



REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCE COMMITTEE ON 2 FEBRUARY 2010

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF EXTERNAL HOUSING SUPPORT (LEARNING
DISABILITY SERVICE)

BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. **REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1 The Committee is asked to approve the review of identified external Housing Support Services for adults with learning disabilities to ensure the most effective and efficient use of this funding and to authorise the recruitment of 1.5 WTE temporary reviewing Community Care Officers to undertake this review for a period of 5 months.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme in relation to the function of the Council as Social Work Authority under the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 It is recommended that Committee approves:-

(i) the review of identified external Housing Support Services for adults with learning disabilities;

(ii) the recruitment of 1.5 WTE temporary reviewing Community Care Officers to the Community Learning Disability Team for a period of 5 months; and

(iii) the use of the information gathered to adjust packages of support to individuals and, in the longer term, to consider the retender of Learning Disability Supported Accommodation services.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 Transitional Housing Benefit, later to be called Housing Support, was introduced by Central Government in 2000. The purpose of the funding was to allow people to be supported to maintain their own tenancies. The funding represented a new financial stream to Local Government.

3.2 To enable local people to benefit from this new funding, all adults with learning disabilities were assessed according to their needs. The aim, which

was supported by the "Same As You", a review of Learning Disability Services in Scotland, was to enable adults with a learning disability to live as independently as possible within their communities. This included enabling them to have individualised service packages, enhancing those already in place, to promote their independence both at home and in the community eg enabling them to access leisure pursuits, maintain and develop independent living skills etc.

- 3.3 Through this process, £6.9million of new funding was brought to Moray.
- 3.4 Since then, this funding has been reduced and is no longer available for new service users with the same level of needs as those previously able to access it; producing a restricted and often inefficient service.
- 3.5 In addition, the demands on Learning Disability Services have continued to mount due to demographic and legislative changes.
- 3.6 It is proposed that 1.5 WTE Community Care Officers are recruited to review identified externally provided Housing Support packages namely those provided by Cornerstone Community Care; Inspire; Turning Point Scotland; The Richmond Fellowship Scotland and Ark Housing in houses occupied by 2-6 people.
- 3.7 Once this has been completed, packages will be adjusted in the short term within current service providers but with an intention to use this information to go through a procurement process for all LD Supported Accommodation Services
- 3.8 The aim of the review would be to consider how the needs of those supported via Housing Support, and who live in small group settings, can be better met collectively than individually.
- 3.9 The outcome would likely be a reduction in the number of hours provided as the emphasis is placed on shared support eg one individual being supported once a week to make tea for himself and others he lives with to maintain his cooking skills as opposed to individual time every day for all the people in the house to make their own tea.
- 3.10 In addition to the above, the main impact will be on the leisure activities for the adults as there would be a reduction in the number of staff available so, for example, in a house of four people sharing, they would have to all go out together or all stay in. This may impact on the maintenance of good mental health and wellbeing.
- 3.11 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed which shows that there will be a negative effect of the quality of lives for people with learning disabilities but, in the current financial climate, this cannot be avoided.
- 3.12 There may also be an impact on the wider service in that service providers would have less flexibility to manage emergency situations such as service

user sickness resulting in time at home from day services. This would be monitored by the Learning Disability Team Manager.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan**

The recommendations contained in this report reflect key priorities of the Single Outcome Agreement namely caring for the elderly and vulnerable and delivering accountability to the local community.

While there is no specific link to the Service Improvement Plan, the recommendations continue to ensure the efficient and effective use of resources.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

The Local Authority has a legal duty to assess individual's needs for support and to provide that necessary as agreed through the Eligibility Criteria. The recommendations contained within this report will ensure this is the case but may impact of the quality of lives of some adults with learning disabilities as detailed in the report.

(c) **Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

The cost for the recruitment of 1.5 WTE Care Officers for a period of 5 months would be £24,000 (costed at top of scale and with full on costs).

It is anticipated that the recommendations within this report would ensure saving of £192,000 as detailed in the council's efficiency proposals and may produce further efficiencies.

Existing staff resources are fully committed to management and delivery of the service and additional staff are therefore required to undertake the detailed review work required.

(d) **Consultations**

The Chief Financial Officer,
Acting Head of Community Care,
Rhona Gunn, Acting Principal Solicitor and
Katrina MacGillivray, Senior Personnel Advisor have been consulted and concur with the recommendations made in this report.

5. **CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 In conclusion, there is a need to review identified external Housing Support services in Learning Disability to ensure the most efficient and effective use of this funding with a view, in the longer term, to retender these services.

Author of Report: Anne Slee

Background Papers:

Ref:

Signature:  _____

Date : 19/1/10

Designation: Director of Community Services Name: Sandy Riddell