

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee
Date:	15 January 2020
Title:	Homelessness Support Services: Implementation of changes to Social Inclusion services
Report From:	Director of Adults' Health and Care

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee with an update on the development of Homelessness Support services following the changes made in August 2019.

Recommendation

2. For the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee to note the contents of this report.

Executive Summary

3. The Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health agreed changes to Social Inclusion services in December 2018 to deliver £1.8m savings for the department. These changes were proposed as part of the Transformation to 2019 programme to enable the County Council to meet a funding shortfall of £140 million by April 2019.
4. The changes agreed led to local partnership approach with the District and Borough Councils with the Council's continued £2.4m investment focussed on the provision of support for the most vulnerable homeless people who may have eligible care and support needs.
5. Savings were achieved through a reduction in services for people with less critical needs, for whom it was considered that support was available from other services.
6. Changes were made in August 2019 and a collaborative approach to implementation (with District and Borough Councils and service providers) over an 8 month period supported a smooth transition to the new arrangements and minimised impact on people directly affected by the changes.

7. This collaborative approach continues and has resulted in the piloting of new delivery models in some areas, supporting ongoing service improvement and providing evidence to inform future commissioning.

Context

8. Social Inclusion Services (Homelessness Support Services) are accommodation based and community support services for people over the age of 18 who are homeless or at high risk of homelessness and have additional support needs.
9. The services offer personalised support to understand and manage the rights and responsibilities of a tenancy, manage debt and budget effectively, better manage physical health, mental health and substance misuse, and access healthcare and specialist services.
10. Following a comprehensive review carried out over 2017 and 2018 and in response to unprecedented financial challenges, the County Council agreed changes to services that reduced provision for people with less critical needs.
11. It was agreed that the focus for continued investment would be the support services in the intensive 24/7 supported accommodation used by people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough.
12. The County Council also agreed continued funding towards services for people who move on from intensive 24/7 supported housing and for those who are sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough and have complex support needs which mean that they are unable to access support from other sources.
13. Whilst the County Council does not have a statutory responsibility to fund this type of service, it is recognised that services support a vulnerable group of people, who face multiple disadvantage and have limited alternative options. It is also recognised that traditional adult social care services may find it difficult to engage this group and that some may have eligible care and support needs as defined by the Care Act 2014 or may develop eligible needs without this service intervention.

Implementation and service development

14. An 8 month transition period enabled a collaborative approach to the implementation of changes, allowing time for the development of more holistic in house services within District and Borough Council Housing Services to meet their statutory duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
15. During this period, the County Council and service providers supported District and Borough councils with the promotion of the Homelessness Reduction Act, ensuring all partners were aware of the new legislation to ensure earlier intervention when a person is at risk of homelessness.

16. This period also enabled service providers to work intensively with people affected by the changes to support them to access other community services.
17. A fast track process for adult social care assessments was put in place to enable easy access to assessments for those who may have eligible needs under the Care Act. This process alongside short term social work interventions supported a strength based approach, maximised client engagement with alternative services and strengthened relationships between adult social care and the provider organisations.
18. Whilst the changes have been challenging, the review presented an opportunity for the County Council and District and Borough Councils to work more collaboratively to make to best use of collective resources. 7 of the District and Borough Councils now jointly fund services.
19. This collaborative approach has supported the continued development of services since the changes were made. One such development is the opening of a new accommodation based service in Winchester, jointly funded with Winchester City Council and part of the Hampshire County Council Social Inclusion contract. This service has been designed to take a personalised approach to the accommodation and support needs of people with a history of rough sleeping and creates a new housing and support offer for those who have been unable to progress within existing provision.

Monitoring impact

20. A recommendation endorsed at the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health decision day in December 2018 was that Hampshire County Council Adults' Health and Care department should monitor the service impact of the changes made to services.
21. This process is ongoing, and it is still relatively early in terms of identifying the impact of the reduction in lower level support. Service providers are working hard to support those who move through services to engage with more mainstream support services and any impact from the loss of longer term tenancy support may not be seen within this contract term. Local homelessness forums and social inclusion partnerships are being asked to monitor any increase in demand for voluntary sector services and how this may relate to the changes in social inclusion services.
22. Some District and Borough Councils are reporting an increase in people requesting support to prevent or relieve homelessness, but this is to be expected given the new statutory responsibilities introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2018.
23. Between December 2018 and August 2019, 220 people using social inclusion services consented to referrals for adult social care assessments. 97 were assessed as having eligible care and support needs. Whilst some of these people continue to receive support from social inclusion services, others benefited from short term social work interventions and were supported to access more appropriate services. Whilst it was necessary to put in place costed services for some people, these were mainly individuals

who had a social care need that was not currently being met and the cost has been minimal.

Next Steps

24. Current contracts have the option to extend to 2022 and discussions regarding re-procurement will commence early in 2020. District and Borough Councils are still waiting for confirmation from central government regarding flexible homelessness grant funding from 2021 and this is required before they can confirm any future joint commissioning arrangements.
25. Quantitative and qualitative data will continue to be collated and used to inform future commissioning strategies.

Conclusion

26. The report presented to the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health in December 2018 highlighted the importance of collaboration and robust partnerships in mitigating the risks associated with changes to Homelessness Support Services. It is this collaboration that has supported the smooth transition to new arrangements and minimised the impact of changes.
27. Hampshire is fortunate to have a voluntary sector committed to supporting people who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness and the commitment evidenced by both service providers and other local voluntary sector partners to work strategically with the County Council and District and Borough Councils is essential for the continued development of services.
28. Funding challenges continue across the public sector and the County Council will carry on developing partnerships that support the best use of collective resources to prevent homelessness and help people who are homeless to get the right support.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Homelessness Support Services: Outcome of the Social Inclusion Transformation to 2019 Review	5 December 2018
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

<p>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</p> <p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p> <table> <tr> <td><u>Document</u></td> <td><u>Location</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Homelessness Support Services – Outcome of the Social Inclusion Transformation to 2019 review</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>	Homelessness Support Services – Outcome of the Social Inclusion Transformation to 2019 review	
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