

**CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SERVICES
16 OCTOBER 2012**

SUPPORTING PEOPLE COMMISSIONING BODY

Report by Director for Social & Community Services

Introduction

1. This report recommends that the Supporting People Commissioning Body be dissolved and that the oversight of commissioning of housing-related support be brought within the structure of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
2. The intention of the proposed changes is to reduce bureaucracy and to devolve decision making to the most appropriate partnership groups. They are not intended to change the plans for spending on services within the current Supporting People programme.

Background to proposed changes

3. The Commissioning Body was set up in 2003 to manage a ring fenced Government grant which helped provide support to vulnerable people so that they could live independent lives. This grant declined steadily from £20.9m in 2003/04 to £16.2m in 2010/11. As part of the financial settlement announced at the end of 2010, the Government incorporated this ring fenced grant into the County Council's revenue grant settlement. This means that the County Council could use this resource in the most appropriate way it deems necessary to meet the needs of the local population
4. This matter was considered as part of the County Council's service and resource planning process at the time. The Commissioning Body had already agreed to reduce spending to £13.8m by 2013/14. This was a 15% reduction from the level of activity in 2010/11. The Cabinet accepted this as a reasonable proposal at the time given that services supported by Supporting People are an important part of our strategy of preventing people needing more intensive and expensive forms of adult social care. However, the effective amount that the Government included in our overall revenue grant was £9.5m. Thus, the County Council is effectively subsidising the Supporting People programme. The County Council took the view that this makes sense because much of the spending helps pay for services for vulnerable people and reduces their need for more expensive forms of care. In other words if we were to pursue radical reductions to the services currently funded by the Supporting People programme beyond those savings already planned then it is likely that this would lead to new financial pressures on either children's or adults' services.

5. Running alongside these developments as part of its wider reorganisation the Council has been considering how it commissions and contracts for services relating to social care and education. The Council has centralised its commissioning service for adults and children with the aim of reducing duplication, creating better outcomes for families and improving communication with external providers. As a result of these changes it became necessary to consider whether we needed to continue with a Supporting People programme as a separate entity, or whether it would make more sense to transfer relevant budgets to either existing partnership arrangements or to new partnership arrangements which support the work of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.
6. Proposals to bring the commissioning of housing-related support into the structure of the Council's Joint Commissioning Team and to align the governance arrangements under the newly formed structures of the Health and Wellbeing Board were discussed and agreed at Oxfordshire Chief Executives.
7. Most of the budgets support adult social care or children's services and are being transferred to the relevant place, in most cases the relevant Joint Management Group. The Joint Management Groups will be overseen by the Adult Health and Social Care Board which supports the work of the Health and Well Being Board. Spend which is much more pure housing support or more directly related to the work of health improvement will be the responsibility of the new Health Improvement Board, which supports the work of the Health and Well Being Board. The Health Improvement Board is chaired by the Districts and will have a focus on the wider issues that prevent ill-health and promote wellbeing.
8. These proposals do not require a Supporting People Commissioning Body as oversight of the commissioning of housing-related support will take place through the Health and Well Being Board structures. Officer support for the functions which become the responsibility of the Health Improvement Board would continue to be provided by the Joint Commissioning service.
9. These changes have been fully discussed and agreed with the Districts and City Council, NHS and Probation Service. Letters have been sent to the Chief Executives of the organisations represented on the Commissioning Body, for them to sign and return to formally agree the dissolving of the Commissioning Body on 31 October 2012.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

10. These changes align the commissioning and governance structures with those of the Health and Well Being Board in a way that reduces duplication and promotes partnership working.

Financial and Staff Implications

11. There are no financial implications as this will not change the plans for spending on services within the original Supporting People programme.

12. The integration of Supporting People staff into the Joint Commissioning Team has taken place successfully, following consultation and internal restructure. There are no staffing implications for the new governance arrangements as officer support for the functions which become the responsibility of the Health Improvement Board will continue to be provided by the Joint Commissioning service.

Legal Implications

13. Legal advice has been followed to ensure the process for dissolving the Commissioning Body is correctly implemented. There are no other legal implications of this change.

RECOMMENDATION

14. **The Cabinet Member for Adult Services is RECOMMENDED to approve that the Supporting People Commissioning Body be dissolved on 31 October 2012.**

JOHN JACKSON

Director for Social & Community Services

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September 2012