

**HOME SUPPORT SERVICE – EXTENSION TO PRIVATE SECTOR**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Brandon Clayton, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Environment and Health
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Liz Tompkin, Head of Housing Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Member(s) consulted	N/A
Key Decision	

1. **SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

To make the Home Support Service eligible to all who have a support need, regardless of tenure.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

- 1) **the Home Support Service be extended to all members of the community regardless of whether or not they qualify for Supporting People funding; and**
- 2) **an hourly rate of £13.22 be introduced to pay for the Home Support Service.**

3. **KEY ISSUES**

**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Officers would like to be able to extend the Home Support Service to non-Council tenants who are not eligible for funding through the Supporting People programme but who can afford to pay for the service.
- 3.2 It is proposed to charge an hourly rate for this service of £13.22. This calculation has been based on the total cost of providing the service divided by the total number of staffing hours available: £624,910.00 ÷ 47,270 = £13.22. The basis for the calculation complies with the CIPFA Best Value Accounting Code of Practice.
- 3.3 The Authority is restricted to charging on a cost-recovery basis and under a duty to secure that, taking one year with another, the income does not exceed the cost of provision. Any over or under recovery that results in a surplus or deficit of income in relation to costs in one period can be addressed when setting charges for future periods so that over time income equates to costs.

- 3.4 A separate cost centre for the service will be established to ensure compliance with this requirement and this will also be a useful source of information for Members regarding the service.
- 3.5 Accordingly, as it is intended that this service will be self-funding, no money from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) will be used.
- 3.6 Dependant on the customer's assessed need, the support could be provided in 30 minute blocks.

**Legal Implications**

- 3.7 Local authorities have power under Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 to provide discretionary services to do anything they consider likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area [but not to raise money]
- 3.8 The ability to charge for such discretionary services is contained in the Local Government Act 2003, on a cost-recovery basis only, as set out above under the "Financial Implications" heading.

**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.9 Currently 37 hours per week of Supporting People funding has been set aside to fund those customers who are not Council tenants but who are eligible for their support to be paid through Supporting People funding. These hours are currently funded through the Supporting People funding stream and no housing revenue account money is used to support this aspect of the service. This approach does not generate any additional income for the Council.
- 3.10 The extension of this service to all people within the Borough will enable vulnerable people to increase their quality of life. This could include maximising their income to enable access to services such as lifeline, to ensure they are able to pay their rent and maintain their home plus working with customers to increase their self-esteem and well being by taking part in social activities.
- 3.11 Currently when assessing potential customers Officers have had to refuse some vulnerable people who need the service. This is because they do not meet the eligibility requirements for Supporting People funding and the service is unable to charge for the service.
- 3.12 On 16<sup>th</sup> August 2011 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following recommendations:
  - 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.

Adoption of the proposals contained within this report will achieve these recommendations.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.13 Currently we are unable to offer this service to those who live in the private sector who can afford to pay for it. Thus the provision of the service is unequal and based on where you live and not on an individual's requirement for support.

**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; currently Arthur Jobson House, Ibstock House and Harry Taylor House.
- 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 of losing the contract.
- 4.3 Supporting People funding is no longer ring fenced by Worcestershire County Council and is not a guaranteed funding stream. The service therefore needs to attract funding from other sources. 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.
- 4.4 Failure to be able to support customers who can afford to pay for the support has resulted in potential customers being offered the service by other providers.
- 4.5 This work will also support the work currently being carried out on the locality transformation work, by providing the Council's services across all tenures to support and help people live independently.

**5. APPENDICES**

None.

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1<sup>st</sup> February 2011 Executive Committee Report ~  
Introduction of a home support service to non-Council tenants who  
qualify for Supported People funding.

16<sup>th</sup> August 2011 Overview and Scrutiny Update Report ~  
Update, on the introduction of the Home Support Service into the  
Private Sector ~ for Supporting People Funded Customers only.

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Emma Cartwright  
E Mail: [emmacartwright@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:emmacartwright@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)  
Tel: (01527) 64252