

**POLICY, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

**27 JANUARY 2015**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS**

**PROPOSED INTENSIVE HOUSING MANAGEMENT SERVICE**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the proposals for implementing a new Intensive Housing Management Service that manages the needs of those Melton Borough Council Tenants who have vulnerability issues ensuring tenants remain independent for as long as possible and sustain their tenancies.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**It is recommended that the Committee Approve the following recommendations from the Intensive Housing Management Task Group:**

- 2.1 **The establishment of a new Intensive Housing Management Service (Appendix A).**
- 2.2 **Approve the charging rates for tenants who receive this service and a contribution of up to £30,000 per annum from the Housing Revenue Account (Appendix B) which is to be capped at this rate.**
- 2.3 **Agrees to the de-designation of properties stated in Appendix C.**
- 2.4 **Members agree to the continuation of the Intensive Housing Management Task Group ensuring a six monthly review takes place to evaluate the effectiveness of the new service.**

**3.0 KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 In October 2014 Leicestershire County Council formally notified Melton Borough Council of their intention to cease funding for Housing Related Support Services that they currently fund. This decision has led to Melton Borough Council reviewing how they will deliver a service to manage the needs of our more vulnerable tenants.

Gretton Court is not affected by this review as it an Extra Care facility which is being reviewed separately by Leicestershire County Council.

- 3.2 Leicestershire County Council currently provides £192,784 funding to Melton Borough Council to deliver a Housing Related Support Service to 725 tenants. Melton Borough Council also delivers the service to 18 tenants in Warwick Flats, Bottesford which is owned by Nottingham Community Housing Association.
- 3.3 The Intensive Housing Management Task Group are recommending that a new service is created that provides intensive management to those tenants who have medium to high needs and that the properties as agreed by the Intensive Housing Management Task Group are included.
- 3.4 Those tenants who will receive the new service will have a lifeline call unit installed that they can contact staff during working hours or Harborough Lifeline out of hours. The details of the service

that can be expected from tenants in relation to Harborough Lifeline are detailed in Appendix D.

- 3.5 Tenants living in Sheltered Housing Schemes will pay a higher charge of £11 per week due to having a daily contact from a dedicated officer. These schemes are Wilton Court, Granby House and Bradgate Flats. Bradgate Lane Bungalows in Asfordby will also have a higher charge of £7 per week as tenants will have access to all the communal facilities at Bradgate Flats, Asfordby.

All other properties will have a charge of £5 per week. There will be a total of 565 properties receiving the new service. In our financial estimations have been made in relation to void levels and a small number of people withdrawing from the service.

- 3.6 All properties outside the sheltered housing scheme will receive a two weekly visit from an Intensive Housing Management Officer who will ensure tenants are managing their tenancies effectively and are maintaining independence.
- 3.7 During consultation with tenants many tenants valued the current service however there were a number who receive the service who do not have many needs and it is more logical to allow those tenants to make a choice as to whether or not they want such a service.

As outlined in Appendix C we are proposing to de-designate the properties listed. This means that they will become available for general needs housing and not be ring fenced only for over 55's and those with specific vulnerabilities.

- 3.8 An exempt report has been produced for this committee to make a decision on recommendations in relation to staffing structure and human resource implications.
- 3.9 The new charges will be subject to benefit assessment and those tenants on benefits will be protected as charges will be covered as part of their housing benefit assessment.

#### **4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The implementation of this new service will complement the Council's priority to improve outcomes for vulnerable people and create independence in people's lives.
- 4.2 The changes to the designation of properties will mean that those properties that are no longer designated will be opened up to letting to all tenants including those with general needs.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The financial implications of the proposed changes can be summarised as follows:

The new intensive housing management service will cost £205,000 per annum to manage with costs being covered by incomes and a contribution from the Housing Revenue Account capped at £30,000.

A breakdown of the costs is detailed in Appendix B.

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- 5.2 Appendix B also clearly shows the charges that tenants in the different housing schemes will pay in 2015/16. Costs will be reviewed on an annual basis in line with rent charge reviews.
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- 5.3 Lifeline costs with Harborough District Council are remaining at the same charge as is currently set but will be reviewed for 2016/17 with an open tendering exercise taking place to source a new longer term contract.
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#### **6.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY**

- 6.1 The proposed changes with the implementation of this new service will see an increase in the number of staff who will be up skilled to deal with low level Anti-Social Behaviour and also all

tenancy issues.

## 7.0 EQUALITIES

7.1 An impact assessment has been undertaken and shown no adverse implications with regard to age, gender and disability. This will continue to be monitored any relevant reasonable adjustments made.

## 8.0 RISKS

8.1 Please see table below.

<b>Probability</b>					
↓					
Very High A					
High B					
Significant C					
Low D					
Very Low E			1,2		
Almost Impossible F					
		IV Neg- ligible	III Marg- inal	II Critical	I Catast- rophic
		→ <b>Impact</b>			

  

Risk No.	Description
1	Failure to implement new service results in increased vulnerability and does not maintain tenant's independence.
2	Increased demand to Customer Service Centre due to new service reducing number of people receiving service.

## 9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

9.1 There are no particular implications arising from this report.

## 10.0 CONSULTATION

10.1 Consultation has been carried out with all staff affected by the proposed new service. The local trade union representatives have regular meetings with Human Resources and are involved in both the job matching process and job evaluation process.

10.2 The 'Tenants' Forum Executive Committee has been consulted as have been members of the Intensive Housing Management Task Group.

10.3 A two month consultation has taken place with tenants affected by the new service which has seen to a response rate of 160 tenants (Appendix E & F). A number of face to face consultation events have taken place across the Borough which has resulted in 120 tenants attending (Appendix G).

## 11.0 WARDS AFFECTED

### 11.1 All

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Contact Officer      Ronan Browne – People & Place Manager  
Date:                    19<sup>th</sup> January 2015

Appendices :        Appendix A – Intensive Housing Management Service  
                          Appendix B – Charging Rates to Tenants  
                          Appendix C – De-designation to properties  
                          Appendix D – Lifeline Service Overview  
                          Appendix E – Survey Results  
                          Appendix F – Consultation Meetings

Background            None  
Papers: