

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> February 2002</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>FUNDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE LEGISLATION</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Strategy and Development Manager</b>
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Purpose:</b>	To update Members on the progress of the implementation of Supporting People, and recommend agreement to continue Countywide joint funding.
<b>Contact:</b>	Sue Burlumi, Strategy and Development Manager  Telephone 01323 415333 or internally on extension 5333.

<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p>	<p>Members note the procedures for administering the Supporting People legislation and agree to the payment of Eastbourne's allocation of £20,539 into the single Countywide budget for the co-ordinated preparation and administration of Supporting People for 2002/2003. Such agreement dependant upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· All other East Sussex local authorities making the same commitment.</li> <li>· Continued full representation on all strategic, operational and consultative steering bodies.</li> </ul>

<p><b>1.0</b></p>	<p><u>Introduction</u></p>
<p><b>1.1</b></p>	<p>Supporting People was introduced by the Government in April 2000. It fundamentally changes the way in which supported accommodation is planned, managed and funded.</p>
<p><b>1.2</b></p>	<p>From April 2003 housing benefit will no longer pay for service changes relating to support and counselling. This affects all rented supported housing, including retirement housing. It also affects the Lifeline service and Care and Repair.</p>
<p><b>1.3</b></p>	<p><b>Prior to that date, service providers must negotiate interim contracts which will ensure their projects continue to be funded when the new scheme comes into effect. This funding will come from a single 'pot' which will be allocated to the County Council by the Government. The</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Probation Accommodation Grant</li><li>· Amounts for growth, if the need is demonstrated as a result of supply and needs mapping exercises which are prescribed as an essential part of the preparation process.</li></ul> <p>This pot will be administered by East Sussex County Council.</p>
1.4	<p><b>The Government has prescribed a range of consultation and decision making forums which include Members, officers, service providers and service users. A local framework for these forums is currently in development with recommendations due to be discussed by senior managers shortly.</b></p>

2.0	<p><b><u>The East Sussex</u></b>  <b><u>Response to</u></b>  <b><u>Supporting People</u></b></p>
2.1	<p>The County Planning Group for Housing is an officer group with representation from County and all District Councils. They set up a Supporting People sub-group in January 2000 and this sub-group has to date taken responsibility for considering all communications from the DTLR, responding to consultation and recommending to the County Planning Group the strategic direction the County, Borough and District Councils should be taking. Because of the scope of this legislation, the County Council is leading this work and Sue Burlumi, Strategy &amp; Development Manager is the local representative of the sub-group. It is proposed that this group is formalised as the Core Strategy Development Group, reporting to a Commissioning Body, which will comprise Directors of Housing and Social Services, together with equivalent managers in the Probation and Health Services.</p>
2.2	<p>The DTLR has issued a number of policy documents which set out the ways in which they expect this legislation to be implemented. They are particularly clear that a cross-County model is the favoured option for two-tier authorities, and our approach has therefore received a favourable response.</p>
2.3	<p>The government regularly issues key milestones which have to be achieved by all local authorities during the preparation for Supporting People. In East Sussex, we have received favourable feedback on our milestones reports, with the most recent achieving over 70% which is well above average.</p>
2.4	<p>Progress achieved during 2001-2002 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The appointment and induction of the Supporting People Team which comprises a Project Manager, 2 project officers and administrative support. The County Council has also seconded a number of resource officers to the team for 2 years to ensure the comprehensive transfer of funding from a range of relevant individual sources to the single pot. These posts have a Countywide remit and are managed by East Sussex County Council.</li> <li>· A comprehensive audit of all supported housing within each Borough or District is underway. To facilitate this, we have established a local supported Housing Forum in Eastbourne which is now being used as a blueprint for other districts.</li> <li>· A Members' training seminar and the</li> </ul>

2.4	<p>The Government granted Eastbourne Borough Council £19,274 for the administration of the Supporting People programme for 2001-2002. In January 2001 Members approved the transfer of this funding to East Sussex County Council, in line with the other local authorities in the County in order to achieve a countywide response.</p>
2.5	<p>The Government has announced that the implementation funding for Eastbourne for 2002-2003 will be £20,539. The other Borough and District Councils will receive similar amounts, and East Sussex County Council will receive £367,242. If all local authorities agree to pool funds, the total amount of funding available countywide to administer the programme will be £471,473. This is a significant increase on the former year, and recognises the cost of IT solutions and the additional resources required to transfer data from District to County databases, as well as the continuing need for training and effective communication.</p>
2.6	<p>The Core Strategy Development Group strongly recommends that Countywide allocations continue to be pooled for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The DTLR is impressed with the co-ordinated response from East Sussex and arrangements are now firmly in place for taking the project forward. A fragmented approach will therefore find no favour with the government and will negate the work which has been done to date.</li> <li>· In a two tier authority such as East Sussex, it is imperative that a countywide overview of the development of Supporting People is retained alongside the opportunity for maximising cross-district boundary developments.</li> <li>· Pooling of resources avoids unnecessary duplication and contributes to economies of scale.</li> <li>· It allows for flexibility in commissioning.</li> <li>· This is an excellent opportunity to fully participate in effective partnership working.</li> <li>· A significant number of housing associations and other service providers are already working across the County and a unified and uncomplicated approach is vital to facilitate the work of these organisations.</li> <li>· It supports the Best Value agenda.</li> </ul>

3.0	<b><u>Strategic Framework for Supporting People</u></b>
3.1	The DTLR has prescribed the formation of two specific forums for planning and commissioning services. The Core Strategy Development Group will comprise Policy Officers from the County Council and each of the Borough and District Councils together with the Supporting People Project Manager. This group will liaise with the DTLR over policy issues and draft the Supporting People Strategic Plan, ensuring that it is compatible with individual Housing Strategies, Housing Needs Surveys and other planning mechanisms. It will advise and make recommendations to the Commissioning Body.
3.2	The Commissioning Body will comprise Directors of Housing, Social Services and the Health Authority, together with Chief Executives of the four PCTs and the Assistant Chief Probation Officer. This group will be responsible for providing a strategic overview to the planning and development of housing and support services across the county, and making recommendations to elected Members.
3.3	Feeding into these two formal groups will be a range of professional and community forums, including district Supported Housing Forums, the Older Peoples Forum, the Countywide RSL Forum and community groups such as the EAVS Fora of Interest.
3.4	All these groups will feed into the emerging Local Strategic Partnerships to ensure that supported housing maintains a high profile within the local and county Community Plans.
4.0	<b><u>Current initiatives in Eastbourne</u></b>
4.1	<p>There are a range of services in operation and under development as a result of the funding provided by transitional housing benefit. Examples include:</p> <p><b><u>Existing services</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <u>Supported Accommodation scheme</u>, providing supported lodgings for 60 vulnerable people within family homes.</li> <li>· <u>Retirement Housing</u>, where the staff costs for the Council's Court Managers will be paid from the Supporting People budget.</li> <li>· <u>Support for single vulnerable people in private tenancies</u>, which is arranged and provided by Eastbourne Housing Aid and Legal Centre.</li> </ul>

<b>5.0</b>	<b><u>Consultations</u></b>
<b>5.1</b>	The Core Strategy Development Group includes representatives from all relevant statutory agencies across all districts. The Commissioning Body will have similar representation at Director level. Feeding into these groups will be local supported housing forums and the existing community user groups, and all strategic decisions will be referred to Members for approval.
<b>5.2</b>	An Inclusive Forum was held in October 2001 and attended by over 200 people including Members, officers, voluntary groups and representatives of the local community. A similar event is planned for 2002, and regular training sessions at all levels are also programmed.
<b>6.0</b>	<b><u>Financial Implications</u></b>
<b>6.1</b>	The funding granted to each local authority is not sufficient to individually administer the legislation, map the need and supply of supported accommodation, monitor the quality of the services provided, develop new schemes, consult with users and providers and maintain the necessary strategic and operational cross-County links. The economies of scale to be achieved by pooling these resources can, however, achieve these outcomes.
<b>6.2</b>	The outline proposals for Countywide spending of the pooled funding for the coming year include IT requirements, data transfer and co-ordination, project management, staffing, administration, mapping of all needs and resources, publicity and communication costs.
<b>7.0</b>	<b><u>Human Resource Implications</u></b>

7.1	<p>If we do not pool our funding for 2002-2003 the implications will be significant. Additional staff will be necessary to ensure that the scheme is efficiently planned, administered, monitored and reviewed, as well as facilitating continuous consultation and ensuring maximisation of funding. This will impact upon all service areas within the Housing, Health and Community Finance Group. Considerable investment of staff time will also be necessary to ensure the cross-County approach is developed and maintained in order to meet the Government's vision for an integrated service. Eastbourne's allocation of £20,539 will be wholly insufficient for all the operational and staffing costs which will be incurred.</p>
7.2	<p>By continuing with the Countywide approach, the majority of work will be undertaken by the dedicated Supporting People Team. District and Borough Councils will continue to steer the work by their representation on the Core Strategy Development Group, the Commissioning Body and the Inclusive Supporting People Forum. With the operational and strategic work taking place centrally, the staffing implications for this Council during the forthcoming year will be minimal, with representation on the steering groups continuing to form part of the regular workload of existing staff.</p>
7.3	<p>Additional resources may be required in the Housing Benefit team to implement the transfer of data from our system to the county database. This contingency will be incorporated into the Memorandum of Agreement to allow for sufficient funding to be transferred back to Borough and District Councils should this need arise.</p>
8.0	<p><b><u>Conclusions and Recommendations</u></b></p>
8.1	<p>Supporting People represents one of the most major changes in the support of vulnerable people since the Community Care Act. It also presents local authorities and service providers with a unique opportunity to work together to improve and increase the provision of support services and thereby address other Corporate issues such as community safety and social inclusion. It is therefore imperative that we continue to invest sufficient time, expertise and money into ensuring robust preparations.</p>



8.2	The DTLR has made it very clear that our Countywide co-ordinated approach is their preferred one, and will therefore require full and unarguable justification if we deviate from such an approach.
8.3	Economies of scale mean that we can achieve far more by pooling resources Countywide than by each local authority reproducing the same pieces of work and then trying to join them up.
8.4	<p>It is therefore recommended that:</p> <p>Members note the procedures for administering the Supporting People legislation and agree to the payment of Eastbourne's allocation of £20,539 into the single Countywide budget for the co-ordinated preparation and administration of Supporting People for 2002/2003. Such agreement dependant upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· All other East Sussex local authorities making the same commitment.</li> <li>· Continued full representation on all strategic, operational and consultative steering bodies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sue Burlumi</b></p> <p><b>Strategy and Development Manager</b></p>	
<p><b>Background Papers:</b></p> <p>The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows:</p> <p>DTLR policy document Policy into Practice</p> <p>DETR Consultation Paper 3 Decision-Making Processes and Working Arrangements</p> <p>October 2001 Administrative Guidance</p> <p>To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please refer to the contact officer listed above.</p>	
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