

Report To: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 15th May 2014

Lead Officer: Head of Housing and Community Development

Lead Members: Lead Member for Customers and Communities &
Lead Member for Social Care (Adults and Children's Services)

Report Author: Housing Care and Support Manager

Title: Housing Related Support for Older People in Denbighshire

1. What is the report about?

This report outlines the changes that are being made to the Council's Sheltered Housing Warden Service as a result changes introduced by Welsh Government following the Aylwood Review of 2010 and the introduction of revised Supporting People Grant Guidance in 2012. Welsh Government has made it clear that Supporting People funded Sheltered Housing Support should be reablement focused and available to everyone in the community regardless of where they live.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The Report has been requested by the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group.

3. What are the Recommendations?

It is recommended that the contents of the report are noted, and that members provide observations and support the approach being taken.

4. Report details.

The review of the Supporting People (SP) Programme in Wales led to the following recommendation being made in relation to Older Peoples services

"It is recommended that the eligibility criteria for older people receiving Supporting People funds should be based on need rather than age or tenure" (Aylward, 2010)

In August 2012 Supporting People Programme Guidance was introduced to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations made by Sir Mansel Aylward in his report.

This "Guidance" stated

- Housing related support service provision must be based on identified or assessed needs, it must also be flexible and person centred

- SP services should be enabling and develop a person's independence
- Support package must be based on written support plans that include risk assessments and risk management measures
- A statement of criteria for admission to service is needed
- Support must be outcome focused with achievable goals and must follow All Wales Outcomes Framework
- Services that receive SP funding must report to the Regional Collaborative Committee

A strategic decision was made through the Council's Supporting People Programme to adopt Sir Aylward's recommendation as they accorded with the Council's reablement agenda and the Council's Big Plan (Outcome1: Older People live independent and fulfilled lives). Please note whilst Housing Services is the landlord and provider of support at the Council's sheltered housing, the support is commissioned by Adult Services and Housing Services are essentially an "in house" service provider. As such Housing Services were not the department that made the decision to change how housing related support would be provided for older people; but fully understood and agreed with the underpinning reasons and logic as to why the Sheltered Housing Warden Service had to change

Traditionally the Sheltered Wardens service has had a "one size fits all" approach with sheltered tenants receiving a standard service combining housing management and support functions; regardless of whether there was an identified need – e.g. the Warden would contact all sheltered tenants each morning.

It was felt that this approach fostered dependence rather than independence – doing for not doing with.

The "traditional service" was only available to people who lived in DCC sheltered accommodation and excluded people who lived in accommodation rented from private landlords or housing associations, or who were owner occupiers who could benefit from receipt of housing related support to meet identified needs and thus retain their independence.

The "traditional service" was inefficient – often wardens would be providing support to people who did not need it and in some cases did not actually want it.

Furthermore it was not integrated effectively with Health and Social Services and not making the significant contribution to the reablement agenda, which it is well placed to do if managed differently.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The change to the Sheltered Housing Warden Service into a tenure neutral, needs led, floating support service directly contributes to the Council's Health Social Care and Well Being Strategy, which is an integral component of the Council's Big Plan (Outcome1: Older People live independent and fulfilled lives). These changes are also supportive of Denbighshire Adult Services Supporting Independence in

Denbighshire approach (SID).

The changes to how housing related support for older people will be delivered will enable many residents of Denbighshire to remain in their own home in accordance with their wishes and this will contribute their well being and quality of life. Moving to sheltered housing is not what all older people with support needs want to do. Some older people are resident in communities where they have lived for many years and are socially well connected and settled and accordingly do not wish to move away, however, the absence of appropriate support undermines this. Other older people, who are owners of modest homes, do not wish to move into sheltered housing to have support needs met as it will require them to release the capital tied up within their property to enable them to pay rent, and this whittles away the financial legacy that they wish to leave to family upon their demise.

The changes do not mean that older people who choose to live in DCC sheltered accommodation will not get support to sustain their independence, rather under the new arrangements, if they have support needs, they will get them met in a way that is very specific to their individual needs and will have this captured within a Support Plan, to which they can hold Housing Services as the support provider accountable for.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

The changes in how older people will receive housing related support will be cost neutral. The Supporting People monies that funded the DCC Sheltered Warden Service are simply being transferred to the new support service being delivered by DCC Housing and Community Services, which is to be known as Supporting Independent Living.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

The changes to how in the future housing related support will be provided for older people are more inclusive than Sheltered Housing Warden Service and will not discriminate or negatively impact upon people who share “protected characteristics” as defined by the Equality Act 2010. EqIA attached as an appendix to this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

These changes have been considered in the context of the Supporting people Local Commissioning Plan (previously known as Supporting People Operational Plan) since 2009. The local commissioning plan is consulted upon with stakeholders, service users and scrutiny committee.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

Costs should be contained within existing budgets and therefore there are no obvious financial implications.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

There are no perceived risks in changing the way housing related support for older people is provided. Rather, there are risks that if the changes are not made many older people who have chosen not to live in sheltered housing will not receive the preventative reablement support that they require to sustain their independence and as a consequence increase the risk of premature or inappropriate admission to hospital, nursing care, residential or other similar institutions.

11. Power to make the Decision

Article 6.3.4(c) of the council's constitution sets out Scrutiny's powers with respect to matters detailed in this report.

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