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For immediate release

Conwy Council calls on Welsh Government to protect support services for vulnerable people

Last week, Conwy County Borough Council unanimously passed a motion calling on Welsh Government to safeguard the Supporting People Programme Grant – a preventative programme which delivers vital support to more than 60,000 people in Wales each year.

The Supporting People Programme plays a key role in preventing homelessness in Wales and in helping people who are marginalised or vulnerable to live with dignity in their community. It funds a variety of services to support a wide range of people, including families fleeing domestic abuse; people dealing with mental or physical health problems, or learning disabilities; ex-service personnel; care leavers; and older people in need of support.

This year, the programme experienced cuts of £10m. Housing charities Cymorth Cymru and Community Housing Cymru have launched the Let's keep on Supporting People campaign to make the case for increased funding for the programme and ensure that people continue to be supported.

As part of the motion, tabled by Councillor Phil Edwards, Cabinet Member for Housing, Social Care & Health and Tackling Poverty Champion, the council voted to support the Let's Keep on Supporting People campaign and urged Welsh Government not to impose any further reduction on the grant.

The council also invited all Constituency and Regional AMs, and members of the North Wales Regional Collaborative Committees, to support the motion.

Phil Edwards commented

'We have been working very hard to make a real difference for our people, who through no fault of their own find themselves in real difficulties, some fleeing from life threatening situations. They literally have nobody else to turn to. We want to continue to provide this help and support to these extremely vulnerable people but we can't hope to do it without the support of government. I hope they hear this heartfelt plea not to cut this grant further.'

Auriol Miller, Director of Cymorth Cymru, welcomed the motion

'We are delighted to see Conwy Council declaring their support for this vital programme, and we hope to see other local authorities in Wales following their example.'

Supporting People plays a key role in tackling poverty and mitigating the impact of welfare reform. Wales has been disproportionately affected by welfare reform and, with the announcement of more cuts in the summer budget, vulnerable people are set to be hit even harder.

Now, more than ever, we need to do all we can to ensure that this essential safety net continues to be protected.'

ENDS/DIWEDD

Notes to Editor

1. Let's keep on Supporting People Wales is a joint campaign set up by Cymorth Cymru and Community Housing Cymru to secure continued investment in the Supporting People Programme and ensure that people who are marginalised and at risk continue to be protected. You can follow the campaign on Twitter using #supportingpeoplewales. Find out more about the campaign here
<http://www.cymorthcymru.org.uk/en/policy/campaigns/lets-keep-supporting-people>
For more information and case studies, contact jodicox@cymorthcymru.org.uk 029 2055 3687 / bethan-davies@chcymru.org.uk 029 2067 4804.

2. The Supporting People (SP) Programme is a flagship Welsh Government programme that supports more than 60,000 people each year to live as independently as they can.

It funds a variety of services to support a wide range of marginalised people at risk of housing crisis, including people at risk of homelessness; families fleeing domestic abuse; people dealing with mental or physical health problems, or learning disabilities; ex-service personnel; care leavers; and older people in need of support.

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