

REPORT TO: HOUSING SUPPORT STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

REPORT FROM: DEVON SUPPORTING PEOPLE

DATE: 26<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2009

## **COMPLETION OF HOMELESSNESS SECTOR STRATEGIC WORK PACKAGES**

### **OBJECTIVE:**

- To be advised of the proposals for the completion of strategic work packages for the Homelessness sector.

## **1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 In December 2007, Devon Supporting People commissioned Ian Copeman, of the Housing & Support Partnership, to undertake a strategic review of Homelessness services. Arising from this, the Homelessness steering group has embarked upon a series of work packages/ projects designed to re-shape the sector. One key project due to start this financial year is the 'Common Assessment & Referral' work package. ([http://www.devon.gov.uk/jcb\\_08\\_165\\_h\\_strategic\\_rev\\_150908.pdf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/jcb_08_165_h_strategic_rev_150908.pdf) )
- 1.2 In December 2007, the Department of Health published 'Putting people first', proposing a radical reform of public services, to place the service user at the centre: ([http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_081118](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_081118) ). It is clear from the pilot schemes for Individual Budgets, that the new systems demand a new approach to both access referral to services, and assessment of service user needs.
- 1.3 In November 2008, CLG issued a new National Rough Sleeper strategy entitled 'No-one left out':(<http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/homelessness/roughsleeping/>) Since this was issued, both Exeter City Council and North Devon council have conducted rough sleeper counts which indicated there are significant numbers of rough sleepers in both areas. CLG has recently announced it intends to offer financial support to both Exeter and North Devon to enable them to pilot Individual Budgets for Rough Sleepers.

## **2 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENTS**

2.1 At the meeting of the 27<sup>th</sup> April, the Financial & Planning group agreed to allocate a sum of up to £45k, to support the completion of strategic improvements to the programme.

2.2 The development of the personalisation agenda, within the Homelessness, Mental Health and Physical Disability sectors, was also to be covered by the investment agreed. It is proposed that up to £20k is allocated to support the CLG Individual Budgets for Rough Sleepers pilot, taking place in Exeter and North Devon. This project will help inform how Individual Budgets might be incorporated into the programme, in the longer term.

2.3. In the case of access & referral pathways, for housing related support services, a project is already underway, led by Shaun Bennett, of CIVIS Consultancy, to develop a Single Assessment Process (SAP) for Older Persons services. A Single Assessment form has been agreed with sheltered housing providers and is being piloted. Shaun will build on this work by looking at similar processes for Homelessness and Mental

health sectors, linking in with the proposed individual budgets pilot, for Rough Sleepers in North Devon and Exeter. Up to £20K was agreed to support this project, which focuses on pathway re-design and piloting change.

2.4 It is proposed that a further £5k is allocated to support the completion of the Homelessness work packages, including the improvement of the access & referral pathways in the Homelessness, as well as Mental Health and Older Persons sectors. The investment was agreed on the basis that the projects would be completed in this financial year.

### **3 KEY QUESTIONS**

3.1 There is a question around what would be the most appropriate system for governing access & referral to services in Devon. In order to answer this question, there are a number of issues which need to be resolved, particularly with the introduction of Individual Budgets. Some of these issues relate to the assessment process and others to the access and referral 'pathways':

#### ***Assessment:***

- Is the Single Assessment Process (SAP) consistent for all client groups?
- Where does care fit in the assessment process? Is there an integrated care & support needs assessment?
- If there is an integrated or joint agency assessment, who does it, what skills are required, and who will resource it?
- What is the role of IT in the SAP? How is information recorded, shared and updated?
- Is brokerage a separate function to assessment and referral?

#### ***Access & Referral pathways:***

- What are the agreed routes into services? Which organisations can refer? How might this differ by service type?
- What is the role of brokerage? How do you broker a service? Which providers can you go to secure services? How do you pay for the service?

### **4 ACCESS & REFERRAL OPTIONS**

4.1 In Appendix One, Shaun Bennett has outlined some of the potential models for Access & Referral to Homelessness services. He goes on to explain how the introduction of Individual Budgets is likely to impact upon the 'workability' of those options.

### **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 The HSSP to agree the proposed investment for the delivery of Homelessness strategic work packages (£5k).

5.2 The HSSP to agree the proposed investment in the Individual Budgets pilot for Rough Sleepers in Exeter and North Devon (£20k).

5.3 The HSSP to agree the proposed investment in the development of access & referral pathways for Homelessness & Mental Health sectors (£20k), linking in with the Individual Budgets pilot.