes would be agreed between the support provider, local commissioners and Supporting People Team.

For example, it could be agreed with an individual provider that in order to release capacity to support people in the private sector some or all of the following actions will be undertaken:

- an improved assessment process to ensure that only people who need the support receive it;
- reviewing the extent to which the method of support is appropriate (are visits being provided, but residents would be happy to replace some of the visits with calls);
- identifying spare capacity in schemes where managers support fewer people;
- understanding the housing benefit implications of support potentially not being a condition of the tenancy in individual schemes.

This approach is being proposed as it can deliver the stated strategic outcomes and will provide the time and flexibility to enable a local solution to be adopted, whilst delivering a common set of outcomes.

### **Number of Providers**

The Commissioning Board has agreed to retain multiple providers in order to promote choice and in recognition of the benefits which can be delivered through the landlord and support provider being the same organisation.

### **Community Alarms**

Further work to be undertaken regarding the future commissioning of community alarms.

## **Implementation and Monitoring**

### **Contracts**

The Supporting People Team will investigate the most appropriate type of contract; however it is likely that some form of block gross chargeable may provide the greatest flexibility.

Individual meetings will be held between the provider, district council representative and a member of the Supporting People Team in order to develop an action plan which will identify the steps to be taken to ensure that the service meets the strategic outcomes listed. It is possible that providers and commissioners may agree that different approaches are to be adopted for individual schemes, however overall the provider needs to show that the service can deliver the strategic outcomes listed above.

A draft format for the action plan is attached at the end of this section, which will include identifying any requirement to consult with service users or to undertake an equality impact assessment.

The action plan will be attached to the contracts which are due to be issued by July 2011.

The Supporting People Team will support the process by researching and sharing national and local good practice.

Where providers of small numbers of units are unable to meet all of the strategic outcomes, or all elements of the individual outcomes, agreement as to the most appropriate service delivery model will need to be reached with the district housing lead and the Supporting People Team.

### **Strategic Fit**

In order to ensure that there is an understanding across the districts and county as to the progress being made in achieving the criteria/outcomes, the district council representative and the Supporting People Team will provide a six monthly update through the appropriate governance structure as outlined below.

### **Governance**

Further discussions are required to establish how this development would be overseen. A number of possible options are shown below:

1. Retain the working groups which have been established in each of the locality/PCT footprints comprising providers, older people's representatives, commissioners.
2. Feed into wider older people's planning groups such as older people's forums, district health and well being partnerships and the fifty plus assembly.
3. Establish a commissioning only meeting across Lancashire or in each PCT footprint to share practice and oversee progress.
4. Use the "commissioning only" part of the Locality Group to share practice and oversee progress.
5. Supporting People Commissioning Board if retained

### **Personalisation**

Further work required to be undertaken regarding the links with individual budgets for people in receipt of both social care and housing support.

## **6. PROCESS ADOPTED AND NEXT STEPS**

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.	Project Groups (involving providers and older people) discussed and amended draft option appraisal	Mid October 2010
2.	Commissioners in each PCT footprint met to review Option Analysis and District Reports	Week of 8 <sup>th</sup> November 2010
3.	Commissioning Board meet to discuss the option analysis, next steps and Lancashire Report	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2010
4.	Meeting of all providers and commissioners of sheltered housing in Lancashire in order to obtain initial feedback regarding the recommended option	Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2010
5.	Discuss preferred options at Project Groups (ESOP, NSHOP, SSHOP) involving older people and providers	January 2011
6.	Agree governance arrangements for implementation of recommendations	CB on 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2011
7.	Issue standard briefing to current service users, through providers, about outcome of review (following discussion at Project Groups)	Beginning of February
8.	Development of action plans	February to July 2011
9.	Implementation of monitoring arrangements	February 2011

## 7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Supporting People Grant will not increase and therefore opening the provision to all tenures will spread the resources thinly.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – There will be administrative costs in changing the delivery.
- Political – Providing support to owner-occupiers will be well received.
- Reputation -

## 8 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

8.1 Accept the contents of the report.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Rachael Stott, extension 4567.