



The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

- D R A F T -

Supporting People Strategy 2009 - 2011

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Supporting People Strategy 2009/11

1. Introduction

The Supporting People programme went live nationally on 1 April 2003 and six years on it continues to evolve. The purpose of this document is to take time to consider the new drivers and influences that will enable a fresh strategic steer to be developed locally that will take the programme into the future. This will enable us to ensure that there is synergy with our partners and to maximise funding opportunities to deliver relevant services that meet local needs in the most cost effective way possible.

2. Vision

The vision for the local Supporting People programme helps deliver the aims of the Borough's Community Strategy 2007 – 2013 which represents its' current Sustainable Communities Plan. In particular it supports the strategic priorities of the council which are : putting people first; providing value for money and equipping ourselves for the future:

'To provide good quality, cost effective, housing related support services to vulnerable people to enable them to live independently within the community and stay safe and healthy whilst maximising their opportunities to learn new skills and develop as individuals.'

3. National/Regional/Sub-regional context

3.1 The Supporting People National Strategy

The **key aims** and the Borough's position:

- **Keeping service users at the heart of the programme and of the local delivery of the service**

The Supporting People Programme has been on a journey as one of the trailblazers paving the way to get to this point in local government development where local people are empowered to have a real say in what services are provided locally.

The enhanced approach to service user involvement has created a much improved response from service users in the last year and there are service user representatives on many schemes. In addition surveys of service users are conducted to enable their views to influence service provision, focus groups are held and service users are offered one to one interviews if this is their preference. The voluntary sector and partnership boards also provide opportunities for discussion about future service delivery.

- **Building on the partnerships with the third sector**

The Borough's Adult Plan 2008 – 2020 sets out broad strategic intentions to develop services. These can only be delivered through closer work with citizens and carers and more effective partnership work with other agencies including health, probation, the police, the fire and rescue services and voluntary and independent providers.

- **Delivering effectively in the new local government landscape**

The Supporting People programme locally has to be flexible. Services should not be provided just because that is what has been done historically but should be provided to deliver what is required now. The way services are provided needs to be imaginative and there needs to be much inter-agency linkage to achieve synergy to meet not just LAA targets but what local individuals need holistically. Local people will be happier and healthier if services link together and the same positive messages are delivered consistently.

- **Working towards better efficiency and less bureaucracy**

An extensive programme of service re-modelling is due to be completed in 2009. Beyond this it is going to be ever more difficult to make savings and maintain existing resource levels.

Steps have already been taken locally to reduce the volume of administration for support providers whilst still maintaining the essential reporting requirements. This will be looked at again during 2009/10.

3.2 Local Government Reform

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, is currently progressing through Parliament incorporating the proposals in the White Paper Strong and Prosperous

Communities. The latter was published at the end of 2006 outlining the government's plans to devolve power to local authorities and create stronger links between local councils and the people they serve.

Strong and Prosperous Communities aims to reform the democratic links between local government and communities, creating a new set of duties for local authorities to place sustainable community development at the heart of commissioning strategies and to co-operate with local partners in setting local priorities to deliver them.

a) Local Area Agreements

New style Local Area Agreements, which came into force from June 2008, are now 'all-encompassing' agreements that will form the central delivery mechanism between local authorities, their partners and central government. The new LAAs, running from 2008-11, will be extended from current arrangements to cover a wider range of services.

In advance of this the ring-fencing was removed from Supporting People Administration Grant from 1 April 2008. It also became part of the area based grants paid to the Borough under the overall control of the Local Strategic Partnership and to be used to deliver the Local Area Agreement targets. Administration Grant covers the cost of the Supporting People Team and all related overheads.

This, in turn, has paved the way for the ring fencing to be removed from Supporting People Programme Grant to follow the same route - to go under the control of the Local Strategic Partnership - on 1 April 2009. Programme Grant covers the cost of service provision.

These are fundamental changes that will affect the delivery of the Supporting People programme locally. Contracts for housing related support will be the first long term contracts that the Local Strategic Partnership will oversee. The future role of the Commissioning Body will need to be determined within this new context as well as that of the Core Strategy Group and Inclusive Forum.

b) National Indicators

The way that government monitors the success of the Local Area Agreements is through the submission of national indicators. There have been over 300 indicators historically. During 2007/8 these were reduced to 198 and with a core 35 that authorities could select to report to government directly.

Many of which have stretch targets carrying financial rewards whilst the remainder of the 198 need to have local targets set.

There is likely to be much competition for funding going into the Local Area Agreements and it will therefore be essential to demonstrate that existing or proposed Supporting People services can help deliver the National Indicator targets. This will involve carrying out strategic reviews of existing services and checking compatibility against the National Indicator targets. This could lead to re-modelling of existing services or possible closure and tendering for new ones. **Appendix 1** shows how current Supporting People services can have a role in delivering the 35 national indicator targets.

c) CLG Homelessness & Housing Support Directorate (H & HS Directorate)

Whilst the removal of the ring-fencing to Supporting People Programme Grant has caused concerns in the sector about the future of the programme government has sought to offer some protection via alternative routes.

Following the introduction of the local government performance framework and development of the Socially Excluded Adults Public Service Agreement (PSA16), the homelessness and SP advisors of the Southern Regional Resource Team have been tasked with supporting delivery of the H & HS Directorate's priorities within the context of the new Local Area Agreements' framework. In particular they will be monitoring the performance against Supporting People indicators NI 141 and NI 142 regardless of whether they form part of the 35 or not.

The overarching aim will be:

Supporting **homelessness prevention**, tackling **overcrowding** and **worklessness** and **rough sleeping** by:

- Supporting the Places of Change programme
- Encouraging identification of the health needs of vulnerable adults so that appropriate services can be commissioned locally
- Supporting Pathfinder areas to develop overcrowding strategies and action plans
- Encouraging authorities to enhance their housing options services via links to employment-related advice; and supporting Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazer areas

- Highlighting the local contribution housing providers can make to tackling worklessness amongst social tenants, and directing them to appropriate sources of funding for this
- Ensuring that homelessness prevention remains a key priority for commissioners and providers

d) Strategic Housing Role for Local Authorities – Powers & Duties September 2008

A further way of reinforcing the important contribution made by Supporting People services comes via the new document from the department for Communities and Local Government the 'Strategic Housing Role for Local Authorities'. This reminds local authorities of the existing legislation to which they are bound. **Appendix 2** shows extracts from this document.

3.3 South East Regional Implementation Group Thames Valley Cross Authority Group

Whilst these groups have proved effective for benchmarking and some joint research it is unclear from 1 April 2009 whether there will be a distinct role for them in the new arrangements. This needs to be determined.

3.4 Procurement Strategy

The major driver of reducing grant funding in real terms has created an increasing focus on value for money whilst maintaining good standards of service provision. By the greater use of collaborative commissioning and procurement across partner organisations it should be possible to enhance collective purchasing power. This will include neighbouring Local Authorities, either bilaterally or under the aegis of the regional public sector procurement body the South East Centre of Excellence (SECE), in the form of framework agreements and cost-assessed preferred supplier lists. Expected spin-off benefits include better sharing of intelligence on market price movements, and more consistent quality monitoring.

4. Profile of the Borough

4.1 A Unitary Authority

The Royal Borough is one of the six unitary authorities within the old Berkshire boundary. In common with other unitaries, our spatial relationships are important and complicated, for

example the Primary Care Trust delivers services across the Berkshire East area -Bracknell Forest, Slough and the Royal Borough - and other partners, such as the Fire and Rescue service, work across all 6 Berkshire unitaries. The Probation and Police services work in a wider Thames Valley context .

4.2 Population

The Royal Borough is relatively small with a population of about 139,100 (Source: Office of National Statistics (ONS) mid-2006 population estimate). Current projections indicate that the population will continue to increase and that by 2015 the population will reach about 143,600.

People from black and minority groups comprise 7.6% of the total population. This is the third highest proportion in Berkshire after the urban areas of Reading and Slough. About 4.6% of the total population have Asian or Asian British ethnic minority backgrounds, 1.7% Irish backgrounds and 0.5% Chinese backgrounds. There are three wards in Maidenhead where over 10% of the population are from BME groups. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds in the Borough's schools is 15.6%. In some schools this figure is much higher - in one school 75% of pupils have a Pakistani ethnic minority background.

Green belt designated land makes up 83% of the total and this also contains National Trust and Crown land. The quality of the built environment is generally high. It has quite a high population density but with most people living in the two urban centres of Windsor and Maidenhead. (687 people per square kilometre compared to 424 for the SE region) Apart from these two population centres there are a number of small, attractive towns and villages, each area having distinctive characteristics in terms of buildings, the economy and population.

4.3 Tourism

One special characteristic is that the Royal Borough is a major visitor and tourist attraction attracting seven million visitors a year generating a local spend of £360 million. Main areas of interest are Windsor Castle and Ascot Racecourse.

4.4 Local Issues

Some of the issues facing this small unitary come from its affluence and its attractiveness to visitors. Whilst the locality is generally affluent, healthy and offers full employment, this

masks certain inequalities and deprivation in some areas. An issue increasingly pressing on the public sector is the rising age of the population especially those in the most elderly groups. Managing the differences between people and communities is also important: wealthy and poor, rural and urban, and different ethnic groups.

4.5 Housing

House prices are amongst the highest outside Greater London and are twice the national average. The high cost of housing, the high use of car transport and the large movement across borders to reach work has widespread effects. Even relatively well-paid workers may find it difficult to find a home and RBWM needs to provide a variety of types and sizes of accommodation to suit all groups, especially affordable housing in the most appropriate areas.

The Council was one of the first to transfer its housing stock, to Maidenhead and District Housing Association and Windsor and District Housing Association. The Borough continues to work closely with both of these and with other local providers of affordable housing to ensure that the Borough's affordable housing needs are optimally met. The Council also works to improve the private housing sector, and seeks to optimise the use of its Supporting People budget to deliver the best possible services to people requiring housing related support.

5. Corporate Context

5.1 Sustainable Communities Plan

The Council's Community Strategy 2007-13 represents its current Sustainable Communities Plan. Four Ambition Groups are the vehicle for progressing the Council's key priorities:

- **Supporting Children and Young People**
- **Supporting Adults and Older People**
- **Safer and Stronger Communities**
- **A Thriving, Cleaner, Greener Borough**

These link with the four blocks within the local area Agreement Framework. Housing has a key role to play in many aspects of these, as recognised in Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities Statutory Guidance published by Communities and Local Government in July 2008.

5.2 Adult Plan 2008 - 2020

The Council's Adult Plan 2008-20 provides a framework for the strategic commissioning of social care services for the community of the Royal Borough through to 2020 and beyond. It highlights the Council's key objectives in delivering the outcomes set out in the White Paper "Our health, our care, our say". The Council's vision for Adult Services is **"Through making personalisation a reality the Royal Borough will empower and support citizens to shape their own lives and the services they receive"**.

The Plan recognises that the Council will need to respond to the changing expectations of individuals around housing, accommodation and support. This will build on the considerable amount of work already carried out by the Housing Policy Unit working with our local housing associations to remodel outdated residential homes and supported housing schemes to provide cutting edge modern homes to meet the special housing needs of different sectors of the community. These include an extra-care scheme for the elderly at Lady Elizabeth Court, Maidenhead, supported housing schemes for people with learning disabilities in Maidenhead, Windsor and Holyport and two supported housing schemes for people with mental health problems in Maidenhead.

5.3 Children's & Young Peoples' Plan 2008 - 11

Supporting People can help deliver some of the aims of the Children's Plan by providing support to those young people who access our dedicated services at Frogmore Court and Admel House. This consists of help with mental health and emotional wellbeing issues, supporting them to engage in drugs or alcohol treatment programmes and encouraging them to seek opportunities to gain life skills, further education or employment.

There is also support for young people living in the community - who have a tenancy - via floating support. This service can help them manage their finances so that they do not put themselves at risk of losing their tenancy and they can also receive a wider range of support as above.

6. Gap Analysis

6.1 Needs Analysis

A picture of current and projected needs has been compiled using various sources of data:

- Supported Housing Needs Survey 2005
- Housing Needs Survey 2005
- Adult Services research for the Adult Plan 2008
- Housing Options statistics 2007/8
- Thames Valley Probation Service – South East
- Department of Health website
- Office of National Statistics
- local provider waiting lists

Where no specific local data has been available national projections have been applied to the local population.

6.2 Comparison with Current Service Provision

The level of needs identified has been compared to the current service provision and the resultant gap analysis is shown at **Appendix 3**.

In all client groups need far exceeds provision currently and this position worsens when population increases are projected forward over three years

7. Profile of Supporting People Locally

7.1 Funding Levels

Communities and Local Government announcement of 7 December 2007 projected funding levels for the next three financial years subject to confirmation nearer the time.

	2008/9 £	2009/10 £	2009/11 £
Programme Grant	1,723,056	1,723,056	1,723,056
Administration Grant	109,831	101,160	86,709

Programme Grant funding levels since 1 April 2003 have been inadequate to meet the costs of local service provision and so the Borough has had to provide additional funding to ensure

essential services are provided. This has been true also of the Administration Grant which has been insufficient to meet the costs of providing the Supporting People team and the relevant overheads.

7.2 Local Structure

A chart of the local Supporting People structure is attached at **Appendix 4** – this also shows the reporting and dissemination lines within the Primary Care Trust, Thames Valley Probation and the Royal Borough.

A separate chart is attached at **Appendix 5** which shows the structure of the Local Strategic Partnership. Supporting People will need to ensure that the lines of dissemination are just as far reaching as those that are in place now.

8. Links to Other Strategies

Supporting People helps deliver the aims of our partners strategies and those of the Borough:

Berkshire East Primary Care Trust Strategic Plan 2008/11
Thames Valley Probation -
Strategy to Reduce Re-Offending 2006
Housing Strategy 2008-2013
Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013
The Adult Plan 2008 - 2020
The Children's & Young People's Plan 2008 - 11
The Community Safety Partnership Plan 2008 - 11

9. Drivers for Future Strategic Direction & Associated Risks

9.1 Local Government Reform

The inclusion of Supporting People within the Local Strategic Partnership will mean that a review needs to happen regarding the existing structure as to whether that lends itself to the new way of working and delivering the programme locally.

Risk: If the structure is not appropriate the significance and relevance of Supporting People services may not be sustained. If the structure is effective greater opportunities could become available.

9.2 Removal of Ring-Fencing to Supporting People Grant

Supporting People must be able to demonstrate that it has a key role to play in ensuring the national indicator targets are met.

Risk: Failure to do this will mean that as the grant is no longer ring-fenced it could be diverted for other uses. If this does happen nationally then the whole Supporting People programme could be lost. Service users who have been able to receive a service for the first time and seen the considerable benefits would have their support service ended.

This would mean increased costs to other agencies and society would notice the change in terms of increased vulnerability not dealt with adequately and increased crime and public disorder.

9.3 Economy

The seriousness and profound repercussions of the current global financial turmoil confront all authorities. The long-term knock-on effects of the economic downturn are far from certain at this stage but what is known is that as the financial squeeze kicks in, it's likely all local authorities, along with almost every household and business in the country, will be affected in some form or another.

Risk: The Public Sector Forum website 21 October 2008 details concerns expressed by a number of authorities:

- a greater risk of job losses to save money
- an increased focus on efficiency savings
- fuel poverty expected to increase in rural areas and those with large elderly communities.

9.4 Housing Crisis

The impending housing crisis is likely to hit hard. Nationally predicted numbers for re-possession are in thousands. Of those people there are likely to be those who either have always had a vulnerability or the distress of losing their homes creates one. The need for services for people with mental health problems, drug and alcohol addiction, domestic violence victims and the homeless generally are likely to increase significantly.

Risk: That there will be insufficient resources to meet these needs. That with Supporting People Grant not being increased over the next three years for inflation and even more efficiency savings being required that some essential services may have to be scaled down or closed whilst only those that meet a statutory obligation will remain. The risks to service users and society will be high.

The Public Sector Forum website advises that Local Government Minister John Healey has published interim findings on the impact of the credit crunch and this shows that already there has been an impact on access to affordable housing. In addition some of the trends that are being predicted by the Forum have a definite impact on demand for Supporting People services:

- a) increased pressure on housing benefit already evident in some councils**
- b) defaulting on mortgages raising spectre of increased homelessness**
- c) increased demand for social housing from rise in potential evictions due to debt**
- d) increased family breakdown and child poverty places pressure on social and health services**
- e) increase in burglaries, car crime and petty thefts as incomes reduce and dependencies on drugs and alcohol increase**

9.5 The Path to Transforming Social Care

Personalisation is a social care approach described by the Department of Health as meaning that 'every person who receives support, whether provided by statutory services or funded by themselves, will have choice and control over the shape of that support in all care settings.'

The overall aim is for social care service users to have control over how money allocated to their care and support is spent. It includes within its' remit direct payments,

individual budgets, personal budgets, user-led services, self-directed support and the 'In Control' pilots. Self-assessment will also be a cornerstone of personalisation. Giving service users the opportunity to assess their own care and support needs and decide how their own budgets are spent are central to the agenda.

Currently Supporting People is able, via grant conditions, to top up an existing Adult Services direct payment and for 13 authorities to pilot individual budgets.

Risk: Whilst the empowerment of the individual to make decisions about the way in which their support is provided and by whom has to be the way forward there needs to be caution applied in how this empowerment is achieved.

Whilst the empowerment of the individual to make choices has to be a main driver for all involved in the supported housing sector there is also the driver of protection of vulnerable adults to provide counter balance. If there is the risk that service users are becoming unwell as a result of trying to manage the budgets then perhaps a more innovative approach needs to be considered.

The 'Evaluation of the Individual Budgets Pilot Programme' by IBSEN on behalf of the Department of Health reports mixed success levels so far from the 13 pilot authorities. While positive risk-taking is part of the philosophy amongst the main risks identified are:

- poorer quality services
- misuse of funds
- financial abuse
- neglect
- physical harm
- lack of Criminal Record Bureau checks

There is a further risk which is a financial one - if funding is not used purposefully and the service user ultimately requires more support of if the programme is not provided with sufficient funding to make true individual choice work effectively the initiative will not fully succeed.

10. Conclusion

The Supporting People programme is continuing to evolve – but where will it be in 2011?

The aim of this strategy is to demonstrate how housing related support services have a considerable role to play in empowering local vulnerable people to take their full place within the community and contribute to the ambitions of the Local Area Agreements. In addition Supporting People has a pivotal role in helping to deliver the outcome targets for the national indicator set. **Appendix 6** Key Actions Plan and **Appendix 7** Priority Action Plan for Service Development show how future work planning will be steered towards achieving the corporate goals.

All the factors identified above will have an impact on how the programme is delivered locally. These changes will affect all stakeholders - the most important of whom are our vulnerable service users for whom everyday living is challenging.

The transformation of social care has started and fundamental changes will need to be put in place to achieve the infrastructure. With this attitudes will change and a move away from prescriptive service delivery and more towards delivering what people want will synergise perfectly with the changes encapsulated in Local Government Reform. This will also capture the key aims of all the Commissioning Body partners which is to put service users as the focus of service delivery – in this way patients will have more choice and be healthier, ex-offenders will be supported not to re-offend and to get their lives back on track and **vulnerable people will be able to fully make decisions about how to improve their lives - perhaps for the first time.**

Appendices:

1. Supporting People can help deliver the National Indicator set.
2. Strategic Role for Local Authorities.
3. Gap Analysis.
4. Supporting People Local Structure.
5. Local Strategic Partnership Structure.
6. Key Actions Plan.
7. Priority Action Plan – Service Development.

Stages of Consultation:

1. Housing Forum meetings 2007/8/9.
2. Core Strategy Group meetings 2007/8.
3. Supporting People and Borough websites 2009
4. Supporting People Newsletter 2009