

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE : 22 MARCH 2007**

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 the continuing changes to the Supporting People Programme and the numbers of service users that benefit from Supporting People funding.

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. 2007/8 FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 As previously reported to Committee, the Scottish Executive's Supporting People Grant allocation to East Ayrshire Council will increase to £7.609M for 2007/8. Together with a continuing Housing Revenue Account contribution for protected tenants (pre 2003 tenants entitled to a free service) and charging income from service users, it is expected that some £7.8M will be available from Supporting People funds in 2007/8 compared to some £6.7M for 2006/7.
- 3.2 The Scottish Executive is using 2.7% as its inflation planning assumption for the Supporting People Programme at national level. It is accordingly proposed that the additional funding available for 2007/8 will provide an uplift for all Supporting People funded service providers of 2.7% compared to 2006/7 rates. It should however be recognised that some service providers are contractually entitled to a higher uplift than 2.7%. Any difference will need to be funded from mainstream budgets.
- 3.3 In East Ayrshire, apart from the uplift for inflation which will provide an additional £0.11M, an additional £0.7M will be made available to Social Work run services to further expand their existing services to vulnerable adults and older peoples services.
- 3.4 For Housing run services, apart from the uplift for inflation of £0.046M an additional £0.3M will be made available. That funding will allow new services to be commissioned to deal with the increasing numbers of young people presenting themselves as homeless and further improve our capacity to meet the challenges of the Scottish Executive's 2012 homelessness agenda.

4. REVISED SERVICE CHARGES FOR EX HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FUNDED SERVICES

- 4.1 A previous report to this Committee in April 2006 presented the conclusions of the Best Value Review of the Sheltered Housing Warden Service. Since receiving Committee approval for the planned changes, work has progressed on restructuring the service, which will take effect from April 2007.
- 4.2 One result of the new services that are to replace the current warden service is that their cost to individual tenants will go down. In place of the current resident warden service, which is costed at £140.37 per month for each tenancy covered by the service, three complementary services have been costed. Two of the service costings are the subject of a separate report to the Housing Committee for approval as they are clear successors to ex Housing Revenue Account funded services.
- 4.3 The third service referred to above is the Community Alarm Service. Up to now, all East Ayrshire Council sheltered tenants have had the community alarm service provided to them as the off duty cover element of their warden service, even though that was never an explicitly costed element of the service.
- 4.4 Replacing the current resident warden service in the schemes being redesignated as high needs or medium needs extra care housing with a care co-ordinator and incorporating the actual community alarm service cost reduces the basic flat rate service charge for those schemes to £76.35 per month. This is a reduction from the current £140.37 monthly charge of £64.02 for 6 of our current tenants, a further 3 will see lesser reductions as they already get a rebate on their current charge.
- 4.5 Replacing the current resident warden service in those schemes being redesignated as low needs amenity housing with a daily visit from homecare staff and incorporating the actual community alarm service cost reduces the basic flat rate service charge for those schemes to £63.31 per month. This is a reduction from the current £140.37 monthly charge of £77.06 for 6 of our current tenants, a further 8 will again see a lesser reduction as they already get a rebate on their current charge.
- 4.6 It is anticipated that 6 of our current tenants would see no reduction as they currently pay less than the new charges under the current charging policy, through the application of rebates based on their income and circumstances.

5. CHARGING FOR SERVICES IN EXTRA CARE AND AMENITY HOUSING

- 5.1 The new extra care and amenity housing service models amalgamate previously separate services and funding streams in a complex hybrid service model. It will be essential to ensure consistent application of the Council's charging policy for non residential services and the Scottish Executive guidance relating to protected tenants and their preserved rights in ex Housing Revenue Account funded services.
- 5.2 It is therefore proposed, following a whole system approach, that the charging function for both the ex HRA services and homecare services being delivered to tenants in our

high, medium and low needs/amenity schemes be consolidated within the Supporting People Team in Neighbourhood Services. The team already charges for the current warden service and deals with all issues relating to protected tenants.

- 5.3 Care co-coordinators and home care managers will do their needs assessments and put services in place to meet the identified needs. Where appropriate, tenants will then be referred on for income maximisation through the Joint Team with the Department for Work and Pensions which is embedded within the Supporting People Team. Any resulting financial assessment and billing tasks will be passed to Supporting People Team clerical staff. This will minimise the administrative work load for front line staff and will ensure the fullest access to benefits for tenants.

6. REDESIGNATION OF EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL PROPERTIES

- 6.1 As part of the Best Value Review, a group of 13 properties in Hopes Avenue Dalmellington that currently receive a warden service from the adjacent Bield Housing Association scheme and are thus designated as sheltered housing were identified as being appropriate to designate as low needs/amenity housing. This would entail replacing their current warden service with a daily homecare visit and transferring their community alarm cover from their current Bield Response 24 service to the Council's community alarm service. The tenants would lose their access to the communal facilities at the Bield scheme, but the questionnaires that they completed as part of the service review showed that this access was largely theoretical, the scheme facilities were almost never used by them.

7. THE FUTURE OF THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME

- 7.1 The Comprehensive Spending Review due later this year is being advertised as the most challenging yet. The Council's officers have been working closely with the Scottish Executive on the research needed to gather the evidence that will sustain the Supporting People Programme nationally through the challenges of the forthcoming Spending Review. All indications are that the Supporting People Programme can demonstrate that it delivers cost effective services that can make fundamental differences to people's lives.
- 7.2 The outcome of the Comprehensive Spending review will be the subject of a future report to Committee.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GENERAL FUND

- 8.1 The additional funding for Social Work Services will help reduce the amount currently spent on meeting the assessed need for housing support services that exceeds the amount of funding that can be provided from Supporting People funds. Current indications are that the additional expenditure on housing support services funded from the community care budget will be approximately £1.4M for 2006/7. As previously reported to the committee, the need for services has steadily increased since 2003 and

continues to increase, despite the amount of funding made available by the Scottish Executive for housing support services remaining essentially unchanged until recently.

- 8.2 The income maximisation work of the Joint Team with tenants will mean an increase in charging income for Supporting People funded home care services. This will in turn release additional Supporting People funding to be provided to other services.
- 8.3 Replacing the current Bield warden service for the 13 tenants in Hopes Avenue, Dalmellington will allow an additional £8,360 to be provided to homecare and alarm services.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

- 9.1 The reduction in service charges outlined in Paragraph 4 above will mean that the ongoing financial contribution required of the Housing Revenue Account will go down in line with the reduction in the cost of the service. Current estimates are that the required contribution will decrease from £0.157M in 2006/7 to an initial £0.98M for 2007/8
- 9.2 This reduction of £0.059M in the required contribution from the Housing Revenue Account releases an equivalent amount of funding towards achieving the Council's commitments to better homes under the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

10. NUMBERS OF SERVICE USERS BENEFITTING FROM THE PROGRAMME

- 10.1 At a previous meeting of this Committee, members requested information on the actual numbers of East Ayrshire residents who are assisted to live independently as a result of Supporting People funding. During 2005/6, the Council spent a total of £6.54M from Supporting People funds and a further £0.5 M from the community care budget on housing support services. The following table shows the numbers of people living in East Ayrshire that were supported to live independently in their own homes during that year.

| | | |
|--|------|---------------------|
| Physical disability/illness | 2612 | Mainly older people |
| People having mental health problems | 526 | |
| People with a learning disability | 323 | |
| People who use alcohol | 213 | |
| People who use drugs | 249 | |
| Older people | 967 | |
| Vulnerable due to young age | 400 | |
| People at risk of offending / re-offending, people leaving prison | 32 | |
| Women at risk of domestic violence | 249 | |
| People who are homeless or sleeping rough | 1168 | |
| People with sensory impairment | 46 | |
| People with dementia | 49 | |
| Other vulnerable groups | 19 | |

| | | |
|------------------|------|--|
| Net total | 6340 | Some people used more than one service in the year |
|------------------|------|--|

During 2006/7 the Council will spend approximately £6.7M from Supporting People funds on housing support services. A further £1.4M will be spent on housing support services from the community care budget. All indications are that the numbers of people receiving assistance from housing support services continue to increase compared to the numbers given above.

11. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The changes outlined in this report give practical effect to the policy changes inherent in the council's adoption of its new Supported Accommodation Strategy in 2006.

12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

13. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The provision of more focused services for older people contributes to the 'improving opportunities', 'eliminating poverty' and 'improving community safety' agendas of the community plan.

14. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 The provision of more focused services for older people will reduce risk and facilitate its better management.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 The Committee are recommended to:-

- (i) approve the revised arrangements for the administration of Service Charges
- (ii) note this report has been considered by the Housing Committee; and
- (iii) note the contents of the report.

Bill Stafford
Executive Director of
Neighbourhood Services
21 February 2007
Encl (0)

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational &
Social Services

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report to Social Work Committee of 20th April 2006 'A Supported Accommodation Strategy for Older People in East Ayrshire'
2. Scottish Executive letter of 17th January 2007 re carry forward of funds to 2007/8

For further information please contact Eddie Fraser, Senior Manager Community Care, telephone 01563 554825 or Geoff Crow, Senior Supporting People Officer telephone: 01563 554832.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: JACKIE DONNELLY/ CHRIS McALEAVEY