

**EXECUTIVE
Committee**

1st February 2011

INTRODUCTION OF A PRIVATE HOME SUPPORT SERVICE

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Brandon Clayton – Housing, Local Environment & Health
Relevant Head of Service	Liz Tompkin – Head of Housing Services
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to consider the introduction of the Council's Home Support Service into the private sector.
- 1.2 The Home Support Service's primary function is to promote and encourage independence for older and vulnerable people to enable them to live in their own homes for as long as possible.
- 1.3 By operating the Home Support Service within the Private Sector we will; be able to meet the conditions of the Supporting People funding, offer a Home Support Service to all residents of Redditch and provide private customers of the Lifeline service with the emergency Home Support call out service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that

- 1) the Home Support Service be introduced to the Private Sector;**
- 2) an emergency Home Support call out service be introduced to private sector customers;**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Home Support Service was previously known as the Community Warden Service. Currently the Service provides a visiting, liaison and advocacy service to older and vulnerable Council tenants to enable them to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. This includes welfare maximisation, social inclusion and health and welfare advice.

- 3.2 The Home Support Service works closely with Lifeline to provide an emergency Home Support to Council Tenants customers in an emergency 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
- 3.3 Currently the Home Support Service is provided to council tenants only and is partially funded through a contract with the County Council's Supporting People service. A condition of this funding is that we now make the service available to all who have a need for the service regardless of tenure.
- 3.4 The Service is part funded through Supporting People arrangements on a gross contract basis. If a customer meets all of the eligibility requirements they will have this service funded through the Supporting People contract. To qualify, customers have to be eligible for housing benefit and have a need for the service. The arrangements have been expanded to reflect that the service must be available for all vulnerable people regardless of tenure. For customers who own their own home, the eligibility criteria, has been extended, to include those in receipt of Guaranteed Pension Credits.
- 3.5 When supporting those funded through the Supporting People programme, the Home Support Service must be able produce a support plan for each customer with demonstrable outcomes. These form part of Supporting People's performance monitoring and feed into Worcestershire County Council's outcomes (Appendix 1).
- 3.6 Each service that is funded by the Supporting People grant must demonstrate that it is continually improving against the Quality Assessment Framework. At the last Supporting People inspection the service was awarded a high marking (level B) which very few providers have gained.
- 3.7 The pilot of the Home Support Service in the Private Sector had 17 customers receiving the service. See Appendix 2 for case studies.
- 3.8 Officers promoted the Service in the Town Centre by holding an event in the Market Square. Leaflets were given out and questionnaires completed.
- 3.9 Meetings have been held with Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, both in the community and in the hospitals, Age Concern, Older Persons Forum, GP surgeries and District Nurses. The overall opinion was that they felt there was a need for the Home Support Service in the Private Sector. See Appendix 3 Trial of Home Support Service and feedback from clients.

- 3.10 Referrals for the Service have been made through the event in the Town Centre, the Home Support Supervisors, and the hospital.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Supporting People contract changed from an accommodation based contract to an hourly rate contract. Further discussions have taken place with the Supporting People Team who agreed that the hours should be used to provide this service to those who meet the eligibility criteria regardless of tenure.
- 4.2 The Council's Lifeline Service is provided in the Private Sector, it would be seen as an enhancement to this service if the Home Support Service was also available.
- 4.3 Currently Council Tenants who receive the Lifeline Service and Home Support Service are provided with an out of hours cover where the Home Support Officer will attend in an emergency. Those Lifeline customers in the Private Sector are currently unable to access the Home Support call out service.
- 4.4 Discussions have also taken place at the Supporting People Forum to agree criteria for people in the private sector to access the Supporting People funding. The qualifying criteria agreed is anyone who has a support need and is entitled to guaranteed Pension Credits will be eligible for the Supporting People grant and incur no charge.
- 4.5 Although the majority of people who signed up to the pilot agreed the Service was invaluable when they needed it, some felt that they would not always require the regular support visit but would prefer and benefit from the Home Support emergency call out service.
- 4.6 The Home Support emergency call out service is very favourable with families who do not live close to their relatives and offers reassurance that, in the case of an emergency, someone would be with their relatives immediately.
- 4.7 The customer would be able to 'dip in and dip out' of the Home Support service dependent on their need.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There would be no additional cost to implement the recommendations.

- 5.2 The Supporting People Team at Worcestershire County Council have agreed to fund a post for 3 years to promote and develop the work of Supporting People funded services. We would be able to use this post to develop the Private Sector side of the business.
- 5.3 By expanding into the Private Sector and thus our potential customer base, we will be able to generate more income and identify any economies of scale.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The service is currently not available for all residents of Redditch and we could therefore be at risk of discriminating against customers in the Private Sector.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The recommendations are for an extension of the service currently provided to Council Tenants into the Private Sector. This is a new policy and will require Full Council approval.
- 7.2 This is not a Statutory Service however the service currently provides support to the most vulnerable of the Council's tenants and is a lifeline to living independently.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 **Enterprising Community**
By extending the Home Support Service into the Private Sector extra income will be generated for the service. A service will be in place to enable older people and the most vulnerable to maintain independent living.
- 8.2 **Safe**
Customers who use this service, especially if also in receipt of Lifeline, feel safe in their homes knowing they can contact the Home Support emergency call out 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- 8.3 **Well Managed Organisation**
The Home Support Service has achieved a level B in the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework. By extending service provision to all residents of Redditch, regardless of tenure, we will be able to further demonstrate the benefit this service provides to older and vulnerable people.

**9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY
CONSIDERATIONS**

- 9.1 The main risk associated with the details included in this report is loss of income.
- 9.2 If we do not meet the new conditions of the supporting people grant it is possible that we could lose the funding. Worcestershire County Council Supporting People will be making budget cuts and will be looking to re-tender for services over the next three years. If we do not extend the service we will not be in a position to compete with other providers.
- 9.3 This risk will be managed through the risk register, the Service Plan and the Housing Performance and Database Team plan.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 All residents of Redditch will be able to access this service regardless of where they live. This will be communicated to all via a press release, posters in the Customer Service Centres, flyers in Doctor's surgeries, hospitals etc. Promotional material will also be available on the website, given to other services such as Lifeline to distribute and through various agencies such as the Home Improvement Agencies.
- 10.2 We will need to make sure all Council Staff and Services are aware of the Home Support Service and what it provides.
- 10.3 The Sundry Debtor Team will be responsible for the invoicing of customers which they currently do for private Lifeline customers.
- 10.4 The Housing and Performance and Database Team will need to extend the mechanism it uses to record private lifeline customers in receipt of supporting people funding to include private Home Support Service customers.
- 10.5 Finance will need to set up and communicate the relevant budget codes.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

If the recommendations in this report are not agreed then we will be discriminating against Private Sector residents.

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12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

12.1 Currently income is generated from Council tenants who do not qualify for the Supporting People grant. If we are able to extend this service into the Private Sector the potential to generate income will increase.

12.2 The fixed costs of the service will not increase however we will be delivering the service to more customers.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

If the recommendations are approved there will be an increase in the mileage undertaken by the Home Support Service Officers and Supervisors who work on a geographical basis. However, when determining the days and times of visits, routes will be plotted to make them as carbon efficient as possible. It is not possible to do this job using public transport.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

The Service can be provided within current resources.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The Housing Performance and Database Team will need to submit performance returns, details of outcomes achieved and case studies to demonstrate to the Supporting People Team at Worcestershire County Council that the Home Support Service is being delivered to private sector residents.

16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

No direct Community Safety implications have been identified.

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The Home Support Service encourages their Council tenants to participate in gentle exercise classes, Tai Chi classes and swimming to improve their health. By not extending this service into the Private Sector, it is possible that some vulnerable people may not be supported to look after their health.

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18. LESSONS LEARNT

We have gained valuable experience from delivering this service to Council tenants and the pilot into the Private Sector. We have learnt that not all customers want a full hour of support but would like the piece of mind that they have access to the Home Support Service in an emergency. We have also found that customers would prefer to have the support when they need it, to 'dip in and out' of the service. We will therefore offer varying degrees of support dependant on the need of the customer.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Relevant Officers, Housing Advisory Panel, Borough Tenants Panel and Community Forum. Pilot conducted see Appendices for further information.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	
Executive Director – Leisure, Environment and Community Services	
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

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21. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards.

22. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Worcestershire County Council Supporting People Team outcomes.

Appendix 2 – Case Studies from customers of the Private Sector trial.

Appendix 3 – Feedback from the pilot.

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12th January 2005 Executive Report.

Supporting People Contract Analysis.

24. AUTHOR OF REPORT

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