

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 16th August 2011

UPDATE ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE HOME SUPPORT SERVICE INTO THE PRIVATE SECTOR – FOR SUPPORTING PEOPLE FUNDED CUSTOMERS ONLY

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Brandon Clayton
Portfolio Holder Consulted	√
Relevant Head of Service	Liz Tompkin
Wards Affected	All Wards
Non-Key Decision	

1. **SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

To update members on the introduction of the home support service, to customers who reside in the private sector who are eligible for supporting people funding, as per Overview and Scrutiny's request dated 19th January 2011.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

- 1) **the Home Support Service be extended to all eligible residents of the Borough regardless of tenure;**
- 2) **the Council enable this service to be available to those who are not eligible for supporting people funding; and**
- 3) **arrangements mirror other housing associations and extend the supporting people eligibility to those on council tax benefit; and**

to **RESOLVE** that

the report be noted

3. **KEY ISSUES**

Financial Implications

- 3.1 Currently 37hours per week of supporting people funding has been set aside to fund those customers who are not council tenants but who are eligible for the Home Support Service and supporting people funding. This approach does not generate any additional income for the Council.

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- 3.2 The delivery of this service to non-council tenants is currently dependant on supporting people funding. This funding derives from central government and given to local administering authorities; ours is Worcestershire County Council, to commission services.
- 3.3 Where a customer is a council tenant, they are eligible for supporting people funding if they have a need for the service and are in receipt of housing benefit.
- 3.4 Where a customer is not a council tenant, they are eligible for supporting people funding if they have a need for the service and are in receipt of guaranteed pension credit. On conducting market research officers have found other providers use council tax benefit as their eligibility criteria for supporting people funding. Officers would recommend this being considered.
- 3.5 Officers would like to be able to extend the Home Support Service to non-council tenants who would pay for the service. The current hourly rate for this service is £14.16. Dependant on their assessed support need this could be provided in 30minutes blocks. This is comparable to other provider's charges.

Legal Implications

- 3.6 There are no legal implications.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.7 Following approval of the Executive Committee Report 1st February 2011, the Home Support Service has been extended to those who own their own homes and would be eligible for supporting people funding. We currently have 11 customers in receipt of the service. This equates to 12 hours of support per week.
- 3.8 The extension of this service has enabled vulnerable people to increase their quality of life. This has included maximising income to enable services, such as lifeline, to be re-installed.
- 3.9 When assessing potential customers the officer has had to refuse some elderly people who need the service. This is because they do not meet the eligibility requirements for support people funding.
- 3.10 We have been to the Older Person's forum and conducted a survey at their meeting. Of the 25 that attended the meeting 9 said they would be willing to pay for the service.
- 3.11 As demand for this service grows we will need capacity to expand the service. We also need to be able to charge for this service. This will

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make the service more financially sustainable and less dependant on supporting people funding.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.12 Currently we are unable to offer this service to those who live in the private sector that can afford to pay for it. Thus the provision of the service is unequal and based on where you live.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Historically the service attracted its customers from those that lived in council owned properties. A condition of moving into some of these properties was to have a Home Support Services Officer thus the customer base was guaranteed. As a result of changes to the supporting people contract and the outcomes of the Older Person's Housing and Support Strategy this is no longer the case. It is only a condition of the tenancy to have a need for the service in our Category A schemes.
- 4.2 For the service to continue and to meet the terms of the supporting people contract the customer base needs to be expanded to include all residents of the Borough. Failure to do so puts the service at risk.
- 4.3 The service need to attract funding from sources other than supporting people. This can be achieved, in part, by extending the service to those who could afford to pay for the service and reside in the private sector. Failure to do this could result in potential customers being offered the service by other providers.

5. APPENDICES

None.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

1st February 2011 Executive Committee Report ~ Introduction of a private home support service.

7. KEY

None

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