

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT: SUPPORTING PEOPLE LOCAL COMMISSIONING
PLAN 2016-19 AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RECOMMISSIONING**

Purpose of Report

1. As part of work programming discussions, Members decided to prioritise for pre-decision scrutiny both the Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan 2016-19 and Domestic Violence Recommissioning. The report attached at **Appendix A** provides Committee with an update on the work underway to develop the policies for both of these areas.

Background

2. Supporting People is intended to provide high quality and strategically planned housing-related support services which are cost effective and reliable. Supporting People services should be provided in a complementary fashion alongside other care or other services. It cannot be used to fund nursing or personal care but is to fund support schemes to enable people to live independently and to maintain a tenancy.
3. The pre-decision scrutiny of the Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan 2016-19 was originally scheduled for January 2016, as this is when the draft Plan is normally available. An update on Domestic Violence Recommissioning was scheduled alongside this item, in recognition of the cross-over between the two areas.
4. However, changes to the timings of the U.K. Government's comprehensive spending review have affected the timeline for the Welsh Government settlement

to Welsh local authorities; this in turn has delayed the Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan 2016/19. It is now anticipated that the Plan will be ready for pre-decision scrutiny in March 2016.

5. At the Committee Meeting 4 November 2015 Members considered the changes required to the work programme due to slippage of several items and requests to include additional items, including the Gypsy & Traveller Housing Needs Assessment and Site Selection Criteria; this has been scheduled for Committee on 6 January 2016 at the request of officers, to fit with the Local Development Plan timeline.
6. In order to ensure effective agenda management, the Chair has agreed to bring forward this item to the December Committee in order to ensure Members are kept abreast of policy developments whilst at the same time avoiding the January Committee agenda being overloaded.

Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan

7. The report attached at **Appendix A** has been provided by Communities & Housing staff and summarises the work underway via a cross-cutting strategic review called the 'Accommodation and Support Programme'. A diagramme showing the various elements of the Programme is provided at **Annex 1 of Appendix A**.
8. The report highlights that further funding cuts are to be expected in 2016/17, with local authorities being advised to plan for three possibilities: 5%, 10% or 20% (equating to £813,000, £1.6million and £3.2million respectively).
9. The report highlights that floating support units are likely to be cut next year and providers have been asked to comment on how best this should be achieved. The report also lists the principles underpinning the approach being taken to identifying savings required in the short term; these are listed at the bottom of **page 4, Appendix A**.

Domestic Violence Recommissioning

10. An update on the work underway to re-commission domestic violence services is provided on **page 4, Appendix A** under the heading 'Gender Specific/ Domestic Abuse'. This states that work is being undertaken in partnership with the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Previous Scrutiny

11. This Committee scrutinised the draft Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan 2015-2018 at their meeting 7 January 2015, following which the then Chair, Councillor Groves, wrote to Sarah McGill on 9 January 2015, stating:

'Members note the difficulties facing the Council, other social landlords and providers in dealing with the reduction in available funding and have real concerns about this. Members were pleased to hear external witnesses, who were addressing Committee in their respective capacities as Regional Collaborative Committee representatives, recognising these difficulties, wishing to engage co-productively in finding solutions, both for this year and for future years in light of further cuts, which are anticipated, and campaigning to challenge future cuts, at an All-Wales level.'

'Members note that there will be a strategic review early in 2015/16 to inform the future direction of Supporting People in Cardiff and were pleased to hear that this review will actively involve service users. Members agree with internal and external witnesses that a strategic approach is essential, particularly as providers are clear that further 'salami-slicing' is not an option as many schemes have reached tipping point and will not survive further cuts. Members received the clear message that providers feel they are at the 'thus far and no further' point. Given this, it is clear that strategic prioritisation is needed. Members also note that competitive tendering will be considered as part of the strategic review; we re-iterate our concerns about the need to avoid competitive tendering leading to a 'race to the bottom', by ensuring specifications are correct and avoid unintended consequences. Members note that a report on the outcome of the strategic

review will be taken to Cabinet and request that this is scheduled to enable timely pre-decision scrutiny by this Committee.'

Way Forward

12. Councillor Susan Elsmore, (Cabinet Member, Health, Housing and Well Being), Councillor Daniel De'Ath, (Cabinet Member, Safety, Engagement and Democracy), Sarah McGill, (Director of Communities, Housing and Customer Services) and Jane Thomas, (Assistant Director of Communities and Housing), will be in attendance to answer Members questions.

Legal Implications

13. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances

Financial Implications

14. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented

with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- i) Consider the report, appendices and the information provided at the meeting,
- ii) Agree any comments, observations and recommendations that they wish to send to the Cabinet Member, and
- iii) Agree the way forward with regard to future consideration of this issue.

MARIE ROSENTHAL

Director of Governance and Legal Services

26 November 2015