

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE  
HOUSING COMMITTEE  
STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

**20 NOVEMBER 2003  
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9 DECEMBER 2003**

**DRAFT SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGIC PLAN**

**JOINT REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND  
HEALTH LIAISON AND THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING**

**ABSTRACT**

This report recommends the approval of the Draft Angus Council Supporting People Strategic Plan for the years 2003 – 2008. This report also outlines the extent and value of the current Supporting People support provision in Angus and recommends a common commencement date for warden service charges.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee, the Housing Committee and the Strategic Policy Committee: -

- i) approves the contents of the attached draft strategic plan;
- ii) notes the current position in Angus in relation to Supporting People.
- iii) agrees a common start date for warden service charges

**2. INTRODUCTION**

Under Section 89 of the Housing Scotland Act 2001, Scottish Ministers require local authorities to undertake an assessment of housing needs and conditions and produce a local housing strategy, covering the provision of housing and related services within their area. In accordance with existing Scottish Executive Guidance the Supporting People Strategic Plan will form Part 2 of the Local Housing Strategy.

Although the Local Housing strategy is not due for publication till April 2004 the Scottish Executive require local authorities to produce a Supporting People Strategic Plan by the 31 October 2003 before they will authorise payment of the Supporting People grant.

A copy of the Draft Supporting People Strategy is appended. This document takes account of comments obtained following consultation on an initial draft strategy that was produced in May of this year. It should be noted that the strategy is a working document, based on the initial understanding of current provision and evidence of need in Angus. It should be viewed as a dynamic working document and will be developed throughout its 5-year life. The document will be formally reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

### **3. SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN ANGUS**

Supporting People is a corporate agenda, however the Supporting People Team is based within Social Work as part of the Contracting and Review Unit within the new Joint Strategic Support Unit.

Prior to April 2003, the Supporting People Team undertook an exercise to maximise transitional housing benefit services. Elected members are referred to Report No 582/02. Final reconciliation of the position at the 31 March 2003 has been completed and submitted to the Scottish Executive. This reconciliation showed that in Angus there are 5,400 vulnerable people in Angus in receipt of housing support services. The final Supporting People pot claimed amounts to £5.7 million. Other income from assumed charging and the housing revenue account is estimated to be around £1.6 million.

These figures do not include amounts for the 15 Angus pipeline projects, for which the funding has yet to be confirmed by the Treasury. This is despite the fact that the projects have been agreed and recommended to the Treasury by the Scottish Executive. The estimated value of pipeline projects is £868,000 for 2003-04 rising to £2.3 million by 2005-6.

Elements of current spending have been claimed as potential Supporting People costs and as such have been included within the Supporting People grant claim. However until the Scottish Executive approves the final reconciliation, the resources freed up cannot be identified and reallocated.

### **4. CHARGING FOR WARDEN SERVICES**

The Supporting People Program came into effect in April 2003. At that time the local authority took over the commissioning and charging for all housing support services in Angus, including warden services provided by registered social landlords. This has resulted in the total number of service users increasing from 3,500 to 5,439, each requiring a financial assessment under non-residential charging. Prior to April, people in sheltered housing paid for their warden service directly to their landlords

Due to the length of time it has taken to carry out assessments of new users and register them on the corporate billing system service users have been billed at different times.

It is an overarching principle of the non-residential charging scheme that it must be fair to service users. With this in mind, a decision was made not to retrospectively charge those who did not receive bills at the appropriate time, as it was thought that this could cause hardship.

However, given that the current position is not equitable, we propose that all charges for warden services take effect from Billing Cycle 57, and that credits be applied to the accounts of those service users who have been billed from an earlier date. Billing Cycle 57 relates to services provided from 21 July to 17 August, which is the most equitable date for the majority of service users.

If the Committee approves this proposal, it will ensure that all these service users will be charged from the same date.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications of the Supporting People agenda will be dependent on several elements yet to be established. These include the amount of the final grant award from the Scottish Executive, the actual income from charging and the result of the Treasury's deliberations in regard to pipeline projects. A further committee report will be produced following receipt of the relevant information. This will detail the outcomes of these issues and any financial implications arising from them.

## **6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

There are no Human Rights implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The opportunities afforded by the national Supporting People initiative have been fully utilised by Angus Council, with many new and improved services being established to improve the lives of vulnerable people in Angus by enabling them to return to the community or by helping them remain in their own homes.

These services bring with them substantial amounts of new money; however, the true financial implications of Supporting People cannot be established at this time and will require a further Report.

A B Watson  
Chief Executive

R Peat  
Director of Social Work and  
Health Liaison

R Ashton  
Director of Housing

**NOTE:** No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.