

Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 30 June 2016

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

Report Authors: Senior Housing Officer (Supported Housing) & Supporting People Team 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?

That Members:

3.1 consider the contents of this report, comment as appropriate; and

3.2 determine whether 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 in September 2015, which resulted in 21 recommendations over 6 Outcome Areas. The latest Action plan can be found in appendix 2. Supporting People have appointed a Generic Link Worker who will work with SIL one day per week, their role is to ensure that SIL and other internal services funded via Supporting People, are in compliance with Supporting People Programme Guidance and are operating in a non-bureaucratic and sustainable way. The Senior SIL Officer has been working with the SP Contract and Reviewing Officer and the Supporting People Link Worker, on the development and implementation of an action plan.

- 4.2 A new contract was issued to SIL commencing April 2016. Funding for SIL was confirmed for 2016/2017. The “settlement” had a direct bearing on the SP Budget across Wales and the size of the SP Grant awarded to Denbighshire. The budget for SIL in 2016/2017 is £505,000 which is a reduction of £42,962 from 2015/2016. The reduction of funding has been negated by the deletion of 0.40 of the post, Care and Support Manager. Line management responsibility for SIL will sit with the Supporting People team manager for the next 12 months.
- 4.3 The Supporting People Grant to SIL has been secured for 2016/2017, however, as with all SP funded services, SIL must be prepared for future cuts in funding.
- 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 reduce management overhead costs for all services and therefore provide some protection for front line service delivery in the future.
- 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. This work will be progressed by the Supporting People Link Worker over the next financial year.
- 4.7 Currently SIL is delivering 400 support hours per week, which is less than its contractual requirement of 507 hours capacity per week. However, this is a slight improvement since the last report. A breakdown of Service Users per ward can be found in appendix 1. SIL had 2.29, full time Equivalent vacant posts, these post were left vacant whilst awaiting funding to be confirmed and recruitment has now taken place. Demand is likely to increase as the service 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 within existing or even reduced capacity; helped in part by the under pinning Reablement ethos of focused time limited intervention aimed at promoting independence. An action plan for marketing and promoting the service has been developed and will be implemented over the coming months.

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 2016-17 the cost of SIL to the Supporting People Grant is £505,000.

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 2015 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 forward with promoting the service

8.3 There is a commitment to share good quality information regarding potential changes to SIL with service users, staff and members

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

As stated above SIL is fully funded by the Supporting People Grant provided directly by Welsh Government. It is important that the service is delivered within the budget provided for by the Supporting People Grant. This report identifies a reasonable approach to delivering the service within the £505k budget for 2016/17 (a reduction of £43k) as well as illustrating financial and service delivery planning for a likely reduction in grant levels in future years.

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 in future years, 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, whilst Article 6.3.4 details its powers with regards to reviewing the Council's performance in meeting policy objectives.

12. Contact Officer:

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