

Warwickshire Supporting People

Supporting People Grant Funding

Eligibility Criteria

1. Purpose of the Document

The purpose of this document is to set out the eligibility criteria that will be applied to Supporting People services in Warwickshire. The criteria will be used as a framework for application when reviewing existing services funded through Supporting People grant and future housing related support services that are likely to be commissioned through the Warwickshire Supporting People (WSP) Commissioning Body.

The criteria is set in the context that Supporting People grant funding is a limited resource and is required to be targeted and used as effectively as possible to fund a wide range of housing related needs for vulnerable people in Warwickshire. Funding also needs to be targeted and realigned where necessary to meet the priorities identified in the Warwickshire Supporting People Strategy, which has recently been agreed in principle by the commissioning partners. The Strategy determines where future investment in housing related support should be directed.

The document sets out

- Warwickshire's definition of the nature of housing related support as distinct from housing management, care and other forms of support
- The objectives of the criteria in determining whether a service would be eligible for Supporting People funding
- Clarification of what can be funded through Supporting People grant and legitimate approaches to assess the levels of support across services
- A Checklist of eligible and ineligible tasks, i.e. the housing related support tasks that would be considered by WSP to be eligible for funding within those services (see **Appendix B**)
- The criteria and tools for applying the principles set out in this document to the review of existing services and commissioning of new services.

2. Definition of Housing Related Support

Housing related support is focused on enabling people to sustain the maximum degree of independence in their accommodation.

In terms of reviewing and commissioning services in Warwickshire, housing related support is defined as

‘Support services, which are provided to any person for the purpose of developing that person’s capacity to live independently in accommodation or sustaining his/her capacity to do so’

(Source: Supporting People Grant Conditions, ODPM April 2003)

3. Objectives

Any housing related support provider seeking to sustain existing funding or develop new services through Warwickshire Supporting People funding would be required to demonstrate that the service is compatible with the aims and objectives of the Supporting People Programme across Warwickshire. This does not imply that all aspects of that service would be funded, only those elements that are defined as housing related support and on funding levels determined by the criteria.

Warwickshire Supporting People team will assess eligibility of housing related support against the compliance with the following objectives

That the **service** provides a housing related support service, which is

- Specifically targeted to vulnerable people who need support and
- Is clearly focused on sustaining or developing an individual’s capacity to live independently in the accommodation or to gain access to appropriate accommodation
- Is supplementary to any housing management service provided by the same provider to the same service user

That in delivering **housing related support**

- There is clear evidence of an enabling approach on the part of the provider
- Housing related support is given in a structured way as part of a support plan, which is reviewed regularly to assess a move towards independence
- There is evidence that support staff assist people to do things for themselves and that service users are meaningfully engaged in this process.
- In applying Value for Money (VfM) principles, the assessment of the Supporting People grant accurately reflects the level of housing related support provided

That the **service user**

- Has specific and identifiable vulnerabilities that render them in need of support services and that the support services is therefore allocated on the basis of a defined selection/admission criteria against which the individual applicant is assessed
- Has a formal support plan in place which reflects positively the move towards independence

4. Outline Principles of the Eligibility Criteria

Vulnerable Groups

ODPM Supporting People Guidance defines what may render a person 'vulnerable' and in need of support. These are set out in **Appendix A**, although this should not be seen as an exhaustive list.

Checklist of Eligible and Non Eligible Support Services

It is Warwickshire Supporting People Commissioning Body's longer-term intention to move towards a more outcome-based assessment of Supporting People services rather than an input based checklist. It is however considered appropriate at this time that assessment includes a checklist-based approach to eligibility. This is considered appropriate since although outcomes of individual service users and services measure the effectiveness of housing related support across Warwickshire, this approach does not guarantee that the Supporting People Programme will fund the cost of all or part of the service. The Commissioning Body needs to satisfy itself that funding is being spent appropriately for the purpose to which it is allocated. In support of this the Checklist is shown at **Appendix B**.

The Checklist lists a number of tasks that are typically undertaken in the supported housing, general housing and social care environments. This list is by no means definitive. It is however a positive step forward in establishing what is eligible for Supporting People funding in Warwickshire and what is not.

Non Eligible Services

Supporting People grant will not cover the following

- Support delivered through the provision of health care, general social care or statutory personal care, which is funded through other sources. These types of services are not intended to allow people to gain or maintain accommodation.
- Services provided by residential care establishments registered under the Care Standards Act 2000
- Services provided by a person required to be registered as a care provider under the same legislation
- Nursing or personal care (including assistance that involves intimate bodily contact such as bathing or dressing)
- Services provided by the Administering Authority in satisfaction of a statutory duty placed upon that Authority through community care legislation or the Leaving Care Act
- Building works, including adaptation, improvement or repair in relation to a building. (This would exclude advice and assistance in obtaining grants for such work or personal support services during the works)
- Provision of equipment unless used to deliver the particular service in question

- Specialist counselling such as psychological therapy or programmes of therapeutic counselling
- Services to enforce specific requirements imposed by a court of law
- General housing management services such as rent collection or dealing with antisocial behaviour
- Services of an adhoc nature providing general advice
- After care services as a result of hospital discharge
- Services, which are openly accessible to the general public without any form of selection criteria, which assesses the level of support, required.

General Supervision in Waking Hours

An appropriate level of funding will be assessed on a case by case basis for general supervision in waking hours in accommodation-based services. In the case of jointly funded services, this will be shared with other purchasers.

Occasional Welfare Services

Grant conditions allow for the Supporting People Grant to be used to fund 'other welfare services' (i.e. those that fall outside of the definition of housing related support) if they are 'occasional' and 'ancillary to housing related support services'. The ODPM guidance makes it clear that these services have to be 'ad-hoc' in nature and integral to the delivery of housing related support, i.e. that they are complementary to the main housing related support package. There is no clear definition of 'ancillary' within the guideline. WSP therefore will assess such circumstances on a case by case basis.

Occasional welfare services may therefore be eligible if the predominant amount of assistance provided is legitimately determined as housing related support, and if it is not regularly and consistently provided as a matter of course for all service users. It is the Warwickshire Supporting People team's view that such tasks are provided occasionally, for a limited time and that this type of ad-hoc support should not exceed 10% of the total time/cost of the support service. The provider would have to justify that it meets the above requirement in terms of its legitimacy, predominance and regularity through support plans and time analysis assessment.

The types of tasks that this could cover are included in the Checklist. Such tasks will not be eligible, however where the support is provided under the terms of a statutory duty.

Overlaps in service provision

The most significant overlap in service provision is between housing related and general social care. The latter is focused on all the aspects of a person's care, not just the support required to maintain accommodation, i.e., support that is intended to help people with everyday living tasks.

It is inevitable that an overlap will exist between these two areas of provision. The criteria attempts to acknowledge this. In its application it will be recognised that Supporting People funding will fund an appropriate proportion of general supervision as this is required to deliver the full housing related element of the service. A judgement has to be made as to whether activities are considered to constitute housing related support or general social care.

The following guidance will be applied

Supporting a service user to undertake a general task as part of their support plan with a clear goal that they will be able to perform this task for themselves at some defined point in the future. Doing this task for them is not eligible. Also if it is not realistic that the service user will be able to learn the skills required to undertake a support task on their own at some stage in the future then this would be deemed to be a social care task.

5. Levels of Support

There is a distinction between long and short-term services and the levels of support required across services and individual service users. It is understood that a number of services will fall between these definitions. This will be assessed as part of ongoing contract monitoring of services and as part of the service review programme and will inform future benchmarking comparisons in relation to future service provisions.

It is further acknowledged by the commissioning partners in Warwickshire that there is a need to further develop this concept in terms of achieving value for money and the effective use of future funding allocations in order to meet the needs of existing and future service users. The Eligibility Criteria will inform the development of the longer term Value for Money Framework for Warwickshire which is currently under development and will be used to inform service outcomes after March 2006.

For the purpose of this document the following definitions will be applied.

Short Term Services – primarily intended **to develop** a person's capacity to live independently. In some circumstances support may initially need to be more intensive to achieve this objective

Long Term Services – primarily intended **to maintain** a person's capacity to live independently in accommodation and, if related only to housing related support tasks, should not need to be intensive

High Level Support – intensive support, dealing with crisis situations requiring a high staff to service ratio

Medium Level Support – Regular ongoing or one off support activities with a strong emphasis on the use of enabling methods and shared tasks, which engage the service user in the activity. A medium ratio of staff to service user

Low Level Support – low input of support required to promote or enable independent outcomes for the service user, i.e. floating support services

6. Assessment Framework – Applying the criteria in practice

The Eligibility Criteria will be applied to

- Existing Supporting People funded services as part of the Interim Contract Service Review Programme
- Joint Service Review arrangements involving statutory partners
- New services commissioned by the Warwickshire Supporting People Commissioning Body in line with the commissioning priorities identified in the Five Year Warwickshire Supporting People Strategy. The criteria will form part of the service specification and determination of service schedules and contract price.
- If the Commissioning Body agrees joint commissioning and contracting arrangements, the criteria will be used as part of the process
- Long Term Contracts awarded following Accreditation.

Tools used to assess eligibility

The following supportive evidence will be used by Warwickshire Supporting People Team to assess eligibility. This list is not exhaustive but should be a useful and practical checklist that can be used by providers to measure the extent to which existing services meet the eligibility criteria

- The aims and objectives of the service clearly demonstrate a primary commitment to develop and/or sustain a person's capacity to live independently
- The Service Specifications detail the main support tasks and service outcomes
- Service Level Agreements and protocols clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all involved
- Clearly defined referral, assessment and review processes are in place
- Support plans are regularly reviewed and specify housing related support, goals, targets and measurable outcomes
- The provider can clearly demonstrate service user input into assessment, support planning, health and safety and protection from abuse issues
- Clearly defined staffing inputs for housing related support which are separate from housing management tasks
- Job descriptions specify appropriately trained and/or qualified staff for the client group

- Financial information and budgets detail housing related support and housing management costs separately
- Application of the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework and compliance with performance monitoring obligations
- There is clear evidence of an enabling approach demonstrated through feedback from staff and service users
- There is clear evidence through assessment of support plans and service user discussion that people are assisted to do things for themselves
- Value for Money assessment and time analysis assessments (where required) clearly verifies the level of housing related support against contractual arrangements and performance monitoring information
- Information relating to other funding arrangements demonstrate clear boundaries between housing related support and personal, social and general care tasks
- The Stage 1 Strategic Relevance assessment determines that the support is housing related and not being delivered under the remit of a statutory duty.

Transitional Support Services

These are defined as ‘support services which on the qualifying date were (partially or fully) funded by eligible funding’ under the ODPM transitional rules. This applies to funded services such as Transitional Housing Benefit (THB), Supported Housing Management Grant (SHMG) and Probation Accommodation Grant (PAG) funding.

Such services have been inherited through legacy funding in Warwickshire, of which Supporting People had no choice in funding from April 2003. These services are only eligible for Supporting People funding up to the end of the Interim Contract. Following the review of these services and the outcome of an eligibility assessment, the service may continue to receive funding, receive reduced funding or may be decommissioned.

The Statutory Supporting People Guidance issued by the ODPM states that

‘By the end of the interim period as far as possible all Supporting People funded services should be delivering only what is covered by the eligibility set out in the grant conditions. This will exclude services which were eligible simply as a consequence of transitional provisions.’

This will be achieved through service review, within the overall context of management of the Supporting People grant. This criteria is critical in achieving this condition

Joint Assessments

The Supporting People Team will work closely with partner agencies and other commissioners in applying the criteria. Where appropriate to do so, a joint assessment process will be used in order to review both quality and VfM

assessments. Where the service review process identifies that Supporting People funding is funding statutory services, we will work with the statutory agency to ensure that this element of funding is transferred to the appropriate funding stream.

Outcomes of Assessment

In applying the Eligibility Criteria, there are likely to be a number of services, which will have ineligible services being funded through Supporting People grant. This means that service levels will need to be reduced or other funding secured in order to maintain existing levels of service. In such circumstances Warwickshire Supporting People team will work with providers to develop an Action Plan, identifying the level of funding that will be withdrawn. This will include

- A clear timetable for transition arrangements and contractual variations
- Consultation with other commissioners and statutory partners
- A joint plan for consultation with service users
- An open and honest dialogue with the provider throughout the assessment process
- Consideration of Fair Access and Continuing Care agendas

7. Commissioning of New Services in Warwickshire

As part of the commissioning arrangements for new services across Warwickshire any potential provider in making any such service proposal will be required to satisfy the requirements within a service specification, which will take account of the eligibility framework. Service proposals for new services will need to identify housing related support tasks that will be applied to enable the service to achieve successful outcomes in accordance with the aims and objectives of the service and also identify any housing management tasks, social, personal and health care that should be funded from an alternative source. Where joint funding is required, health and social services partners will need to take into account the eligibility framework in sourcing funding under their joint commissioning responsibilities.

The framework will be an integral part of the Supporting People Commissioning Framework for Warwickshire, which is currently under development.

Appendices

- A - List of Vulnerable Groups
- B - Warwickshire Supporting People Eligibility Checklist
- C – Time Analysis Template

Appendix A

List of Vulnerable Groups identified by the ODPM as eligible for Supporting People Grant

Services should be provided to people who are at risk of losing their home due to an inability to cope with the demands and requirements of living independently (in a tenancy, as an owner occupier or as a lodger or other semi-independent arrangement), not to the general public as a whole.

In assessing whether a service meets this criterion, Administering Authorities should consider whether the service user has any of the following vulnerabilities, which may render him or her in need of support

- Previous homelessness or rough sleeping
- Previous imprisonment, or at risk of re-offending
- Mental health problems
- Learning difficulties
- Being at risk of domestic violence
- Teenage pregnancy
- Vulnerability due to age, including both older vulnerable people having difficulty coping (or anticipating having difficulty coping) and young people at risk
- Drug and alcohol problems
- Physical and sensory disability
- Having HIV or AIDS
- Being a refugee
- A previous history of repeat and unplanned loss of tenancy
- Travellers