



AGENDA ITEM: 7

SUMMARY

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|-------------------------|--|
| Report for: | Housing and Communities Overview & Scrutiny |
| Date of meeting: | 18 July 2012 |
| PART: | 1 |
| If Part II, reason: | |

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|--------------------------------|--|
| Title of report: | |
| Contact: | Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing Author & Responsible Officer: Andy Vincent |
| Purpose of report: | The purpose of this report is to update the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee members on the work undertaken by the Project Group established to consider the Future of the Supported Housing Service in Dacorum. |
| Recommendations | 1. To note the work of the project working group to date and its outcomes. 2. To continue the working group throughout the period of consultation regarding the vision for the Supported Housing Service with a reference to the DBC Business Plan and the landscape set by HCC for 2013-2015 |
| Corporate objectives: | Affordable housing |
| Implications: | <u>Financial</u> None identified <u>Value for Money</u> |
| 'Value For Money Implications' | To ensure future service models deliver value for money |
| Risk Implications | Risk reference 01 in the Housing Landlord Risk Register refers to Failure to Achieve Headline Service Objectives |

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| Equalities Implications | An Equality Impact Assessment of the service will be carried out to assess the impact of changes to the service on current and future tenants. |
| Health And Safety Implications | None |
| Consultees: | Supported Housing project group |
| Background papers: | <p>http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/pdf/Social%20-%2011-10-19%20-%20Item%2011%20-%20Sheltered%20Housing.pdf</p> <p>(Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 19th October 2011 – Future of Sheltered Housing)</p> <p>http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/pdf/Social%20-%2011-10-19%20-%20Item%2011%20-%20Sheltered%20Housing.pdf</p> <p>(Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 9th of May 2012 – Housing Review Account Business Plan Report)</p> |
| Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report: | <p>HCC – Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>HRS – Housing Related Support</p> <p>DBC – DBC</p> |

1.0 Background

The Supported Housing Service provided by Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) provides ‘support’ in varying forms to tenants and residents living within the borough. The table below identifies who services are delivered to:-

| Types of Household | Number of tenants in each category |
|--|--|
| Tenants of sheltered housing schemes | CAT 1 (dispersed sheltered housing – bungalows and flats) 524 CAT2 (sheltered housing with some communal facilities) 1355 |
| Residents living within the private sector | 10 |
| A life line service to residents within the private sector | 1,300 |

Tenants and residents are required to pay for their own support service (self funders) unless they are in the following circumstances:-

| Circumstances of Households | Number of tenants this applies to (March 2012) |
|---|---|
| In receipt of Housing Benefit | 1,284 sheltered housing tenants are in receipt of Housing Benefit |
| Have savings of less than £23,000 | We do not retain details of the savings of tenants as eligibility for grant support is assessed by HCC |
| Were a resident of sheltered housing prior to April 2003 (the introduction of the current Supporting People regime) | 598 tenants have lived within Sheltered Housing since 1 st April 2003 (441 tenants who have lived in sheltered accommodation since 1 April 2003 are also in receipt of Housing Benefit). |

The current service charges within the supported housing service are:-

| Type of Service Charge | Weekly Charge – over 48 weeks per year |
|---|---|
| Service charge for a tenant living within a category 1 sheltered housing home | £6.53 |
| Service charge for a tenant living within a category 2 sheltered housing home | £7.57 |
| Service charge for a resident within the private sector who has a Life Line/community Alarm within their home | £1.05 per week |
| Service charge for support to private customers | £2.74 |

2.0 Current Funding of the Service

2.1 The support service is part funded by HCC via a contract with DBC. The funding DBC receives through the contract with HCC is currently £446,000 annually. The current contract with HCC to deliver support services expires in April 2013. The full cost of the support service (this does not include the cost of the Life Line service) is £1,131,960 HCC therefore funds 39.4% of the service.

3.0 Future of Supported Housing Project Group

3.1 On the 19th of October 2011 Overview and Scrutiny committee agreed to establish a working group consisting of Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, tenants and other stakeholders. The purpose of the group was to consider how the Supported Housing Service delivered by DBC Housing Landlord should develop from April 2013 in the context of possible reduction in funding from HCC for housing related support.

The project kick started on the 28th of November 2011 where a wide range of stakeholders were invited. Following this meeting, the group has met once a month. The Project Worksheet can be found in Appendix 1

4.0 External Changes

4.1 Hertfordshire County Council – Funding and delivery arrangements

4.1.1 In January 2012 HCC's Health and Communities Service indicated their desire that upon the expiry of the current support contract in April 2013, that the award of any new contract would require support providers to participate within a tendering exercise.

4.1.2 It was suggested that there could be funding reductions of approximately 50%. They also reiterated their desire that providers should not focus the delivery of support services on the social housing sector; rather they should be 'tenure neutral' with equal priority given to residents within the owner-occupied and private rented sectors.

4.1.3 In April 2012 HCC Health and Communities Service changed their view and will no longer require service providers to tender for a future contract. They have indicated that the current contract will "role over for a further two years, at current funding levels, to minimise disruption to service users".

4.2 Housing Revenue Account Reform – Housing Self Financing

4.2.1 At the time of the Future of Supported Housing Project Group being set up the Council were in the process of preparing for Self Financing. This involved arranging a portfolio of loans to cover the allocated debt that would replace the subsidy system.

4.2.2 At that time the interest rates that would be secured over the 30 year period were unknown and Business Plan modelling was prudent allowing for the worst case scenario which would have resulted in similar or even less resources available going forward.

4.2.3 The actual rates secured were extremely beneficial to the Business Plan and allow for investment levels in excess of previous years and that increase over time.

4.2.4 Due to the external factors detailed above, the group was restricted in performing its original remit of exploring the full potential of the supported housing service in Dacorum. Focus had to be diverted to potentially preparing to tender to keep the service with an assumption that there would be no increase in resources.

5.0 Outcomes of the Future of Supported Housing Project Group

1. Work has started in establishing a vision for the next five years for the Supported Housing Service in Dacorum. See appendix 2.
2. The group has reiterated the commitment to ensure that charges for services to residents within the private sector cover the full cost of delivering those services to the Council. This has led to a review of the Life Line charges. It is suggested that the £1.05 weekly charge for the Life Line service is increased to £1.32
3. The group have recommended that DBC work with voluntary or private sector support providers to encourage support provision to residents living within the private sector. This work is continuing both with Age Concern Dacorum and care agencies.
4. A definition of 'support' has been developed by the group, including defining low, medium and high level support provision. This will be built into literature produced for existing and prospective sheltered housing tenants, detailing exactly what they can expect from the service. See Appendix 3
5. The group recognises that DBC's Housing Asset Management Strategy needs to ensure the best use of the Council's Supported Housing stock going forward complimenting the overall vision for the service.

6.0 Portfolio Holder Consultation

6.1 The Portfolio Holder for Housing was regularly updated on the progress of the group along with the Corporate Director for Housing and Regeneration and Assistant Director for Housing Landlord.

6.2 In May 2012 it was agreed that the Project Group should report back to Housing & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee with progress up to that stage.

6.3 This was due to the fact the Project Group had been diverted by uncertainty around HCC funding and delivery arrangements as well as the final HRA Business Plan allowing more flexibility going forward.

Appendix 1



Future shape of the supported housing service

PROJECT WORKSHEET

| PROJECT DETAILS | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Project Champion | Andy Vincent |
| Project Leader | Dharini Chandarana |

| VERSION CONTROL | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------|--|
| Version | Date | Editor | Details of Changes |
| 1 | 18 July 2011 | Andy Vincent | Original Version |
| 2 | 8 August 2011 | Andy Vincent | Make additions to the organisations attending the launch meeting |
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| 1.0 | PROJECT BACKGROUND |
|-----|--|
| | <p>Enter a description of why we are doing this project; i.e. what is the issue, problem or new thing we are trying to implement, and why.</p> <p>Dacorum Borough Council currently has a 2 year contract with Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Community Services (HCS) to provide support services to residents of sheltered housing and other 'qualifying' households within the community.</p> <p>The value of the contract is £443,000 annually.</p> <p>The availability of funding after April 2013 via supporting people is uncertain.</p> <p>This is an opportunity to consider how the service is delivered in the future including in partnership with the voluntary sector.</p> |

2.0

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

**Enter a description of the project here,
What is its objective (what specifically will be different when this project is completed, when completing the project plan consider training of staff and communication issues)**

The objective of the project is to ensure the service is delivered in a sustainable way from April 2013 and provides the highest quality of service to sheltered housing residents and other households living within the community.

What areas, job roles or services will be affected?

The sheltered housing service could be significantly affected – any roles within the team.

Any changes will also impact on the users of the service and it is essential that the impact on largely 'vulnerable' household is minimised.

2.1

SCOPE AND SCOPE EXCLUSIONS

IN SCOPE

All aspects of the support services delivered to sheltered housing residents and other 'qualifying' households living within the community.

Working alongside or together other agencies to consider the best possible model of service delivery.

The 'housing management' activities undertaken by Supported Housing Officers and how this is would need to be considered if service provision is reshaped.

The Community Alarm contract and Lifeline service would also be affected by any changes.

To consider the Allocations Policy and process for applicants interested in sheltered housing

To consider the viability of certain types of sheltered housing schemes that may be hard to let because of their physical attributes.

The impact of changes to the service on the charging structure and the actual charges paid by residents of sheltered housing and those individuals living within the community receiving the supported housing service

SCOPE EXCLUSION

Floating support services to younger people living within the community as this is a client group that the service has no experience of delivering services too.

2.2

SUCCESS CRITERIA

[NOTE: Success Criteria are levels of which the project will be evaluated against to see if it was successful in delivering what it set out to deliver. Include in this any quality requirements.]

That the service remains affordable after April 2013 for Dacorum Borough Council, residents of sheltered housing and also does not place an unaffordable burden on resources within the Housing Revenue Account.

That the quality of the service continues to improve from April 2013 – guaranteeing the best possible service for sheltered housing residents.

Sheltered housing is allocated to those who wish to live independently and have some support needs

The stock of sheltered housing is fit for purpose and void levels are minimised
Customer satisfaction levels remain at comparable levels or improves

3.0

COSTS & BENEFITS

[NOTES: This section needs to specifically show what the benefits and the costs are of this project. Although they may not be known at the outset of the project.]

It is not possible to identify the costs at this stage

3.1

COSTS

| Category & Exp code | [Year] | [Year] | [Year] |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Capital | | | |
| Revenue (one off) | | | |
| Revenue (recurring) | | | |

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3.2

BENEFITS

Enter here the benefits which the project will achieve

1. That the service remains affordable
2. That demand to take up the service (for example to move into sheltered housing) is maintained and improves – as the service is valued within the community.
3. That customer satisfaction levels are maintained

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| 4.0 | ASSUMPTIONS, CONSTRAINTS & DEPENDENCIES |
| 4.1 | CONSTRAINTS |
| <p>The constraints are things that need to be considered during the project that can not be changed or things that the project team have no control over. i.e. legislation, technological requirements or Cabinet or other reporting deadlines.</p> <p>The current sheltered housing tenancy agreement commits the Council to the provision of a support service</p> <p>There may be some political sensitivities related to the change of provision in sheltered housing due to the vulnerable nature of the client group, these need to be considered throughout the project.</p> | |
| 4.2 | DEPENDENCIES |
| <p>List all dependencies with other projects, programmes or initiatives which are either internal or external and will impact this project.</p> <p>This project is likely to stretch over a period of months and is likely to continue into 2012/13.</p> <p>There are currently a number of projects within the current financial year which could impact on this project (A project designed to increase the demand for sheltered housing and a project designed to improve the quality of service delivery).</p> <p>These projects will ensure that the vacancy rate, satisfaction levels and demand for sheltered housing are at their optimum levels by April 2013 putting the service in the best possible position to consider the future after the current contracts with Hertfordshire County Council ends.</p> | |

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|---|---|
| 5.0 | PROJECT PLAN & ORGANISATION |
| 5.1 | WHO SHOULD ATTEND THE LAUNCH MEETING ('KICK START') |
| <p>Andy Vincent Dharini Chandarana Age UK Cllrs Representatives from Hertfordshire County Council Representatives from the NHS locally Residents from TLC (preferably sheltered tenants?) Housing Accountant Policy Officer Nicola – Development Officer Lead officer – Supported Housing Communications Someone from repairs – Asset Manager Supported Housing Officer x2</p> | |

5.2

PROJECT MEMBERS

Dharini Chandarana
Development Officer
Cllr
Someone from Allocations
Housing Accountant – when required
Asset Manager
Supported Housing Officer x 2

6.0

PROJECT PLAN

The project plan will be worked up following the 'kick start' meeting

Appendix 2

Initial Vision for Future of the Supported Housing Service: What should the service look like in 5 years time?

- A number of the schemes provide accommodation which cannot be considered to be 'fit for purpose'. Some of this stock should be either redesignated, have the layout reconfigured or demolished.
- In the longer term it is likely that additional sheltered accommodation will be needed as the numbers of older people continue to rise.
- The demand for flexi-care schemes is likely to rise as older peoples' needs become more complex and cannot be met by traditional sheltered accommodation.
- It is increasingly likely that older tenants within the 'general needs' stock will both require and demand support services. It is likely that increasingly support services will be delivered to tenants in 'general needs' accommodation.
- Eligibility criteria for sheltered accommodation and support services are likely to change to necessitate that applicants demonstrate a support need prior to accessing sheltered accommodation.
- The requirement to be of a certain age in order to be eligible for sheltered housing may change with a focus on a needs and risk assessment identifying if sheltered housing would be offer a new tenant the necessary services to meet their needs.
- The link between Supported Housing Officers and sheltered housing schemes should be retained. Offering accommodation with a designated Supported Housing Officer is one of the corner stone of sheltered accommodation.
- It is not necessary to be able to contact a Supported Housing Officer outside of office hours. The current service via the alarm call provider is sufficient to provide sheltered housing tenants the appropriate level of support and reassurance.
- Alarm call equipment requires some updating to make it compliant with telecare and telehealth. Developing the equipment would enhance tenant's experience of sheltered housing and enable it to offer a wider variety of services compatible with the health agenda.
- The service should operate different levels of charge depending upon the level of support being provided.
- Residents should not be able to opt out of the charging structure; some element of support/charge is a requirement of living in sheltered housing.
- Residents should be able to benefit from a spare bedroom as part of the value of living in sheltered housing.

Appendix 3

What is Support?

- Contact
- Reassurance
- Encouragement
- Referral's to other services
- Enablement
- Practical help such as reading mail for isolated tenants/sensory problems
- To promote independence
- Emotional support
- Listen to what individual 's needs are
- Signposting
- Monitoring for changes
- Safeguarding – watching for abuse
- Advice and assistance to enable service users to establish safety routines which minimise the risk of exploitation
- Assisting in arranging for professionals to call
- Assistance in accessing advice with personal budgeting and debt counselling referral
- Supporting with neighbour disputes
- Completing benefit forms and assisting with benefit claims
- Advice on personal hygiene
- assistance with personal and home safety & security
- accessing social activities and contacts
- help in accessing other services
- monitoring of health & wellbeing
- Advice and guidance on community/social alarms and/or assistive technology in the dwelling and how to use equipment where applicable
- Monitoring of health and medication
- Advice regarding maintaining the tenancy/home in terms of cleaning and gardening
- Ongoing risk assessment that relates to the maintenance of the tenancy/home
- Signposting service users to health/ treatment services which are appropriate for their cultural needs
- Advocacy with health professional over medication and related matters
- deal with repairs and or improvements to the property, which are necessary to assist the service user to live independently such as the minor works provided through the handy persons service
- advice regarding their accommodation warm, safe and comfortable
- look after themselves, with appropriate care

How is Support different from Care and what is not support

- Care is physical / hands on
- Care is practical tasks
- Care is provided by nurses, carers
- Care involves: Personal hygiene, dressing, medication, clinical procedures

Levels of support

ALL SHELTERED TENANTS TO RECEIVE AS A MINIMUM LOW LEVEL OF SUPPORT

| Level | frequency | service |
|--------------|---|--|
| Low | Contact with tenant ranges from monthly (maximum of one of support per month) to relinquished | community alarm, support not required, community alarm self tested and follow ups by SHO on a quarterly basis |
| Medium | Fortnightly to weekly (0.5 hours of support per week) | community alarm, support plan in place, community alarm tested by SHO monthly, more intensive visits can be arranged for a short duration of time following hospitalisation or other such support need |
| High | At least one day week (1 hour of support per week) | community alarm, support plan in place, community alarm tested monthly |