

Portfolio Holder Decision

Housing Related Support (HRS) Redesign

Public Consultation

Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care & Health
Date of decision	12th May 2023
	Signed 

1. Decision taken

- 1.1 That the Portfolio Holder approves a public consultation for the re-design of Housing-Related Support services as set out in this report.

2. Reasons for decisions

- 2.1 A review has been undertaken into how the Housing Related Support (HRS) services commissioned by the Council can be delivered more efficiently and effectively when the current contractual arrangements come to an end in January 2025. A report on options for recommissioning these services was shared with Social Care and Support and Children & Families Senior Leadership Teams in October 2022.
- 2.2 To ensure a strategic approach to re-structuring these services, Council commissioners have carried out briefings and discussions with the Warwickshire Housing Board. A series of redesign workshops were held during 2021-22 with participation from the Council's Children and Families and Social Care and Support teams; the five District/Borough Council Housing services; and Probation Services.
- 2.3 The options for redesign have been presented to the Warwickshire Housing Board, which recommended that Option 1 be taken forward to consultation, in line with the Council's preferred option.
- 2.4 Whilst there is no statutory duty to undertake a public consultation when making changes to this discretionary service, it is considered good practice to do so. A document for public consultation, setting out the reasons for the exercise and how people can contribute to the Council's decision-making has been prepared (Appendix 1).
- 2.5 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been completed (Appendix 2) and will be shared as part of the public consultation exercise.

- 2.6 To support the consultation exercise, the Council has commissioned an engagement provider through the Co-Production & Engagement Framework; this will also ensure seldom heard groups are supported to contribute to the consultation.
- 2.7 The public consultation will run for approximately 12 weeks. We anticipate the consultation will run from 23rd May – 11th August. Should call-in occur the consultation will run from 7th June - 25th August 2023.
- 2.8 The responses to the consultation will be analysed and will inform the final service redesign to be presented to People Directorate Leadership Team and Corporate Board ahead of seeking approval from Cabinet on 14th December 2023.
- 2.9 The procurement for the new services will commence with publication of the notice in March 2024; contract award in June 2024 and contract start in January 2025.

3. Background information

- 3.1 Housing Related Support (HRS) is non-statutory service offered to vulnerable people aged 16 years and over across Warwickshire with the aim of promoting independent living and encouraging people to build on their existing skills and capabilities.
- 3.2 The current contracts and delivery model commenced in 2016 and are the result of significant redesign and budget reduction of the former Supporting People programme.
- 3.3 The provision of HRS remains discretionary; the County Council has no statutory duty to offer these services to Warwickshire citizens.
- 3.4 Nationally, there has been a diverse response to the changes to the funding of Supporting People services. Compared with other upper tier authorities, there is evidence to suggest that this Council’s current spend on HRS is one of the highest in England.
- 3.5 The current preventative service offer is delivered as in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Current Service Offer

Eligibility	People with own tenancy or temporary accommodation at risk of becoming homeless	People with no tenancy but ineligible/ or currently unable to access Local Authority or Private Rented Sector housing
HRS Service Type	Floating Support	Accommodation-based Support
	The Council commissions service which delivers support sessions from a caseworker to develop customer’s ability to prevent homelessness.	The Council commissions support; provider arranges accommodation (mix of hostels and ‘dispersed’ properties in general housing) funded through housing benefit/customer contribution.

For People Aged 16-25	Single countywide service	1. Service for North Warwickshire/ Nuneaton and Bedworth/Rugby 2. Service for Warwick/Stratford-on-Avon
For People Aged 25+	Single countywide service	Single countywide service
For People Aged 16+ with a Disability (including Mental Health)	Single countywide service	No dedicated service - would need to refer to the relevant age-specific service

3.6 The Council will have a reduced budget allocation from 2025-26 allocated for these services. To align with current contract length, new services will be procured to commence from January 2025.

3.7 Four options for redesign were considered under the new budget allocation and were developed following extensive engagement work with customers and key stakeholders (Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of options considered to provide services within reduced budget allocation

Options	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain both accommodation-based and floating support services for young people and adults allocating the available budget in the same proportions as current contract arrangements.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain all young people services Reduce adult floating support by 10% Decommission adult accommodation-based support
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain all young people services Reduce adult accommodation-based support by 10% Reduce adult floating support by 40%
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain young people accommodation-based support Retain adult-based accommodation-based support Reduce all floating support services by 50%

3.8 To ensure a strategic approach to re-structuring these support services, the Council's commissioners carried out briefings and discussions with the Warwickshire Housing Board. A series of redesign workshops were held during 2021-22 with participation from Children and Families and Adult Social Care teams at the Council; the five District/Borough Councils Housing services; and Probation Services.

3.9 These redesign workshops concluded that all the current services were valued by customers and the organisations that work to support them and there was evidence of positive impact and outcomes for Warwickshire citizens. It was felt that decommissioning any of the individual services would create a risk of increased

homelessness or increased need for social care. Accommodation-based support services for people with chaotic lifestyles and multiple disadvantages/vulnerabilities were viewed as critical in the local support arrangements due to the lack of alternative provision. These services were felt to support customer engagement with relevant support services, reduce re-offending and minimise homelessness.

- 3.10 The recommendation that we wish to consult on: 'Retain both accommodation-based and floating support services for young people and adults, allocating the available budget in the same proportions as current contract arrangements' is supported by the redesign workshop members, Housing Board and Warwickshire Probation Service. Both accommodation-based and floating support services are seen as preventing, reducing and delaying needs for care and support, preventing homelessness and supporting vulnerable people to gain the skills to live independently.
- 3.11 The proposed new services will be referred to as the 'Supporting Independence Services' and will continue to offer holistic and personalised support to meet need, promoting wellbeing, safety, resilience, independence, recovery and reablement to prevent, reduce and/or delay an individual's need for on-going care and support.
- 3.12 The recommended option features three redesign proposals which we wish to get the public's views on through the public consultation:
1. Stop commissioning the separate floating support service for people with disabilities and meet those needs within redesigned inclusive floating support services; one for young people aged 16-25 and one for people aged 25+ years.
 2. Add a flexible range of shorter support interventions that respond to individual needs as efficiently as possible and give earlier, focused support for customers who do not need longer term support.
 3. Reduce the maximum duration of a service intervention for an individual:
 - i. *maximum duration of floating support for people aged 16-25 reduces from 24 to 12 months*
 - ii. *maximum duration of floating support for people aged 25+ reduces from 12 months to 9 months*
 - iii. *maximum duration of Accommodation-based support reduces from 24 months to 18 months*

It is proposed that the redesigned services will offer a personalised support service that meets individual needs of customers, inclusive of those with disabilities. During the tender process it will be clear from the specification that providers are to respond to and deliver ongoing support to customers through an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach. There will be a requirement for staff teams to be adequately trained to support the range of customers who may require support. We will expect our providers to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities to ensure everyone can access the support they require.

- 3.13 The equal reduction across all services will unfortunately have a negative impact on the number of people it can support, and some people may find they are waiting longer for services. The service delivery efficiency improvements will partly mitigate the impact of the budget reductions. The aim is to increase the throughput of

customers to maximise the reduced resource and continue to support as many customers as possible. Our proposed redesign will make the services more efficient through more effective triage; shorter, targeted services where these are appropriate for customers; and people leaving services earlier with positive outcomes.

- 3.14 In order to realise our duties under the Equalities Act 2010 by having due regard for the impact of these proposals on protected groups under the Act, we have carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment (attached at Appendix 2). This assessment will be reviewed and amended regularly throughout the life of this project.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1 This report reflects the intended delivery of the £1m budget reduction, from current budget of £3.6m, approved by Council in February 2023.
- 4.2 The service re-design was developed, and proposals have been reached to support the £1million savings.
- 4.3 At the 2022/23 budget levels this would be a 28% reduction.

5. Environmental implications

- 5.1 There are no identified environmental implications

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Urgent matter?

No

Confidential or exempt?

No

Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?

No

List of background papers

Appendix 1 Public Consultation Document

Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillors Margaret Bell

Corporate Board – Nigel Minns, Becky Hale

Legal – Alison Hallworth, Sioned Harper

Finance – Victoria Forrester, Andrew Felton

Equality – Joanna Kemp

Democratic Services – Isabelle Moorhouse

Councillors – Jeff Morgan, Clare Golby, John Holland, Kate Rolfe and Tracey Drew

Local Member(s): n/a