



## Community & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

### Briefing Paper

Report of: Kate Bailey  
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Open

## Worcestershire Supporting People Strategy Refresh

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The report provides Members with details of the new five year Supporting People Strategy, the development of which is led by Supporting People but supported by the Supporting People Commissioning Body, of which Wyre Forest District Council is a member along with the other five district councils, Adult and Community Services, the three Primary Care Trusts, West Mercia Probation Service, and representatives from both service providers and from the service user group, WAVES.
- 1.2 A new Supporting People Strategy for the period 2010 - 2013 has been developed by the Worcestershire Supporting People Team. A draft copy of the new strategy was circulated by the Strategic Housing Manager to all Members in February for consultation and the opportunity for comments to be submitted directly to the Supporting People Manager. The closing date for consultation responses has been extended to April 12<sup>th</sup> 2010.
- 1.3 The Committee is asked to consider the draft strategy and to recommend to Cabinet that delegated authority to approve the final strategy is given to the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services and the Portfolio Holder.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 Nationally the Supporting People programme offers housing related support to over a million vulnerable people in the UK. The Worcestershire Supporting People programme provides strategically planned housing-related support services to vulnerable people with the goal of supporting them to achieve a range of outcomes that will improve their quality of life.

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- 2.2 Supporting People are based within the County Council and are responsible for commissioning and reviewing approximately £15m of support services per annum. They currently work with 20,000 vulnerable people each year to attain or maintain independence through the provision of housing related support. Through the use of the Communities and Local Government social accounting format the Research and Intelligence Unit (at Worcestershire County Council) identify that the Supporting People services produce a public services cost saving of £65 million each year. They currently provide support to various groups including older people, people with mental health issues, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, homeless, offenders, teenage parents, travellers, people with alcohol or substance misuse problems, those suffering domestic violence, young people and people leaving care.
- 2.3 The County Council in its role of administering authority, issues contracts to providers, makes payments and has responsibility for ensuring that the programme is effectively administered and delivered. The County Council has a key responsibility for the finances of Supporting People and the responsibility to work with its partners to deliver the best possible services within the resources available. Part of this responsibility is to ensure a robust Supporting People Strategy is in place setting out the direction in which services will change and develop to meet the needs of the local area.
- 2.4 The Supporting People programme was launched in April 2003 and comprises a funding, quality monitoring and needs assessment programme for housing related support services. Prior to Supporting People, housing related support was funded in a number of different ways and was not strategically planned and co-ordinated. Following the launch, one of the Supporting People responsibilities was to review all these services to ensure that they were strategically relevant, were eligible for SP funding, offered value for money and quality services.
- 2.5 During the previous Supporting People Strategy (2005 – 10), which has now expired, Supporting People and the Commissioning Body have reviewed services, driven down average weekly unit costs of service provision from £150 per week to £70 and commissioned a range of new services. They have moved away from accommodation based services to more floating support, outreach and resettlement allowing the support to be more flexible and less tenure specific.
- 2.6 Over the previous five years, funding for Supporting People has been ring fenced but from April 2010 the funding will form part of

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the County Council's area based grant and will therefore need to become more closely aligned to Local Area Agreement priorities as well as delivering on needs identified through the strategic review process. The funding and commissioning of services will remain the responsibility of the Supporting People Commissioning Body.

- 2.7 A number of strategic reviews of client groups has taken place (Single Homeless, Young People and Domestic Abuse) and more strategic needs analysis planned for people with a Physical and Sensory Impairment, with a mental health issue and for Gypsy and Travellers.

### **3. Key Elements of the Strategy**

- 3.1 The Supporting People Strategy 2010-2013 informs and embeds the commissioning intentions and priorities for helping the most vulnerable and excluded to contribute to wider society within Worcestershire. In addition it sets out how service users and providers can become a more integral element within the commissioning of the programme. The intention is for the most vulnerable people within the County to have services which are appropriate and responsive to individual needs and expectations thus preventing the need for intrusive intervention at the point of crisis.
- 3.2 The strategy sets out the direction the programme for the next 3 years in meeting vulnerable client needs, becoming more flexible and creative in meeting the rising demand for support services (taking into account changing demographics within the county).
- 3.3 The strategy was developed in conjunction with stakeholders and providers through various consultation events. Service User Groups, including WAVES, were also consulted with during the process.
- 3.4 The strategy details the approach of the programme in aligning all 117 contracts to meet LAA priorities, a financial benefits model which identifies significant public cost savings as a result of these preventative services and a range of projects the programme seeks to commission in 2010/11.
- 3.5 The strategy will be accompanied by an annual work plan, which will detail and organise activity to achieve the requirements of the strategy. An element of this work plan will be to ascertain the distribution of funding per District. Currently, there is not an equal split of funding by District. This is based on the way SP commission it's provision – on need and priority target areas. Demographic and existing provision will determine the level of

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support needed by District, and it is also to be noted that the countywide provision will offer support per District also on need. The initial stage of the work plan will focus on the distribution of funding, identify changing demographics and ensure that allocation is representative. This will be supported by the District Council housing officers.

### **4. Summary of Commissioning Intentions for 2010 - 2013**

- 4.1 In terms of commissioning intentions the strategy outlines that all service provision will achieve the following objectives;
- Deliver the vision of the strategy and align to key Council priorities
  - Meet the needs of vulnerable people in the county, and engage with the most chaotic
  - Are flexible in approach to engage with such a diverse range of needs
  - Are sustainable and have the ability to attract additional funding as a result of SP investment
  - Are cost effective, providing value for money
  - Fit with the strategic priorities of the Worcestershire Supporting People partnership
  - Are high quality
  - Can demonstrate that the client groups being supported are prioritised for support

Provision is also commissioned on needs evidence and remains tenure neutral.

#### **4.2 Older People**

- Early intervention services for older people (particularly with mental health needs).
- Low-level preventative housing related intervention as provided by home improvement agencies, community alarms and assistive technology.
- Provision of a countywide floating support that meets the needs of the most vulnerable (irrespective of their tenure)
- To provide low level support where appropriate within existing and new models of housing support provision.
- To identify the additional outcomes that may be achieved through social inclusion activity, for instance volunteering. (Either as a mechanism to identify housing related concerns for people who are not currently engaged, or to sustain networks for communities.)

Please also refer to Learning Disability, Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment, in addition to Mental Health commissioning intentions for this client group.

### **4.3 Mental Health**

- To undertake a strategic needs analysis of mental health provision within Worcestershire. The review will provide a strategic framework for commissioning intentions for Worcestershire's Supporting People programme seeking to add value to existing provision, create a real life account for gaps in provision, identify opportunities for joint commissioning and create alignment to Local Area Agreement priorities (current and potential).
- Within existing provision, increase the awareness of mental health issues and capacity build to assist programmes in identifying early someone's mental health deterioration.
- Within existing provision, support the drive for an equitable provision of mental health support programmes providing community based support, opportunities for training, education, employment, housing and support to develop networks (inclusion activities) and assist move on.
- Within existing provision, support the drive for equitable provision of support for people with a mental health illness to return to their home or supported living arrangement at the earliest opportunity that their condition allows. This provision should include a coordination of multi agency support in regard to health, housing and social care agreed with patients and their carers.
- Ensure appropriate choice is developed within Supporting People initiatives to aid recovery, increase social integration, enable maintenance of social networks and provide opportunities for increased independence, including return to appropriate employment.
- Within existing mental health provision, ensure move on is a priority, to ensure independent living opportunities and throughout

### **4.4 Learning Disabilities**

- Provision should seek to enhance greater choice and control, the use of community-based activities, with greater opportunities to integrate with increased accessibility, an emphasis on leisure, work and learning opportunities regardless of disability and, importantly, a desire to ensure that social contact with friends is maintained.
- Ensure that provision identifies the needs of carers, in addition to the service user.
- Ensure that programmes within our portfolio achieve multi faceted outcomes, and that provision works alongside each other with the adaptability to meet choice and control expectations

**4.5 Physical Disability and Sensory Impairments**

- To undertake a strategic needs analysis of physical disability and sensory impairment provision within Worcestershire. Working in partnership with key stakeholders (policy makers, physical disability and sensory impairment commissioners, providers and service users) the review will provide a strategic framework for commissioning intentions for Worcestershire's Supporting People programme seeking to add value to existing provision, create a real life account for gaps in provision, identify opportunities for joint commissioning and create alignment to Local Area Agreement priorities (current and potential).
- To ensure that existing provision and any newly commissioned provision is enabling people to access supported housing and low level housing related support, in addition to identifying social inclusion activity

**4.5 Gypsy and Travellers**

- To carry out a strategic review of the Gypsy and Traveller community within Worcestershire (and neighbouring authorities where appropriate) to ascertain the housing related support needs of this client group. The recommendations of this review will provide support for investment decisions to be made within the lifetime of this strategy.
- Within existing provision, ensure that Gypsies and Travellers are recognised within the diversity and training of providers;
- Work strategically with Children Services and stakeholders where appropriate to support families in existing provision seeking support, specifically around education or access, and also health (families who travel may not have a regular doctor). Providers will be expected to work closely with Health Visitor's/practitioners about specialist health support available to this community.
- Identify the needs of older communities specifically in terms of adaptations and health

**4.7 Young people at Risk**

- Preventative work: early prevention and advice, mediation, home visiting, school based work and assessment and local authority advice in housing.
- Accommodation and support: supported lodgings, nightstops, emergency accommodation (hostels), forms of move on from hostels and floating support.

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- Person-specific services: complex needs and high vulnerability, health, learning and work, BME young people, tackling anti social behaviour and offenders and offending, identifying opportunities for contribution to positive activities agenda (for instance, volunteering)
- Provision of a greater range of housing options and support (embraced within the freedom and flexibility of funding governance) which contributes to the prevention of homelessness and repeat homelessness. This includes specific issues within mainstream housing and support including substance misuse issues, youth offending behaviour, learning disabilities and difficulties including Asperger's Syndrome, dyspraxia, minority ethnic groups particularly unaccompanied asylum seekers, teenage parents and young people who are pregnant and young victims and survivors of domestic abuse, and care leavers

### **4.8 Teenage Parents**

- Provision of short-term transitional services to make the move to independent living
- Floating support and coordinating services, enabling access to health and well being support through to training, education, employment and benefits support.
- Development of move on support functions, for instance life coaching / mentoring to aid and support transitions

### **4.9 Homelessness**

- Ensure preventive agenda is extended throughout the County, including the introduction of a single service gateway and improved systems such as common monitoring and common assessment
- Crisis intervention: emergency access accommodation and street outreach, often dealing with high vulnerability and complex needs.
- Supported independent living: supported accommodation for single homeless people, offenders and substance mis-users.
- 'Preparation for independent living': floating support, which can be generic or specialist. Some focuses solely on crisis intervention work, some are specialist services and other floating support moves with the person through different types of accommodation.
- Ensure provision continues to complement housing strategies countywide, and remains equitable based on need.
- Development of move on support functions, for instance life coaching / mentoring to aid and support transitions

**4.10 Substance Misuse**

- The provision of Low-level and floating support for individuals with drugs and alcohol problems;
- Complementing low-level community interventions and alignment to the strategic direction of the Drug and Alcohol Action Team partnership
- Provision to address the demand profile within the County, and remains equitable.
- Development of move on support functions, for instance life coaching / mentoring to aid and support transitions

**4.11 Offenders**

- Ensure that provision of effective offending behaviour support programmes (housing related needs) aimed at the low / medium and high risk offenders, within the community, are implemented effectively to reduce and stop further offending based on research and intelligence in terms of need per district.
- Ensure housing related provision supports offenders in accessing training and employment opportunities, as this is identified as a very effective mechanism in helping previously unemployed offenders live crime-free lives
- Ensure that we have a mixed economy of low, medium and high risk offenders within the current portfolio of provision.
- Development of move on support functions, for instance life coaching / mentoring to aid and support transitions

**4.12 Domestic Violence**

- Ensure that Supporting People provision is available to meet a targeted response to the needs of specific vulnerable groups including Gypsy and Traveller Communities; Rural Communities; Vulnerable Adults – drugs, alcohol, mental health, older people; Young Adults.
- Work in Partnership with the Domestic Abuse unit, ensuring a portfolio of provision is applied throughout the county (specifically looking at both prevention (including perpetrator programmes) and recovery/resettlement programmes).
- Work in conjunction with the WFADA in regard to a Safer Housing strategy, including a needs assessment of need and options within the county.
- Continue to work strategically with WFADA on improving practice through training, service standards and outcome /

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data monitoring with current provision within the Supporting People programme in Worcestershire.

- To work strategically with the Domestic Abuse Forum to ascertain the needs of the County and allocate resource to meet identified housing related needs.
- Development of move on support functions, for instance life coaching / mentoring to aid and support transitions

### **4.13 Additional Requirements**

A comprehensive and integrated needs analysis for the following groups will also be commissioned to assist with actions within future annual plans.

- Training Needs Analysis for providers supporting HIV/AIDS
- Refugees and migrant communities
- Carers for all client groups

4.14 Within Wyre Forest the majority of Supporting People funding coming into the district is targeted towards older people and in particular through providing support to those in sheltered accommodation. Funding has now been set aside to develop a floating support service to all older people in need across tenures and to further support the development of the new Home Improvement Agency from April onwards. However SP also fund services to a wide range of clients including young people, victims of domestic abuse and homeless households. The total number of households that can be supported within Wyre Forest are 3706 at any one time.

4.15 Supporting People have also worked closely with the RIU to ensure services are mapped and compared with need and other forms of service delivery to identify unmet priorities. It is the intention of the SPCB to use the strategy and the research the RIU have undertaken to better inform other strategies developed with the County Council and across other stakeholders including District Councils.

## **5. Options**

**5.1 To recommend to Cabinet to delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services and the Portfolio Holder, to approve the final strategy.**

## **6. Consultation**

The strategy has been sent out to various stakeholders by Supporting People for consultation and to Wyre Forest District Council Members.

**7. Related Decisions**

Not applicable

**8. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies**

Not applicable

**9. Implications**

9.1 Resources: There are no financial implications as the County Council as the administering Authority bears the full financial risk of the Supporting People programme.

9.2 Equalities: An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken in relation to the strategy.

9.3 Partnership working: The action plan can only be delivered through working in partnership with the Supporting People Commissioning Body, Stakeholders, Providers and Service Users.

9.4 Human Rights: There are no implications.

9.5 E-Government: There are no implications.

9.6 Best Value: There are no implications.

**10. Wards affected**

10.1 All wards of the district are affected by the Supporting People Strategy.

**11. Appendices**

11.1 Supporting People Strategy

**12. Background Papers**

Not applicable.

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