

Democratic Services Officer: Erica Keegan (Ext. 37547)

06 March 2014

HOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP

A meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group will be held in Committee Room 1 at the Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton on **Wednesday, 19 March 2014 at 6.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors; Clayden (Chairman), Edwards (Vice-Chairman), Bicknell, Mrs Bower, Mrs Goad, Mrs Harrison, Haymes, Mrs Oakley, Oliver-Redgate, Mrs Pendleton, Squires, Dingemans (Cabinet Member), Mrs Madeley (Deputy to Cabinet Member), Elkins (Cabinet Member), Gammon (Deputy to Cabinet Member)

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Please send your apologies to Erica Keegan – tel: 01903 737547 or e-mail: erica.keegan@arun.gov.uk

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are reminded to make any declaration of personal and/or prejudicial/pecuniary interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda.

You should declare your interest by stating:

- a) the item you have the interest in
- b) whether it is a personal interest and the nature of the interest
- c) whether it is also a prejudicial/pecuniary interest

You then need to re-declare your interest and the nature of the interest at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

3. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group held on 09 January 2014.

4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

5. GAS SAFETY CERTIFICATES VERBAL UPDATE

The Head of Housing will update Members on the current position with respect to Gas Safety Certificates.

6. ROUGH SLEEPER VERBAL UPDATE

The Housing Services Manager will update Members on the current numbers of Rough Sleepers in the Arun District.

7. *CUSTOMER SERVICE ACCESS STRATEGY

This report updates Members on progress against the Customer Access Action Plan and developments around the Customer Relationship Management System.

8. *HOUSING COMPLAINTS UPDATE

This paper is a summary of the Council's position regarding the housing complaints process following changes in legislation in April 2013. Currently, Councillor Clayden is the nominated designated person for escalated housing complaints. A designated tenant panel has not yet been set up but the intention is to do so during 2014.

9. *RAISE THE ROOF PROGRESS REPORT

The Council's Housing Strategy Raise the Roof was approved in December 2010; this report sets out progress with the Action Plan as at February 2014.

10. *TENANCY STRATEGY & TENANCY POLICY

This report updates the Working Group on the first year of the new Tenancy Strategy & Tenancy Policy, in particular the use of Fixed Term Tenancies. The Tenancy Strategy & Tenancy Policy have been circulated to Members previously and published on the Council's Website at [Housing Strategy, Policies, Application forms and leaflets](#). Alternatively a paper copy has been made available in the Member's Room. Please contact the Committee Manager if you would prefer a personal paper copy.

11. *PHOTO ID

This report updates the Working Group on the 12 months pilot project to take photographic ID of each new tenant moving in to a Council property.

12. *WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

The Work Programme for the new Municipal Year 2014/15 is attached.

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HOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP

09 January 2014 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: - Councillors Clayden (Chairman), Edwards, (Vice-Chairman) Bicknell [from minute 7], Mrs Bower, Mrs Harrison, Mrs Oakley Mrs Pendleton and Squires

Councillors Dingemans and Mrs Madeley were also present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors; Elkins and Mrs Goad.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 07 November 2013 were approved by the Working Group and were signed by the Chairman.

4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

With the agreement of the Chairman, the Head of Human Resources and Customer Services updated Members on the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review prior to the next meeting of the working group. It was confirmed that the Peer Review Team would consist of:

- Stuart Davy, Chief Executive, East Lindsey (lead peer)
- Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader, Broadland DC
- Cllr Melvyn Caplan, Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Customer Services, Westminster City Council
- Liz St Louis, Head of Customer Service & Development, Sunderland City Council
- David Armin, LGA Challenge Manager

The date for the Challenge was confirmed as 19th to 21st March 2014. It was explained that, as part of the review, the team had requested an opportunity to observe a Housing and Customer Services Working Group Meeting, to meet separately with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Housing and Customer Services Working Group and informally meet with a

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group of elected Members for general discussion about the role of a Councillor.

It was agreed that the Peer Review Team would be invited to observe the Housing and Customer Services Working Group Meeting on Wednesday 19th March at 6pm. The Chairman then requested volunteers to meet with the Peer Review Team, informally, prior to this meeting. Councillors Clayden, Edwards, Mrs Bower, Mrs Oakley, Mrs Pendleton (subject to diary commitments) and Squires agreed to meet with the Peer Review Team.

The Head of Human Resources and Customer Services stated that arrangements would be confirmed with Members prior to 19th March 2014.

5. GAS SAFETY CERTIFICATES VERBAL UPDATE

The Head of Housing reported that of the 11 Gas Safety Certificates that were outstanding, 4 had been booked for inspection, 5 final reminders had been sent, 1 was related to a void property and 1 was pending with the Council's Legal Team.

6. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

The Head of Housing requested a change to the order of the agenda and the Working Group agreed to consider the Council's Rough Sleeper's Strategy prior to the update on progress from Stonepillow.

7. ROUGH SLEEPERS' STRATEGY

The Housing Services Manager presented this report to the Working Group which updated Members on the current situation of rough sleeping in Arun, outlined the services available to respond to the needs of this client group and requested recommendation to Cabinet to adopt and extend the Rough Sleepers' Strategy until 2016/17.

The Housing Services Manager clarified the Statutory Duty that local authorities had to secure permanent accommodation for unintentionally homeless people in priority need. The Council also had a duty to provide assistance and advice to those people deemed not in priority need.

It was explained that the Rough Sleepers' Strategy set out the services available in the District and the partnerships that had been developed between the Council and statutory/voluntary agencies to respond to rough sleeping and reduce homelessness to as low a level as practically possible.

Services in Arun were outlined, these included:

- the six month pilot period of the Glenlogie night shelter that would help the Council understand the need for emergency housing solutions for rough sleepers and provided an opportunity for closer work with Stonepillow.
- that Arun District Council had become a member of the SHORE partnership (Sussex Homeless Outreach Reconnection &

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Engagement) which was funded by Central Government to aid the development of rough sleeping solutions across East and West Sussex.

- Housing Options Service that provides housing advice and assistance.

The Working Group discussed the report. Following questions from Members it was confirmed that:

- the gap in services for rough sleepers, following the closure of Homelink in Littlehampton, had been filled mainly by Stonepillow and Churches, including the Worthing Homeless Churches Project that had provided assistance in Rustington.
- approximately 70% to 80% of rough sleepers had substance misuse problems as well as mental health issues.
- the Council provides a Rent Deposit Scheme as well as a scheme that provides financial assistance to help pay for one month’s advance rent.
- rough Sleeper statistics were calculated on the numbers of people sleeping rough in an area, on a particular night, and did not include those that had been accommodated within a shelter.

The Working Group also discussed their concerns with respect to the homeless issues that surround seasonal farm workers. The Housing Services Manager informed Members that Sussex Police had appointed two Police Community Support Officers to liaise with the farm employers and workers.

The Housing & Customer Services Working Group

RESOLVED - That

an update on Rough Sleepers be provided at every meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group.

The Housing & Customer Services Working Group

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET – That

- (1) the Rough Sleeper’s Strategy be extended until 2016/17;
- (2) the Strategy be adopted.

8. ROUGH SLEEPER AND COLD WEATHER PROVISION

The Head of Housing introduced Stonepillow’s Chief Executive and Head of Client Services and the Chairman welcomed them to the meeting. This report and Stonepillow’s update provided Members with the progress on the Nightshelter that opened at Glenlogie on 1st November 2013.

The Head of Housing presented his report and alerted the Working Group to developments since the Nightshelter opened. He reminded Members that the operating costs for the building would be met by the Council and that Stonepillow had agreed to support staffing costs via Housing Benefit

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Payments. It was explained that a rent officer assessment had been carried out which resulted in a significant funding shortfall. It was advised that the shortfall had been met by DWP funding and this would continue until the end of the pilot. In the meantime Stonepillow and the Council would explore ways in which the payment of Housing Benefit could be used to support the Nightshelter’s operations.

The Head of Housing also explained that the building works in connection with the temporary accommodation at Glenlogie would be completed during the first half of May 2014. It was proposed that, in order to test the viability of the Nightshelter operating alongside temporary accommodation, the pilot project should be extended by a further two months.

It was pointed out that the temporary accommodation was vital to help the Council’s need to reduce bed and breakfast costs.

The Stonepillow Chief Executive and the Head of Client Services then provided the Working Group with a summary of their activities at Glenlogie from November 2013. Stonepillow’s vision was outlined as the commitment to supporting people who find themselves sleeping rough on the streets, providing them access to safety, improving their wellbeing and preventing homelessness by breaking the cycles that lead people to insecure accommodation. The focus of Stonepillow’s work was described as helping clients to help themselves and providing the best possible outcome through Health, Housing and Work.

It was noted that Stonepillow and the Council began the Rough Sleeping pilot on 1st November 2013 when Glenlogie opened as a day centre, hostel and cold weather shelter.

Members were informed that the day centre, known as the Hub, had received 45 individuals. One week saw 31 individual clients. A variety of support was offered including mental & physical health, Housing and getting in to work.

It was advised that the Hostel was staffed by 4 project workers who had been trained to engage with entrenched rough sleepers. Members were informed that the issue of female homelessness had been overlooked but this was rectified with the provision of a separate sleeping area using a partition wall. During the first two months the Hostel accommodated 19 individuals on a provisional 28 day stay basis. Members were pleased to note the excellent news that to date 5 clients had moved on into more secure accommodation which means 5 less people sleeping rough. Comment was made that this was a good result, over a short period, and provided evidence that the pilot had been operating successfully thus far.

It was pointed out that a large number of rough sleepers suffered from substance misuse as well as mental health disorders where one of these issues would exacerbate the other. Stonepillow often helped individuals with these problems as it was noted that this section of the community were particularly vulnerable to homelessness. Stonepillow had also seen increasing

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numbers of people presenting homeless under the age of 30. It was felt that family breakdown had contributed to this.

The Chairman thanked Stonepillow for their informative presentation. The Working Group discussed the report and presentation and agreed that the pilot had progressed successfully. Following questions from Members it was confirmed that:

- Glenlogie had the capability to support 20 Rough Sleepers during cold weather.
- There were 5 to 6 people on the waiting list for homelessness provision as the facility was currently full.
- Stonepillow’s Housing Team ensured that clients were successfully rehabilitated into accommodation as any problems caused by an ex-client would be to the detriment of Stonepillow.
- Glenlogie had good security at reception and the temporary accommodation was separate from the basement area.
- Stonepillow worked well with other organisations such as the British Legion to secure grants to help in client rehabilitation into accommodation.

Further discussion centred on a particular homeless case where a hospital patient was discharged from hospital and sent direct to Stonepillow. Members expressed that they were appalled at this occurrence and the Working Group felt the way the NHS discharges homeless patients needs to be improved. Stonepillow’s Head of Client Services informed Members that they had recently secured a 12 month post that would concentrate on liaising with the NHS and Psychiatric units that unethically discharge patients.

The Working Group then considered the report’s recommendations. Recommendation 1 and 2 were agreed and a further recommendation added.

The Housing and Customer Services Working Group

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET – That

- (1) an extension of 2 months (starting May 2014) to the initial 6-month trial period so that any operational issues can be considered in relation to the Nightshelter operating when the temporary accommodation units above are commissioned in May 2014.
- (2) the existing method of funding Nightshelter clients be continued for the 2-month extension period.
- (3) viable future funding options are explored by the Council’s Housing Team and if a viable solution is found present to Cabinet to ensure Arun District Council’s support continues, on an ongoing basis, from the end of June 2014 when the pilot finishes.

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The Housing & Customer Services Working Group then

RESOLVED – That

a Cabinet Report concerning viable future funding options for Glenlogie be circulated to Members of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group prior to its submission to Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services made comment that the pilot had been very successful so far and he would support the idea that investigations would be made with respect to how this pilot scheme could be made permanent.

The Chairman and the Working Group extended their thanks to Stonepillow for their attendance at this meeting.

9. RETENDER OF THE GAS SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR COUNCIL DWELLINGS AND CORPORATE PROPERTIES

The Head of Housing presented this report to the Working Group which sought approval to tender a contract for Gas Servicing and Maintenance of Council Housing and Corporate Properties for a five year period with the option of extending the Contract for a further two years dependant on performance, effective from 1st April 2015.

In discussing this item Members supported the proposals set out in the report.

The Housing & Customer Services Working Group

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET – That

- (1) a contract for Gas Servicing and Maintenance of Council Housing and Corporate Properties be tendered for a five year period with the option of extending the contract for a further two years without resubmitting the Contract for tender. The value of the Contract over the initial period of five years is estimated to be approximately £4 Million.
- (2) a tender evaluation model be approved based on weightings of 60% for price and 40% for quality and focused on the following:-
 - Technical and Operational arrangements
 - Quality Assurance Systems (with particular reference to customer care and involvement in continuous service improvement during the life of the contract)
 - Systems and Procedures for ensuring all aspects of Health & Safety Policies, Procedures and Regulations are maintained.

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10. WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

The working group considered the work programme. The following points were made:

- It was agreed that the Rough Sleeper Update item would be included at every meeting.
- As a new Municipal Year was approaching Members were keen that issues such as Welfare Reform would be carried forward to any future work programme and not omitted. It was noted that provision had been made, on this work programme, to note items that would be carried forward for consideration during 2014/15.

(The meeting concluded at 7.30pm)

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCILHOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP19 March 2014

Information Paper

Subject : Report on Progress with Replacement for Lagan Customer Relationship Management System

Report by : Jackie Follis

Report date: 24 February 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates Members on progress against the Customer Access Action Plan and Developments around the Customer Relationship Management system.

1.0 Background

1.1 At the meeting on 10 September 2013 Members agreed to the Customer Access Strategy Action Plan. This report updates members on progress against this plan, in particular on the replacement for the Lagan Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System.

2.0 Lagan Customer Relationship Management System

2.1 Members will recall that a key piece of work was to be a decision on whether or not to continue with the current Lagan CRM system. Originally Lagan was established as a CRM Project as part of the Better Together Partnership spanning West Sussex County Council and all districts and boroughs. Originally the majority of funding was from the 'Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise' (IESE) fund. A major upgrade project started in 2010 and during 2011 this went live. The project was managed by a Partnership Project Manager and three developers who were jointly funded, the principle being 'equal shares'. The IESE funding expired during 2013 and at this point West Sussex Chief Executives agreed to continue with a reduced development team and ongoing funding. In Arun's case the commitment was to pay our share of the joint project up until March 2015, on the basis that we needed time to either make a more permanent commitment or find an alternative.

- 2.2 The principle current users of the system are Adur & Worthing, Arun, Horsham, Mid-Sussex and Burgess Hill Town Council (funded by WSCC). Chichester, Crawley and West Sussex have independent systems. Should any of the current users withdraw costs would be reallocated between remaining users. The view of Arun is that this introduces unacceptable uncertainties. The original cost to Arun of the CRM was £8,000 per annum. The cost from 2013 moved to £23,000 and would increase if any other authority stopped using the system.
- 2.3 There have also been concerns around the ongoing management of the system. This is in no way a reflection of the individual staff supporting the system, but based around issues such as lack of control of our own data and the lack of flexibility to make local changes to scripts etc., there is the requirement to go back to the support team for everything. An ongoing issue has also been that when we make mandatory changes to our internal core systems this often causes problems with Lagan.
- 3.0 CRM Alternative
- 3.1 The Customer Services Team, with input from IT, spent some time exploring alternatives to the existing Lagan CRM. This included looking at using a more limited version of Lagan, looking at alternative systems and looking at developing our own internal system. A key aim was to look at options which are sustainable, can be developed to deliver improvements in the future and work well with other technologies such as electronic forms.
- 3.2 It was concluded that the best option for Arun was to develop an in-house system using Microsoft SharePoint. SharePoint is an existing Arun District Council technology. It is a set of web tools which enables us to build a single information portal for customer interactions. Combined with existing technologies such as document management and e-forms SharePoint has so far proved able to deliver the majority of functions currently delivered within Lagan, but has also opened up opportunities to enhance the way Arun Direct and other areas of the Council work.
- 3.3 The basis of the proposal was improved functionality and connectivity with other technologies and a saving to the Council from April 2015 of £19,000 per annum. The proposal to move to SharePoint was presented to and agreed by the Arun Improvement Programme Board in December 2013.

In summary SharePoint will offer:

- A platform through which communications may be shared.
- A storage facility in which we may retain and share documents and other reference materials.
- Integration of web based content and multimedia through one desktop window.

- Adviser scripts which can be accessed by staff working in both front and back office teams, offering opportunities for more flexible working.
 - Interoperability with the Council's existing workflow and electronic document management systems enabling standardisation of the way work cases are created and moved through the business.
 - Opportunities to develop web sites and intranet sites supported from within the platform.
 - Personal organisation (as well as corporate organisation) benefits with synchronisation and integration working with other Microsoft Office Applications.
 - Improved customer case tracking and status updating.
 - Scalability – ie we can grow the system ourselves as required in the future at minimal additional cost
- 3.4 With the inclusion of Arun's workflow management and electronic document applications we aim to go live with SharePoint in Arun Direct by 30th June 2014 at this time moving away from reliance on Lagan and taking back responsibility for administering our own systems within the Contact Centre. This has been and continues to be a major piece of collaborative work and credit is due to the staff who have been working so hard on it.
- 3.5 It is worth noting that market trends indicate this approach is being adopted more and more in the public sector arena as an effective way of delivering customer services and a number of the other West Sussex authorities are showing an interest in what we are doing.
- 4.0 E-Forms
- 4.1 As part of the CRM replacement project we have taken the opportunity to review the process flows used to get information from the customer to the relevant back office system. A key tool supporting this improved customer experience is e-forms. E-forms are not just a replication of paper based forms but provide a mechanism to collect information in a tailored, user friendly way, workflow it automatically to the right officers (and track where it is) and then re-use any data collected if required.
- 4.2 Our e-forms seamlessly integrate with other key systems such as payments, maps, document management and back-office lookups, providing the user with as much information as possible to complete their transaction in one go.
- 4.3 The approach that is being taken with the replacement CRM project is to use the same e-forms both within the Contact Centre and via the web as a customer self-service (24/7) option.
- 4.4 An example of how an e-form uses intelligence is the new missed bin/recycling e-form. When a customer has a missed collection they are able to report this via an e-form. Based on their address the form will check their collection day and if it was not due that day tells them when the next collection is. If they are still a genuine missed

collection they will be asked a number of other questions to see if there was a valid reason for the miss (e.g. not left out at the correct time). Assuming it is still a genuine case then the completed form automatically workflows to the correct department/BIFFA to action. If the customer phones the council to check progress it is possible to track what action has been taken and by who.

- 4.5 We currently have 120 e-forms in use, both internal and external. Some of these are fully integrated, as in the example given above. We are working towards as much integration as possible, this being a key way to improve the customer experience and gain efficiencies by limiting double entry and error rates.

5.0 Customer Service Excellence – Arun Direct

- 5.1 Members are asked to note that Arun Direct was re-assessed for the Customer Service Excellence Award on 25 February 2014. The Customer Service Excellence Standard requires that we have an annual visit from the Assessor to ensure that we continue to meet the criteria of the standard and are continuously striving to improve our customer service. These reviews are divided into three sections to make the process more manageable. This year criteria 4 and 5 have been reviewed. These relate to monitoring standards, the particular area for improvement in our case relating to benchmarking and telling our customers about our performance.

- 5.2 The Assessor has confirmed that he had been very pleased with all he had seen and heard during his day. He encouraged everyone to continue to seek feedback from customers not only on their level of satisfaction with the service received but on the whole experience of their dealings with the Council. Finally he confirmed that the Customer Service Excellence award would be retained and looked forward to coming back next year to learn more about the progress we are making.

- 5.3 A lot of hard work went into the preparation for the visit and every member of the Arun Direct team contributed to the event as well as service managers and customers. Thanks must go also to all those who played a part on the day or who submitted feedback in advance of the event. It is always nice to be recognised for a job well done and everyone should be proud of what they have achieved.

6.0 Conclusion

Members are asked to note the progress in developing our alternative to the existing CRM System. Members are also invited to attend a demonstration of the new system.

Contact: Jackie Follis, Head of HR and Customer Services, 37580

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCILHOUSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP19 MARCH 2014

Information Paper

Subject : Housing Complaints Update

Report by : Elaine Gray

Report date: 20 February 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper is a summary of the Council's position regarding the housing complaints process following changes in legislation in April 2013. Currently, Councillor Clayden is the nominated designated person for escalated housing complaints. A designated tenant panel has not yet been set up but the intention is to do so during 2014.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 provides that tenants of local authorities, housing associations and ALMO's will be able to ask for their complaints to be considered by a designated person or designated tenant panel when their landlord's internal complaints procedure is completed. This provision started in April 2013.
- 1.2 A designated person can be an MP, local Councillor or Tenant Panel. The complainant can decide which of these designated persons they approach; the landlord cannot compel the complaint to use the designated person or panel of their choice. The complainant can approach more than one designated person if they choose to.
- 1.3 Arun District Council has nominated Mike Clayden to act as designated person for complaints from Council tenants. Tenants from other social housing providers are able to approach their MP or Councillor and ask them to fulfil their role of designated person and facilitate a local resolution to their complaint.
- 1.4 From April 2013 unresolved complaints are referred to the Housing Ombudsman. Previously, complaints were investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman.

- 1.5 The Housing Ombudsman Service will not investigate a complaint from a tenant until either:

8 weeks have passed since the tenant has completed the landlords' complaints procedure and received a final decision letter

Or

A designated person or panel have been approached to review the complaint. The designated person can refer the complainant directly to the Ombudsman if they do not believe that the complaint is resolvable locally. The complainant can also refer themselves to the Ombudsman if they are unhappy with the suggested outcome made by the designated person

2.0 CURRENT POSITION - ADC

- 2.1 There has been one complaint referred to a designated person since the legislation changed in April 2013. Cllr Clayden handled this complaint and was able to successfully resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the tenant and the Council.
- 2.2 When the legislation was introduced members of the H&CSWG recommended the setting up of a Designated Tenants Panel. A tenant survey carried out in July 2013 evidenced that 74% of respondents also supported the concept of a tenant panel.
- 2.3 In September 2013 the Council embarked on a recruitment process to appoint volunteer tenants to one of two panels – Tenant Scrutiny Panel and Designated Tenant Complaints Panel. All applicants were interviewed by two tenants and the Senior Tenant Participation Officer.
- 2.4 The outcome of the recruitment process was that 10 tenants were identified as having the requisite skills and commitment to be appointed to a panel. 10 members was the target number for appointment to the Scrutiny Panel. A decision was made therefore that given that Tenant Scrutiny has the greatest benefit to the tenant base and the Council, priority should be given to getting this group established.

3.0 PLANS FOR 2014 / 15

- 3.1 An option to utilise the Scrutiny Panel to also act as a Designated Panel has been rejected on the advice from Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS). Their recommendation is that Tenant Scrutiny is time consuming for the volunteer panel members and that complaint resolution requires comprehensive training and could distract from the main focus of the panel.
- 3.2 Anecdotal evidence from other social housing providers is that their panels have been under-utilised and that complaining tenants are more likely to approach a Councillor or MP than the designated panel. Data from the

Housing Ombudsman's website indicates that only 41 out of 1783 social landlords have established designated tenant panels.

- 3.3 Once the Scrutiny Panel is more established, Housing will develop a menu of activities that tenants can get involved with. This will include a Tenants Complaints Panel. The aim would be to broaden the appeal of getting involved and therefore have a greater pool of tenants to select from.
- 3.4 Cllr Clayden will continue in his role as the nominated Designated Person for ADC tenants for the foreseeable future. As the complainant is able to choose which designated person / panel they refer their complaint to, this role is permanent.

AGENDA ITEM NO.9ARUN DISTRICT COUNCILHOUSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP19 MARCH 2014

Information Paper

Subject : Raise the Roof – Progress report February 2014

Report by : Andy Elder / Judy Knapp Report date: 28 February 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council's housing strategy Raise the Roof was approved in December 2010; this paper sets out progress with the Action Plan (appendix 1) as at February 2014.

Whilst good progress has been maintained in enabling the delivery of new affordable housing, both for rent and shared ownership, the Council continues to face considerable challenges in respect of its homelessness prevention work.

The Council is also making good progress with its work to improve the energy efficiency of private sector housing in the District and is moving forward with plans to develop new council housing for local people.

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Council's Housing Strategy is Raise the Roof and covers the period 2010 – 2015. Raise the Roof sets out the ways in which the Council and its partners are working towards creating a balanced housing market for the District and providing decent homes which are fit for the needs of Arun's population.

1.2 The following are the strategic priorities of Raise the Roof;

- 1) To develop balanced and sustainable communities in the Arun district;
- 2) To ensure through a range of housing options that everyone has somewhere to live;
- 3) To meet the housing and support needs of vulnerable people;
- 4) To improve the condition and energy efficiency of the private sector housing stock;
- 5) To manage, retain and improve the Council's own housing stock;

2.0 DELIVERING THE HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

- 2.1 Progress on specific items in the housing strategy action plan 2010-2015 are set out in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.2 The Council set itself an ambitious target when producing its current housing strategy of enabling the development of 1,000 affordable homes by 2015. After 3 years, over 800 homes have been completed, but there is still some way to go before this particular strategy action is achieved.
- 2.3 The Council brought 36 empty homes brought back into use in 2012/13. However, we now have limited capacity in this area of our work as we share (0.4 FTE) an Empty Homes Officer post with Worthing and Adur Council.
- 2.4 Homelessness prevention is the main purpose of the Council's homelessness service. Arun has performed well in preventing homelessness in recent years, however homeless applications have started to rise again and the Council faces a number of significant pressures, many of which are outside of its control. Demand is still increasing for temporary housing which means people are often staying longer in relatively expensive Bed and Breakfast accommodation.
- 2.5 The extent to which the Council is successful in its approach to homelessness prevention is important because as well as an economic cost any failure in the housing market also has a high social cost.
- 2.6 Changes to Housing Benefit entitlements and welfare benefits are likely to make accessing the private rented sector even more difficult in the future. Arun has been proactive in identifying those households who are likely to see their benefit levels fall and could lose their homes as a result.
- 2.7 Homelessness services are funded by the Council tax payer, therefore increasing spend on temporary accommodation will have an adverse impact on the General Fund.

Background Papers: Appendix 1 - Housing Strategy Action Plan progress
February 2014

Contact: Andy Elder ext. 37714 Judy Knapp ext. 37740



RAISE THE ROOF ACTION PLAN

UPDATE FEBRUARY 2014

**HOUSING STRATEGY
FOR THE ARUN DISTRICT 2010 - 2015**

RAISE THE ROOF ACTION PLAN 2010 – 2015

This Action Plan is reviewed annually by the Council's Housing and Customer Services Working Group

A1 To develop balanced and sustainable communities in the Arun district				
Housing strategy objective	Action	Milestone / Target	When	Update February 2014
To enable the delivery of 1,000 affordable homes by December 2015	To work with our social housing provider partners to enable the delivery of 1,000 new affordable homes by December 2015	Delivery of 1,000 affordable homes for rent, shared ownership and low-cost market housing	2015	805 affordable homes completed since start of strategy in 2010
	Revise the Coastal West Sussex Local Investment Plan with the Homes and Communities Agency	Report annually on the engagement undertaken with the Homes and Communities Agency and the investment secured in the previous financial year	On-going	Coastal Local Investment Plan revised and updated 2013. Working with preferred registered partners on their bids for the 2015-18 HCA Affordable Homes Programme.

Making better use of the existing housing stock by bringing 60 empty homes back into use by 2015	Bringing 12 empty homes back into use by December 2010 and the same annually thereafter	12 empty homes per annum brought back into use in the life of strategy	On-going	Jan 2014 -appointment of an (0.4 FTE) Empty Homes Officer, shared with Worthing & Adur DC. Feb 2014 – new initiative to target owners of empty properties in Arun to encourage bringing properties back into use. 36 empty homes returned to use in 2012/13 through direct intervention of the Council
Review the current S106 agreement for affordable housing by December 2011	Promote the use of Community Land Trusts as a method of delivering new affordable housing for community ownership	To produce information for Parish Councils on Community Land Trusts	2013	Completed
		Include CLT's in Local Plan and S106 agreements	2014	Included in new Local Plan and new S106's
Produce a	Requirements for specific types of	Local Plan policies	2014	Completed

<p>Development Plan Document to determine the level of Lifetime Homes standard dwellings and wheelchair homes</p>	<p>housing embedded in planning documents. To include prescriptive percentage of housing for Lifetime Homes Standard</p>			
<p>Promoting affordable housing in rural areas by enabling the delivery of a minimum of 50 affordable rural homes</p>	<p>Encourage and enable rural communities to meet their housing needs by commissioning a minimum of 2 rural housing needs surveys per annum</p>	<p>Facilitate a rolling programme of village / parish housing needs surveys in partnership with Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS)</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Housing Needs surveys completed for Slindon, Findon and Aldingbourne.</p>
		<p>Work with parish councils and local communities to assist the development process for affordable housing</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>On-going</p>

Promote the delivery of more sustainable homes and communities by ensuring all affordable homes meet Code Level 4 by 2014 and Code level 6 by 2016	To co-ordinate the delivery of low and zero-carbon energy supply infrastructure for larger strategic sites developments	Production of Local Plan	2014	Included as part of the Local Plan
	Adopt a strategic approach to energy infrastructure throughout the district to include the delivery of District Heating schemes, Combined Heat and Power (CHP) schemes and solar capture and storage systems by December 2015	Negotiations with developers and RSL's on individual schemes	On-going	Created Green Voice to comment on large residential, commercial and retail planning applications from an ecological and sustainability perspective
	New homes are cost effective to heat and have low carbon emissions by adherence to the current CfSH delivery standards	Ensure all new homes meet minimum of CfSH level 4	2015	Addressed as part of the Local Plan

A2 Ensure through a range of housing options that everyone has somewhere to live				
Housing strategy objective	Action	Milestone / Target	When	Update February 2014
Increase the levels of homelessness prevention by the targets in the action plan	The numbers of homeless preventions in the district are achieved as per annual targets	90% of households are prevented from being homeless in each year of the housing strategy	2012 - ongoing	88% achieved
	Average length of stay of households in temporary accommodation	46 weeks (2011/12)	2012	Demand is still increasing and the limited availability of temporary accommodation means households are staying longer in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
		44 weeks (2012/13)	2013	
		42 weeks (2013/14)	2014	
40 weeks (2014/15)		2015		
Renew the Rough Sleepers' Strategy	Increase the availability of Temporary Accommodation of varying unit size to achieve offers of 'suitable' interim accommodation	New units at Glenlogie, Maxwellton & at Howard House	2014	An additional 10 Temporary Accommodation units (1beds, 2 beds & 4 bed)
	Renew the Rough Sleepers' Strategy	New Strategy to HCSWG & Cabinet	Jan 2014	Completed
		Deliver the objectives of the Rough Sleepers' Strategy	On-going	Achieved the following to date: Glenlogie night hostel trial opening; supporting SHORE initiatives; working with Broadway Outreach; participating in rough sleeper / street community multi-

	Deliver the objectives of the new Homeless Strategy	Completion of tasks to preventing homelessness	2012 - ongoing	agency case meetings Included in the new Homelessness Strategy
A3 Meet the Housing and Support Needs of Vulnerable People				
Housing strategy objective	Action	Milestone / Target	When	Update February 2014
Promoting choice and independence for vulnerable people in the Arun District	Ensure external agencies and service users are involved in the future review of allocations policies affecting vulnerable people.	Hold consultations with relevant agencies	2012	Completed
	Research the need and viability of extra care housing schemes and specialist care provision to widen the housing and care options open to older people	Agree an acceptable model for the delivery of extra care housing	2015	Abbottswood extra care housing scheme completed 2012
Improving housing options for young	Provide supported housing for 16 – 25 year olds	Include the delivery of supported housing for young	2015	Not being currently progressed due to lack of

people with a bespoke housing scheme for under 25's by 2015		people in the Local Investment Plan		revenue funding for this type of scheme.
Improving housing options for Gypsies and Travellers by delivery of a permanent site by 2015	Promote good site management and provision of appropriate facilities for all authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites	Produce a Development Plan Document for the delivery of a permanent Gypsy and Traveller site	2015	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment completed 2013. Policies included in the Local Plan.
A4 Improve the condition and energy efficiency of the private sector housing stock				
Housing strategy objective	Action	Milestone / Target	When	Update February 2014
Improving energy efficiency of homes by ensuring 500 dwellings each year receive at least one measure which improves their energy efficiency	Decent homes in the private sector	Produce action plan from 2010 Stock Condition Survey	2010	Completed Information from the stock condition survey has been used to set priorities for the Housing Strategy, Energy Efficiency/Fuel Poverty Strategies and Empty Homes Strategy
	Reduce the number of dwellings in poor repair with the most serious hazards through a combination of encouragement, assistance and enforcement	214 dwellings per annum brought up to the Decent Homes Standard	On-going	2012/13 – 54 Properties made decent

	Improving the energy efficiency of homes, particularly those occupied by vulnerable and disadvantaged residents experiencing fuel poverty	500 dwellings each year to receive at least one measure which improves their energy efficiency	On-going	2012/2013 – 783 Dwellings
	Improving safety of older owner occupiers	Regular partnership working	On-going	Regular meetings with Occupational Therapists at WSCC and partnership working in the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants - on going On going
Helping elderly people to maintain their homes, ensuring they are satisfactory for the occupier in order that they can maintain their independence	Promote the use and availability of assisted technology to help people remain living independently	Increase by 15% the number of private rented or owner occupied homes with assisted technology installed	On-going	2012/13 - 126 Disabled Facilities Grants completed. Low number of referrals continue to be received. As at February 2014 Occupational Therapy Teams have high level number of cases on waiting lists. As of January 2014 75% of Disabled Facilities Grants were completed on target. Lifeline service provided jointly with Chichester DC

Review the assistance available to help people stay warm in their homes by 2013	Promote the various sources of subsidies, loans and grants available to individuals	Review the opportunities for alternative funding sources	2013	547 properties in Arun received warm West Sussex Home Energy visits in 2011/12. 2012/13 Warm Homes Healthy People Heating Grant – 16 Properties
A5 Manage, retain and improve the Council's own housing stock				
Housing strategy objective	Action	Milestone / Target	When	Update February 2014
Better use of the Council housing stock	Decommission unsuitable sheltered housing for use as general needs housing or redevelopment initiatives to attempt funding to modernise or replace remaining sheltered housing stock	Install Tunstall overlay for all existing sheltered housing schemes Undertake Sheltered Housing review	2013 2014	Being progressed Working group undertaking Sheltered review but within the context of a wider review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

Commission the development of an initial programme of 20 new council homes	Appoint a Housing Development Project Officer	2012	Completed: appointment of Hastoe and MH Architects; developed plans for new Council housing in Wick
	Appoint a Register Partner to develop new homes for the council	2013	
	Consultation with residents & stakeholders	2013/14	
	Planning Applications	2014	
	Start on site	2014	
Introduce an Under-occupation Scheme to encourage ADC tenants to down-size	Report to HCSWG, seeking recommendation to Cabinet, and Cabinet approval	Nov 2013	Completed: Scheme in place
Make better use of existing disabled adapted properties and develop	Liaison with WSCC Occupational Therapists,	2014	

	policies for responding to new applications for adaptations in Council properties via Disabled Facilities Grant to avoid adapting properties which do not meet residents' needs	and develop policy		
	Develop Policy for tackling Tenancy Fraud, incorporating the new powers of the Prevention of Social Fraud Act 2013	Work with colleagues in Internal Audit & HB to develop a corporate response to tenancy fraud	2014	
		Participate in the West Sussex Tenancy Fraud Forum & share good practice	2013 and on-going	Attendance at new Forum meetings, learning from good practice, particularly that developed by Crawley BC
	Improve void performance to bring void properties back into use	Weekly void management meetings with Mears	2013 and on-going	Completed
		Develop improved processes with Mears for the inspection, specification and timescales of void works	2014	
		Develop improved processes for the collection of Notice to end a tenancy from vacating ADC tenants	2013	Completed
Improving housing services to service users and residents by conducting	Conduct regular service user and resident surveys to understand their	Undertake questionnaires and equality and diversity	On-going	Equality Impact Assessments completed for

satisfaction surveys	opinions on our services	audits for frontline housing services	the Allocations Scheme and Homelessness Strategy
Improve thermal insulation to Council dwellings and reduce carbon footprint	Explore possibilities of working with WSCC and their preferred provider, Carillion plc, to improve thermal insulation and provide other enhancements, particularly to areas of fuel poverty.	Achieve fuel savings and reduce the Council's carbon footprint	2014 and on-going
			Lists of properties have been provided by the Council for desktop surveys by Carillion. Further meetings have been arranged.

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCILHOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP – 19 MARCH 2014

Information Paper

Subject : Tenancy Strategy & Tenancy Policy

Report by : Judy Knapp

Report date: March 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates the Working Group on the first year of the new Tenancy Strategy & Tenancy Policy, in particular the use of Fixed Term tenancies.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In June 2012, the Working Group approved the draft Tenancy Strategy & Tenancy Policy for public consultation. This consultation was carried out in June and July 2012.
- 1.2 The Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy were approved by Cabinet in September 2012. The Strategy was implemented from October 2012 and the Policy was implemented from January 2013.
- 1.3 The Tenancy Strategy sets out the criteria for the different tenancy types: Secure, Flexible (Fixed term) for 5 years and Flexible (Fixed term) for 10 years.

2.0 TENANCY CRITERIA

- 2.1 Secure tenancies are offered to those moving into 1 bedroom accommodation and sheltered accommodation.
- 2.2 Secure tenants who transfer to another Council property retain their Secure tenancy, but not if they are moving to a property with more bedrooms than their current home.
- 2.3 Flexible (Fixed Term) tenancies are offered to those moving into properties with 2 or more bedrooms; disabled applicants moving to an adapted property; family members who succeed to a tenancy after the death of a Secure tenant.

- 2.4 Flexible (Fixed Term) tenancies are offered for a minimum of 5 years, after the 1 year introductory period, or for 10 years after a 1 year introductory period.
- 2.5 Households with a child under the age of 5 years are offered a Flexible (Fixed Term) tenancy of 10 years.

3.0 NEW TENANCY LETTINGS

- 3.1 Since April 2013, 106 Council properties have been let on Secure tenancies; 75 have been let on an Introductory basis leading to a Secure tenancy after 12 months; 22 on Flexible (Fixed Term) for 5 years and 21 Flexible (Fixed Term) for 10 years.
- 3.2 A further 94 properties have been let on non-secure licenses.
- 3.3 None of the prospective tenants have raised concerns or appealed the tenancy type they have been offered.

4.0 THE END OF TENANCY PROCESS

- 4.1 Flexible (Fixed Term) tenancies will be reviewed in their final year. The first 5 year Flexible tenancies will not end until 2018/19. Housing staff will engage with the tenant to understand their current circumstances and consider any grounds for tenancy extension.
- 4.2 Tenancy extension would not usually be offered if the tenant is under-occupying 1 or more bedrooms; if an adapted property is no longer needed for a disabled person; or when the tenants have sufficient household income to meet their own housing needs in the private sector.
- 4.3 If the Flexible tenancy is to end, housing advice will be offered and signposting to alternative accommodation options.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The outcomes of the change in tenancy arrangements will not be felt until 2018/19, when the first tenancies under the new arrangements end. A report on the impact of the changes will be brought back to the appropriate committee/working group at that time.

Background Papers: Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy

Contact: Judy Knapp, Housing Services Manager
Ext: 37740

AGENDA ITEM NO.11ARUN DISTRICT COUNCILHOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP – 19 March 2014

Information Paper

Subject : Photo ID

Report by : Judy Knapp

Report date: March 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates the Housing & Customer Services Working Group on the 12 months pilot project to take photographic ID of each new tenant moving in to a Council property.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is proposed that photographic ID continues to be collected for new tenants moving into Council properties.
It is proposed to extend the photographic ID collection to include any changes of tenancy and to include any other adults living in Council properties as well as the tenant.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In February 2013, the working group recommended to Cabinet that a pilot project be approved to take photographic ID of each new tenant moving in to a Council property from April 2013.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Photos of new tenants have been collected since 1 April 2013. A total of 318 new tenancies have started since the beginning of the financial year, and photos have been taken of each new tenant. Photos are also taken of new tenants who carry out a mutual exchange.
- 2.2 Prospective tenants are advised that photos will be taken at the time of sign-up.
- 2.3 No tenants have refused to have their photos taken as part of our identification & verification process.

- 2.4 Housing staff refer to tenant photos when carrying out home visits to verify that the tenant is still in occupation.
- 2.5 Photographs are not shared with any third party unless we are required to do so by law.

3.0 GOOD PRACTICE

- 3.1 Housing staff carry out new tenancy visits in the early weeks of each tenancy, and other regular visits throughout the 12 month term of Introductory tenancies.
- 3.2 Housing staff work in close liaison with Housing Benefit staff and fraud teams to identify and investigate cases of potential fraud.
- 3.3 Photographic ID is an example of good practice for social landlords as a means of detecting tenancy fraud.
- 3.4 By gradually collecting photographs of tenants as they move into a Council property the Housing department is increasing its identification of its tenants. The 'library' of tenant ID will grow as further properties are vacated and re-let.

4.0 FUTURE PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed to continue to collect photographs of all new tenants moving into Council properties.
- 4.2 It is proposed that Housing staff will extend the photographic ID to include other tenancy changes, such as adding or removing a joint tenant and when a surviving family member succeeds to a tenancy on the death of the tenant.
- 4.3 It is also proposed that photographic ID will be collected from other adults living in Council properties even if they are not the tenant. This will increase knowledge of who is living in our stock.
- 4.4 The new Housing IT software has the capacity to hold photographic ID of occupants linked to property addresses.

Contact: Judy Knapp, Housing Services Manager (ext 37740)

Housing & Customer Services Working Group - 2014/15 [as at 21.10.13] (please note all dates for agenda items subject to review)								
Meeting Date			03-Jul-14	28-Aug-14	23-Oct-14	08-Jan-15	05-Mar-15	
Item	Lead	Origin						COMMENTS
Election of Chairman & Vice-Chairman		ToR	*					
Terms of Reference		ToR	*					
Work programme - set and review		ToR	*	*	*	*	*	
Stonepillow Update			*					
Gas Safety Certificates - verbal update at every meeting			*	*	*	*	*	
Rough Sleeper Update - verbal update at every meeting			*	*	*	*	*	
Items for 2014/15								
Impact of Welfare Reform Act (including Bedroom Tax, Housing Rent Arrears and Housing Allocations)								
Housing Business Plan Annual Review								
Development of Tenants Panel								
Landlord Accreditation Scheme (include Choice Based Lettings)								
Disabled Facility Grants (Sept/Oct 2014)								

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