

Specialist floating support service for people with a history of offending (MAPPA & OM) consultation 2016

Report

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1. Executive summary

This report summarises the responses of Lancashire County Council specialist floating support service for people with a history of offending (MAPPA & IOM) consultation 2016.

Lancashire County Council currently provides all of the funding which is used to deliver the county wide specialist floating support services for people who have a history of offending. As part of the savings, the county council is proposing to stop funding the floating support service by March 2017.

For the consultation, paper questionnaires were sent to all service users and made available at specialist floating support services. An online version of the questionnaire could also be accessed from www.lancashire.gov.uk.

The fieldwork ran for twelve weeks from 16 May until 7 August 2016. In total, 9 completed questionnaires were returned.

A separate questionnaire was sent to Lancashire's 12 district councils, current supporting people providers and stakeholders. We received a response from one provider (there is only one provider for this service), 2 stakeholders and 2 district councils.

1.1 Key findings

1.1.1 Provider

- The key points from responding provider for what its plans are for their schemes in light of the proposal were: looking for alternative funding from police, probation and CRC to run all or part of service and may cease all on 31st March 2017 if no alternative funding secured.
- The key points from responding provider for the impact on services users were: will receive little/no support for independent living, rise in reoffending, rise in homelessness, less support for drug/alcohol/substance users, harder to access employment, training and education, less support to access health services (physical and mental) and financial exclusion.
- The key points from responding provider for the impact on its organisation were: loss of local knowledge and partnerships, redundancy payments affecting other services of Independent living and loss of skilled staff.
- The key points from responding provider for the impact on the community were: community safety issues regarding offenders/reoffending, loss of suitable properties for high risk offenders, pressure on other public services, saving are false economy as will increase cost to public purse.

1.1.2 Districts and stakeholders

There were total two district councils and two stakeholders responded to the specialist floating support service for people with a history of offending (MAPPA & IOM) consultation 2016.

The top mentions from respondents are presented with the number of districts and stakeholders that they relate to shown in brackets.

- The top mentions from responding districts and stakeholders for the impact on services users were: clients are some of the most vulnerable in society (2), without support they would struggle to cope (2), could lead to further crime/mental health issues/self-harm (2), with the support the landlords and housing associations less inclined to accept this group of service users (risks to high without support) (2), some service users will not be able to obtain or retain tenancy without support (2) and reoffending increased (2).
- The top mentions from responding stakeholders for the impact on their organisation were: difficulties in finding accommodation leading to an increase in homelessness (2) and additional request from housing needs (2).
- The top mentions from responding stakeholders for the impact on community were: increase in crime as residents have no other support to find and maintain tenancy (2) and increase in anti-social behaviour (2).

1.1.3 Service users

- Of the different types of support listed in the question, respondents were most likely to say that they receive or have received: support to claim the right benefits (8); support to improve physical health (8); and support to learn budget properly and pay bills.
- Respondents were most likely to say that: support to find, set up and maintain your home (9); support to learn budget properly and pay bills (8); and support to claim right benefits (8) are important¹ aspects of the service to them (8).
- Respondents were most likely to say that if this service ended then they would; sleep on the streets/homeless (8), seek help from family and friends (6), seek help about housing from the local district council (6).
- 8 out of 9 respondents said that their situation would be worse without this support.

¹ Very important and fairly important

2. Introduction

Lancashire County Council is required to make savings of £262m by 2020/21. This extremely difficult financial position is the result of continued cuts in Government funding, rising costs and rising demand for our key services.

Lancashire County Council currently provides all of the funding which is used to deliver the county wide floating support service. As part of the savings, the county council is proposing to stop funding the floating support service by March 2017.

What is specialist floating support service (MAPPA & IOM)?

The specialist floating support service is a free service which provides short term intensive housing related support to help people settle into independent housing.

This service is for high risk offenders subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and to offenders identified exclusively through the revolution panel identified as Integrated Offender Management (IOM) but not exclusively PPO and have been released from custody and or are under statutory supervision.

The specialist floating support service tasks often include:

- help people move to temporary (short term) or permanent home and to avoid eviction or
- re-possession (eg rent payments, reporting repairs, resolving neighbourhood disputes);
- sorting out any money or debt problems;
- helping people deal with a short term personal crisis and any issues that might seem overwhelming;
- supporting people to live healthy lives;
- helping people to stay safe at home and in the community;
- improving people's employment, training and leisure opportunities; and
- helping people to become more independent or stay independent in the community

The specialist floating support service should not be confused with personal care services (e g help with cleaning, cooking, bathing, which many people in Lancashire also receive). Neither is the specialist floating support service a replacement service for professional advice e g solicitors, financial experts.

Although we are not yet clear what this will mean for the Lancashire County Council funded specialist floating support service run by the provider, there is a possibility for any or some of the following to take place:

- the service ends;
- the service continues with major changes (e g reduction in number of staff, new types of support services);

- the service continues with little change as provider has managed to obtain other funding (e g from charities, not Supporting People).

As the specialist floating support service only delivers short term support this proposal might not affect the current service users directly. However, it could affect other people who may need to use this service after March 2017.

This consultation was designed to help us understand: more about how important the service is to service users; and their thoughts about how the proposals could affect people who need services in the future.

3. Methodology

For the consultation, paper questionnaires were sent to all service users and made available at specialist floating support service for people with a history of offending. An online version of the questionnaire could also be accessed from www.lancashire.gov.uk.

The fieldwork ran for twelve weeks from 16 May until 7 August 2016. In total, 9 completed questionnaires were returned.

A separate online questionnaire was made available to Lancashire's 12 district councils, providers and stakeholders. This questionnaire was designed to give district councils, providers and stakeholders an opportunity to outline what they think the impact of the proposal will be on service users, on their respective organisations and on the wider community.

Where districts, providers and stakeholders have sent more than one response, these responses have been merged and are presented in the findings.

A summary of providers and stakeholders responses have been provided in the main findings.

The questionnaire included instructions that told service users that they could answer all the questions or just the ones that they were concerned about.

3.1 Limitations

In charts or tables where responses do not add up to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.

4. Main consultation findings

4.1 Providers responses

There is only one provider of the specialist floating support service for people with a history of offending (MAPPA & IOM) consultation 2016. The main issues raised in the provider response are summarised below.

Further details of provider response is presented in appendix 2

4.1.1 Key findings

Impact on schemes

- looking for alternative funding from police
- probation and CRC to run all or part of service
- may cease all on 31st March 2017 if no alternative funding secured.

Impact on service users

- will receive little/no support for independent living
- rise in reoffending; rise in homelessness
- less support for drug/alcohol/substance users
- harder to access employment, training and education
- less support to access health services (physical and mental)
- financial exclusion.

Impact on organisation

- loss of local knowledge and partnerships
- redundancy payments affecting other services of Independent Living
- loss of skilled staff

Impact on the wider community

- community safety issues regarding offenders/reoffending
- loss of suitable properties for high risk offenders
- pressure on other public services
- saving are false economy as will increase cost to public purse

4.2 Districts and stakeholders responses

There were total two district councils and two stakeholders responded to the specialist floating support service for people with a history of offending (MAPPA & IOM) consultation 2016. The main issues raised in their responses are summarised below. The top mentions from respondents are presented with the number of districts and stakeholders that they relate to shown in brackets.

Further details of district councils and stakeholders responses are presented in appendix 3.

4.2.1 Key findings

The top mentions from respondents for the impact on services users were;

- clients are some of the most vulnerable in society (2);
- without support they would struggle to cope (2);
- could lead to further crime/mental health issues/self-harm (2);
- with the support the landlords and housing associations less inclined to accept this group of service users (risks to high without support) (2);
- some service users will not be able to obtain or retain tenancy without support (2); and
- reoffending increased (2).

The top mentions from respondents for the impact on their organisation were:

- difficulties in finding accommodation leading to an increase in homelessness (2); and
- additional request from housing needs (2).

The top mentions from respondents for the impact on the wider community were:

- increase in crime as residents have no other support to find and maintain tenancy(2); and
- increase in anti-social behaviour (2).

4.3 Service user responses

4.3.1 Your use of supported accommodation

First, respondents were asked which of the main types of support offered by the service they receive or have received.

Of the different types of support listed in the question, respondents were most likely to say that they receive or have received: support to claim the right benefits (8); support to improve physical health (8); and support to learn budget properly and pay bills (8).

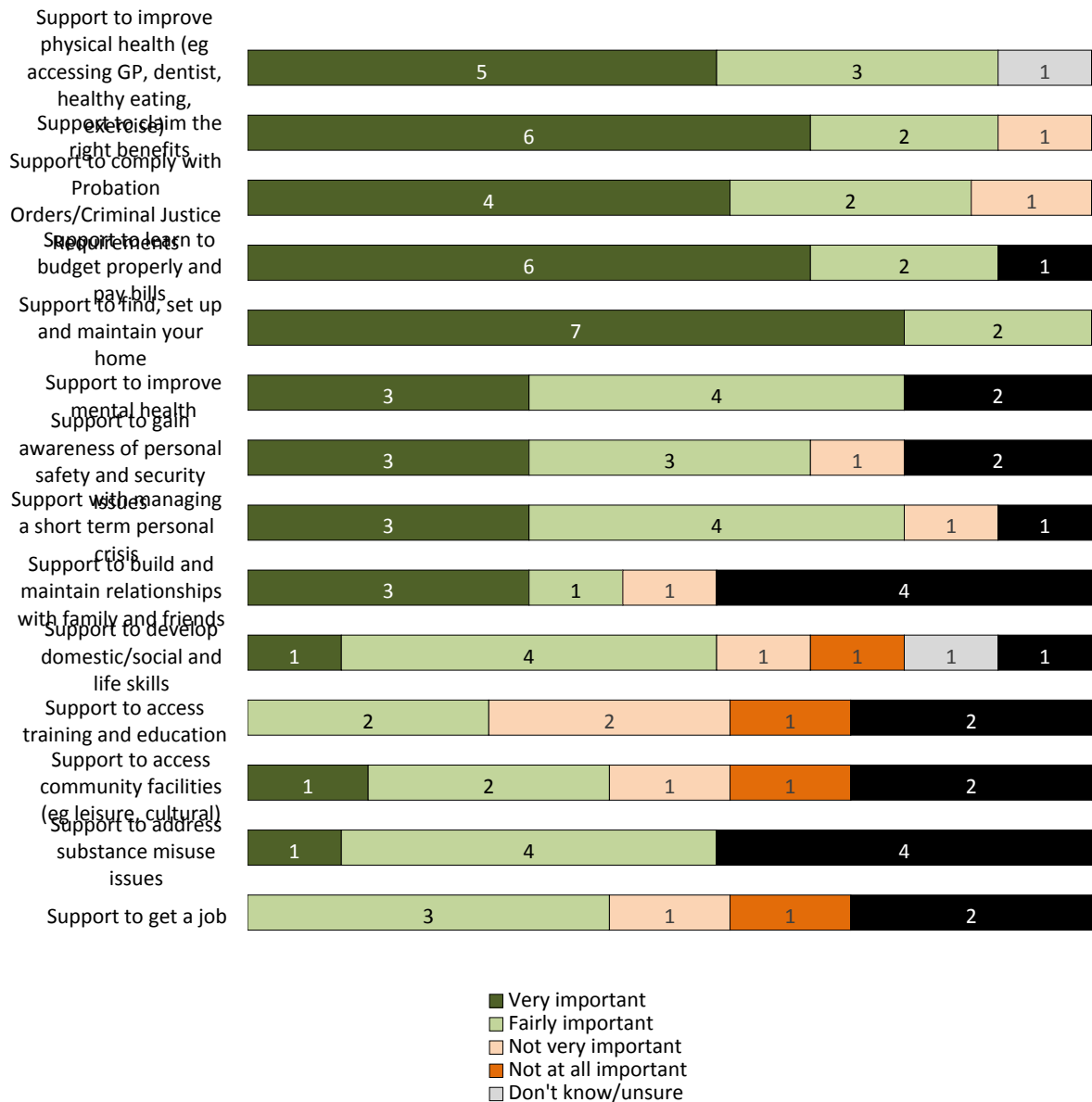
Table 1 - Do you receive or have you received support with the following?

Type of support	Count
Support to improve physical health (e g accessing GP, dentist, healthy eating, exercise)	8
Support to claim the right benefits	8
Support to learn to budget properly and pay bills	8
Support to comply with Probation Orders/Criminal Justice requirements	7
Support to improve mental health	7
Support to find, set up and maintain your home	7
Support to gain awareness of personal safety and security issues	5
Support with managing a short term personal crisis	5
Support to build and maintain relationships with family and friends	5
Support to access community facilities (e g leisure, cultural)	3
Support to address substance misuse issues	3
Support to develop domestic/social and life skills	3
Support to access training and education	2
Support to get a job	-
Total	9

Respondents were asked about how important different aspects of the service are to them.

Respondents were most likely to say that: support to find, set up and maintain your home (9); support to learn budget properly and pay bills (8); and support to claim right benefits (8) are important² aspects of the service to them.

Chart 1 - How important are the following aspects of the service to you?



Base: all respondents (9)

² Very important and fairly important

Respondents were then asked what they think that people who need this type of service would do in the future, if this service ended.

Respondents were most likely to say that if this service ended then they would; sleep on the streets/homeless (8), seek help form family and friends (6), seek help about housing from the local district council (6).

Table 2 - If the funding for the service ended, what do you think that people who need this type of service would do in the future?

Type of Service	Count
Sleep on the streets/homeless	8
Seek help from family/friends	6
Seek help about housing from the local district council	6
Stay in unsafe/inappropriate accommodation	5
Seek help from CAB (Citizen Advice Bureau) or another advice agency	5
Seek help about housing from the landlord	5
Seek help from the Police	3
Seek help about care from Lancashire County Council (Social Services)	3
Harm themselves or harmed by others	2
Total	9

Respondents were then asked for their feedback and comments about how this proposal will affect them.

- 8 out of 9 respondents said that their situation would be worse without this support.

Appendix 1: Demographic breakdown

Table 3- Are you...?

	Count
Male	8
Female	1
Total	9

Table 4- Have you ever identified as transgender?

	Count
Yes	2
No	7
Prefer not to say	-
Total	9

Table 5- What was your age on your last birthday?

	Count
20-34	2
35-49	3
50-64	4
Total	9

Table 6 - Are you a deaf person or do you have a disability?

	Count
Yes	7
No	1
Total	8

Table 7- Which best describes your ethnic background?

	Count
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	9
Total	9

Table 8- What is your religion?

	Count
No religion	4
Christian (including CofE, Catholic, Protestant and all other denominations)	5
Total	9

Table 9- Are you in a marriage or civil partnership?

	Count
Marriage	1
None of these	8
Total	9

Table 10- How would you describe your sexual orientation?

	Count
Straight (heterosexual)	8
Other	1
Total	9

Table 11- In which district do you live in Lancashire?

District	Count
Burnley	2
Hyndburn	4
Lancaster	1
Pendle	1
Preston	1
Total	9

Table 12- Are there any children or young people in your household aged under 20?

	Count
No children aged under 20	8
Yes, aged 5-8	1
Yes, aged under 5	1
Total no of children	2

Table 13- Are there any disabled young people in your household aged 20-25?

	Count
Yes	1
No	8
Total	9

Appendix 2: Provider response

Changes to services

- service Ceases if no alternative funding is sourced
- staff redundancies
- examining options for alternative funding
- no service to transfer clients to

Impact on service users

- due to risk associated with the service users they cannot be referred to generic floating support
- no community based service to resettle/maintain independent living
- increase in crime/re-offending and returning to prison
- reduce likelihood to secure and maintain appropriate accommodation
- increase risk to members of public and children
- demand for the service is high
- more people being homeless
- RSLs allocation policy excludes high risk offenders
- high risk offenders face barriers to housing
- clients may face difficulties obtaining sufficient funds for deposits/rent in advance
- clients under 35 will only receive single room allowance
- increase in the demand on Public services (More ill health and greater access to health services, Criminal justice systems, CSC, A&E)
- significantly less access to stable accommodation and this significantly increases re-offending.
- more likely to suffer from mental and physical health problems and have higher rates of alcohol misuse
- more severe debt issues often due to tenancies being left open
- financially excluded e.g. limited access to bank accounts
- risk of harm (comply with terms of statutory orders) risk of further child offences, contact with children and named others
- reoffending increased
- not integrated into society
- lack of contact with family and friends
- drug and alcohol Use

Impact on organisation

- loss of Lancashire service footprint including established partnerships, local knowledge base and development opportunities
- financial liability for redundancy payments from service transition adversely affecting other elements of the business
- loss of skills and expertise (including specialist offender knowledge)
- job losses
- financial implications

Impact on the wider community

- community safety will be compromised
- likely reduction in the amount of appropriate accommodation identified, secured and maintained (landlords will be lost)
- increase of workload on neighbourhood police teams
- the service saves LCC and local authorities' money
- false economy
- high risk to children and young people of being affected by sex offenders
- much greater risk with specialist floating support
- high risk to public of violent crimes due to homelessness and substance misuse

Other comments

- service has consistently operated over capacity supporting on average 32 clients at a given time (contract is 26)
- outcome focussed service Targeted aim to support 100 clients in 12 months
- given the profile of referrals we have successfully supported 78% of clients to gain and maintain accommodation at service exit
- service reduces crime and public expenditure and funding should increase and not decreased and long term contract should be offered

Appendix 3: Districts and stakeholders response

Table 14- impact on service users

	Clients are some of the most vulnerable in society	Without support they would struggle to cope	Could lead to further crime/mental health issues/self-harm	With the support the landlords and housing associations less inclined to accept this group of service users (risks to high without support)	Some service users will not be able to obtain or retain tenancy without support	Reoffending increased	Incidents and suicide	Drug and alcohol Use	street homelessness	Not integrated into society	Difficult to comment specifically how loss of SP impacts on service	Private landlords are already mindful of accepting tenants on benefit because of ongoing welfare reforms	Restriction on where the service users can access accommodation has to be overcome	Further Decrease the confidence of landlords	The number of vulnerable people who have access to the support they need will dramatically fall	Social isolation and loneliness	Tenancy failure
Stakeholder A	x	x	x			x	x										
Stakeholder B				x	x	x											
District A											x						
District B	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Total	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 15- impact on organisation

	Difficulties in finding accommodation leading to an increase in homelessness.	Additional request from housing needs	One less purposeful activity for the residents to engage in which provides structure and support	The service utilises service user time positively giving them less time to go out and engage in criminal activity	More pressure on other services such as prisons and health as there may be an increase in recalls to custody or self-inflicted harm.	Huge impact on multi agency working and support available to the vulnerable group of people who need it most	Reluctance from landlords to accept this client group thereby reducing the availability of accommodation.	Community safety issues	Expensive unsuitable accommodation eg B & B	Where mental health or other complex needs may have been managed they may well escalate without this intervention to a crisis point	Cost shunting
Stakeholder A	x		x	x	x						
Stakeholder B						x	x				
District A		x						x			
District B	x	x							x	x	x
Total	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 16- impact on the wider community

	Increase in crime as residents have no other support to find and maintain tenancy	Increase in anti-social behaviour	High risk to children and young people of being affected by sex offenders	High risk to public of violent crimes due to homelessness and substance misuse	Increase demand on public sector services (Accident & emergency services etc.)	Increased in unemployment	Increase in issues/crimes in neighbourhoods	Difficult to comment specifically how loss of SP impacts on service	High risk offenders may also have complex needs	More adults seeking help from LCC	Increase in family breakdowns	False economy	Increase in isolation and rough sleeping
Stakeholder A	x	x											
Stakeholder B	x	x				x	x						
District A								x					
District B			x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x
Total	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 17- other comments

	Concerned that the loss of SP funding which may be contributing towards the successful management of these service users	Need the funding to keep service in place	Not enough support services to ensure that the support lost will be offered by others
Stakeholder A		x	x
Stakeholder B			
District A	x		
District B			
Total	1	1	1