

## **TENANT REVIEW PANEL - LOCAL OFFERS 11 AND 16**

Report of the Tenant Panel

### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report shows the findings of the Tenant Panel's review of Local Offers 11 and 16, in addition to presenting recommendations.
- 1.2 Local offer 11 – Provide new tenants with help and support to allow them to maintain their tenancy.
- 1.3 Local Offer 16 – Provide vulnerable or elderly tenants with access to a range of services to help them live independently.
- 1.4 Full details can be found in appendix 1.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

To consider the recommendations of the Tenant Review Panel as detailed in paragraph 3.5.

### **3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 The review of Local Offers 11 and 16 has been carried out by the Tenant Panel over a period of 2 months. The panel felt that the current services are well run but have identified changes which could be of benefit to them.
- 3.2 Factors taken into account whilst carrying out the review were in relation to the Local and Central Government Supporting People grant funding cuts.
- 3.3 The panel visited the Tenancy Support, Supported Living, Tenancy Sustainment, Mental Health and Carelink Teams to establish how each service provides support to Derby Homes' clients.
- 3.4 Areas looked at in each area were:
  - Current procedures
  - Referral forms and processes
  - Client databases
  - Support plans
  - Timelines for service delivery
  - Visiting criteria
  - Case studies

### **3.5 Review Panel Recommendations**

#### **3.5.1 The first recommendation is across all teams**

An administration assistant to be brought in to assist the Tenancy Support, Supported Living and Tenancy Sustainment Teams. This role could be filled by utilising the new Derby Homes Home 2 Work Initiative, enabling an apprentice to gain valuable work experience.

The panel have spoken to the Social Enterprise Manager who has confirmed this would be a viable proposition.

The benefit of this would alleviate staff of administration duties allowing them to concentrate on their support duties.

#### **3.5.2 Supported Living**

An investigation into the possibility of a more robust IT system which could be shared by both Carelink and Derby Homes' staff to ensure information sharing is consistent and accurate.

An option in the short term would be to allow Derby Homes' staff access to the current system used by Carelink.

#### **3.5.3 Tenancy Sustainment**

A second survey to be carried out after the full 12 months support has ended to ensure consistency throughout.

#### **3.5.4 Mental Health**

A possible secondment from within the Mental Health Trust. The benefits of this would be support for the Tenancy Support Specialised Officer, also enabling the secondee to gain valuable experience.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

Consultation  
Financial and Business Plan  
Legal and Confidentiality  
Council  
Personnel  
Environmental  
Equalities Impact Assessment  
Health & Safety  
Risk  
Policy Review

If Board Members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author.

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Background Information: None.

Supporting Information: None.

# TENANT PANEL REPORT

## Review of

**Local offer 11 – Provide new tenants with help and support to allow them to maintain their tenancy**

**Local Offer 16 – Provide vulnerable or elderly tenants with access to a range of services to help them live independently.**



NOVEMBER 2012

## ABOUT THE PANEL

The panel was brought together in April 2012 by inviting people from tenant involvement groups already in existence. The panel's main role is to review the 23 Local Offers and make recommendations if required for service improvements.

Scrutiny panel	Gill Young	Chair
DACP	Harry Margett	
DACP	Keith Merry	Vice Chair
OSCAR	Koliwe Chikuri	
Leaseholder	Lyn Gadsby	
Tenant	Bob MacDonald	

Arthur Baba has recently joined the panel. Arthur has been a Derby Homes tenant for 3 years.

## 2nd REVIEW

**Local offer 11 – Provide new tenants with help and support to allow them to maintain their tenancy**

**Local Offer 16 – Provide vulnerable or elderly tenants with access to a range of services to help them live independently.**

Due to recent Local and Central Government Supporting People grant funding cuts Derby faces a significant reduction in funding from 9m to 4m from April 2013.

## WHAT WE DID

Derby Homes Support Services include:

- Tenancy Support
- Supported Living
- Tenancy Sustainment
- Mental Health worker
- Carelink (Derby City Council)

The panel met with members of staff from each of the above to establish how each service provides support to Derby Homes clients.

### Tenancy Support

The Tenancy Support Team provides services for people who have been rehoused after a period of homelessness, survivors of domestic abuse, young people, people living with HIV and ex offenders or people at risk of offending.

### Supported Living

Supported Living is a needs led service, which provides either daily, weekly or monthly visits according to the individual circumstances of the client and enables them to live independently in their own homes.

### **Tenancy Sustainment**

The Tenancy Sustainment Team provide help and support to new tenants, ensuring they get support with things like sorting out utilities, benefit payments and any other property related issues.

### **Mental Health Worker**

Derby Homes appointed a Mental Health Worker in 2010 as it was recognised that there were gaps in the ability to provide support to clients suffering from mental health issues. This post has also given all housing staff additional support to enable them to identify possible mental health problems with their tenants.

### **Carelink**

Carelink is a part of Derby City Council's Adult Health and Social Care service working in partnership with Derby Homes to provide a 24 hour emergency response and call service.

## **EVIDENCE**

In assessing these services the panel looked at the following:

### **Tenancy Support**

The panel visited the service at Brook Street Local Housing Office and spoke in great detail to Leon Taylor and Gaynor Sladen, Supported Living Team Leaders. During the visit the following were observed:

- Current procedures
- Referral forms and processes
- Client databases
- Support plans
- Timelines for service delivery
- Visiting criteria
- Case studies

The aim of the service is to help people maintain their tenancies, promote independence and get involved in the community. There is a goal set when the action plan is put in place with the client and this is specific to the individual as it is a wholly needs led service.

The panel felt that the procedures were very strong and robust enabling a competent service to be consistently delivered for the benefit of clients. A perfect example of this is the exemplary record the service has achieved within the ISO9001: 2008 framework.

The panel were concerned at the amount of admin work required. The panel felt that this is mainly data inputting taking away away valuable visiting/support time from the staff.

### **Supported Living**

The Supported Living Service is also situated at Brook Street and the panel reviewed the following:

- Current procedure
- Referrals
- Access to services (additional agencies)
- Client database
- Timelines for service
- Case studies

The aim of this service is to enable people to live independently in their own homes. By doing this the service contributes to the economy by making financial savings around hospital stays, care home beds and property repairs and maintenance. The service is not time bound therefore allowing a greater range of support and signposting to be offered, dependent upon the clients individual needs.

The panel felt that if face to face contact is lost due to reductions in funding, this social inclusion aspect of the service would be of great detriment to the health of the clients. This in the opinion of the panel, is one of the most important elements of the service and needs to be kept. If withdrawn many elderly/vulnerable people would become isolated, not being able to identify when they may be in need of help. Having the face to face contact allows the Support Officer to continually access the needs, wellbeing, health of the tenant, and also the property condition.

The panel were concerned that the caseloads for each Support Worker are very high and the service offered could suffer due to the amount of administration work needing to be completed by the Support Worker. An example of this is that the Support Officer completes a needs/risk assessment and support plan, on paper format with the service user. Once this is agreed, they then have to duplicate this by data inputting the information into the supported living system, a loss of support visiting/case management time.

There is an ongoing variance of supported living needs, due to medical and social needs. The panel has become aware during the investigations relating to this report, that further steps should be taken to enhance the 'independent living' criteria, ie further use of the adaptation and occupational therapy facilities within the NHS, co-ordination with DH would enhance this for the benefit of all tenants and other agencies

## **Tenancy Sustainment**

The panel visited Rob Key, Manager of Tenancy Sustainment Team and reviewed the service by looking at:

- Criteria of service
- Timelines for visits
- Management spreadsheets
- Satisfaction statistics
- Workload
- Service plan

The aim of the Tenancy Sustainment Team is to support new tenants whilst they get to grips with their tenancy in the first 12 months. The service has helped a total of 757 tenants in the last 2.5 years. As a result of this service being in place there have only been 8 evictions for rent arrears and no abandonments. Tenancy Sustainment Officers visit at 3, 6, 9 and 12 months and carry out a satisfaction survey after the initial 3 month visit. The overall satisfaction of the client about the service stands at 100%. The uptake of the service is currently showing a 5% increase.

The service is self funding and has shown financial savings for Derby Homes as the tenancies are being managed well by the tenants with the support of the team.

Although the panel were impressed by the satisfaction results they felt it could be improved if an additional survey was carried out at the end of the support.

### **Mental Health Worker**

The panel spoke to Ruth Cudworth who holds this position of Mental Health and Housing Support Officer and reviewed the following:

- The referral process
- Workload
- Support
- Training role

They felt that this role is crucial as Ruth brings a wealth of expertise surrounding mental health issues, a vitally important asset to Derby Homes and the management of its tenancies .

The role was demonstrated to be on hand to advise and support members of staff, should they have any concerns with a service user. This role is available for any Derby Homes tenant or lease holder.

Ruth holds a heavy caseload and also runs Mental Health awareness training courses for all Derby Homes staff. Recently some members of the panel attended the course and it was evident that it is of great use for all staff in their roles. The panel felt that there could be a lack of service provision if Ruth was to be absent for a sustained period of time. It was also clear that this is another area which would benefit from some additional administrative support being provided.

### **Carelink**

Although Carelink is managed by Derby City Council the panel felt it prudent to visit and look at that service too, as Derby Home's tenants also rely on the provision of this service.

The panel felt that the 24 hour cover was adequate, but the lack of interaction of databases could hinder response times or the right type of support being given.

If Carelink are contacted by a Derby Homes tenant, the information is passed to Derby Homes staff verbally; this appears to cause problems for both Carelink and

Derby Homes staff. It was discussed that both Carelink and Derby Homes felt that it would be better to have a shared electronic database.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **The first recommendation is across all teams**

1. An administration assistant to be brought in to assist the Tenancy Support, Supported Living and Tenancy Sustainment Teams. This role could be filled by utilising the new Derby Homes Home to Work Initiative, enabling an apprentice to gain valuable work experience.

The panel have spoken to the Social Enterprise Manager who has confirmed this would be a viable proposition.

The benefit of this would alleviate staff of basic administration duties allowing them to concentrate on their support duties.

### **Supported Living**

2. An investigation into the possibility of a more robust IT system which could be shared by both Carelink and Derby Homes staff to ensure information sharing is consistent and accurate.

An option in the short term would be to allow Derby Homes staff access to the current system used by Carelink.

### **Tenancy Sustainment**

1. A second survey, in addition to the 3 month survey to be carried out after the full 12 months support has ended to measure consistency throughout the term of the service.

### **Mental Health**

2. A possible secondment from within the Mental Health Trust. The benefits of this would be support for Ruth, also enabling the secondee to gain valuable experience.