

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 14 February 2017
Report Subject	Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Report Author	Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the draft Supporting People spend plan for 2017/18. This aligns with the priorities laid out within the Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan 2016-18. It is pleasing to note that the grant has been protected in 2017/18. Welsh Government recognises the value of continuing to fund low level preventative support services which help to reduce pressures on more expensive specialist health, care and homeless services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Cabinet approves the Supporting People Programme Grant Spend Plan for 2017/2018.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME GRANT
1.01	<p>In 2012, the Welsh Government merged together the Supporting People Grant and Supporting People Revenue Grant and created the Supporting People Programme Grant. This grant funds the provision of services that enable vulnerable people to gain and retain independence by remaining in their own home and prevents people from needing to access health, social care and homelessness services, etc.</p> <p>The grant faced significant reductions between 2013 and 2016 which totalled £1,311,339 in Flintshire and equated to an 18.4% reduction over the 3 years. It is pleasing to note that the grant has been protected in 2017/2018. This report details all changes in expenditure to the Supporting People Programme Grant including any reductions and areas of new investment.</p> <p>The proposals contained within this report are in line with the Council's and the Regional Collaborative Committee's strategic priorities.</p> <p>As a matter of good practice, the Supporting People Team is committed to running an efficient programme through ensuring service providers are delivering their support services as efficiently and effectively as possible. Service Providers have been involved in discussions about delivering services differently to achieve savings and maintain service delivery. This has included the use of volunteers, identifying where a floating support model can be more efficient than supported housing and considering changes to overnight support provision.</p> <p>Services continue to be assessed in line with the model from the 2014-16 Commissioning Plan which assesses providers in terms of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Is the service eligible for Supporting People funding?ii. Has the service been subject to a value for money assessment?iii. Does the service contribute to key strategic priorities of the Supporting People Programme?iv. Is there clear evidence of demand for the service?v. Could the same outcomes be achieved by delivering services in a different way?vi. Are there other services/funding streams in the County that could deliver the outcomes?vii. Is there opportunity for partner or regional collaboration?viii. What is the service user impact, if the service is ceased or reduced? <p>The outcomes of the assessment of service providers has enabled the Supporting People Team to identify potential efficiency savings of £150,000 in 2017/18, whilst protecting service delivery to vulnerable customers.</p>

Table 1 demonstrates where efficiencies and reductions have been identified in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Table 1

Service Area	Efficiency Savings	
	2016/17	2017/18
Domestic Abuse <i>Achieved through a value for money assessment on fixed site support provision. This did not reduce or affect support provided at the project.</i>		£12,000
Families <i>Achieved through a reduction within a family hostel</i>	£15,000	
LD <i>Achieved through a continuation of a planned withdrawal from services ineligible for Supporting People Programme Grant.(75) and A value for money assessment in partnership with another authority (35)</i>		£110,000
Substance Misuse	No change	
Chronic Illness <i>Achieved through decommissioning a regional project for HIV/AIDS.</i>	£14,000	
Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment	No change	
Offenders	No change	
Young People <i>Achieved through remodelling and re targeting of resources in a fixed site support project.</i>		£27,000
Mental health	No change	
Housing Support (Generic)	No change	
Housing Support (Aged over 55) <i>Achieved through withdrawal of support from Abbeyfield Flint with the agreement of the provider</i>	£14,500	
Community Care <i>Achieved through a continuation of a planned withdrawal from services ineligible for Supporting People Programme Grant.</i>	£163,000	
	£206,500	£149,000
Total	£355,500	

1.02	Commissioning Priorities
	The Supporting People Planning Group met in November and agreed that any efficiency should be invested in priority areas across the wider Tackling Poverty policy areas.
1.03	Regional Developments
	The North Wales Regional Collaborative Committee is taking forward two pieces of work to consider how services can be delivered more effectively across the region for domestic abuse and prison leavers. Local Authorities have agreed to ringfence 0.5% of their budget for regional priorities. It is expected that protecting or further developing the male domestic abuse refuge and developing improved outcomes for prison leavers will be a priority for the region.
1.04	Homeless Prevention
	There continues to be pressure upon the Housing Solutions Service and identifying suitable and affordable accommodation options is becoming more challenging, particularly with the ongoing reforms of the financial assistance towards housing costs provided through the UK social security system. The Homeless Prevention funding for 2017/18 will be subject to a reduction and it is important for the Council to maintain the services supported through transition funding such as targeted early intervention and prevention services together with the wider services focussed on improving the standard and increasing the availability of private sector rental properties.
1.05	Welfare Benefits and Advice – Universal Credit
	The Department for Work and Pensions has announced that rollout of the Full Service of Universal Credit (UC) will commence in Flintshire from April 2017. This is a significant development in the national implementation of UC and will generate a continued growth in the number of Flintshire households claiming UC, including households with challenging and/or complicated needs. The removal of Families First funding for welfare benefit related advice has resulted in a reduction of three welfare benefit advice posts. To maximise the effectiveness of the available resources, the Council's Welfare Rights Team is currently based with Citizens Advice Flintshire and all referrals for assistance with welfare benefits are triaged through the Advice Gateway and are allocated to an appropriate officer. However, the Gateway figures consistently demonstrate that demand already outstrips supply for welfare benefit advice and this situation will intensify with the introduction of the UC Full Service.
1.06	Work and Learning Programmes – Communities First
	The removal of funding from the Communities First Programme will see many projects in Flintshire cease to operate. The programme has been particularly innovative and successful in engaging and supporting people into employment, learning and self-employment and these strands are a high priority in tackling poverty and fit neatly with the Supporting People Programme.

1.07	Proposals for 2017/18	
	Ringfence 0.5% for regional priorities as agreed by the Regional Collaborative Committee.	£30,000
	Continue to fund homeless prevention posts (2016/17 proposal).	£100,000
	Continue to support the Advice Gateway (2016/17 proposal).	£30,000
	Fund one of the Welfare Rights posts currently funded by Families First.	£35,000
	Fund a Financial Inclusion Post based in housing benefits to support customers through the transition to Universal Credit.	£35,000
	Fund two Work and Learning posts to ensure all opportunities for work and learning are maximised.	£90,000
	Continue to fund the Male Refuge in Flintshire as evidence has demonstrated this is a much needed service for North Wales.	£35,000
		£355,000

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	A growing body of research has demonstrated the financial benefits to the public purse that are attained due to the positive outcomes from interventions delivered through the Supporting People programme. The key research in Wales indicates that for every £1 spent on the provision of housing related support, £1.68 is saved across other budgets, with the health, social care, and homelessness budgets seeing the most significant savings, primarily due to the preventative nature of Supporting People services.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Service providers have been consulted upon how the support services that they are currently delivering will be impacted by the efficiencies being made within the 2017/18 Supporting People Programme Grant.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The services provided through the Supporting People Programme aim to improve the quality of life of vulnerable people by supporting them to live

	independently in the community. These include the provision of services that help people to maximise their household income and manage their financial commitments. The successful outcomes from such services play an important role in helping to tackle poverty and prevent homelessness within the County.
4.02	Whilst the Flintshire Supporting People Team will attempt to identify efficiencies that will generate the least impact upon service users, it has to be recognised that any future reduction in service provision may result in some vulnerable people not having ease of access to the support services that they require in order to avoid their household from falling into poverty and/or becoming at risk of homelessness.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Supporting People Programme Spend Plan 2017/18

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None. Contact Officer: Katie Clubb – Customer Support Manager Telephone: 01352 703518 E-mail: Katie.clubb@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Supporting People Team – the team sits within the Customer Support Service area and is responsible for the contract management, reviewing and commissioning of Supporting People Services.</p> <p>Supporting People Programme Grant - In 2012, the Welsh Government merged together the Supporting People Grant and Supporting People Revenue Grant and created the Supporting People Programme Grant. This grant funds the provision of services that enable vulnerable people to gain and retain independence by remaining in their own home and prevents people from needing to access health, social care and homelessness services, etc.</p> <p>Housing related support - is provided to help vulnerable people develop or maintain the skills and confidence necessary to live as independently as possible. Housing related support can include help and advice with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Developing life and domestic skills <input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting and managing money <input type="checkbox"/> Accessing other services and opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Establishing safety and security <input type="checkbox"/> <p>Supported Housing - This is a service where the support is linked accommodation for people who have support needs as well as housing needs. Support can vary from simple information and advice on benefits to more in-depth help with independent living skills, accessing education and</p>

employment, overnight support and assistance with finding move-on accommodation.

Floating Support – This is where support is not linked to a particular property and is flexible and can support a number of people wherever they reside.

Decommissioning Strategy – The Supporting People Planning Group agreed a decommissioning strategy which ensures that the decision to end funding to a service has taken into consideration a number of factors including any impact on service users.

Tackling Poverty Programmes – The Welsh Government has recognised the following programmes as contributing to the Tackling Poverty agenda: Supporting People, Flying Start, Communities First and Families First.