

## Wellbeing Service Offer at Gretton Court

<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Alison Bennett</b> , Assistant Director, Housing Management 01664 502344 abennett@melton.gov.uk
<b>Chief Officer Responsible:</b>	<b>Michelle Howard</b> , Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) 01664 504322 mhoward@melton.gov.uk
<b>Lead Member/Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Councillor Pip Allnatt</b> - Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Providing high quality council homes and landlord services
<b>Relevant Ward Member(s):</b>	All
<b>Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):</b>	Not applicable
<b>Exempt Information:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Subject to call-in:</b>	No

### 1 Summary

- 1.1 Gretton Court is Melton's only extra care facility, offering accommodation to older residents with care and support needs.
- 1.2 Recent changes to services commissioned by Leicestershire County Council resulted in the withdrawal of the Wellbeing Service at Gretton Court. Responsibility for this service has been passed to Melton Borough Council as the landlord from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. The Council has carried out a review of the service, staffing arrangements and future options for wellbeing offer, including through listening to the views of tenants.

- 1.3 Further to the withdrawal of the LCC 'Wellbeing Offer' a revised offer to residents is proposed which includes the appointment of a full time Independent Living Officer at Gretton Court , alongside delivery of a programme of activities and events and access to 24-hour emergency care and concierge service. The service would be fully funded through a service charge. The total weekly cost of the proposed Wellbeing Service Charge is £62.25.
- 1.4 This proposal represents a more effective, efficient, and resilient service offer for residents and responds directly to tenant feedback about the services they wish to receive. It also results in a reduced weekly wellbeing charge for residents compared to the previous service offer.
- 1.5 This report seeks approval to commence the implementation of the proposed changes to the service and charges, subject to any final amendments required in response to tenant feedback.

## 2 Recommendation(s)

### That Cabinet:

- 2.1 **Approve the introduction of a Wellbeing Offer provided by Melton Borough Council to residents of Gretton Court, funded through a service charge arrangement.**
- 2.2 **Delegate to the Director for Housing and Communities, authority to enter into the necessary actions to implement the new service including the associated charge.**

## 3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 Gretton Court is designated as an Extra Care Scheme, offering accommodation to older residents with care and support needs. Melton Borough Council is the landlord, whilst Leicestershire County Council has responsibility for resident care.
- 3.2 The offer at Gretton Court includes additional (paid for) services such on site care and support, midday meals and social activities. Gretton Court provides an alternative supported housing option for older residents, enabling them to maintain their independence and reducing their need to access residential care.
- 3.3 The withdrawal of the Wellbeing Service by Leicestershire County Council has reduced the offer to residents. An alternative offer is proposed, which represents a more effective, efficient, and resilient service offer for residents and responds directly to tenant feedback about the services they receive. It also results in a reduced weekly wellbeing charge for residents compared to the previous service offer from LCC.

## 4 Main Considerations

- 4.1 Gretton Court is owned by Melton Borough Council. The Council is responsible for landlord services including repairs, maintenance, income collection, tenancy compliance and staffing. The extra care offer is provided by Leicestershire County Council (LCC) who have commissioned an on-site care provided who is registered with the Care Quality Commission.

- 4.2 In April 2023, LCC's new CQC registered care provider – Diamond Home Care (DHC), took over the service from previous provider Radis. Some staff also transferred to the new provider which was positive for our residents as it delivered stability and continuity of care, as familiar staff were transferred (TUPE) as part of the agreement, something which we know is important for our tenants.
- 4.3 LCC previously provided the wellbeing service at Gretton Court, at a cost of £69.98 per week for each tenant. In 2020, LCC took the decision to stop providing this service and to pass that responsibility over to the landlord (MBC), with effect from 1 April 2023.
- 4.4 Officers from MBC and LCC have conducted a range of joint meetings to discuss and explain these changes to the residents of Gretton Court (and their relatives / carers) so that they could be kept up to date with and have their say on service changes. Key feedback from residents is the need for more on site staff presence.
- 4.5 Since 1 April 2023, Melton Borough Council has provided an interim wellbeing offer pending finalisation of a longer term, sustainable solution. This has included activities such as bingo, film afternoons, nail painting, and visits from the local primary school. No charge has been made for this interim service; however, this is not sustainable, and the longer-term wellbeing offer cannot be subsidised by the Council.

#### 4.6 **Wellbeing Service Offer / Service Charge**

- 4.6.1 The Council has engaged with residents to design a new wellbeing service offer that provides a range of social activities, supported and coordinated by a full time Independent Living Officer, based at Gretton Court. Further information is set out below:
- 4.6.2 The **Independent Living Officer** will coordinate delivery of the Wellbeing Service and general running of Gretton Court, including daily checks on residents. Having this presence on site was cited as a key priority for residents. Key responsibilities within this role include:
- Undertake and maintain individual tenant's records and person-centred risk assessments using appropriate IT systems. Assist tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities under their tenancy agreement.
  - Undertake individual assessments and design a Health and Wellbeing plan, identifying support needs and goals to ensure maximum engagement in improving health and wellbeing.
  - Work with tenants to plan activities and entertainment. Arrange workshops/activities at the scheme which promote physical and emotional wellbeing and promote independence.
  - Design, promote and deliver a varied programme of events, both internal and external for tenants in consultation with support staff, individuals and their families.
  - Encourage and support tenants with appropriate benefits needs, signposting to relevant agencies in the case of complex issues as necessary.
  - To carry out weekly safety tests and maintain a safe and healthy physical environment for tenants and staff responding as required to health and safety issues.
  - Participate in the allocation panel along with external agencies to assess the suitability of any new applications for accommodation as well as facilitate viewings and assistance with individual accommodation needs and risk assessment.

- Address enquiries from tenants for repairs and other associated issues in line with Council guidelines. Support contractors on site to gain access to the building.
- Support tenants to live safely and independently by carrying out regular welfare checks and escalating any care, support or safeguarding needs to appropriate services.
- Monitor rent accounts for tenants who are at risk through arrears and ensure that appropriate and proportionate action is taken.
- Assist residents to challenge and report ASB issues

4.6.3 The wellbeing service charge will include an **entertainment budget** to pay for activities such as trips out, guest speakers, entertainers and activities. The annual entertainment budget has been set at £10k, as professional entertainers can charge between £150 - £300 per session. Officers have worked with LCC and have been able to arrange a number of free of charge and low-cost activities, but to be prudent, a reasonable entertainment budget is required.

4.6.4 As a requirement of the facility being an Extra Care scheme, there is also a weekly charge payable to the care provider to enable residents access to a 24-hour emergency care. The onsite care provider is required to ensure a 24-hour staffing presence to respond to unplanned urgent / emergency care issues (falls, sickness etc.) This is a set fee at £25 per week per resident. Whilst this forms part of the overall wellbeing charge, it is paid directly to the care provider.

4.6.5 The total weekly cost of the service would be funded by residents through a Wellbeing Service Charge of £62.25. The breakdown of costs of the new Wellbeing Service are shown below:

<b>Service Element</b>	<b>Weekly Charge (£)</b>
Independent Living Officer	37.22
Concierge Service (service delivered by Diamond Care)	3.95
Entertainment Budget	5.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>46.23</b>
10% management fee	4.62
Care provider charge for 24hour emergency cover	25.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>75.85</b>
Removal of the previous Intensive Housing Management charge	-13.60
<b>New weekly wellbeing charge</b>	<b>62.25</b>

4.7 The figures provided are based on 90% occupancy rate, recognising the potential for vacancies within this scheme. Any over or under recovery will result in a surplus or deficit which will be adjusted in the following years' service charge.

4.7.1 At 12.05.2023, the council had 40 void properties across its total stock of 1,788, representing an average void rate of 2.2%. However, evidence shows a higher number of voids in our sheltered/supported schemes. Basing the revised wellbeing service offer on 90% occupancy is considered prudent.

4.8 Please note, this service charge remains separate to those charges applied for other landlord functions (such as health and safety, electricity, grounds maintenance) and meals. It is also separate to any care package.

## 5 Options Considered

5.1 The Council could choose not to provide a Wellbeing Service to residents at Gretton Court. This is not recommended as it would adversely impact resident wellbeing and would impact on Gretton Court as a housing option of choice. However, it would offer a further financial saving to residents.

5.2 The Council could choose to offer a Wellbeing Service on an opt in / opt out basis. However, the offer is a key component of a high-quality extra care facility and to deliver this effectively and stabilise staffing arrangements, the council must be assured it can cover its costs in delivering the service. An opt in / opt out arrangement would not achieve this.

## 6 Consultation

6.1 Tenant feedback has so far shaped the development and design of the proposed Wellbeing Service. Tenants will also be involved in designing a programme of activities / entertainment and in reviewing the wellbeing service offer.

## 7 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

7.1 Subject to Cabinet approval and further discussion with tenants, four weeks' notice is required to change the tenancy conditions and amend the charge for the wellbeing service. This will require a variation of the current tenancy agreement for Gretton Court residents.

7.2 The Council will also carry out a recruitment process for the role of Independent Living Officer and engage with tenants on implementation of the revised service.

7.3 Tenants will also be involved in designing a programme of activities / entertainment and in reviewing the wellbeing service offer.

## 8 Financial Implications

8.1.1 A detailed review of charges has been carried out in order to cost the proposed wellbeing service. The total weekly cost of the service would be funded by residents through a Wellbeing Service Charge of £62.25. The breakdown of costs of the new Wellbeing Service are shown below:

Service Element	Weekly Charge (£)
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<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>75.85</b>
Removal of the previous Intensive Housing Management charge	-13.60
<b>New weekly wellbeing charge</b>	<b>62.25</b>

8.2 The figures provided are based on 90% occupancy rate, recognising the potential for vacancies within this scheme. Any over or under recovery will result in a surplus or deficit which will be adjusted in the following years' service charge.

8.2.1 At 12.05.2023, the council had 40 void properties across its total stock of 1,788, representing an average void rate of 2.2%. However, evidence shows a higher number of voids in our sheltered/supported schemes. Basing the revised wellbeing service offer on 90% occupancy is considered prudent.

8.3 Whilst this proposal will increase the council's establishment by 0.5FTE, the new Independent Living Officer Post will be fully funded by the wellbeing charge and will therefore deliver a saving (0.5 of a band 5 post to the Housing Revenue Account).

8.4 This service charge remains separate to those charges applied for other landlord functions (such as health and safety, electricity, grounds maintenance) and meals. It is also separate to any care package.

**Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Resources (s151 Officer)**

## 9 Legal and Governance Implications

9.1 Subject to Cabinet approval and further discussion with tenants, four weeks' notice is required to change the tenancy conditions and amend the charge for the wellbeing service. This will require a variation of the current tenancy agreement for Gretton Court residents. Legal support will be provided to the housing team to ensure the correct processes are followed to implement the charge and make any tenancy condition variations.

**Legal Implications reviewed by: Alison McKane, Monitoring Officer**

## 10 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

10.1 The Wellbeing Offer is an important part of support residents to remain healthy, active, safe and well in their homes. The absence of a wellbeing offer could adversely impact resident wellbeing. Care must be taken to ensure clear roles and responsibilities, and separation of responsibilities between the Independent Living Officer and the Care Provider. Part of the role of the Independent Living Officer will be to support tenants to live safely and

independently by carrying out regular welfare checks and escalating any care, support or safeguarding needs to appropriate services.

## 11 Data Protection Implications (Mandatory)

11.1 None arising directly from this report.

## 12 Community Safety Implications

12.1 None arising directly from this report.

## 13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

13.1 None arising directly from this report.

## 14 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Wellbeing offer cannot be adequately staffed our resourced to meet tenant need and expectations	3	3	Medium
2	Poor communication with tenants and families bout the changes	3	3	Medium
3	Delays / complexities in implementation of the new charge and associated legal and charging arrangements	4	3	Medium
4	Delays / unsuccessful recruitment to the post of Independent Living Officer	3	3	Medium
5	Customer dissatisfaction at re-introduction of a wellbeing charge after a short period of no charge (April to July 2023)	4	3	Medium

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High				
	4 Significant			3, 5	



3 Low			1, 2, 4	
2 Very Low				
1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	Service design based on 90% occupancy to ensure it can fully funded. Clear mechanism to adjust service charge in future if service can be delivered at lower cost or if occupancy exceeds 90%.
2	Officers have engaged with tenants throughout, including through meeting hosted jointly with LCC. Service has been designed in response to tenant feedback, particularly the need for increased on site staff presence. Further engagement with tenants will take place prior to any change being formally introduced.
3	Technical support from legal colleagues will be required to ensure clarity of process to implement the change and associated charges.
4	Job description has been drafted based on service needs and tenant feedback. Job evaluation will be completed prior to recruitment. Recruitment will commence as soon as possible. The introduction of the paid for wellbeing offer requires successful recruitment.
5	Residents have previously paid for a wellbeing service at a cost of £69.98 per week, in addition to paying towards an intensive housing management officer at £13.10 per week. The revised offer is at a lesser cost (£62.25 per week) and is considered more resilient and effective. Continued communication with residents is key as the charge is introduced.  To mitigate the temporary loss of a wellbeing offer pending design of a new offer, an ad hoc programme of activities has been implemented, at nil cost. This has enabled a temporary period of saving for residents.

## 15 Background Papers

15.1.1 Job Description – Independent Living Officer

## 16 Appendices

16.1 None