

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE - 29 JANUARY 2004

THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME

Joint Report by the Director of Homes and Technical Services and the Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise members of the implementation of this Scottish Executive initiative and its operation in East Ayrshire Council since April 2003.

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. PROGRESS UPDATE

- 3.1** The Scottish Executive has now confirmed the final Supporting People Grant award to the Council for 2003/04 as £6,161,575. Transitional Housing Benefit claims account for £5,361,141 and the Executive have confirmed that this reflects the full amount of accepted Transitional Housing Benefit claims rather than the 95% level which the Executive had previously intimated would be paid to Councils.
- 3.2** However, the final grant award based on Transitional Housing Benefit claims is £223,808 less than the value of the Council's final Transitional Housing Benefit submission due to a small number of disputed claims and the funding available awarded nationally to implement the Supporting People Programme.
- 3.3** Discussions with the Department for Works and Pensions on the disputed claims are ongoing. In the meantime, it is proposed to meet any shortfall by apportioning relevant costs between existing budgets as previously agreed by the Departments involved.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GENERAL FUND

- 4.1** It was previously agreed that General Fund resources would be used to meet any shortfall for those services provided by housing associations and moreover, that Education and Social Services budgets would meet the costs of any shortfall for those services delivered in conjunction with Community Care funded services.
- 4.2** As a result, a contribution of £23,518 will be required from the General Fund for housing support services provided by housing associations. Existing Education and Social Services Budgets would contribute £151,051 towards the costs of housing support services associated with the Community Care budget.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE HRA

- 5.1** The Housing Revenue Account would be expected to contribute £49,239 in respect of the Tenancy Support Service and Homeless Hostel Warden Services.
- 5.2** The Councils contribution to the cost of providing Sheltered Housing Warden Services during the current year to protected tenants will rise slightly to £203,801 due to some changes in individual circumstances. The Supporting People Grant includes funding of £568,136 to meet the balance of the total cost of providing this service to all sheltered housing tenants.
- 5.3** Housing Revenue Account funding is available for every protected tenant but, as they die or move away to be replaced by a new tenant on Housing Benefit, a gap starts to appear in the funding of the service as the new tenant is entitled to a service free of charge due to them receiving Housing Benefit. There is however no additional Supporting People Grant available from the Scottish Executive to meet the shortfall which will eventually amount to a maximum of approximately £200,000 annually at 2003/4 prices
- 5.4** The cost of providing and funding the Sheltered Housing Warden Service in future years as the number of protected tenants reduce over time, is currently under discussion and options will be submitted for Members consideration in due course.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1** It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this report.

James Lavery
Director of Homes & Technical Ser.
5 January 2004

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational & Social Ser.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

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