

Torfaen County Borough Council



Supporting People Strategy (Draft V1)

2012 - 2017

Contents

Section 1 Introduction

Section 2 Background to Torfaen Supporting People

Section 3 The Context

Section 4 Our Vision

Section 5 Our Priorities

Section 6 Finance

DRAFT

Section 1 Introduction

The Supporting People Programme provides essential **housing-related support** to the most vulnerable people in our communities.

The programme provides a cost effective alternative to intervention by statutory services to help vulnerable people through the development of preventative solutions. Supporting People

Housing-related support can include activities such as help with arranging accommodation, paying bills and accessing other services. Housing-related support does not include medical, personal or domiciliary care activities

Services offer a number of benefits and contributes to the achievement of a range of positive outcomes for individuals and communities. Some examples of the benefits of the programme include preventing homelessness, reducing crime, reducing social exclusion and increasing independence of people who use the services. A recent review of the Supporting People Programme in Wales concluded that:

“The Supporting People Programme in Wales is highly regarded throughout the United Kingdom. There is compelling evidence that the Programme in Wales is providing commendable and sorely needed assistance, support and relief for the most vulnerable and disadvantage people who have either lost or are at risk of losing their homes” (Alyward 2010).

This strategy establishes the medium to long term direction and priorities of Torfaen Supporting People Programme amidst a challenging climate of economic uncertainty and changing political environment. Exploring the challenges ahead, the strategy aims to

provide a focused pathway of priorities to maximise the value of housing-related support services in the borough.

Consultation with a broad range of stakeholders has allowed the identification of the emerging challenges to enable the development of strategic priorities to be delivered over the next 5 years. The delivery of this strategy will be supported by the development of an annual operational plan compiled by Torfaen Supporting People Team in partnership with Torfaen Supporting People Planning Group (SPPG) and Supporting People Inclusive Forum (SPIF).

DRAFT

SERVICE USER STORY – TO BE INSERTED

Section 2 Background

Supporting People is a Welsh Government (WG) funded programme that provides housing-related support for **vulnerable people** to maximise, maintain and sustain their independence through the provision of a range of innovative services and projects. The types of services available through Supporting People funding include housing-related support at home and in supported housing projects such as refuge, extra care, hostels and shared housing.

Vulnerable People, as defined by the Welsh Government, eligible for supporting people funding can fall into one or more of the following groups: People experiencing domestic abuse, mental health problems, learning disabilities, substance misuse, homelessness, ex-offenders, physical disabilities, BME communities, vulnerable families, those with a chronic illness, young people or older persons

The Supporting People Programme in Torfaen offers a number of benefits and contributes to the achievement of a range of positive outcomes for individuals and communities. The preventative ethos of the programme supports local, regional and national policy objectives enabling vulnerable people to maintain their independence.

Local Authorities in Wales are required to plan and commission housing-related support services that are needs driven and service user focussed. To demonstrate this, each Local Authority is required to develop an evidence base that provides a comprehensive rationale for the development of housing-related support services. Through consultation with stakeholders over the past five years, the following client groups have been identified as local priorities for development of housing-related support services:

- People at risk of homelessness
- Young People (including care leavers)
- Women experiencing domestic abuse
- People with mental health problems

- People with substance misuse issues
- Older persons and frail elderly people
- People with learning disabilities

The evidence base relating to this document can be found on the Torfaen Supporting People website (The website address is detailed in **Appendix 1**).

Torfaen Supporting People vital statistics

- At April 2011, Torfaen Supporting People Programme funded 2787 units across 47 schemes employing a range of services including community alarms, supported housing, refuge, extra care and floating support (please see evidence base for more detail).
- During 2010/11 the programme supported 3856 people to live independently through the provision of housing-related support.
- The current budget for housing-related support in Torfaen stands at £3.6 million, however, in line with public sector policy further cuts are expected.

Each Local Authority in Wales has established a Supporting People Team to administer the programme at a local level. If you would like further information about Supporting People in Torfaen please contact any member of the Supporting People team (the team structure and contact information can be seen in **Appendix 1**).

OUTCOMES INFORMATION & DATA – TO BE INSERTED

Section 3 The Context

Set against the backdrop of a global financial crisis the environment in which the programme operates is increasingly complex and unpredictable. The programme provides much needed support to the most vulnerable people in our community to encourage stability and independence, however, the influences on the circumstances of individuals are numerous.

UK Government

The change of government in May 2010 and subsequent financial policy has significantly impacted on the delivery of public services. The national policy and legislative directions are expected to have substantial impact on demand and provision of housing-related support for vulnerable groups. The public spending cuts and changing welfare system are expected to negatively impact on vulnerable groups and create an increase in demand for housing-related support services.

Welsh Government

2010 was a critical year for the Supporting People Programme across Wales. The Welsh Government commissioned a review of the programme that examined and challenged the administrative conditions and effectiveness of housing-related support services. Consequently, a number of recommendations, relating to the financial management, governance arrangements and quality management of the programme were established and are scheduled for

implementation in the coming years (these are available on the [WG website](#)).

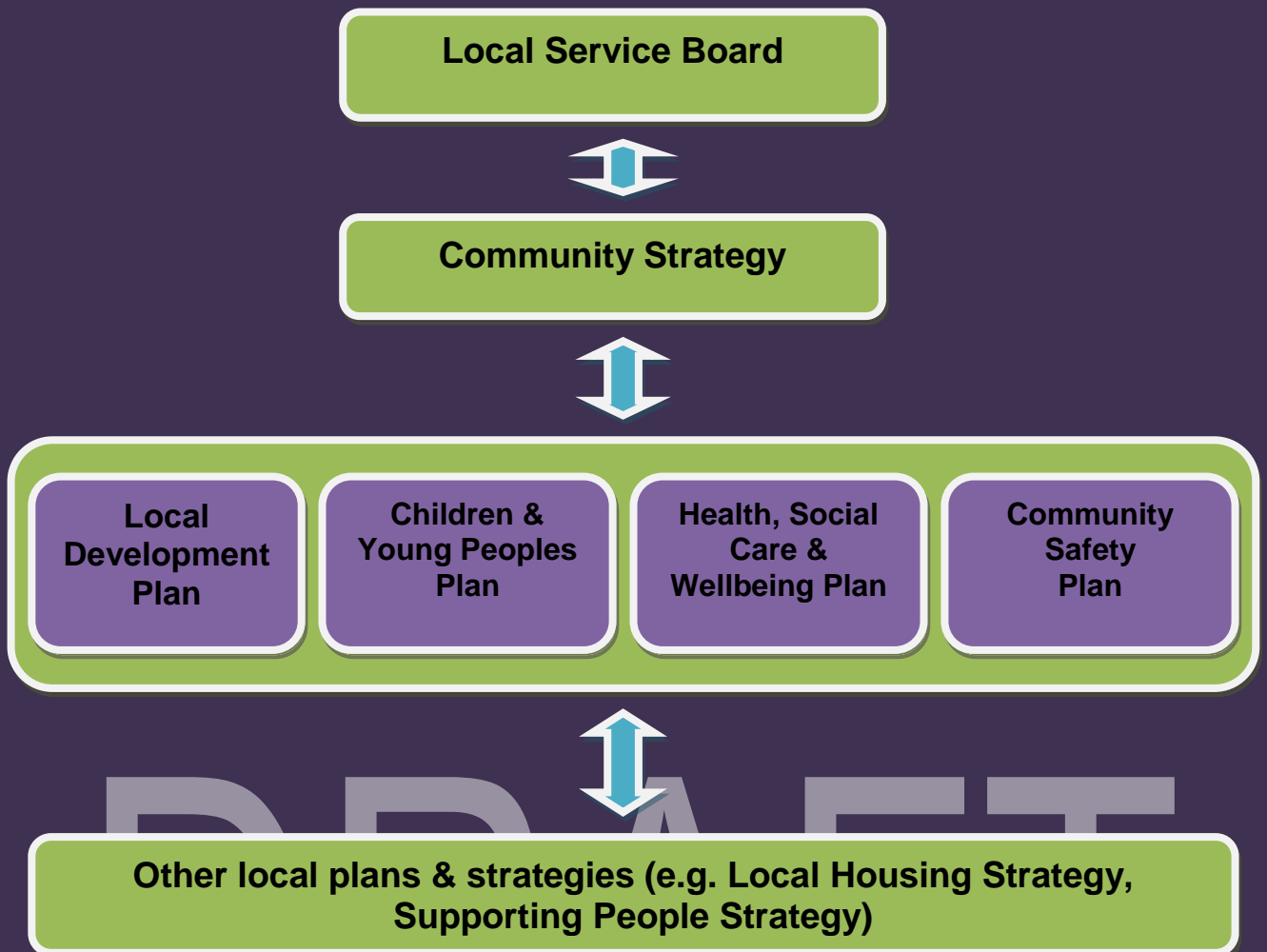
The positive outcomes of the review, completed by Sir Mansel Alyward, have effectively raised the profile of the programme and promoted the benefits and value of the programme for vulnerable individuals and wider society. Consequently, the Supporting People budget has secured some protection in the recent Welsh Government budget setting process. Whilst cuts are expected over the next two years, these will be implemented in line with the equitable redistribution of SP funding.

Local Government – Torfaen County Borough Council

At a local level, Torfaen County Borough Council have recently published a suite of strategies that include:

- The Community Strategy
- Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Local Development Plan
- Children and Young People Plan

The integrated suite of strategies, depicted in the following diagram, are linked and aligned to deliver the outcomes established by the local service board.



The new suite of strategies establishes an integrated outcomes approach to delivering local strategic priorities. The plans are centred around the following 7 outcomes shared by all public services in Torfaen:

- Torfaen has a healthy population with a good quality of life
- People in Torfaen are safe
- People in Torfaen are educated for life
- People in Torfaen enjoy a prosperous economy
- People in Torfaen live in quality affordable homes
- People in Torfaen live in clean, green, sustainable communities
- Frail people in Torfaen are happily independent

Furthermore, Torfaen County Borough Council in Corporate Plan II, published during 2011, highlight seven key priorities for the Council spanning the next five years:

- Supporting families and children living in poverty to get through the recession
- Preventing Torfaen residents becoming homeless
- Safeguarding children, especially those with additional (special) educational needs and supporting positive attitudes towards education
- Protecting the most vulnerable adults and supporting those with disabilities and other long term conditions
- Targeting support to deprived communities and families suffering from crime and anti-social behaviour
- Using resources wisely, to include maintaining the highway infrastructure and reducing energy consumption and waste
- Supporting initiatives which generate employment and training for work opportunities.

The Supporting People Programme in Torfaen contributes directly to the delivery of a number of the Council's priorities through the provision of strategically planned housing-related support services.

PROVIDER STORY – TO BE INSERTED

Section 4 - Our Vision

In Torfaen we are committed to the development of housing related support services that meet the needs of the community. Our overarching vision for the programme in Torfaen is that:

People in Torfaen live independently

To achieve the vision we will adhere to the following standards:

- Understand the housing-related support needs of vulnerable people in Torfaen.
- Adopt an inclusive framework for planning and commissioning services.
- **Ensure supporting people funded services are efficient and effective.**
- Place the service users at the heart of the programme.

Our vision links closely with Torfaen's Community Plan outcomes, to effectively align the Supporting People Strategy with Torfaen's suite of strategies and plans. The alignment between the plans and strategies will ensure appropriate linkages are made across the variety of agencies involved in the delivery of the Torfaen Community Plan.

SERVICE USER STORY – TO BE INSERTED

Section 5 Torfaen Supporting People Priorities

Following consultation with a range of stakeholders a number of strategic priorities for the Supporting People Programme were agreed by the Supporting People Planning Group (SPPG) for delivery over the next five years.

Our Priorities

These priorities will form the backbone of future Supporting People Operational Plans for the duration of this strategy.

We are committed to:

- The delivery of a range of services to cater for the diverse needs of vulnerable groups in Torfaen.
- Ensuring that the Supporting People Programme in Torfaen is equipped to respond to the programme of public sector cuts and uncertain economic conditions.
- Developing collaborative approaches with stakeholders, working across boundaries and sectors where appropriate.
- Contributing to the development of national policy and remaining responsive to the changing political environment.
- Promoting creativity and innovation in the commissioning of housing-related support services.

Specific actions relating to the implementation of these priorities can be found in the annual report and operational plan (published annually during March).

SERVICE USER STORY – TO BE INSERTED

Section 6 Finance and Resources

The Supporting People budget in Torfaen currently stands at £3.6 million, however further funding cuts are anticipated over the next 5 years as the government plan for economic recovery.

The cuts to public sector budgets are expected to severely impact on the delivery of supporting people services. Although afforded some protection by the Welsh Government, forecasted figures suggest that further cuts will be implemented alongside the redistribution of Supporting People Grants and amalgamation of Supporting People funding streams.

Operating under conditions of extreme uncertainty the Supporting People Programme in Torfaen is equipped to respond to the challenging financial circumstances through adoption of:

- A robust planning framework detailing investment and disinvestment priorities
- Short, medium and long term planning mechanisms
- A programme of annual contract monitoring
- 3 year schedule of service reviews
- An annual contract negotiation process
- Performance management measures
- Regional and collaborative approaches

These processes allow the development of a comprehensive understanding of the housing-related support needs within the Borough to ensure that resources are appropriately targeted.

DRAFT

Appendix 1 - Organisational Chart & Contact Information

