

Generic Specification for Floating Support services

1. Background

The Council is setting up a procurement framework to tender all of their supporting people contracts.

This particular Agreement focuses on the floating Support Services that are required in the London Borough of Wandsworth. These will fall under the following client categories: -

- Older people
- People with learning difficulties
- Substance misuse issues
- Alcohol misuse issues
- Mental Health
- Single Homeless
- Teenage pregnancy
- Young people leaving care
- Chronic Illness (HIV and sickle cell)
- Young people at risk
- Generic

The kind of Support Services that are required will vary but we would be asking you to apply for the client categories to which your organisation would be interested in providing Support Services.

There are a number of generic areas that cut across all the client categories.

2. Aims of service

The aim of this Support Service is to encourage and support vulnerable Service Users to manage their tenancy and move towards and where possible achieve independent living.

This can include a variety of specific support such as and without limitation the following:

- practical financial advice and benefit issues;
- liaising with health services;
- helping Service Users find activities to help avoid isolation;
- help Service Users into education, employment or training;
- Act as advocate with housing related problems;

- Sign post to specific personal or cultural resources;
- Assist with referrals to specific counselling or external support as required.

3. Referral process

There are a number of ways in which Service Users can be referred. The main route of referral will be via the Council's Housing Department. Some of the other referrals points are shown below but will be highlighted in specific Purchase Orders:

- Adult Social Services
- Mental Health Trust
- DAAT

4. Service

The hourly contract requirements will be set out in each individual Specification which will address the needs of a defined group of Services Users. On average the Service can be to meet the short term needs or long term needs from 5 up to 100 Service Users. Short term is usually up to a period of two years and long term could be permanent. The expectation is that Service Users in short term and long term support will receive between one and eight hours a week on average depending on the need of the Services Users. The Contractor will be expected to provide any Support Service current or new of the client group and service type that it has been approved. The Contractor shall have the capacity to increase the unit numbers of an existing Support Service by up to 10% of the original capacity.

The Contractor will be expected to negotiate and agree a support plan/package which will be provided to the Service User outlining the hours per month of support that they are due to the Service User, the types of support and when and how it will be provided.

It is expected that the Contractor will manage the Support Services Contract accordingly reviewing the needs of the Service Users at any time and allocating the appropriate time required for each individual. For example, it would be generally expected that when an individual comes into a Support Service they will require more hours than after they have been in the Support Service for a year.

This will leave some additional support hours to use flexibly as needed across the Support Service. These additional hours must be accounted for to the Council's Supporting People team. All support hours will be recorded and reported to the Council's Supporting People team on a monthly/quarterly basis.

5. Manager and staffing

The manager will have experience in working with the specific client group and in supporting people within their own homes, so have experience of the safety issues and risk management that such work requires. Support staff will also have specific client group experience. They will have worked in a housing environment and will be trained in lone working, health and safety and in appropriate protection of vulnerable adults and safeguarding adults training. Staff will be able to demonstrate a proactive approach to support and have the skills and commitment to engage people who may be wary or mistrustful or otherwise reluctant to engage in support.

All staff must have a current CRB check which will need to be recorded and updated every 3 years in accordance with Condition 15.5 of the Support Services Contract.

6. Support provided

The Contractor shall make contact with the Service User within one week of the referral. We would expect the service to be flexible in their working and be able to cope with temporary periods of increased demand.

The Contractor shall provide assistance with claiming benefits including housing benefit and any other benefits the Service User may be entitled to, such as pension, carer's allowance or disability benefits. The Contractor shall also offer the following basic support to all tenants as a minimum:

- Budget management and assistance with managing bills and debts.
- Links to health and social work services as needed.
- Links to community activities.
- Help with maintenance and any other landlord issues.
- Reviews of tenant's safety and risk of exploitation from others.
- Help in accessing adaptations and equipment as needed.
- Help in accessing education, training and employment, as appropriate.

For Service Users on time limited support, it is important to work proactively to engage people with other groups and activities so that their potential for isolation is minimised. These can be informal links to community based social groups with structures that will keep a Service User linked to other people. Encourage people to remain active and get involved in local activities. Support will not involve physical or personal care or specialist counselling, but informal support and links to care services are a key aspect of the overall support package.

7. Turn over in services

The Contractor's floating support staff shall liaise with the referral agent on a regular basis. Support staff will give weekly updates of the upcoming vacancies to the referral agent. The Contractor's support staff will meet with Service Users within a week of receiving the referral. Any problems making contact with services users will be reported to the referral agent.

The Contractor shall prepare a support plan for each Service User outlining outcomes and approximate length in the Support Service. This will be shared with the referral agent to allow them to carry out service planning.

The positive outcome for a Service User in a short term Service would be to live independently and be able to manage their tenancy comfortably.

The positive outcome for a Service User in a long term Service would be to maintain independency and their tenancy.

8. Placement breakdown

There are times when a placement will breakdown. It is expected that work would have been carried out and the Council will expect to see how the Contractor has tried to engage with the Service User. The Contractor shall keep records of all attempts to make contact with the Service User and why this has not been possible. When a placement with a Service User breaks down, this should be reported back to the referral agent as well as in the monthly returns to the Council's Supporting People team.

9. Managing positive and negative outcomes

Vacancies in terms of a Service User coming to a point where they are able to live and manage their tenancy independently will be monitored monthly and a list of all tenants, their support start date and the number of hours visited or worked with will be reported quarterly to the Council's Supporting People team. The Council's Supporting People team may also carry out mystery shopper or unannounced visit checks to ensure quality services are being provided.

The Contractor shall formally monitor the individual outcomes of people through the CLG outcome monitoring that the Contractor shall complete for each short stay tenant as they are floated off and for all long stay tenants over a two year period, with 50% in one year and 50% in the second year. The Contractor will also have targets for positive move on (based on 33% of all short stay tenants each year) and for engagement with tenants and tenants' engagement with outside activities. The expectation will be that all short stay tenants have such engagement when floated off and that at least 50% of long stay tenants are

linked into such activities. Periodic tenant audits will verify that these targets are being met.

10. Other services and service links

The Contractor shall establish links with a wide number of complementary services that will increase the Service Users wellbeing, such as and without limitation social groups and counselling services. This list is not exhaustive and will differ depending on the Service Users needs.

As with other services, if any facilities providing training or social centres or other facilities such as benefits advice sessions are available directly from the Contractor, these should be listed in the Contractor's Method Statement and details of what each tenant could access given.

11. Housing management

Although this Service is not directly responsible for housing management i.e. repairs it will be expected that the Contractor's support workers will be able to assist the Service User to make contact with the relevant services and offer advice. If necessary, the Contractor shall engage with the relevant services on the tenant's behalf to assist with any maintenance, rent arrears, or tenant dispute issues.

12. Quality and Accountability

The Contractor shall attend yearly contract meetings with the Council's Supporting People Team and positive and negative outcomes will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

The Contractor will be monitored according to the SW London SP Monitoring Protocol, which includes a full review with service visit every three years, interviews with front line staff and tenants and record audits. This Protocol also requires a provider to comply with annual or more frequent contract meetings and to supply quarterly performance indicators looking at staffing, voids levels and turnover as well as the Key Performance Indicator of whether a person moved on positively or for the long stay services, whether all tenants were maintained in their homes.

The Key Performance Indicators are the national performance indicators KPI1 (percentage of people who have maintained independence in long term accommodation) KPI2 (percentage of planned move on from short term accommodation) and utilisation (percentage of service units used). These indicators measure the positive outcomes and usage of the Support Services and are therefore provide a strong indicator of a services 'success' rate. The

Council's Supporting People team shall sets Key Performance Indicators based on client groups which the Council would expect the Contractor to achieve.

The Contractor shall work to the Supporting People National Standards as outlined in the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) for supporting people services. The Contractor shall also maintain throughout the Contract Period the minimum standard of 4B's and 3C's or the equivalent within the new QAF (which is introduced in 2009) and shall confirm the same before entering into a Support Services Contract for the provision of the Support Services.

The Contractor shall continually improve its Support Services and should be able to demonstrate at each Service review that it is seeking to improve its Services. The Contractor shall regard the 4B's and 3 C's as a minimum standard.

13. Individual budgets

The Contractor must be able to respond to the move towards more tenant choice and so the Support Services Contract will need to be flexible regarding the number of units funded. Service Users referred will be given a choice of floating support providers and will also be allowed to change providers after one year if the Support Service is long term or if they have had major problems with the Service where time limited. As Individual budgets are introduced, Support Services Contracts may be amended to allow Service Users to control and move their own support funding. The Council's Supporting People team will be guided by government policy and Wandsworth's Transition Programme in the detailed approach to individual budgets but will aim to build in a reasonable notice period of change into the Support Services Contract, maintaining the six month notice. The Contractor will need to show in its Method Statement that it is keeping abreast of the development of individual budgets and will be able to respond to these changes in the Support Services Contract as and when they arise.

Extract from Best Value Statutory Guidance.

“1 Authorities are under a general Duty of Best Value to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness” (Section 3(1) of the 1999 Act).

2. Under the Duty of Best Value authorities should consider overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision. As a concept, social value is about seeking to maximise the additional benefit that can be created by procuring or commissioning goods and services, above and beyond the benefit of merely the goods and services themselves.

3 authorities are under a Duty to Consult (Section 3 (2) of the 1999 Act) representatives of a wide range of local persons; this is not optional. Authorities must consult representatives of council tax payers, those who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and those appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions. Authorities should include local voluntary and community organisations and small businesses in such consultation. This should apply at all stages of the commissioning cycle, including when considering the decommissioning of services.....

4 Authorities should be responsive to the benefits and needs of voluntary and community sector organisations of all sizes. and small businesses.

5 Authorities should seek to avoid passing on disproportionate reductions – by not passing on larger reductions to the voluntary and community sector and small businesses as a whole, than they take on themselves – and in particular:

- An authority intending to reduce or end funding or other support to a voluntary and community organisation or small business should give at least three months’ notice of the actual reduction to both the organisation involved and the public/service users (where on the basis of past practice the organisation might have some basis for expecting the funding or contract to be continued).
- An authority should actively engage the organisation and service users as early as possible before making a decision on: the future of the service; any knock-on effect on assets used to provide this service; and the wider impact on the local community.
- Authorities should make provision for the organisation, service users, and wider community to put forward options on how to reshape the service or

project. Local authorities should assist this by making available all appropriate information.

Initial Equality Impact Assessment – Policy Change.

Department	Adult Social Services
Policy	The Future of Supporting People Services in Sheltered Housing Schemes
People involved	A.Rush, P.Khwaja, C.O'Connor

1. What are the aims of the policy and what changes are being proposed?

Supporting People services provide people with assistance to live independently and to contribute to the community in which they live. In relation to older people over 55 there are a number of service delivery models which are used to provide housing support within sheltered housing schemes.

Services delivered exclusively to a specific housing scheme can vary from scheme to scheme but, traditionally, will include support via a warden or housing officer. The warden or housing officer may be dedicated to one scheme or work across a number of schemes. The warden or housing officer will usually provide a combination of services that are both housing management and support related. There are some services provided which could be classed either as a housing management service (e.g. providing concierge to a scheme) or support (e.g. having a dedicated on site warden service). The main characteristic of the warden/housing officer services is that all tenants are charged the same rate for the support service provided.

A floating support service is not based within a physical location but can be provided wherever it is needed, covering a range of housing support services including assistance with completing official forms and education to support the development of effective skills to allow individuals to maintain an independent tenancy, for example, relationships with landlords, utility companies, benefit offices, the management of household budgets etc. The Council currently funds a floating support service for older people with support needs.

Hub and Spoke services provide support from a specific location to older people who live in the scheme and others living independently within the community thereby covering a wider geographical area and population than a single housing scheme.

2. What is the rationale behind these changes?

To ensure that the service commissioned meets the demands across the whole Borough a review was conducted on the way in which services are commissioned and delivered. This identified that a significant amount of the functions allocated to Housing related support could be ascribed to Housing

'This review identified a number of functions that would be more appropriately designated as housing management functions rather than as housing support and are as follows:-

1. Communal contracts – services that benefit all residents within a scheme but are not directly linked to the objectives of Supporting People
2. Health & safety – including risk assessments, daily inspections and record keeping
3. Concierge scheme/security – including the security of the scheme, monitoring and maintenance of CCTV and access telephones
4. Scheme equipment testing – includes fire alarm, warden call, emergency lighting, small electrical appliances, lifts, IT equipment
5. Managing scheme services – includes, laundries, shower rooms, lounges, communal IT services and administration of scheme inventory
6. Emergency and out of hours warden Cover

However this review has only addressed the issue of the function of the service therefore it is appropriate that the issues of need and demand are also reviewed to ensure that Wandsworth continues to provide the best quality services at the lowest possible price.

Following feedback from older people via Supporting People reviews and scheme visits over the past 9 years, it indicates that, older people want to live in a safe and secure environment. Indeed many older people cite the security and safety of sheltered schemes as their prime motivator in moving into a sheltered housing scheme. The perception for older people that where they live is safe and secure is vital to their well being. However, this primary need is addressed through maintaining the security, safety and fabric of the building all of which can be legitimately charged through rents and service charges in line with standards set out within Housing Benefit regulations.

To meet the specific and variable housing support needs of residents a specialist floating support service, that responds to the individual and personal needs of people who live in sheltered housing schemes or in their own home, is considered the most cost effective approach to delivering

appropriate, personalised services to the largest population. This support can be tailored to the first few crucial months of a person moving into a sheltered housing service, to help them set up benefits or financial arrangements and ensure that they are connected to relevant support services or community based services, for example culturally relevant groups or social groups. Likewise, when specific issues arise in a person's life, such as a bereavement or an illness, requiring immediate support, a floating service can respond more appropriately, flexibly and personally.

Where longer based support needs are identified, the flexibility of a floating service means that a menu of support can be offered, whereby a variable amount of hours can be selected on a weekly schedule and delivered on a flexible basis depending on need.

The floating support service delivery model also provides an additional benefit of allowing services to be delivered to older people within their own homes regardless of tenure, as well as within the sheltered housing schemes, therefore support can be offered to a much wider range of people than is currently possible and supports older people to remain living in their own homes, retain their independence, social and family networks and assists in preventing the need for more costly social care interventions.

3. What information do you have on the policy and the potential impact of your policy change in relation to the following?

	List information you have.
Race	Breakdown of current service users by race GLA population estimates (2010)
Gender	Breakdown of current service users by gender GLA population estimates (2010)
Disability	Breakdown of current service users by disability
Age	Service is for older people aged 55+
Faith	Data not currently collected
Sexual Orientation	Data not currently collected

4. Thinking about each group below please list the impact that the policy change will have.

	Positive impacts of policy change	Possible negative impacts of policy change
Race	30% of current service users are BME. This is above the borough profile for residents aged 55+ which shows that 22.7% are BME.	

	<p>The Floating Support model is a more personalised approach which will allow for cultural factors to be taken into consideration for each service user. It also allows for support to be accessed when required for example when moving accommodation or coping with a bereavement or illness.</p>	
Gender	<p>53% of current service users are female. This is broadly in line with the borough profile which shows 56% of the population aged 55+ are female.</p> <p>The Floating Support model is a more personalised approach which will allow for individual needs to be taken into consideration for each service user. It also allows for support to be accessed when required for example when moving accommodation or coping with a bereavement or illness.</p>	
Disability	<p>13% of current service users are registered disabled.</p> <p>The Floating Support model is a more personalised approach which will allow for individual needs to be taken into consideration for each service user. It also allows for support to be accessed when required for example when moving accommodation or coping with a bereavement or illness.</p>	

Age	<p>As the service is targeted at older residents all current service users are aged over 55. The current average age is 73. There are currently 2003 service users across 54 services.</p> <p>As the population over 55 grows so the needs of this population are changing and becoming more varied. A floating support model as opposed to a generic service will allow support to be tailored to individual needs and also to times when support is most needed, for example when moving accommodation or coping with a bereavement or illness.</p> <p>A floating support model can also be delivered to older people within their own homes regardless of tenure, as well as within sheltered housing schemes. This means that support can be offered to a much wider range of people than is currently possible and supports older people to remain living in their own homes.</p>	Current service users maybe unsettled by the change from a model of support they are used to.
Faith	<p>The selected provider will be required through the Council's contract to comply with equality legislation.</p> <p>The Floating Support model is a more personalised approach which will allow for cultural factors to be taken into consideration for each service user. It also allows for support to be accessed when</p>	

	required for example when moving accommodation or coping with a bereavement or illness.	
Sexual orientation	The selected provider will be required through the Council's contract to comply with equality legislation. The Floating Support model is a more personalised approach which will allow for support to be tailored to an individual's needs. It also allows for support to be accessed when required for example when moving accommodation or coping with a bereavement or illness.	

5. Is a full EIA required? Yes

- Does the policy support a frontline service? Yes
- Is it clear what impact the policy change will have on all the equality groups? Yes but further consultation will be undertaken to ensure the views of older residents are taken into account.
- Overall will the change have a negative impact on any of the equality groups? To be confirmed following consultation.

Comments - Please give the rationale here for not undertaking a full EIA

n/a

6. Through the initial EIA have you identified any actions that needed to be implemented to improve access or monitoring of the policy? (please list)

Consultation to take place with service users and providers.

Signed

Date: 29.05.12

Approved by: Clare O'Connor