

Title of service being assessed	Supporting People NI 141
Directorate	Adult, Health and Community Wellbeing
Name and role of officer completing this assessment	Simon Harniess, Head of Supporting People
Contact Telephone Number	01245 437875
Date Assessment Completed	08/01/09

1. What are the aims and objectives of this service? (what needs is it designed to meet?) (Bullet please)

Supporting People is a grant programme funded by central government to commission housing related support services for vulnerable adults. It has a focus on preventative services and on building or maintaining independence. It is a partnership programme, with the Local Authority holding funds on behalf of a partnership involving Health, Probation and the District and Borough Councils.

This assessment relates to the LAA Action Plan. Supporting People is directly monitored at the national level through two indicators – NI 141 and NI 142. The first of these is described as *Percentage of Vulnerable People Achieving Independent Living*, and this has been adopted as a priority indicator within LAA2. As a consequence of this, an Action Plan has been drawn up to help improve performance against this indicator.

A wide range of services are commissioned including sheltered housing for older people; teenage parent schemes; schemes for young people leaving care; Home Improvement Agencies; Care lines and floating support services.

2a. Which strategic objective does this service support? Please select one	2b. Is this service provided under a statutory or discretionary duty? Please select one
Supporting vulnerable people	Discretionary

3. Which policies and/or guidelines control how you deliver the service and who is eligible to receive it?

- As a Central Government Grant Programme, Supporting People has been governed by Grant Conditions which specify how the funding can be used. The Grant Conditions and associated guidance specify who can receive a service and what types of support can be offered. For example, SP funding cannot be used to fund any tasks which are a statutory duty.
- The governance of the Programme locally is managed via a member-led Commissioning Body and supported by an officer-level Core Strategy Group.
- At the time of writing (January 2009) the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) has indicated that there will be significant changes to how the funding is paid in future and their will consequently be changes to governance arrangements. The consequences of this are being considered locally via a sub-group of the Commissioning Body.

4. Think about each of the equality groups in turn. Could anything in the policy or guidelines identified in question 3 mean that any group could be excluded or disadvantaged (albeit inadvertently)? Tick the groups that could be affected and note the detail in question 7.

<input type="checkbox"/> Race and Culture	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender
<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion and Belief

5. Now think about how you actually deliver the service, for example how do people find out about your service? How do they access or use it? Most teams have developed processes to allow them to deliver their service efficiently. List all the processes as bullet

points here:

The Supporting People Programme commissions services through a Supporting People Team. This team contracts with a range of providers, many of whom are Third Sector, to deliver housing related support services across the county. There are in excess of 750 services currently, so it is not possible to give a detailed breakdown of how all services are accessed. However, the following list gives some indication:

- Formal referral panels, e.g. locality-based panels for vulnerable adults
- Direct referral – many services allow service users to access services directly
- Professional referral – services might be accessed through formal referral by a professional, e.g. Community Psychiatric Nurse; Care Manager, etc
- Emergency referral – access to some services, especially Womens Refuges, may be via the police or medical professionals. Similarly, some homelessness services will accept direct referral.

Similarly, how services are publicised may vary widely depending on the location and the nature of the service. Examples of publicity include:

- Advertising of services in the media and in local shops, post offices, etc
- Awareness raising meetings with professional groups, e.g.
- Leafleting
- Promotional events

6. Now think about each of the equality groups again. Could the way that you deliver the service disadvantage or exclude members of any group (albeit inadvertently)? Tick the groups that could be affected and note the detail in question 7.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Race and Culture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion and Belief |

7. Now you have thought about the governance and delivery of your service in respect of each of the equality groups, list below brief notes outlining the negative impacts that the service may have on each group.

a. **Race and Culture**

b. **Age**

c. **Sexual Orientation**

d. **Disability**

Depending on the nature of the disability, some service users may find it hard to obtain information on some services.

e. **Gender**

f. Religion and Belief

8. Your Service may already be meeting the needs of the equality strands in some areas. Please list, group by group, the positive actions you have already taken to address possible inequality.

a. Race and Culture

As a general comment : All services that are commissioned are formally reviewed against a national quality standard – the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF). This includes sections relating to how the commissioned service meets the needs of diverse groups and ensures that their service is accessible. This would apply to all of the categories below.

We have actively worked with partners to identify the housing related support needs of specific groups and have supported bids for services that would meet the needs of specific cultural groups.

b. Age

Supporting People commission a range of services some of which are 'holistic' and are delivered regardless of age; others are age specific. For example, schemes are funded for Young People Leaving Care; for Young People with Support Needs; for Older People who need sheltered accommodation, etc. We review our overall spend across categories and aim to re-direct funds towards emerging needs.

As part of Strategic Reviews, we have actively sought the views of Older and Younger People respectively in helping to build our picture of how services need to adapt in future.

c. Sexual Orientation

d. Disability

Some services are commissioned specifically for service users with particular disability, e.g. Acquired Brain Injury; Hearing Impairment.

e. Gender

Again, some gender-specific services are commissioned, e.g. Womens Refuges. Other services, e.g. accommodation-based schemes for Young People, may have gender-specific units, e.g for young parents.

f. Religion and Belief

Conclusion of section 1: You should now have a clear idea of why your service is provided by Essex County Council, you should have spent some time thinking about the equality groups and how your service might impact on them, or perhaps why members of these groups are less able to make the best use of the service. The next stage is to consider the data you could use to help you to support or dispute your initial conclusions. Think about how you will collect this data and/or how you will check your presumptions by consulting with our communities.

Complete the consultation and data plans below. Identify the sorts of data you need and the questions that you need answer to. If you feel that particular organisations or community/ voluntary groups will be able to help you please list these too.

DATA PLAN

What data do you want?	Where are you going to look or who are you going to ask?	What will you do with the data/answer?	Name of planned source (if known)
<p>It is difficult to state explicitly what the data requirements would be for the whole of the SP Programme. The approach will be to draw up data requirements in response to planned changes, e.g. for the Older People's Strategic Review.</p>			

CONSULTATION PLAN

What do you want to know?	Who are you going to ask?	What question will you ask?	What will you do with the answer?	Name of planned source (if known)
<p>As above, it is difficult to complete this statement across the range of activity across the programme. As above, the approach will be to draw up the requirements for specific changes/activities. For example, the activities in relation to the Older People's Strategic Review would be:</p>				
<p>What is the current pattern of provision of supported accommodation for older people across the county?</p>	<p>Service providers – front line managers</p>	<p>We have used bespoke questionnaires agreed on by a representative Working Group and signed off by a Project Board, both of which include representatives who are service users</p>	<p>We have collated the results and shared them with the Working Group and Project Board.</p> <p>The results were collated into a Baseline report which was circulated widely to service users and providers as well as other stakeholders.</p> <p>We have followed this up by hosting a consultation event with service users, providers and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The findings from the surveys and the consultation event have been collated and an Implementation report has been drafted to allow further consultation.</p>	<p>Supporting People Providers list</p>
<p>What are the views of service users about the service they currently receive?</p>	<p>Service users currently living in the accommodation</p>			<p>As above</p>
<p>What is the view of carers?</p>	<p>Carers of people currently living in supported accommodation</p>			<p>Carers of service users in the identified schemes</p>
<p>What is the view of potential service users?</p>	<p>Potential service users who attend conferences/consultation events</p>			<p>Conferences/consultation events</p>
<p>What are the views of providers?</p>	<p>Service providers at different levels</p>			<p>SP Provider list; consultation events</p>

The Next Stage - Section 2:

We need to ensure that the consultation process is managed. Please submit Section 1 of the EIA with the consultation and data plans completed. It is likely that some of the data will be available to you without the need for external consultation and /or other officers may have already sought the views of community groups. This will reduce the level of work that will be required by you to complete the final EIA stage. We also need to control our approaches to partners and community/ voluntary groups so that they are not inundated by Essex officers asking them for help and information. We will be able to co-ordinate these approaches.

The equalities team will be able to offer support and advice during the consultation process. Once the consultation stage is complete you will need to complete section 3 of the Equality Impact Assessment using your initial thoughts and the consultation information to develop an effective action plan for your service.

Please submit this form to the equalities team: equalities@essexcc.gov.uk