

**REPORT TO: HOUSING COMMITTEE – 18 JUNE 2001  
SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 18 JUNE 2001  
PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE  
– 18 JUNE 2001**

**REPORT ON: SUPPORTING PEOPLE**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK  
AND DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT  
SERVICES**

**REPORT NO. 300-2001**

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to:

- (a) inform the Council of the implications of the Supporting People policy and framework for the Council, service users who rely on support services and for providers of services and
- (b) to recommend actions to be taken by the Council to ensure it is adequately prepared for the implementation of the scheme.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1. It is recommended that the Council should:

- 2.1.1. establish a Supporting People Management Group and an Implementation Team (as described in Appendix 1);
- 2.1.2. identify from within the Council, a team of dedicated officers to carry out the main tasks of implementation (as described in Appendix 2);
- 2.1.3. conduct a review of Local Authority sheltered housing and warden service to ensure that any opportunities that arise from the transitional arrangements have been optimised;
- 2.1.4. consider the redefinition of some other council properties as amenity housing to increase the scope of the Supporting People framework;
- 2.1.5. conduct a detailed review of more specialist accommodation with support;
- 2.1.6. refer inter-agency working and immediate communication issues to the existing multi-agency Community Care Housing Group;
- 2.1.7. instruct the Management Group and Implementation Team on formation to prepare an implementation plan for the Council.
- 2.1.8. Personnel and Management Services Committee approve the establishment of temporary posts listed in Appendix 2 up to March 2004.

### 3. **LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. The Supporting People policy framework should improve the health and wellbeing of people by enhancing the range of accommodation that is available to meet their needs.

### 4. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. The full implementation of the Supporting People policy and framework should improve the choice of accommodation with support available to vulnerable people in the community.

### 5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. It is estimated that there is currently £3.5 million of support services in place in Dundee City.

Cosla has been advised by the Scottish Executive that £2 million will be available in financial year 2001/2002, £5 million in financial year 2003/2003 and £8 million for financial year 2003/2004 to Local Authorities in Scotland to enable them to make arrangements for the introduction of the new scheme.

The City Council has been informed that its share, calculated on population levels, is £56,000, £139,000, and £222,000 in respective years.

Estimated staff costs for the first year of operation is £57,691, including employers' costs. The shortfall in the first year will be met from existing budgets.

### 6. **BACKGROUND**

#### 6.1. **The Supporting People Policy**

- 6.1.1. At the end of 1998 the Government published a consultation document "*Supporting People - a new policy and funding framework for support services*". The proposals for the development and implementation of Supporting People have their origins in this document.
- 6.1.2. The Scottish Executive describe Supporting People as "a new integrated policy and funding framework for services for people in supported accommodation or in receipt of flexible support that will involve bringing together a number of funding streams, including the support element of Housing Benefit, Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, Special Needs Allowance Package and Resettlement Grant from Scottish Homes".
- 6.1.3. Local Authorities will be responsible for the administration of the new scheme and will have the resources for it transferred to them. The scheme will be introduced throughout the UK in 2003.
- 6.1.4. Supporting People is a key element of the Scottish Executive's drive towards social inclusion. They have indicated that it will be developed to be complimentary to other associated policy developments like Modernising Community Care (Scottish Office, 1998), the work of the homeless taskforce and the provisions that will follow from the Housing Bill and the Regulation of Care Bill.

The provision of Housing Support Services will be included as part of the Local Housing Strategies that are proposed in the Housing Bill.

## 6.2. **The Supporting People Framework**

- 6.2.1. The Scottish Executive has established a stakeholder group to work on the application of the Supporting People policy and framework in Scotland. The group has concerned itself with the preparation of advice and guidance in co-operation with Cosla; the establishment of three preparation projects that will focus on key aspects of the Supporting People programme and help develop procedures and information requirements suitable for delivery across Scotland; and adapting DETR guidance on a research based methodology for local needs assessment.
- 6.2.2. *Interim Start Up Guidance* (Scottish Executive, 2001) has been issued to Local Authorities. This guidance sets out the points that should be addressed by Local Authorities when considering their readiness for the implementation of the programme. These include:
- appointment of a lead officer;
  - how provision will be mapped;
  - how schemes will be reviewed;
  - how services will be monitored and evaluated;
  - how cross-authority planning will work;
  - how the commissioning process will operate locally.
- 6.2.3. The more detailed progress that will be required was set out in earlier guidance (Decision Making Processes and Working Arrangements - Implementation 2001 - 2003). The targets with suggested completion dates that come from this guidance are set out in Appendix 3 (Targets and Completion Dates).
- 6.2.4. The Council has already appointed Lead Officers for Dundee. In addition a Housing and Social Work group, with input from the Revenues Division of the Finance Department, has ensured that the Council has responded to consultation documents from the Council; met the immediate requirements arising from the implementation of the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme; and conducted preliminary investigations of the scale and scope of Supporting People for provision in Dundee.

The tasks required, however, need more concerted and concentrated activity than this interim group can provide.

It is therefore recommended that the Council:

- establish a Supporting People Management Group and an Implementation Team (as described in Appendix 1);
- identify from within the Council, a team of dedicated officers to carry out the main tasks of implementation (as described in Appendix 2);
- refer inter-agency working and immediate communication issues to the existing multi-agency Community Care Housing Group;

- instruct the Management Group and Implementation Team on formation to prepare an implementation plan for the Council.

It is suggested that the establishment of the framework recommended above will ensure that the Council is in a position to meet immediate implementation requirements and to communicate with relevant stakeholders including the public.

The proposed Implementation Team will ensure the Council is in a position to administer the new system from April 2003. From that date resources will be required to administer the new Supporting People fund and related systems and policy. The Implementation Team will assess that resource requirement.

## 7. **THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE POLICY FOR DUNDEE CITY**

### 7.1. **Financial Dependency on Support Costs**

- 7.1.1. The annual budget for Supporting People will be made up of various existing support budgets as listed in 6.1.2.

The exact amounts involved are difficult to quantify at the moment as they come from various sources.

From what we have been able to quantify the likely annual budget will be in excess of £3,500,000. The Council will have to ensure the administration is in place to deal with this.

### 7.2. **Key Policy Issues**

#### 7.2.1. **Maximising Transitional Housing Benefit**

The costs that can be met by Supporting People have to relate to housing support. There appears to be some potential to redefine some of the costs for home care as a housing support service cost, costs which are currently met by the Social Work budget. For these costs to be counted in the Supporting People budget they would have to be introduced during the transition period.

Care will have to be taken to ensure any service charges are reasonable and the effect on persons not eligible for benefits assessed.

It is therefore recommended:

- that a review of Local Authority sheltered housing and warden service is conducted to ensure that any opportunities that arise from the transitional arrangements have been optimised.

#### 7.2.2. **Redefinition of Some Property**

The largest client group who will be affected by the changes in administering these budgets will be older people. In addition to those staying in sheltered housing, large numbers stay in other Council housing but receive home care support, community alarm support etc. It is proposed to investigate the possibility of identifying these properties, which are generally in popular areas, which are occupied by people over a certain age with view to designating these as "amenity" housing. This would allow a benefit eligible service charge to be applied for the services tenants receive.

While additional benefit eligible charges are attractive, they are property related and as such have implications for void charges to the HRA and Housing Benefit subsidy levels. These elements will need to be fully assessed before proceeding.

It is therefore recommended that the Council:

- consider the redefinition of some other council properties as amenity housing to increase the scope of the Supporting People framework.

### 7.2.3. Registration and De-registration

On the basis of preliminary investigation it is likely that there is some registered accommodation in the city that provides support and that may or may not be suitable for de-registration. In addition, there are schemes under development as part of the broader Community Care policy that could be considered. This is, however, a complex issue that requires more detailed consideration.

It is therefore recommended that the Council:

- conduct a detailed review of more specialist accommodation with support.

### 7.3. Implications for Service Users

- 7.3.1. An initial assessment of the implications for City Council Sheltered Housing tenants, if additional support charges were transferred using the Transitional Housing Benefit Regulation, has been completed.

The effect on individuals is determined by a number of factors including, income, rental charges, capital and savings and, as in all such schemes, there will be winners and losers.

The impact of the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme on Local Authority sheltered housing residents who receive home care can be summarised by the following approximate percentages:

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| people who would not benefit   | 30% |
| people who would benefit       | 43% |
| people who would be unaffected | 21% |
| unknown                        | 6%  |

In assessing and mapping the Supporting People requirement the Implementation Team will carryout an in depth assessment of the implications for service users and will recommend appropriate strategies to ensure the maximum benefit and alleviation of any detrimental effect.

## 8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1. The Supporting People policy and framework requires dedicated input to ensure that Dundee City Council optimises its position to the benefit of its citizens and that it has arrangements in place to ensure the new scheme can be administered adequately from April 2003.

9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Supporting People : a new policy and funding framework for support services.

Supporting People : Interim Start-up Guidance.

Elaine Zwirlein  
**DIRECTOR OF HOUSING**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Jacquie Roberts  
**DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Jim Petrie  
**DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL AND  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **MANAGEMENT GROUP**

#### **Purpose**

The main purpose of the Group will be to ensure compliance with the legislation and guidance, that a plan is in place for the implementation of the Supporting People Policy and Framework and that a strategic approach is taken to the expansion of accommodation with support.

#### **Membership**

Representatives from:

Housing Department  
Social Work Department  
Finance Department  
Health  
Agreed representative interests.

### **IMPLEMENTATION TEAM**

#### **Purpose**

The main purpose of the implementation team will be to undertake detailed tasks required to ensure the Supporting People framework can be implemented effectively in Dundee.

More specifically it will:

- Ensure a consultation process and information is in place.
- Ensure services are mapped.
- Manage the transitional period.
- Maximise transitional housing benefit income.
- Prepare and consult on proposals for reconfiguration of current provision.
- Review current provision.
- Develop a commissioning and purchasing framework.

#### **Membership**

Two Lead Officers from Social Work and Housing Departments  
Four Dedicated Officers (see Appendix 2)

## APPENDIX 2

### Supporting People Dedicated Officers

One whole time and three part time dedicated officers are recommended as follows:

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Co-ordinator:              | To take responsibility for strategy, needs assessment, local commissioning and directing the team.                                   |
| Supporting People Officer: | To take responsibility for mapping, monitoring and evaluation of services.   |
| Supporting People Officer: | To take responsibility for assessing needs and charges related to Housing Benefit Transitional arrangements and systems development. |
| Senior Clerical Assistant: | To take responsibility for data input, general administration and information management.  |

### Salary Details

|                           |                            |                          |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Co-ordinator              | Full time - PO4-7          | £25,476-£27,687          |
| Senior Clerical Assistant | Part-time (50%)- GS3       | £12,624-£13,164 pro rata |
| Supporting People Officer | Part-time (50%)- AP4       | £18,378-£20,397 pro rata |
| Supporting People Officer | Part-time (50%)- AP4       | £18,378-£20,397 pro rata |
|                           | <b>Approximate Total</b>   | <b>£50,166</b>           |
|                           | <b>Employers costs@15%</b> | <b>£ 7,525</b>           |
|                           |                            | <b>£57,691</b>           |



**APPENDIX 3****TARGETS – COMPLETION DATES**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <u>December 2000</u>                      | Identify capital funding priorities for bidding round 2001/02.   |
| <u>April 2001</u>                         | <p>Appoint lead officer, give details to Scottish Executive.<br/> Set up core co-ordinating group.<br/> Set up supporting people team.<br/> Devise strategies for consulting with users and providers.<br/> Agree how and when to involve elected members.<br/> Establish commissioning and purchasing group as sub group of CCG.<br/> Devise communication strategy to disseminate information to all partner bodies.<br/> Obtain information and supply of services from local and national sources.</p> |
| <u>August 2001</u>                        | <p>Agree capital funding priorities for completion in period up to April 2003.<br/> Map links to other local strategies and identify areas of joint interest.</p>  |
| <u>September 2001</u>                     | <p>Develop overall protection plan for implementation of SP until April 2003.<br/> Explore options for cross authority working.<br/> Review Scottish Executive IT report and decide on IT option to use.</p>   |
| <u>October 2001</u>                       | <p>Visit existing schemes and suppliers to familiarise with sector.<br/> Assess current knowledge of needs and develop options for achieving a comprehensive analysis.</p>   |
| <u>January 2002</u>                       | Set up shadow cross authority arrangements.  |
| <u>February 2002</u>                      | <p>Collect data from providers.<br/> Review current position on management agreements locally.</p>   |
| <u>March 2002</u>                         | <p>Develop user involvement approach.<br/> Develop comprehensive map of local supply.</p>  |
| <u>August 2002</u><br><u>October 2002</u> | <p>Commission IT option.<br/> Establish and test joint commissioning and purchasing process.<br/> Decide the composition of commissioning and purchasing body that will be operational April 2003.<br/> Carry out full needs survey.<br/> Identify unmet need to inform the 2003 comprehensive spending review.<br/> Agree location of supporting people in the wider planning framework.</p>  |

December 2002

Finalise procedures for registration, tendering and contracting.  
Establish and test payments system.  
Establish and audit system.  
IT system in place and tested.  
Carry out review of sheltered housing providers.  
Develop local service aims for each client group.  
Develop framework for cost comparisons.  
Develop framework for cost comparisons for working with service providers.  
Set up a framework for reviewing all existing provision between 2003-2006.

October 2003

Identified priorities and resource requirements for 2003-2004 in detail and in outline for subsequent years.

Ongoing

Conduct Best Value Reviews of sector.