

Floating Support for Vulnerable Individuals in South Somerset

Executive Portfolio Holders: Sylvia Seal, Leisure & Culture
Ric Pallister, Leader of the Council, Strategy & Policy
Director: Martin Woods, Service Delivery
Service Manager: Kirsty Larkins, Housing & Welfare Manager
Lead Officer: Alice Knight, Welfare & Careline Manager
Contact Details: alice.knight@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462943

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides Members with an update on the Floating Support for Vulnerable Individuals project we have been delivering in South Somerset in partnership with Yeovil4Family (Y4F).

Forward Plan

2. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of October 2017.

Public Interest

3. This report provides information on the provision of services to vulnerable individuals who might otherwise be homeless and can benefit from engaging with support to address their particular circumstances.
4. It will be of interest to members of the public concerned about the provision of support available to vulnerable individuals in their local area. It will be of particular interest to any member of the public who is seeking such assistance themselves, or has a friend or relative in need of such assistance.

Recommendations

5. That the District Executive note the information in the report and note that Sonia Floyd from Yeovil4Family will be delivering a short presentation at the District Executive meeting.

Background

6. In 2016, SSDC Housing & Welfare Service developed a pilot project in partnership with Y4F to provide a floating support service to vulnerable individuals (aged 25+) in South Somerset at risk of homelessness. This was funded through the Housing & Welfare Budget, in response to:
 - a rise in rough sleeping and the cost of rented accommodation locally
 - a rise in demand for support services (eg. drug and alcohol, mental health services) at the same time as these services experienced severe cut backs and
 - the cessation of the P4A contracts (Pathways for Adults) in April 2016 which provided housing related support to people with a history of homelessness and those who had an offending background.
7. Local authorities and partner organisations in Somerset have been working together through the new Positive Lives Partnership to explore new ways of working, including listening to client experiences/life stories to pilot innovative projects and develop longer term, more sustainable solutions, helping clients address issues in their lives which ultimately reduce their risk of homelessness.

8. In January 2017, District Executive approved £35,000 funding in 2017/18 for Yeovil4Family to continue with the project for a further year based on the success of the pilot work. Members were particularly keen that multi-agency solutions to addressing homelessness were being sought where appropriate and that schemes were effectively measured in terms of outcomes achieved.
9. SSDC has statutory duties under the 1996 Housing Act (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) to prevent homelessness, provide suitable advice and assistance to those threatened with homelessness and help secure suitable alternative accommodation for those in priority need (as defined by the Act) who have become homeless 'unintentionally' (as defined by the Act). In addition the new Homeless Reduction Act (2017) strengthens the Councils advice and prevention duties to all people threatened with homelessness.

Results from Year 1 (June 2016 – Sept 2017)

10. This new service was commissioned by SSDC in June 2016. The project is based on the model built up by Yeovil4Family, who delivered a highly successful 3 year family support programme under Family Focus between 2012-2015, and continue to operate in South Somerset to support families and individuals.
11. Funding for the 'singles' work has been awarded through a Service Level Agreement with Y4F, to support up to 20 individuals at any one time through a team of 2.4 FTE Link Workers and 15 trained volunteer mentors.
12. Through this project, individuals are referred from a wide range of agencies. Their needs are evaluated before they are allocated a Link Worker and, if appropriate, a 1-1 Mentor, for up to a year. Intensive support is offered; it is flexible and tailored in response to individual needs.
13. Our SLA with Y4F specifies a number of generic outcome measures which will be fully reported at the end of March 2018 including:
 - Increased ability to maintain tenancy
 - Improved social and life skills
 - Increased engagement with support for life controlling problems
 - Increased engagement with employment, training, volunteering or education opportunities
 - Increased ability to manage personal finances
14. However with each client, specific aims and outcomes are agreed. These are individually tailored to their own needs which they identify and agree with their Link Worker; they are reviewed and measured during the year as progress is made. This is proving to be a very effective way of working with clients who display a wide range of complex needs and may have historically led chaotic lifestyles.
15. Monthly meetings also take place between Y4F and SSDC, looking at overall progress of the project and of each individual client. This helps us work in partnership and engage/refer to other agencies if needed, and agree collective exit strategies for clients to ensure they leave the programme fully supported.
16. Since June 2016:
 - **47** referrals have been received from a range of agencies including SSDC Environmental Health, SSDC Housing, Health Visitors, Yarlington, Police, GetSet, Stonham/Pathways

- 22 individuals have signed up to the programme and are being/have been supported by a Link Worker and in some cases a mentor
- Issues they have presented with include drug and alcohol, risk of losing tenancy, disability, mental health issues, relationship breakdown, debt, victims of abuse, isolation/loneliness
- Significant progress has already been made with individuals including management of debts, securing tenancies, engaging with support from drug programmes, accessing counselling, health coaches, joining community groups and practical improvements to homes
- 15 mentors have been trained and are supporting individuals

17. Further details of the outcomes achieved for clients will be presented at the DX meeting by Y4F.

Financial Implications

18. None. This report is for information only.

19. In 2016, Y4F used a cost benefit calculation (the Manchester New Economy Model) which showed that for every £1 spent on their work supporting families, the cost saving to public agencies was between £4.50 - £6. We would estimate that through the £35,000 we invest in the singles programme, the savings are in the region of £157,000 - £210,000 per year.

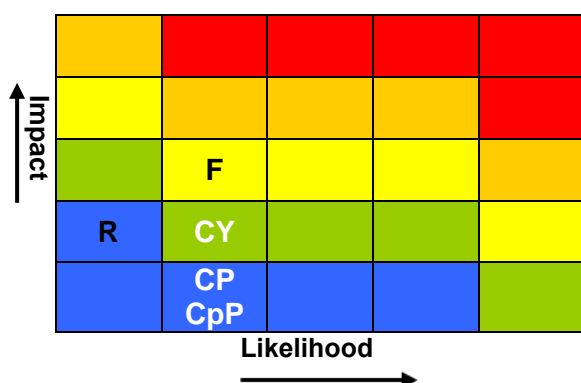
20. The cost to SSDC of processing a homeless application is £2,630. Through working with individuals to sustain their tenancies, considerable cost savings are made by SSDC. If 13 people are assisted through this programme the £35,000 is already saved.

21. A recent report by the Centre for Responsible Credit cites examples from Southend-on-Sea and Milton Keynes Councils who have calculated the cost-benefits of providing local welfare assistance in the face of large government cut backs. Southend-on-Sea were saving £300 per week per person (reduced temporary accommodation costs), and Milton Keynes calculated the value of £6,500 per person (with direct fiscal savings of £2,640 to the local authority itself) through providing this kind of support to individuals.

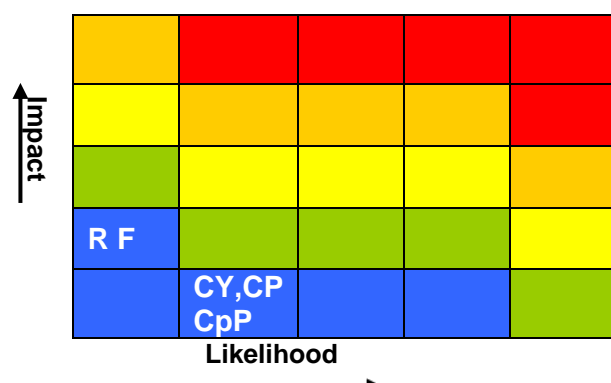
22. In addition Y4F support people to access benefits, secure employment and training which also have positive financial implications for SSDC, other public bodies as well as the individuals themselves.

Risk Matrix

Risk Profile before officer recommendations



Risk Profile after officer recommendations



Key

Categories	Colours <i>(for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)</i>
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

Council Plan Implications

Homes

- Minimise homelessness and rough sleeping
- Enable people to live independently

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

No policy changes

Y4F work with vulnerable individuals who often encounter barriers to accessing services, particularly people with mental health issues, ex-offenders or people who have experienced discrimination, exclusion and abuse.

Privacy Impact Assessment

Our Service Level Agreement with Y4F includes Data Protection

Clients are required to sign formal consent before a referral is made and any personal data is shared

Secure email is used to share any personal data electronically

Y4F is registered with the Information Commissioners Office

Background Papers

District Executive Agenda and Minutes January 2017
