

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Update on services receiving transitional funding</b>		
<b>Report to:</b>	Scrutiny	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Debbie Freeman and Shirley Beauchamp – Commissioning Officers

## 1. Purpose of Report

**The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update on the services that are receiving transitional funding from the Council to allow them to source alternative funding. These services are:**

- The Jatis Project – 25 beds of supported accommodation for people recovering from substance misuse issues. Transitional funding is in place until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2015.
- Leonard Stocks Centre – 24 bed hostel providing supported accommodation for the most vulnerable, and housing single people to whom the Council has a duty to under Housing Law. Transitional funding is in place until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2015.
- Supported Employment Service (provided by Pluss) – currently supporting 24 people with Learning Disabilities and Autistic Spectrum Conditions, who are working and need support to maintain the work they have. Transitional funding is in place until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014.
- Young Persons Support and Accommodation Service (provided by Independent Futures, part of Devon and Cornwall Housing) - 45 units of accommodation based support, plus approximately 30 hours per week outreach support. The accommodation is based at:

Torbay Foyer, Teignmouth Road, Torquay	20 units
Fraser Court, Waterleat Road, Paignton	11 units
Galway Court, Bath Lane, Torquay	7 units
Parkview, Garfield Road, Paignton	7 units

The service is provided for homeless 16 &17 year olds, 16 &17 year olds leaving care and young people aged 16-24 requiring supported accommodation. Transitional funding is in place until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, to facilitate a reduction in capacity to 20 units of accommodation based support at Torbay Foyer and 15 hours per week outreach support.

- Integrated Families Service also known as Stone Court (provided by Independent Futures, part of Devon and Cornwall Housing) - 15 units of accommodation based support at Newton Road Torquay. (These units sit alongside 6 units of emergency temporary accommodation used by Housing Options, which are due to be decommissioned by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 following the procurement of new emergency temporary accommodation by Housing Options. DCH did not bid for the new contract). The service also delivers 14 hours a week in outreach support. Transitional funding is in place until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

## **2. Background**

Following the budget consultation in 2013/14, Members granted transitional funding to a number of services to allow them time to source alternative funding to enable the services to continue.

Members requested that they be kept updated on the progress that the organisations had made towards sourcing alternative funding, and also arrangements for service end if alternative funding is not secured.

Officers have met regularly with the providers of the services receiving transitional funding. Councillor Excell has attended some of these meetings. Transition plans are also in place for all services. Officers are working with providers to support them to access alternative funding, but also putting in place plans to decommission services if funding is not secured.

## **3. Key Points**

The update on the services receiving transitional funding is as follows:

### The Jatis Project

There are ongoing negotiations between Jatis, Public Health and Commissioning Officers to try to design a community rehabilitation model within budget. This ten bed community rehabilitation service would replace the current model which spot purchases drug and alcohol rehabilitation beds out of area, as there is currently no suitable provision in Torbay. A final decision about the viability of this project will need to be taken by the end of October.

Alongside this, Jatis are planning to have 3 shared houses to provide move on accommodation from the community rehab. The people in the 3 houses will be supported by one support worker, who will be funded by Jatis.

Alongside these negotiations, a decommissioning plan is in place to ensure smooth closure or reduction of the Council funded service if the Public Health project is found not to be viable.

### Leonard Stocks Centre

Chapter One, Shekinah and Jatis have been having regular meetings ('Plan B' meetings) to look at developing a model for provision for the most vulnerable people in Torbay, and accessing funding for this provision. They have now been joined by Langley House Trust (the owners of the Leonard Stocks building) and Torbay Churches.

The group are working on putting in a Big Lottery bid for some funding to maintain a 'hostel' provision. There is also a possibility of charitable funding from within the group.

A decommissioning plan is in place for the service detailing actions that will need to take place if alternative funding is not found. Transition/decommissioning meetings are being organised to take place on a monthly basis between Chapter One and the responsible

Commissioning Officer for the Council to plan for closure of Leonard Stocks if alternative funding cannot be accessed.

#### Supported Employment Service (provided by Pluss)

Pluss are making applications for alternative funding to maintain the service. They are preparing a Big Lottery bid, and also making an application for some short term funding from the Department of Health's Autism Innovation fund (closing date for Autism Innovation Fund is 28<sup>th</sup> August 2014)

Regular meetings are taking place with Pluss, and a transition plan is in place for the service if alternative funding cannot be found.

#### Young Persons Support and Accommodation Service

There are no confirmed plans to source alternative funding for the units being decommissioned as part of the reduction in capacity.

Seven units at Parkview have been decommissioned as of 4/8/14. Of the seven clients (all female), one returned to live with family, the others have remained in the accommodation which has been taken over by Young Devon as host landlords for their supported lodgings provision. (This had no impact on the Young Devon contract value).

Fraser Court is owned by Spectrum Housing Group and managed by Westward Housing. DCH provide the support to the clients this block, who are on six month assured shorthold tenancies. The properties will return to Spectrum Housing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. No referrals will be taken for this accommodation after 30<sup>th</sup> September.

It is understood that Spectrum would aim to continue to use Fraser Court as supported housing in the first instance; subject to Housing Benefit agreeing to pay additional HB to cover costs for additional (intensive) housing management costs which would be incurred as a result of the units remaining supported. They are currently exploring this model with another Local Authority, so there is no timescale as yet on whether this is a viable option in Torbay. If this is viable they would approach the current housing management provider (Westward) to provide the intensive housing management on Spectrum's behalf.

If this option is not viable Spectrum will want to convert the tenancies to general needs accommodation so that the occupants do not need to find alternative accommodation. This will need to be agreed by Torbay Council as an exception to the usual Devon Home Choice allocations policy. In the meantime move on plans are being developed with the clients to find alternative accommodation as a contingency.

Galway Court is owned by DCH and they will retain the properties for their own use. They are also exploring intensive housing management options though Housing Benefit but there are not timescales for this as yet. No referrals will be taken for this accommodation after 30<sup>th</sup> September. Move on plans are being developed with the clients to find alternative accommodation via the private rented sector or social housing through Devon Home Choice.

Stakeholders and clients affected are currently being formally notified of the plans. Regular meetings are taking place with the provider and will continue throughout the transition period.

### Integrated Families Service (Stone Court)

There are currently no bids for alternative funding to continue the service at Stone Court.

The block is owned by DCH. No decisions have yet been made regarding the future of Stone Court however they are looking at options in discussion with Teignbridge District Council and our Housing Options Manager. No timescale has been given for the completion of these discussions.

In the absence of any other sources of funding the 15 SP funded units and outreach support at Stone Court will be decommissioned as of 31 March 2015.

The units comprise a mix of 13 x one and 2 x two bed flats occupied by families on six month assured shorthold tenancies. The waiting list will close and no referrals will be taken from 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Individual move on plans are being developed for all the affected clients to find alternative accommodation via the private rented sector or social housing through Devon Home Choice. Regular meetings are taking place with the provider and will continue throughout the transition period.

Stakeholders and clients are currently being formally notified of the plans.

## **4. Risks**

### Jatis

- The principal risks associated with Jatis are that it is not possible to agree a viable community rehabilitation model with the funding available from Public Health. This would lead to the closure of the Council funded service, and the need for all 25 people to move from their current accommodation in Jatis, and would leave no supported accommodation in Torbay for people recovering from drug and alcohol use.

Colleagues in Public Health and Commissioning are working hard with Jatis to try to agree a viable model for a community rehabilitation service in Torbay.

Alongside this, a transition plan has been put in place to plan for the closure of the service and moving the 25 people out if agreement cannot be reached on the community rehab.

Again, the decommissioning plan and regular transition meetings with Jatis should mitigate this risk as we are making detailed plans for service closure if this situation occurs.

### Leonard Stocks

- The principal risk associated with Leonard Stocks is if alternative funding cannot be found and Leonard Stocks closes. The Council's Housing Options service currently relies heavily on Leonard Stocks to house single people to whom the Council has a statutory duty under housing legislation. In addition, Leonard Stocks currently provides the statutory Severe Weather Watch service which provides a roof for the night for street homeless people in the case of severe weather. Provision of both of these statutory services would have a large impact on the Council's Housing Options service.

There would clearly be a huge impact on the street scene in Torbay if there was no hostel provision in Torbay as street homelessness would potentially increase, with the associated impact on community safety and tourism.

- If the Leonard Stocks Centre remains open and funded through alternative means, there is no guarantee that the provider would be willing to take referrals from the Council's Housing Options team, or run the statutory Severe Weather Watch service. The current providers of Leonard Stocks have a very good working relationship with Housing Options, and Commissioning Officers are meeting regularly with the 'Plan B' group to try to ensure that any future service would work with the Council to help it fulfil its statutory duty.

#### Supported Employment (provided by Pluss)

- The major risk with this service is that alternative funding is not found, and the service closes. It is the opinion of the service manager that many of the 24 people who are currently supported in their paid work, will not be ready to continue with their jobs without any support, and many of them will lose their jobs and return to benefits.

The Commissioning Officer is working with the service to look at any possible alternative options for supporting these people in their work. A decommissioning plan is in place to ensure the smooth closure of the service.

#### Young Persons Support and Accommodation Service

- The first major risk is that the service will be unable to move sufficient numbers of young people out of the decommissioned units in time. Young people will need to obtain deposits and references to seek accommodation in the private rented sector; or obtain social rented accommodation via Devon Home Choice which currently has a backlog of high banded cases. Some of the young people may refuse to leave their accommodation which will mean that DCH will have to take court action to recover possession of the properties, and some clients may be eligible to apply as homeless to the Council's Housing Options Services and be entitled to temporary accommodation as part of the Council's statutory responsibilities under homelessness legislation.
- The second major risk is the impact of the reduction in capacity on the pipeline of services for young people aged 16 to 17 leaving care and/or at risk of homelessness. The Council has a duty under The Children Act 1989, The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, and Leaving Care Guidance 2011 to accommodate eligible, and relevant care leavers; and discretionary authority to support accommodation needs of former relevant care leavers. There are also other case law judgements (like Southwark 2009) which have relevance for homeless 16 & 17 year olds. The significant reduction in overall capacity for young people's accommodation based support services may lead to more young people applying as homeless who may be entitled to temporary accommodation as part of the Council's statutory responsibilities under homelessness legislation.

To mitigate the risks outlined above the Commissioning Officer and Housing Options Manager are meeting with the provider every three weeks to review the transition plan and move on plans for the clients affected.

### Integrated Families Service (Stone Court)

- The major risk is that the service will be unable to move sufficient numbers of clients out of the building in time. These families will need to obtain deposits and references to seek accommodation in the private rented sector; or obtain social rented accommodation via Devon Home Choice which currently has a backlog of high banded cases. Some may refuse to leave their accommodation which will mean that DCH will have to take court action to recover possession of the properties, and as these are families with children they will be eligible to apply as homeless to the Council's Housing Options Services and be entitled to temporary accommodation as part of the Council's statutory responsibilities under homelessness legislation.

To mitigate the risk outlined above the Commissioning Officer and Housing Options Manager are meeting with the provider every three weeks to review the decommissioning plan and move on plans for each client.

## **5. Conclusion**

Commissioning Officers are working in two ways with services that are receiving transitional funding: firstly to support them in their efforts to obtain alternative funding, and secondly to plan for closure of services if this does not happen.

Whilst there will undoubtedly be an impact of the closure of these services if alternative funding is not found, Commissioning Officers are working with providers to try to minimise these risks if this should occur.