

Consultation on the Redesign of Housing Related Support Services

Background

We want to know your views on the redesign of Housing Related Support Services. The following information sets out why changes are being proposed, what the proposed changes are and how you can have your say about the changes.

What are these Support Services?

These services in Warwickshire support vulnerable people to enable them to attain the skills required to be able to live independently in the community. They aim to reduce the need for more intensive/longer-term social care support and/or health care, or risk of homelessness. They support people who are in need and eligible as determined by a Care Act 2014 assessment or who are assessed as vulnerable to not being able to sustain their independence.

Vulnerability is likely to be a key issue identified through multiple needs (for example mental health needs, debt and financial issues and risk of homelessness) with one main need being complicated by others or a combination of lower-level issues that together give cause for concerns in terms of ability to maintain independence ('edge of care').

Warwickshire County Council ('the Council') pays providers to deliver services that support customers to acquire living skills thus enabling them to live independently after the support ends. This can include support for customers to enable them to:

- stay safe within the home and local community
- manage finances, including budgeting, utilities and benefits
- acquire general housekeeping skills
- maintain independence, good health and wellbeing
- access and maintain a secure tenancy in accommodation
- participate in training and/or education
- obtain paid work or volunteering opportunities

There are two types of services available to anyone over the age of 16 with support needs:

- Accommodation-based: temporary housing and short-term support are delivered together
- Floating support: short term support for those in their own accommodation or temporary accommodation.

For the accommodation-based service, the Council pays providers for the cost of support only, not property/rental costs. All rental costs, including housing management, are paid via Housing Benefit claims payable by the relevant Local Housing Authority (LHA) and/or customer contributions where applicable.

Services are currently provided to customers for up to 2 years for accommodation-based support; up to 2 years for floating support for people aged 16-25 and 1 year for floating support services for people with disabilities aged 16+ years and for adults aged 25+ years.

To check whether this includes services you use please see the lists at page 13 at the end of this document.

In addition to the services we asked the current provider of support services for people aged 25+ to deliver, the provider offered to provide some additional services including Street Outreach services and 'Navigator' hubs in Nuneaton and Rugby. Additional services are those services that were not part of the specification the Council tendered.

The Street Outreach service is countywide and offers support to rough sleepers to encourage and motivate them to engage with services including drug and alcohol treatment, healthcare, assistance with benefits, reconnection to their local area/country and move into safe accommodation. This team is part funded by a Department for Levelling Up and Communities grant in Warwick and Stratford Districts.

The 'Navigator' hubs are shop premises in Rugby and Nuneaton town centre. People can get advice or support and be helped to access other services to improve their situation or circumstances. We are not proposing to specifically include these additional services in the redesigned services although potential providers may decide to include additional services like this in the bids they submit to us. We will be asking for your views on this approach in the consultation questionnaire.

What is happening in Warwickshire?

We are consulting on re-designing these services to become more efficient and effective within a reduced budget, while still focussing on those people in the greatest need and those whose support will prevent them needing care services.

We have developed the proposals, with input from strategic partners and stakeholders, including housing teams in the five District and Borough Councils; Warwickshire Probation Service; Warwickshire County Council Adult Social Care and Support; and Children and Families Service. The proposals have been developed to maximise the impact of the funding and to ensure that wherever possible, the commissioned services will help people with targeted, time-limited and effective support that equips and enables them to self-manage once the service ends.

How did we develop these proposals?

In order to develop possible options for re-designing the services, we engaged with customers to understand their experiences and priorities and conducted a survey across all stakeholders and strategic partners, including voluntary sector organisations, housing teams in the five District and Borough Councils; Warwickshire Probation Service; Warwickshire County Council Adult Social Care and Support; and Children and Families Service.

The findings from these activities and our performance and quality monitoring data informed a series of redesign workshops which involved strategic partner identified above. Together we looked at how we could deliver a more efficient and cost-effective service through re-design and ensure people who need support get the right service at the right time.

The redesign workshops looked at each type of service in detail. They considered the customer journey into service as well as the delivery. They considered if the services offer timely support that resolves issues at the earliest point. They also looked at the level of demand and ways to create efficiencies in the service. They also looked at the situations and needs of people who were being referred into the service.

The redesign work highlighted the importance of trauma informed interventions, psychologically informed environments and starting from strengths/ relationship approach to build independence alongside the value of working well in partnership. These insights will be incorporated into the specification of the proposed future model.

A common feature from the workshop feedback looked to limit the impact on services to young people (16-25yrs) and considered options which promoted early intervention and support with the aim of reducing risk of homeless earlier and therefore reliance on adult services later in life. Furthermore, accommodation-based services for people with chaotic lifestyles and multiple disadvantages/vulnerabilities was considered vital due to the lack of alternative provision and opportunities it presents to support engagement with relevant support services, reduce re-offending and minimise homelessness.

The workshops concluded that all the services were valued by customers and the organisations that work to support them. We noticed that the length of the support was not clearly related to the need and so we explored ways to better triage referrals and be as efficient as possible in delivering support proportionate to a citizen's situation.

We considered approaches which sought to disproportionality reduce some of the services to maintain the same level of funding for another. We felt this would result in a larger group of people being negatively impacted, the impact being felt more by those with protected characteristics. We concluded that decommissioning any of the individual services would create a risk of increased homelessness or needs for social care support and that this was not an option we would want to pursue.

What does this mean?

The Council is therefore proposing the new budget is distributed in a way that means each service area would receive the same percentage reduction in spend. This will support the Council to maintain the range of services it delivers.

The proposed approach would retain both accommodation-based and floating support services for young people and adults by allocating the budget in the same proportions as current contract arrangements. This approach is supported by Warwickshire Housing Board and Warwickshire Probation Service.

The proposed new services would continue to offer holistic and personalised support to meet need, promoting safety, resilience, independence, recovery and reablement to prevent, reduce and/or delay an individual's need for care and support. To reflect the increased focus on reducing, delaying and preventing needs for care and support, and preventing homelessness, we are proposing that the new services will be known as the Supporting Independence Services when they are retendered to commence in January 2025.

This equal reduction across all services will unfortunately have a negative impact on the number of people it can support, and some people may find they are waiting longer for services. However, the impact of this approach has been explored and was recommended by key stakeholders as proportionately it was felt it would have the lowest impact across all groups.

Our proposed redesign will to some extent reduce the impact of the funding reduction by making the services more efficient through more effective triage; shorter, targeted services where these are appropriate for customers; and people leaving services earlier with positive outcomes.

About this Consultation

The aim of this consultation is to inform you about the proposals to redesign services and to ask for your views. What the people of Warwickshire tell us during this consultation about the impact of our proposals and what we could do instead will help us consider how we redesign services. We wish to offer and deliver as many of the right services to the right people at the right time as possible and your views about how we should do this are important.

This consultation is in two parts:

- Part One focuses on how the Council would spend the budget and how the service would be re-designed
- Part Two focuses on our Equality Impact Assessment

The consultation questionnaire asks for your views on six elements of the re-design.

Have Your Say

Why should you get involved?

The proposed redesigned support services would be different from what is provided currently. The proposals will have an impact on many people accessing support services both now and in the future. We wish to hear everyone's views on the proposed changes, including people that use these services or may use them in the future, so that we can work together to re-shape support services.

Your contribution is important and can make a difference.

How can you get involved?

We have the consultation pack on Ask Warwickshire.

You can put forward your views either individually or as part of a group in the following ways:

- Complete the questionnaire online, please go to www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask
- Or you can also ask for assistance in completing the online form by using the contact information below.

- Or complete a paper copy of the questionnaire. If you require a paper version, please request this by telephone or email (contact details below) and we shall send one out to you.
- Or can ask for an easy read version of the questionnaire. If you want an easy read version, please ask for this by telephone or email (contact details below) and we shall send one out to you.
- You can also contact us if you need the questionnaire in a different format or language.
- You can respond directly in writing to: Warwickshire County Council, Housing Related Support Consultation, Shire Hall, Market Place, Warwick, CV34 4RL or by emailing peoplestrategyandcommissioning@warwickshire.gov.uk.

For help and advice about the consultation:

If you have any queries or need any help or advice about the consultation, please email peoplestrategyandcommissioning@warwickshire.gov.uk or telephone Warwickshire County Council Customer Service Centre on 01926 410410 and they will direct you to the Maintaining & Promoting Independence Team for support.

Please also ring the above number or email if you require help completing the questionnaire or would like the questionnaire in another format or language.

What will happen with all the information gathered?

We will collate all the consultation responses and use the information provided to inform the future of support services in Warwickshire.

The Consultation Analysis report and Proposal for the new services will be considered by Warwickshire County Council Cabinet later this year. If approved, tendering will start in 2024 for re-designed services to be delivered from 1st April 2025.

PART ONE – Budget and service re-design proposals

Budget

Element 1 - Retain both accommodation-based and floating support services for young people and adults by allocating the available budget in the same proportions as currently

Under the new budget the money available is reduced but the proportions of the budget that we spend on each service area would be unchanged

Why we are proposing this change

The Council are making this proposal because it enables the Council to continue to provide the range of support services that have been offered since 2015 and does not disproportionality impact more so on any one group of customers.

We want to know if you agree or disagree with this proposal and why. We also want to understand if you think this will impact you or other people or organisations or if you have any other suggestions. The consultation questionnaire will ask you about this.

Service redesign proposals.

We propose the following three service re-design proposals to enable us to improve the service and deliver it within the available budget.

Element 2 - Stop commissioning the separate floating support service for people with disabilities and meet those needs within redesigned inclusive floating support services, one for young people aged 16-25 and one for people aged 25+ years

We currently commission three Countywide Floating Support services, one for people with disabilities aged 16 and above (Together working for Wellbeing), one for young people aged 16-25 (St Basils), and a generic service for adults aged 25 + years (P3 - People, Potential, Possibilities).

We propose to stop commissioning the separate service for people with disabilities, they will instead be able to apply for support from the two re-designed services in the same way, and the two new services will be able to meet the same range of customers' needs as the current services.

We would commission:

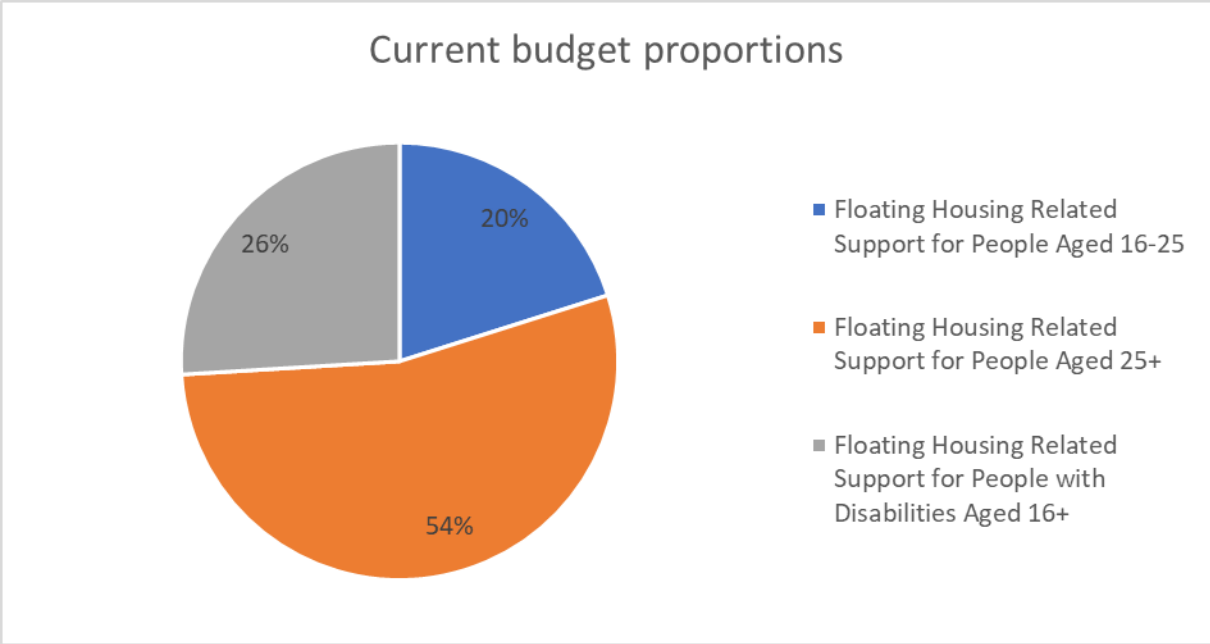
- A floating support service for people aged 16-25
- A floating support service for people aged 25+

The proportion of the total budget that would have been spent on the separate service for people with disabilities will be added to the money spent on the two floating support services.

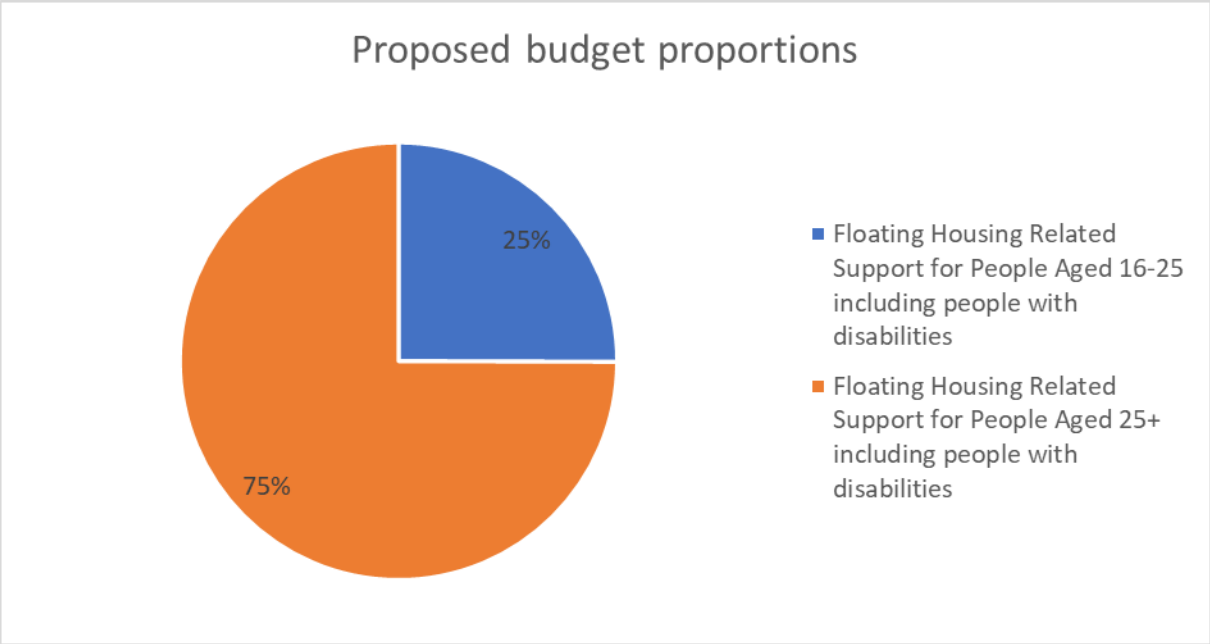
The proportion of the total budget that would have been spent on the separate service for people with disabilities will be added to the money spent on the two floating support services. Currently, 20% of customers in the specialist disability service are 16 – 25 years and 80% are 25 years and over. We have allocated the proposed budget to the young people and adult services to reflect this. This means the overall budget proposed for inclusive floating support changes to 25% for young people and 75% for adults.

Proportions of Total Floating Support Budget:

Current HRS



Proposed



Why we are proposing this change

The current system can result in delays as people may be referred to the wrong service and after assessment will need to be referred on to a different provider and assessed again. This change will make it easier for people to access the right service to meet their diverse needs within an inclusive service, with teams able to meet the needs of those people with and without disabilities.

Our experiences since the start of the current arrangements which started in 2015 indicate that a single provider could deliver services that can be inclusive to meet the need of those with disabilities (including mental health problems) alongside support for those without disabilities. It is more costly to run two services compared to one as there are fixed costs involved in delivery and management of each contract. Reducing the number of contracts increases the proportion of our funding that is spent directly on support for people.

Element 3 - Adding a flexible range of shorter interventions that respond to individual needs as efficiently as possible and give earlier, focused support for customers who do not need longer term support.

We propose to introduce a range of flexible services accessed through triage to determine level and urgency of need. It will include:

- A. Early information, advice and signposting to relevant services.
- B. Brief interventions of 1-5 telephone and/or face to face support sessions.
- C. 12-week short term transition/ resettlement/enablement floating services for those whose needs can be met in this time.

We propose this change for all services.

We will keep the option of both self-referral and referrals by other organisations.

Why we are proposing this change

The demand for services can be high and we need to prioritise those in most need of support services.

Currently people referred are added to a waiting list for assessment and then allocated a named support worker if they are eligible and need support services. Not everyone needs on-going support. Some people just need brief advice to resolve their issues and remain independent. This change will improve people's journeys in getting the right service at the right time, so customers need to tell their stories only once.

The redesigned floating support service will continue to offer holistic and personalised support to meet need, promoting wellbeing, safety, resilience, independence, recovery and reablement in order to prevent, reduce and/or delay an individual's need for on-going care and support.

Element 4 - Reduce the maximum duration of services:

We are proposing to reduce the maximum duration of a service intervention for an individual.

We propose to:

- Reduce the maximum duration of floating support for people aged 16-25 from 24 to 12 months
- Reduce the maximum duration of floating support for people aged 25+ from 12 months to 9 months
- Reduce the maximum duration of Accommodation-based support from 24 months to 18 months

In exceptional circumstances the period of support may be extended with approval from the Council.

Why we are proposing these changes

The demand for services can be high. To continue to support as many people as possible, we aim to increase the number of customers we can support by reducing the time a customer can receive the service. This will also ensure that our service providers deliver support that is focused on achieving outcomes as early as possible and preventing dependency on this support.

Element 5: A new name for the services

We are proposing to name these services 'Supporting Independence Services' and would like to understand your views on this.

Element 6: Additional services

Additional services are those services that were not part of the specification the Council tendered. We are proposing not to include the street outreach and navigator hub services in the services that we ask providers to deliver.

Why we are proposing these changes

These services were offered by the current provider as additional services and were not part of the services we originally asked them to provide. Potential providers bidding for the new services may decide to offer similar additional services, but this is not guaranteed.

The reason we are proposing not to include them in the re-designed services is because there is still no available Council budget to fund this. Potential providers bidding for the new services may decide to offer similar additional services, but this is not guaranteed.

We want to know if you agree or disagree with these proposals and why. We also want to understand if you think this will impact you or other people or organisations or if you have any other suggestions. The consultation questionnaire will ask you about this.

PART TWO- Equality Impact Assessment Summary

An Equality Impact Assessment has been developed and is available for you to view. It identifies that the proposals have the potential to have some negative impacts on people with protected characteristics and that careful consideration needs to be given to these. See Supporting Information - Equality Impact Assessment.

Our assessment suggests:

For all services

With services being reduced it may increase the number of individuals at risk of homelessness, made homeless or continuing to be homeless which may then negatively impact on their health. People experiencing socio-economic disadvantage will be negatively impacted as they may not be able to access support services if they require them due to reduced provision.

Mitigation: The Council will ensure good signposting is in place to support people to access other sources of advice and support and ensure all key partners are kept up to date with ongoing service activity.

There are some differences between the percentages of people in the general population and the service users identifying as Black or Asian. These will be considered when redesigning services.

Whilst an overall reduction in service provision may impact on these specific groups of vulnerable people, the specification (the document that sets out the requirements of providers delivering the service and forms part of the contract) will clearly state that providers are to be inclusive and non-discriminatory towards customers. We will highlight that we expect services to be accessible for all.

For Floating support

We are proposing to stop commissioning a separate disability floating support service.

Mitigation: We expect both the young people's 16-25 years and adults 25+ floating services to offer an inclusive service and meet the needs of people with disabilities as part of their contract. All providers' staff will be expected to be adequately trained to support the diverse needs of all people requiring support services including specialisms around supporting people with disabilities to reduce the impact of this change.

The overall reduction in the service offer will have an impact on all customers as well as those with protected characteristics.

For Accommodation-based support

There is currently a mother and baby hostel and a dedicated provision for young families. With service reduction the number of mothers and young families supported may decrease, negatively impacting the number of mothers and babies and young families accessing the service. For adult accommodation-based services single males and those who have experience of the criminal justice system tends to be a higher percentage of customers and consequently this group could be disproportionately impacted.

Mitigation: The Council will ensure that all service specifications require providers to be inclusive and non-discriminatory towards customers. We will highlight that we expect services to be accessible for all. The specification will also define training requirements to ensure providers' staff have sufficient knowledge to support the wide range of potential customers of support services. Service specifications will promote equality and diversity, with clear expectations around monitoring, training and quality of services.

What are your views on the potential equalities impacts of the proposed redesigned service?

The consultation questionnaire asks for your views on the impacts of our proposals.

We would like to know whether you think the proposals will create inequalities or other impacts we have not identified, and if so, what these might be and how you think they will affect you or other people.

We would also like you to tell us if you have any ideas on how we could overcome or reduce these impacts.

During the consultation we will ask for feedback and input from groups and organisations representing people with protected characteristics.

The Equality Impact Assessment will be updated after the consultation taking account of the feedback we receive.

Meaning of some terms used in the consultation

Term	What this means
Accommodation Based Support	Where accommodation and support are linked as part of the same service. An accommodation-based service can include shared housing such as hostel type accommodation and dispersed shared and self-contained flats or houses. Each customer has an allocated support worker.
Floating Support	The support worker allocated to the customer can offer support face to face at the customer's home or a community venue and/or virtually on-line or by telephone. If the customer moves home, from temporary accommodation or their own home then the support worker can continue to support them in their new home.
Adult Social Care Services	Warwickshire County Council provides adult social care to people with eligible needs caused by or related to a physical or mental impairment (such as a brain injury or learning disability) or illness, who are unable to do two or more of the following things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manage and maintain nutrition • maintain personal hygiene • manage toilet needs • be appropriately clothed • make use of their home safely • maintain a habitable home environment • develop and maintain family or other personal relationships • access and engage in work, training, education or volunteering • make use of necessary facilities in local community, including public transport and recreational facilities • carry out any caring responsibilities they have for a child and because of the above there is, or is likely to be, a significant impact on their wellbeing.
Provider	The organisation we have commissioned (paid) to deliver the service on behalf of Warwickshire County Council
Trauma Informed Care	A trauma-informed approach to supporting people aims to provide an environment where a person who has experienced trauma feels safe and can develop trust.
Psychologically Informed Environments	Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) are services that are designed and delivered in a way that takes into account the emotional and psychological needs of the individuals using them and working in them.
Service specification	Service specifications are the written guidelines that describe the outcomes for people using services, requirements and standards expected for delivering the service.

Overview of Current Housing Related Support Services (HRS)

Floating Support Services

1. Floating Support Service with Disabilities aged 16 and above

Service Provider	Local Authority District Areas
Together working for Wellbeing	Countywide

2. Floating Support Service for Young People 16 – 25 years

Service Provider	Local Authority District Areas
St Basils	Countywide

3. Generic Floating Support Service for Adults 25+ years

Service Provider	Local Authority District Areas
People, Potential, Possibilities P3	Countywide

Accommodation Based Services

4. Accommodation-Based Support Service for Young People aged 16-25

Service Provider	Local Authority District Areas
People, Potential, Possibilities P3	North Warwickshire Borough Council Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council Rugby Borough Council
St Basils	Stratford District Council Warwick District Council

5. Accommodation-Based Support Service for homeless people, including ex-offenders, aged 25 and over

Service Provider	Local Authority District Areas
People, Potential, Possibilities P3	Countywide

For further information please see:

[Housing-related support – Warwickshire County Council](#)