

**SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGY  
(Report by the Head of Housing Services)**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 For Cabinet to consider endorsing the updated Supporting People Strategy and agree the 2004/05 housing support priorities included within it.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The first Supporting People Strategy was endorsed by Cabinet on 12 September 2002. This covered the period 2003-2008. This first strategy had been developed through an incremental process over nine months and included extensive consultation in the period November 2001 to January 2002.
- 2.2 During summer 2002 this first strategy was also formally endorsed by the other commissioning agencies participating in the Supporting People partnership in Cambridgeshire: the five District Councils, the Probation service and Primary Care Trusts.
- 2.3 The ODPM evaluated all Supporting People strategies over the autumn and rated the Cambridgeshire strategy as good. Nationally, 21 strategies were rated as excellent, 49 as good, 53 as fair and 26 as poor.
- 2.4 The vision, principles and key challenges set out in the first Supporting People Strategy continue to be appropriate. These have not been changed in the updated version of the Strategy.
- 2.5 The Supporting People Strategy is a large document (101 pages). A copy of the report is available in the members' room; on request from democratic services; or available to read or download from the internet at the following address:  
[www.huntsdc.gov.uk/Housing\\_Serv/documents](http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk/Housing_Serv/documents)
- 2.6 The elements of the Strategy that have been updated are as follows:
- a) The three-year review programme agreed by the Supporting People partnership in autumn 2002. It is an ODPM requirement that all services funded through Supporting People are reviewed in the period 2003-2006. The review programme has already commenced, with a Best Value review of sheltered housing due to report in June 2004 and a review of the five Home Improvement Agencies in the county due to report in January 2004.

- b) The risk-sharing agreement across the six local government partners. This was endorsed by the Joint Member Group for Supporting People in April 2003. The risk-sharing agreement was devised as a way of tackling the estimated £300,000 unfunded costs arising in 2003/04 as a result of the implementation of Fairer Charging and other previously identified risks. Although all administering authorities are facing unfunded costs as a result of these risks, as far as is known an agreement to share these risks in this way remains unique. This highlights the strength of the partnership in Cambridgeshire. Part of the risk-sharing agreement requires that the partnership agree how this risk will be tackled in subsequent years.
- c) Cambridgeshire was one of four authorities that the Audit Commission invited to take part in these pilot inspections. The inspection found that Supporting People in Cambridgeshire is a good, two-star service that has promising prospects for improvement. They identified a number of practical pointers for further improvement and the action plan for tackling these is included in the updated Strategy.
- d) A best practice report from all four pilot inspections will be available shortly. Supporting People in Cambridgeshire will be subject to formal inspection again in November 2005.
- e) The housing support priorities for 2004/05. These have been arrived at collectively on the basis of the existing inter-agency priorities for the seventeen client-groups affected by Supporting People. They comprise the following three sets of proposals in priority order:
- f) Priority List A

These are proposals agreed by the commissioning partners in 2002/03 where the revenue requirements are yet to be fully funded. The revenue requirement of each of these proposals is to be re-considered in the light of issues of affordability, pressures on the SP budget, uncertainty over additional revenue from ODPM for 2004/05, alternative funding arrangements and information about benchmark unit costs.

- Stonham Staithe move-on for 4 young people (Fenland)
- Kelsey/Fulbourn re-provision for 14 people with mental health problems (South Cambs.)
- King St/Fulbourn scheme for 8 older people with mental health problems (Cambridge City)
- Jubilee bungalows for 4 older people – budget for commitment of subsidy at 70%, i.e. £2000 (Fenland)
- Robert Ellis House re-provision for 8 people with a physical disability (Huntingdonshire)
- CHS extra sheltered housing scheme at Moorlands – budget for commitment of subsidy at 65%, i.e. £73,000 (South Cambs.)
- Wet hostel (Cambridge City)
- Papworth/Willingham project for 6 young people with learning disabilities (South Cambs.)

- g) Priority List B

These are new capital schemes identified as part of the 2003/04 prioritisation round. They are prioritised ahead of new revenue only

schemes because there is to be a Housing Corporation capital allocation round this autumn, the schemes have no other way of obtaining this capital and they reflect pressing needs on the statutory authorities.

- Foyer project, Wisbech (Fenland)
- Older carers learning disability project for 6 people (Huntingdonshire)
- Transitions project for 5 young people with learning disability and autistic spectrum disorder (South Cambs.)
- Specialist hostel provision (5-7 places) for offenders in Wisbech (Fenland)
- Extra sheltered housing scheme at Linton (South Cambs.)

#### h) Priority List C

These are new revenue only schemes identified as part of the 2003/04 prioritisation round.

- Domestic violence and other move-on (Cambridge City)
- Five schemes for homeless people (Cambridge City x 2, Fenland and Huntingdonshire x 2)
- Five learning disability schemes (Cambridge City, East Cambs., Fenland, Huntingdonshire and South Cambs.)
- Offender/ex-offender schemes requiring revenue only (as determined by Probation/YOS)

- 2.7 The Strategy explains how this order of priorities has been reached. They have been agreed at an officer level across the partnership and are now being considered formally by the partner agencies for endorsement. Further discussion remains to be held on the revenue limits to be attached to schemes in Priority List A on the basis of affordability and pressures on the SP budget. Nevertheless, it is important to agree the priorities at this stage in order to send clear signals to housing providers as soon as possible, to produce the optimum outcomes for Cambridgeshire from the Housing Corporation autumn bidding round and to exert the maximum influence on ODPM in relation to any growth in Cambridgeshire's SP budget for 2004/05.

### 3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Endorsement of the updated Supporting People Strategy is being sought of commissioning agencies participating in the Supporting People partnership in Cambridgeshire: the County Council, the five District Councils, the Probation service and Primary Care Trusts.

### 4. RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet give consideration to:

- 4.1 endorsing the updated Supporting People Strategy; and
- 4.2 agreeing the 2004/05 housing support priorities in order for further discussions to take place with partner agencies and to enable agreed proposals to be submitted to the Housing Corporation for capital schemes and to ODPM for additional revenue grant.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Source Documents

Supporting People Strategy 2003 – 2008

[www.huntsdc.gov.uk/Housing\\_Serv/documents](http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk/Housing_Serv/documents)

Agendas and minutes of Commissioning Body and Joint Member Group for Supporting People in Cambridgeshire

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