

Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 17 December 2015

Lead Member / Officer: Lead Member for Social Care (Adults and Children's Services)/Head of Community Support Services

Report Author: Service Manager: North Locality/Supporting People Team Manager/Housing Care and Support Manager

Title: Supporting Independent Living Service (SIL)

1. What is the report about?

This report is about the progress of SIL in meeting the housing related support need of older people across the County, during the current financial climate of ongoing constraint and the need for the Council to deliver savings

2. What is the reason for making this report?

It was agreed at the September 2015 meeting of the Scrutiny Committee that reports on SIL would continue to be brought before future meetings of the Communities Scrutiny Committee, until notified otherwise, to enable members to monitor the progress of SIL in meeting the housing related support needs of older people across the County.

3. What are the Recommendations?

It is recommended that

- a. the contents of this report are considered and Members provide comment as appropriate
- b. a further fully detailed report is brought before Scrutiny concerning the potential benefits of taking an integrated streamlined approach to managing SIL, Reablement and the Health and Social Care Support Worker Service (HSCSW.)

4. Report details

4.1 SIL is fully funded by the Supporting People Grant, provided directly by Welsh Government and has been subject to a full Supporting People (SP) Service Review this year, which resulted in an action plan containing a total of 21 recommendations over 6 Outcome Areas. The Senior SIL Officer has been working with the SP Contract and Reviewing Officer, who reviewed the service, on the development and implementation of an action plan. Work will be ongoing until all recommendations have been delivered and bedded in before the issue of a new contract commencing April 2016.

4.2 At the time of writing the Welsh Government do not know the details of the funding settlement from Westminster for 2016/17. The "settlement" will have a direct bearing on the SP Budget across Wales and the size of the SP Grant awarded to Denbighshire. The

Welsh Government has made it clear that the SP Budget will be reduced by an amount likely to be somewhere between 10% and 30%.

4.3 As a large SP Service Provider with a current SP Contract worth £547,962 per annum, it has been reasonable to anticipate a significant cut to SIL's funding as from 1st April 2016 and to prepare for this by exploring in advance how the impact of a significant cut could be ameliorated in terms of protecting front line service delivery for service users

4.4 Options being considered include the possibility of placing SIL, Reablement and the Health and Social Care Support Worker Service (HSCSW) under a new aligned Supporting Independence in Denbighshire (SID) management structure, which potentially could significantly reduce management overhead costs and therefore provide some protection for front line service delivery.

4.5 Such a proposal would see each of the three service areas remaining essentially independent of each other, which would help in terms of performance monitoring, financial accountability and, most importantly, service user understanding, but should facilitate greater integration between them thus delivering an overall service of enhanced quality, at reduced overall cost

4.6 Further work is needed to determine the full feasibility of implementing an aligned management structure, and fully assessing the impact of this on service delivery from the service user perspective. Initial indications suggest that SIL's annual management costs, which are currently circa £144,000, could be reduced to circa £95,000

4.7 Inevitably, even with a front end service delivery mitigation approach to managing a reduction in SIL's SP funding, there will still be an impact on the number of support hours that the service is able to deliver – albeit this impact will be lessened by the adoption of a management model like the one being explored

4.8 Currently SIL is delivering 394 support hours per week, which is significantly less than its contractual requirement of 614 hours per week. Notwithstanding that demand, SIL is likely to grow as it becomes more known, both through word of mouth and more formal marketing. The indication based on current numbers, is that demand would still be met with a reduced capacity; helped in part by the under pinning Reablement ethos of focused time limited intervention aimed at promoting independence.

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

This project will contribute to supporting Denbighshire's Corporate Plan 2012-2017 in the following areas:-

- a. Vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible
- b. Ensuring access to good quality housing. This project plays a key role in contributing to the prevention of homelessness for vulnerable people.

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

For 2015-16 the cost of SIL to the Supporting People Grant is £547,962. In anticipation of a significant cut in Supporting People funding from Welsh Government to DCC,

provision has been made, within the DCC SP Local Commissioning Plan, to reduce SIL's funding in 2016/17 to £411,000. The creation of an aligned integrated SID Management structure will mitigate the impact of this cut on front end service delivery.

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.

Over successive years, the proposals to remodel the Wardens Service to a Tenure Neutral Service were included in the Supporting People Operational Plan and latterly the Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan for which an Equality Impact Assessment was completed.

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

8.1 The changes to the Sheltered Housing Warden Service to create SIL, in line with Welsh Government recommendation, 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.

8.2 In the September report to Scrutiny it was stated "During the review, the Contracts and Reviewing Officer interviewed Service Users, there was evidence to suggest that Service Users did not fully understand what the changes were or why they were necessary. This was highlighted to the SIL manager during the review who confirmed that the SIL service has carried out extensive consultation with Services Users and stakeholders throughout the transition. The SIL service will continue to address these concerns as they move forwards with promoting the service

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The cost of any future service delivery model for the Supporting Independent Living Service will be dependent on the level of Supporting People grant funding that is available and also that the model satisfies the conditions of the grant.

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

The main risk is that Supporting People Grant is reduced by more than expected, creating a situation where further reductions to the SIL budget are made. The review of management arrangements will reduce this risk but there may be a need to further reduce the number of hours of direct support provided.

11. Power to make the Decision

Article 6.3.3 of the council's constitution sets out Scrutiny committee powers with respect to policy development and review.

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