

SUPPORTING PEOPLE – CONSULTATION PAPER NO 2

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report advises Members of the proposed new arrangements in respect of supporting vulnerable members of the community in their own homes which are due to come into effect on 1 April 2003.
- 1.2. Members' views are also sought with regard to the specific questions posed in the above mentioned consultation document with regard to whether or not the scheme should be phased in.
- 1.3. Copies of the consultation papers will be deposited in the Members' Lounge.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The new proposals will come into effect in April 2003 with regard to providing the necessary support to maintain people within their own homes.
- 2.2. The key aims of the new regime are:-
 - **Focusing provision on local need:** introducing a more systematic and strategic process to assess needs within and across local authority areas and supply relevant support services
 - **Improving the range and quality of services:** promoting the development of a wider range of support services more geared to the needs of the people receiving support, and based on informed good practice. In particular the previous link of support services to tenure will be broken, so that more 'floating support' may be introduced where appropriate.
 - **Integrating "support" with wider local strategies:** particularly within Health, Social Services, Housing and Neighbourhood renewal and Community Safety.
 - **Monitoring and inspecting quality and effectiveness:** in a more structured way, including integrating with the 'Best Value' regime.

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- **Introducing effective decision making and administration:** changing the arrangements for funding and managing the sector should be done in a way which leads to transparent decision making and cost effective administration.

2.3. The objectives of the new regime are:-

- To enable people to remain, or establish themselves, independently in the community.
- To be part of the range of preventative strategies being developed by local authorities, aimed at giving early help to avoid the need for acute or crisis care.
- To form “packages” or provision designed to meet the multiple and varied needs of vulnerable clients.
- To ensure that the full range of vulnerable groups receive support services.
- To encourage more co-ordination with NHS bodies in commissioning and funding services.
- To provide generic support services by skilled staff who, in the main, will provide very different services from staff trained to provide personal or medical care.
- In most cases, to be allocated through processes other than the Social Services community care assessments.
- To complement other support provision made by the authority.

3 IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1. The lead authority in implementing the new regime will be the Essex County Council. They will need to involve all relevant agencies dealing with issues such as health, housing, social services and probation. Although the lead authority tasked eventually with grant distribution, the decision making process will need to involve all of the partner organisations.
- 3.2. A list of the tasks that need to be carried out is shown at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 3.3. The Essex County Council will receive grant from the Government in order to finance the various services provided to residents.

4 ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT

- 4.1. Rochford will be involved in the process mainly as a provider of services. As a landlord of sheltered accommodation, the Council provides support to residents primarily through the Scheme Managers. This element of care will in future be funded from the Supporting People budget.
- 4.2. At present, the Council provides the support and passes the cost to the tenants in receipt of those services by levying a supplemental charge on the weekly rent. The additional charge qualifies for Housing Benefit. In future, the Essex County Council will give a grant in respect of the cost of the service. It has been stated in Government literature that the amount of funding received by authorities through the new system should be no less than currently received through the benefit process.
- 4.3. It will not be until details of the grant regime emerge that we will be able to predict accurately what the effect on the Housing Revenue Account and tenants' rents will be.
- 4.4. Although the majority of work will fall to Essex County Council, officers from Rochford will need to be involved in the consultation process. We will also be required to supply data in respect of service provision costs and amounts of rebate granted to tenants in respect of those services.
- 4.5. In addition, schemes such as the floating support initiative and the Home Improvement Agency will also be funded from the Supporting People grant. Rochford is a key player in these types of issues.

5 CONSULTATION PAPER NO. 2

- 5.1. There will be a number of consultation papers dealing with all aspects of the new initiative. In the main, these are dealing with technical issues aimed mainly at lead organisations such as the County Council. It is proposed officers will respond to those documents as appropriate.
- 5.2. This specific consultation paper requires a more formal response to the question as to whether or not the scheme should be phased in. The Government is offering this option, but giving a very clear message that it does not believe it is necessary to phase implementation.
- 5.3. Any authority wishing to express support for the phasing must give a detailed explanation as to why it is necessary.
- 5.4. As Rochford is essentially a service provider in this process, there is no requirement for this authority to request a phasing of the initiative.

6 SUMMARY

- 6.1. This is a major national initiative which will affect all local authorities, social landlords, care providers and recipients. When officers have further information, it is suggested that Member training on the subject be arranged.

7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The initiative is aimed at bringing together the funding of support for vulnerable groups such as those with alcohol or drug dependency problems.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Officer time will be required to attend meetings, respond to consultation, provide data and to gain full knowledge of the initiative. We are unable to quantify whether or not there are any financial implications until the grant regime has been decided upon.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There will be a legal requirement to provide any necessary data to implement the project.

10 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. This initiative will affect residents across the District.

11 RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) To note the proposals of the new initiative and instruct officers to arrange suitable Member training at the appropriate time.
 - (2) To advise the Department of Environment, Transport and Regions that this authority would not wish a phased implementation of the scheme. (CD(F&ES))

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Background Papers:

DETR Consultation Papers 1-

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APPENDIX 1

LIST OF TASKS

Task	Completion Date
Strategic Planning	
Appoint lead officer for Supporting People and provide details to DETR	October 2000
Set up shadow Supporting People Decision-Making Group (DMG)	November 2000
Set up shadow Supporting People strategic forum	November 2000
Decide on constitution for shadow DMG and Forum and relationships with other strategic groups	January 2001
Establish links with Health organisation, probation service and relevant local authority departments	January 2001
Map links to other local strategies and identify areas of joint interest	February 2001
Establish links with commissioning managers in Social Services, health, probation service and housing departments	February 2001
Identify areas of existing and potential joint commissioning with other programmes	August 2001
Explore options for cross authority working	May 2001
Set up shadow cross authority arrangements	January 2002
Develop overall project plan for the implementation of Supporting People (up to April 2003)	February 2001
Agree how and when to involve elected Members	June 2001
Agree location of administrative team	March 2001
Provide report for DETR to trigger allocation of implementation resources	February 2001
Review DETR IT report and decide on IT option to use	March 2001
Commission IT option	June 2001
Identify capital funding priorities for the Housing Corporation bidding round for 2001/2001	October 2000
Agree capital funding priorities for the period up to April 2003	June 2001
Produce initial Supporting People strategy based on needs and supply analysis	July 2002
Mapping Existing Supply	
Obtain information on supply of services from local and national sources	April 2001
Visit existing schemes and suppliers to familiarise with sector	October 2001
Collect data from providers	February 2002
Develop user involvement approach	March 2002
Develop comprehensive map of local supply	March 2002
Conduct Best Value reviews of sector	Ongoing

Needs Mapping	
Assess current knowledge of needs and develop options for achieving a comprehensive analysis	April 2001
Carry out full needs survey	June 2002
Identify unmet need to inform the 2003 Comprehensive Spending Review	September 2002
Reviewing Services	
Carry out review of sheltered housing providers	February 2002
Develop local service aims for each client group	May 2002
Develop framework for cost comparisons	February 2002
Review current position on management agreements locally	February 2002
Develop framework for working with managing agents	May 2002
Set up arrangements for reviewing schemes	September 2002
Plan communication strategy for sheltered and other home for life tenants	January 2003
Making it happen	
Set up implementation team	June 2001
Set up administrative arrangements	April 2002
Set up administrative team	September 2002
Plan first round of scheme reviews	September 2002
Establish and test IT systems	December 2002
Set up payments for April 2003	March 2002