

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 27 MARCH 2003
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 continuing arrangements being made for the implementation of this Scottish Executive initiative and to update them on achievements in maximising income to the Council through Transitional Housing Benefit claims from existing Homecare service users.

2. BACKGROUND

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

3. PROGRESS UPDATE

- 3.1 As previously reported the Council remains on target to implement the Supporting People Programme from April 2003. The current version of the Implementation Action Plan is annexed to this report.
- 3.2 Since the last report to Committee on 29 January 2003 further guidance has been received from the Scottish Executive on issues such as the future funding and reviews of services, the monitoring of management information and the quality of service delivery.
- 3.3 As required by the Scottish Executive, further reports are being sent to them detailing the sums being paid from Transitional Housing Benefit and other funding sources which will contribute to the Council's Supporting People Grant. The current maximum possible amount of Supporting People Grant due to the Council in 2003/4 is currently estimated at £6M.
- 3.4 During April and again in November there will be reconciliations of the amounts of Transitional Housing Benefit paid, the results of which will inform adjustments to the Council's Grant payments in May and November. Further updates will be given to future Committee meetings on the progress achieved on these reconciliations.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GENERAL FUND

- 4.1 The Scottish Executive has now advised that our Revenue Support Grant settlement will be adjusted following the November reconciliation referred to in Paragraph 3.4 to make up the full level of Supporting People funding with the 5% General Fund contribution to Housing Benefit payments that would have been required to be made had the Transitional Housing Benefit scheme continued through 2003/4. Discussions continue between departments to ensure that the adjustments needed to service budgets to reflect their required relative contributions back to the General Fund are made in a fair and equitable manner.
- 4.2 In early summer 2002 a small team was established within Educational and Social Services with a view to maximising income to the Council through Transitional Housing Benefit and the Supporting People Programme, particularly linked to current homecare service users. This "spend to save" initiative looked for a return of £0.73M in recurring revenue from a one off outlay of approximately £0.04M which was jointly funded by Educational & Social Services and Homes & Technical Services. The team, of 4 temporary Transitional Housing Benefit Assistants, have completed 546 claims for East Ayrshire homecare service users resulting in over £1.1M of recurring revenue income. This is over 50% more than was originally anticipated, this provides real opportunities to develop services in East Ayrshire for vulnerable service users and the team are to be commended on their efforts. Close co-operation between Social Work and Housing staff has also so far enabled over 500 service users of the Community Alarm service to make claims for Transitional Housing Benefit realising over £0.3M of additional recurring revenue.

5. STAFFING ISSUES

- 5.1 Discussions continue between departments on the operational issues surrounding Supporting People. Over £3M is expected to be transferred to Educational and Social Services during 2003/4 to purchase housing support services where they are provided in conjunction with community care services to more than 1200 clients.
- 5.2 There is a need to be able to track what is happening to services to individuals and validate the spending of the money as Supporting People Grant funding is ring fenced and thus can only be spent on providing housing support services. To achieve this administrative supports will be required within Educational and Social Services and an allowance has been built into the unit costs of service to fund this. A requirement has been identified for two additional administrative posts in Educational and Social Services to carry out the required clerical tasks.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

- 6.1 The return previously submitted to the Scottish Executive claiming matching Supporting People Grant funding in respect of housing support services provided from rent pooled income has had to be revised and resubmitted in the light of fresh guidance. A revised total of £825,235 has now been submitted against which Supporting People Grant funding will be claimed of £606,708. The continuing cost to the 2003/4 Housing Revenue Account of some £219,000 for the provision of previously rent pooled services free of charge to existing tenants who do not receive Housing Benefit has been included in the 2003/4 Housing Revenue Account

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no new policy implications from the existing Scottish Executive Supporting People guidance other than those previously reported to Committee.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no new legal implications arising from this report. Any legal implications arising from the implementation of the Supported People Initiative will be reported to Committee as they arise in the context of further Supporting People progress reports.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Committee is asked to:
- (i) note the progress achieved to date;
 - (ii) refer staffing implications at paragraph 5.2 to the Corporate Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration; and
 - (ii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

James Lavery
Director of Homes & Technical Services
6 March 2003
Enc (1)

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational & Social Services

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS Nil

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March 2003 version

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME ACTION PLAN – ‘FINANCES AND COMMITMENTS					
Objective		Action Required	Current Situation	Timescale	Responsible Officer
F1	Maximise take up of Transitional Housing Benefit	Review all Social Work client services to identify support services	Temporary staff being employed	Ongoing to March 2003	Eddie Fraser / Geoff Crow / Trish McLean
F2	Map existing & planned housing support services to identify commitments for 2003/4	Issue questionnaires, log results on database issued by Scottish Executive and keep updating	Reports to Executive as required	Ongoing	Geoff Crow
F3	Agree capital programme for 2002/3 and later	Get approval from Communities Scotland on pipeline projects	Done	March 2002	Joe Cassidy/Deborah Brady
F4	Resolve cross-authority issues	Identify clients who are funded by another authority or whose funding is unclear	Done	October 2002	Geoff Crow
F5	Develop framework for cost comparisons between schemes and providers	Establish mechanisms for accurately identifying costs- Proforma to be worked up for consideration by Practitioner's Network	Done	December 2002	Geoff Crow
F6	Maximise Housing Revenue Account to be matched by Executive grant for 2003/4 and beyond	Identify housing support services paid from pooled rent income in 2001/2 Housing Revenue Account (£ 825,235)	Done	End October 02 for accurate return, Jan 03 audited return	Geoff Crow/David McLellan
F7	Agree 100% Interim Contracts with providers	Draw up service specifications and determine funding amounts- payments to be made from April	Negotiations on contracts ongoing	February 2003	Geoff Crow

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME
ACTION PLAN – ‘PLANNING’**

Objective		Action Required	Current Situation	Timescale	Responsible Officer
P 1	Devise strategies for disseminating information to all partners and consulting with users and providers	Draft strategies and submit to Core Co-ordination Group for approval	Done	November 2001	Geoff Crow
P 2	Identify areas where enhancement is needed to SWIFT system	Map existing levels of functionality & compare with those required for supporting people	Done- SPLS under development	April 2002	Geoff Crow
P 3	Identify local service aims for each client group	Develop user involvement approach for approval by Core Co-ordination Group	Ongoing as part of consultation on Strategic Plan	February 2003	Geoff Crow
P 4	Conduct full needs survey	Identify information sources and conduct survey	Ongoing as part of consultation on Strategic Plan	March 2003	Geoff Crow
P 5	Prepare scheme review strategy	Conduct survey of types of service and develop framework for cost comparisons	Discussion Paper submitted to C&P Group- scoring matrix being developed to select priorities	February 2003	Geoff Crow
P 6	Devise post-2003 strategy and include in Local Housing Strategy	Gap analysis between supply and need to identify unmet need ongoing	Ongoing to take account of the effects of THB	March 2003	Geoff Crow
P 7	Produce final draft of first strategic plan	Prioritise service enhancements and resources for 2003 on based on gap analysis	Report to March Committees for approval prior to re-submission to Scottish Executive	March 2003	Geoff Crow

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME
ACTION PLAN - 'SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES'**

Objective		Action Required	Current Situation	Timescale	Responsible Officer
S 1	Discuss and agree with North and South Ayrshire common approaches to issues	Discuss and agree with North and South Ayrshire common approaches to issues	Done	March 2002	Chris McAleavey/Geoff Crow
S 2	Develop commissioning and purchasing process for Supporting People	Decide on composition of C & P Sub Group, identify what systems can be copied across and used	Community Care Commissioning & Purchasing framework being developed to include Supporting People	February 2003	Chris McAleavey /Geoff Crow/ Andy MacDonald
S 3	Develop scheme review system	Conduct survey of types of service, establish protocols for prioritizing reviews	To follow on from strategy preparation	February 2003	Geoff Crow
S 4	Develop I.T system to meet the needs of the Supporting People Programme	Work with Anite and other users to enhance SWIFT where required	Functional specification completed and contingency system under development	February 2003	Martin Mason/Geoff Crow
S 5	Develop registration, tendering and contract processes for Supporting People.	Identify what systems can be used or copied across to Supporting People. Adapt as necessary.	Commissioning and purchasing framework being adopted	February 2003	Geoff Crow/Andy MacDonald
S 6	Develop payments system	Identify what systems can be used or copied across to Supporting People. Adapt as necessary.	Contingency system under development due to delays with SPLS	February 2003	Geoff Crow
S 7	Develop audit system	Identify what systems can be used or copied across to Supporting People. Adapt as necessary.	Contingency system under development due to delays with SPLS	February 2003	Geoff Crow

