

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE – 11 AUGUST 2015**

**COMMUNITY LAUNDRY SERVICE**

**REPORT BY MARGO WILLIAMSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - PEOPLE**

**ABSTRACT**

As the result of a review of the Community Laundry Service, this report seeks approval to amend the eligibility criteria for access to the laundry service and to relocate the laundry from Brechin to Forfar.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee:

- (i) approve the proposed changes to the eligibility criteria for the laundry service;
- (ii) approve the proposed move of the laundry from Brechin to Forfar (Beech Hill).

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/CORPORATE PLAN**

This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013 - 2016:

- The health of the Angus population is improved;
- A good quality of life is enjoyed by all in Angus;
- Carers are supported to undertake their caring role

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Reference is made to Committee Report 84/14 Provisional Revenue Budget - which stated that a review of the laundry service would be carried out and a saving of £80,000 made from the budget of £102,000 (£40,000 in 2014/15 and £40,000 in 2015/16). The report also stated that 4 FTE posts would be lost from the service. This budget measure was agreed at Council and the saving was subsequently removed, reducing the available budget accordingly.

The time scale for these savings has been delayed from that contained within Report No. 84/14 due to the review process and interdependencies with other service reviews.

The proposed plan outlined in this report would reduce demand for the laundry service by introducing new eligibility criteria from October 2015. The service will remain free to service users.

**4. CURRENT POSITION**

Angus Council currently provides a free Community Laundry Service to around 100 service users. There is a duty on the local authority under the Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002 to provide/arrange an incontinence laundry service. This service is ordinarily not charged for.

The service launders bedding and clothing for those service users that meet the eligibility criteria. Laundry is collected from and returned to a service user's home and washed and dried in a laundry facility.

The current service criteria are overly flexible and usually remove the laundry task from the household, even where there are laundry facilities on site. It is proposed that in future continence

laundry needs will be identified through SDS assessment and an appropriate service arranged to meet the outcome in the person's own home wherever possible. This will be reflected in revised criteria for the laundry service which refocuses on only collecting laundry where it is not possible to do this in the service user's home.

The current eligibility criteria are:

- The individual has no laundry facilities at home;
- The individual, or someone living in the house, has a particular medical condition which means that bedding needs to be changed often;
- The individual, or someone living in the house, has problems with continence; or
- The individual is in a crisis situation where he/she needs urgent help to wash clothes or bedding.

Benchmarking with the 31 other Scottish local authorities shows that only 2 of them provide a dedicated laundry service in the same way as Angus Council. Some however provide a laundry service via their domestic or personal care services as part of a high level personal care package.

## 5. PROPOSALS

It is proposed that the eligibility criteria for the laundry service are amended to ensure that it reaches those most in need of the service, while keeping costs to a minimum. The proposed new eligibility criteria are as follows:

- You have problems with continence and you have no access to laundry facilities.

OR

- You have a medical condition which means that you need to change bedding or clothing often and you have no access to laundry facilities.

Note:

If you satisfy one of the conditions above and have access to laundry facilities but nobody in your household is able to use them, social work staff may help you to find a service that will assist you, based on an assessment of your needs.

The new service will cover the laundering of bedding and clothing of the assessed person and will remain free for service users.

### **What does this mean for staff?**

The laundry service currently employs 5 staff (4 x FTE), 1 Driver, 3 Laundry assistants (2 FTE) and 1 Supervisor. The change will mean that we will only require 1 Laundry Assistant and 1 Driver, meaning that 2 FTE jobs (i.e. two staff members) within the laundry service will be removed.

Natural turnover and redeployment will support this reduction but it is probable that the service will also need to consider ER/VR and compulsory redundancies. If approved this staff reduction will happen from October 2015.

### **What does this mean for those who receive a Community Laundry Service?**

This will mean that from the end of October 2015 the community laundry service eligibility criteria will change. Service users currently receiving the laundry service will be assessed against the new eligibility criteria and where they meet the criteria their service will continue; however, where they do not meet the criteria their service will end, and staff will assist them to look for an alternative solution. It is not possible at this stage to estimate demand for the service following the introduction of the new eligibility criteria.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It has not been possible to deliver the full saving contained within the Provisional Revenue Budget. The savings which can realistically be realised from this review will amount to £55,226 per annum; this is the maximum that can be realised at this point in time while still providing a laundry service to those most in need.

The saving is made up as follows:-

Description	£
Labour Costs	38,301
Property Cost	16,925
Total	55,226

The remaining shortfall of £24,774 will be contained within the Adult Services overall budget.

Savings realised would be reduced by the cost of any early retirement or voluntary retirement or salary conservations. There may also be property costs associated with the increased use of the laundry at Beech Hill which may affect the property savings noted above.

Minor one-off costs will be incurred in decommissioning the laundry building including disconnecting equipment and services and draining down plumbing systems.

## 7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Property Implications

The move from St Drostan's in Brechin to Beech Hill in Forfar will free up the cottage type building to the rear of St Drostan's currently used by the community laundry. This will leave only the office accommodation occupied on the St Drostan's site.

Beech Hill has the capacity to take on additional laundry within its existing laundry facility. It is not planned to transfer any of the laundry equipment from the current laundry to Beech Hill.

### 7.2 Risks

At present we do not know what the extent of demand for the laundry service will be following the introduction of the amended eligibility criteria; however, observations of current service use suggest that there will be a significant reduction. If this proves not to be the case domestic staff within Beech Hill will manage the demand.

### 7.3 Human Rights

The following Article(s) of the European Convention of Human Rights are relevant to this report:

Article 3 – The prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment

Article 8 – Right to respect for private and family life

It is considered that the Council is justified in taking action to change the laundry service as the new service will target help to those most in need and that we are not in breach of the above Articles.

**NOTE:** The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- 84/14 Provisional Revenue Budget as approved at Council on 13-2-14

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