

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
HOUSING COMMITTEE 26 JANUARY 2005

THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME

**Joint Report by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services and the
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise members of future funding arrangements in respect of the Supporting People Programme and seek the approval of members for changes in the roles and remits of the Commissioning and Purchasing and Core Coordination Groups.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Previous reports to Committee have detailed the policy background to the Supporting People Programme together with the funding being made available to the Council.

3. FUTURE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 It was previously reported to Committee that the Scottish Executive had determined on redistribution between local authorities of Supporting People funding on the basis of a distribution formula rather than continue the current historic funding allocations into the next spending round. Supporting People Grant will however continue to be paid under Section 91 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. There will be no change to any of the current reporting or accountability arrangements for Supporting People funds. The Scottish Executive continues to view the Supporting People Programme as being separate from but complementary to Community Care and ring fencing of the funding will be continued to ensure its continued separate identity.
- 3.2 An announcement on future funding levels for the Supporting People Programme was made on 23rd December. The national budget for the Supporting People Programme has been set at £407.3M for 2005/6, £399M for 2006/7 and £401.1M for 2007/8. The separate funding for pipeline projects (new supported housing developments that started operating during 2003/4) is being absorbed into the main Supporting People budget from 2005/6 onwards.
- 3.3 In contrast to the majority of local authorities, East Ayrshire Council ultimately gains from the move to allocation of Supporting People funds by a distribution formula.
- 3.4 The Council's Grant allocation will be £6.184M for 2005/6, which is a slight reduction from the full current year allocation of £6.201M. (This is due to the ending of separate pipeline funding referred to in Paragraph 3.2 above).

There will however be an increase in the allocation to £6.464M for 2006/7 and a further increase to £7.609M for 2007/8.

- 3.5** It is expected that both the makeup of the distribution formula itself as well as the rate of change to full implementation will continue to be the subject of ongoing discussions between COSLA and the Scottish Executive.

4. SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGIC PLAN

- 4.1** The Council's Strategic Plan for the Supporting People Programme has been subject to its first annual review. The increased allocation of Supporting People Grant from 2006/7 and potential efficiency gains from service reviews affords the Council opportunity to further develop services to meet identified need. The review report was approved by the Core Co-ordination Group at its meeting of 11th November 2004. Copies of the revised Plan and associated documents are being made available in the Members Lounge and are being posted on the Council web site.

5. THE ROLE AND REMIT OF THE CORE CO-ORDINATION GROUP AND THE COMMISSIONING & PURCHASING GROUP

- 5.1** The above groups were established in line with Scottish Executive Supporting People Guidance to facilitate implementation of the Supporting People Programme.
- 5.2** Now that the Supporting People Programme is established it is proposed that the Commissioning and Purchasing Group be reconfigured to have an overview of all Supporting People funded services, with membership comprising officers from Health, Housing and Social Work together with Procurement and Finance staff. The group should consider and endorse all Supporting People service reviews and should provide recommendations on future procurement actions to Committees through the Head of Housing as Lead Officer and the Executive Head of Social Work.
- 5.3** It is proposed that the Core Coordination Group be refocused as a stakeholder forum rather than a policy making body, given the potential for conflicts of interest were it to assume an executive role in relation to the outcomes of service reviews.
- 5.4** These changes of role and remit were approved by the Core Co-ordination Group at its meeting of 11th November 2004.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GENERAL FUND

- 6.1** The requirement to provide funding from existing budgets to meet the current shortfall between our existing contractual obligations and the amount of Grant provided by the Scottish Executive will continue into 2005/6. The annual contribution is currently estimated to be some £180,000 from existing Social Work budgets and £30,000 from General Fund Housing budgets.

- 6.2** As numbers of service users and their needs increase, it has become clear that the amount of Supporting People Grant currently available to fund housing support services delivered as part of integrated care and support packages is insufficient to fully fund those services. During 2003/4 an additional £1.06M was also spent from the community care budget on the provision of housing support services. The equivalent figure for 2004/5 is expected to be £1.3M. This is one of the ongoing issues that the revised Commissioning & Purchasing Group outlined in Paragraph 5.2 of this report will consider.
- 6.3** It has been confirmed by the Scottish Executive that the implementation budget from which East Ayrshire Council receives £186,000 annually in additional Revenue Support Grant towards the costs of administration of the Supporting People Programme will continue through to 2007/8.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

- 7.1** The current requirement to provide funding from the Housing Revenue Account to meet the current shortfall in Grant allocations to Housing Department in-house services will continue into 2005/6. The required annual contribution is currently estimated to be some £50,000. Moreover, the cost of providing services free of charge to those tenants who do not get Housing Benefit but who have preserved rights to a free service, 'protected tenants', continues to reduce as their numbers reduce. The total overall cost of services for protected tenants funded from the 2004/2005 Housing Revenue Account is therefore expected to be in the order of £120,000.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** There are no policy implications arising from this report

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1** There are no legal implications arising from this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1** The Committee are recommended to:-

- (i) note the Supporting People Grant awards from 2005/06 to 2007/08;
- (ii) approve, in respect of its interest, the revised role and remit of both the Core Co-ordination Group and Commissioning & Purchasing Groups; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

William Stafford
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Services

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6 January 2005

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1.** Scottish Executive letter of 1 October 2004 on Supporting People funding allocations and reform of programme
- 2.** Scottish Executive letter of 23 December 2004 on Supporting People funding allocations and reform of programme

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