



Supporting People Newsletter: February 2008 Edition

Introduction

Welcome to the February 2008 issue of the Lambeth Supporting People newsletter in conjunction with the Three Borough Forum.

This issue includes features on the inflationary uplift for 2008/09, Lambeth's Default Policy, tendering plans, Lambeth's

Regional Champions Event, a move-on update, Sheltered Housing Commission update and support charges update.

We welcome your views regarding the topics covered in this issue. Email your views or suggestions to Jane Ritchie on jcritchie@lambeth.gov.uk

Inflationary uplift for 2008/09

We are pleased to advise that the procurement boards that Supporting People report to have agreed to award an inflationary increase of 2% for 2008/2009 effective from 1st April 2008. The increase in the contract price will be included in the next payment you receive for the period 26/03/08 – 21/04/08. This increase has also been applied to all contracts except where previous values have been agreed to be effective from 1st April 2008.

The CLG funded Lambeth Supporting People grant has been announced for the next 3 years (remains indicative) and will remain at the same level as in the previous year. Whilst this is very good news and provides some stability it is in real terms a cut in funding, as we have not been awarded an increase in line with inflation. We have therefore once again had to fund the 2% increase awarded to providers through savings.

Another piece of good news for our providers is that it is a leap year. All contracts are calculated at a day rate and as there is an extra day in the year ending 2008, you get another days payment. This payment will also be included in the above mentioned payment period.

SP Team trying not to find fault

It's now almost five years since the Supporting People programme started and we've all come a long way since those early days. We're not quite as scared of QAFs as we were and, broadly speaking, most providers have proved that they have good systems in place to ensure

that the myriad of reporting and monitoring information required by CLG can be complied with without too much blood, sweat and tears. However, it is still the case that, despite the age of the programme and the fact that some requirements like workbooks and Client Record Forms have been with us since the start, we have some providers in Lambeth that routinely do not comply with submitting these mandatory forms and some who persist in submitting late and inaccurate workbooks. Thankfully the numbers are few but even a small level of non-compliance can cause knock on problems for us as it means we cannot give CLG the complete set of monitoring data that they require of us.

With the need to improve this situation in mind, we have recently developed a new Default Policy which underpins and (we hope!) provides further clarity on the default clauses in the Steady State Contracts and the circumstances when we might issue a default. We very much hope that we will have to use the default provisions sparingly and as a last resort but we will be issuing defaults where appropriate to ensure that providers who persistently fail to comply with reporting requirements take seriously the need to do so.

The draft Default Policy has gone out to all providers by email and your comments are sought and very much welcomed. The policy will also be discussed at the Three Borough Forum on 27th February and we aim to introduce it shortly afterwards.

In the meantime, we may still issue defaults in line with the permissions given to us in the Steady State Contract but we hope this policy, when formally



SP Team trying not to find fault (cont)

introduced, will make our reasons for doing so clearer and help us all to avoid the necessity of doing so.

Comments to mbinfield@lambeth.gov.uk by 12th March please.

Move-on Update

Thank-you to all of our providers for an excellent quarter. Not only did we have the highest level of planned moves yet but we also managed to once again decrease the levels of unplanned moves. We are constantly looking to increase move on options for our service users and plans for the near future include an expansion of our 'In House Private Rented Sector Rent Deposit Team' due to the excellent results demonstrated by Ivorine Nelson over the last 9 months. We are also opening new services including a specialist dual diagnosis scheme, three long term mental health schemes and a Time Out Hostel for Young People.

Just a quick reminder to all about your quarterly workbooks. Please could we ask you to check the accuracy of the move on information contained in them before they are submitted. We are still receiving workbooks with either no move on recorded or inaccurately classified and are spending too much time having to follow this up.

Thanks again to everyone for the great results so far this year.

Lambeth Regional Champions event

On 29th January, Lambeth Supporting People held a Regional Champions conference 'Supporting People, the LAA and Joining Up Governance'.

Lambeth organised the conference not only to showcase the innovative work which we're doing with the LAA but to widen understanding among Supporting People teams across London of the importance of working with their LAAs to improve the lives of vulnerable people. Most London boroughs were represented, together with some non-London Supporting People teams and the third sector.

Opening the conference, Jo Cleary (Executive Director of Adult and Community Services for Lambeth) highlighted the importance of social inclusion to both Supporting People and Local Area Agreements.

Naomi Eisenstadt, Director of the Social Exclusion Task Force in the Cabinet Office outlined the work which the Task Force is doing in relation to reducing social exclusion, setting it in a London context. David Warwick, Deputy Director of the Government Office for London gave the Government Office perspective and underlined the importance of making sure Local Area Agreements had a truly local focus.

Ann Skinner and Lou Rossati, from Lambeth LSP, explained Lambeth's approach to the LAA, Supporting People and the social exclusion focus – emphasising that SP teams to get involved with their LAAs now.

The conference was chaired by Jeremy Swain, CEO for Thames Reach, including a panel session with Ian Jackson, Ann Skinner (both Lambeth LSP) and Jenny Edwards from Homeless Link. Oxford Computer Consultants, which supply ICT support to the public sector, sponsored the conference, held at the Oval.

Plans for Tendering Services

You will be aware of the huge amount of tendering that has been going on within the SP



Plans for Tendering Services (cont)

sector over the last few years and the discussions of how this will fit with existing services? You may be asking why the majority of SP teams are now beginning to tender services that have been run well by the same organisation for many years.

The answer to why tendering is now so prevalent is that each Council must meet Government's stipulations to ensure services are provided by the best agency at a fair price. We can only prove this through putting services to competitive tender regularly and can only continue to rollover contracts for periods of time where there is a good business case to do so, e.g. the service is so specialist few other agencies could provide it, or the funding is so varied, that SP is only a small contributor.

For these reasons Lambeth is beginning to tender many of its services this year and next and is planning where there is a special case to make in not tendering. In some cases we have already begun competitive tendering, such as Extra Care sheltered housing, and contracts we now hold for Youth Offending and Street Population Outreach. We are planning to very shortly begin tendering our specialist tenancy support for mental health, substance mis-use and young people. We will also begin a Framework tender later in the year for a large number of supported housing services, where we hope to achieve some different models of service delivery, groupings of services and financial efficiencies. The following year will see many other services put to tender, including many of those for young people, rough sleepers and women at risk of domestic violence. Sheltered housing will have an approach which matches the current Review's recommendations and learning disability services will be based upon the impact of Individual Budgets.

We will make it very clear to you the impact these plans will have to your contracts and discuss possible options available to your organisation. We realise this process is new to many providers and will continue to give as much information, training and support as we can, at appropriate times. Please do discuss concerns to your organisation with a member of the SP team. We are particularly interested to hear of any good practice you may have observed elsewhere that we could adopt, which would particularly assist services, their staff and service users.

Lambeth Sheltered Housing Commission

You may recall that the Lambeth Sheltered Housing Commission met last year to consider the future of sheltered housing for older people in Lambeth. The commission developed a report, which was sent to the Council's cabinet in November 2007.

While the report was primarily concerned with the provision of the Council's sheltered accommodation, and it did not make specific recommendation about individual sheltered housing schemes, it did suggest that a wider range of support services was made available to older people in the borough. The report described this as a "Menu of Provision"

This menu of provision states;

The Council, in partnership with other organisations and agencies, should:

- make sure there is a choice of different housing types and tenures for older people, providing a 'home for life' wherever possible
- continue to provide traditional sheltered housing for older people
- refurbish/improve existing sheltered schemes, achieve decent homes standard and:
 - increase the number of flats suitable for people with disabilities by installing new kitchens and showers;
 - upgrade all common rooms to modern standards;
 - install better alarm systems



Lambeth Sheltered Housing Commission (cont)

- make sure there is at least one fully accessible, sheltered housing scheme, built to modern standards, in each of the six housing areas in the Borough, with a luncheon club and other daytime activities available for tenants and people living in the local area
- make sure there is at least one extra care scheme in each of the three PCT/ACS localities within the Borough. (Lambeth Adults and Community Services Department and Lambeth Primary Care Trust have divided the borough into three areas and have a team working with older people in each area or locality)
- Each extra care scheme should also be a day centre or have facilities open to the community; and have facilities for visiting services, for example, chiropodists, nursing services, doctors, and advice services. Each extra care scheme should be the base for a team providing support and care to tenants and people in the local area
- develop at least one leasehold sheltered housing scheme for sale in each of the three PCT/ACS localities by working closely with RSLs, developers and the planning department
- have a supply of suitable 'older person's housing' in each area, which might not necessarily have communal facilities or a scheme based support service
- make sure that all sheltered housing in the Borough is flexible enough to provide housing for people with different support needs
- extend housing support services to people who are not living in sheltered housing, including community alarm services, needs assessments and a visiting service
- continue effective emergency call-out and out of hours emergency visiting services
- make sure there is fair access to all these services for all communities of older people in the Borough

Cabinet asked for a further report to be delivered to them in June 2008 detailing how these recommendations will be delivered. A group of Officers and stakeholders is working to produce this report and will be meeting regularly over the next 6 months.

Support Charges Increase

The Supporting People Commissioning Body agreed a 2% increase for all providers from April 2008. This increase is to help providers pay for increased costs in staffing and other overheads which result from inflation.

The charging rules state that this increase must be passed on to service users where chargeable services are provided, therefore all support charges will increase by 2%. Letters have been sent out to service users in chargeable services explaining the amount of the increase. Although some people, who receive housing benefit, are exempt from paying the charge, people who do not receive housing benefit may be able to get other help to pay.

If any of your service users would like to enquire about getting help to pay support charges you can call the SP team using the contact details below or call the Financial Assessment Team on freephone 0800 052 8886.

Supporting People useful contacts:

General Enquiries

Jane Ritchie (020) 7926 7520

Finance Enquiries

Wayne Cooper (020) 7926 7524

SPOCC Enquiries

Ade Bamgbose (020) 7926 7525

Contracts Enquiries

Sunil Panchal (020) 7926 7517

Older Person Service Enquiries

David Worrall (020) 7926 9978

