

CITY BOARD
25 AUGUST 2011

ITEM B7

EMERGENCY CALL SYSTEMS – TELEPHONE LINES

Report of the Director of Housing and Customer Service

1. SUMMARY

This report explains the current system relating to the provision of telephone lines for emergency call systems.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the City Board support the approach set out in this report.

3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 We currently deliver supported housing services to just under 1000 tenants. As part of the support package tenants have a 24 hour emergency call system which links them to Derby Carelink.
- 3.2 In 1990, this emergency call system was upgraded from a hardwired system to a dispersed system which operates via telephone lines. In order to facilitate this more Derby City Council installed telephone lines where none were available.
- 3.3 More recently the policy has been established that to receive the emergency call system service the tenant must provide their own telephone line on which the equipment operates. This applies to Derby Homes' customers and also private customers who receive the service direct from Derby City Council's Derby Carelink.
- 3.4 Derby Homes is still funding line rental on 276 lines whilst our 700 tenants pay for their own line at £11.00 per month this costs a total of £36,432 per year to its Supporting People costs.
- 3.5 We propose to move to a position where all tenants provide and fund the phone lines required for the system. In many cases tenants also have a private line which they use for their own calls which can also provide the line for the call system.. The emergency call system does not incur any additional charges for the tenant over and above the line rental.
- 3.6 We appreciate that there will be circumstances of financial hardship where a tenant may have difficulty paying for the line rental. We will exercise discretion in such cases and give tenants at least 3 onths notice of the charge. This will be authorised by the Director of Housing & Customer Service.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 This will involve personal consultation with tenants affected. With the tenants consent we will also contact and consult with carers and next of kin. Supported

Living staff will also discuss the issue with them.

5.0 FINANCE & BUSINESS PLAN IMPLICATONS

- 5.1 Line rental charges are met from Supporting People funding, outside of Derby Homes' Management Fee. Savings arising from this proposal will be ring-fenced within Supporting People funded services and will enable Derby Homes to react to pressures on this budget.

6.0 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The emergency call systems provide support and reassurance for elderly and vulnerable tenants. We will implement these proposals in a sensitive manner and will not introduce greater risks to the health and well being of our tenants.
- 6.2 Were there are grounds of financial hardship and a tenant would be placed at risk through this proposal Derby Homes will continue to fund the line rental on a 'preserved rights' basis.

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

- Legal and Confidentiality
- Personnel
- Environmental
- Equalities Impact Assessment
- Risk
- Policy Review

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or Phil Davies, Chief Executive, phil.davies@derbyhomes.org – Phone: 01332 888528

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Background Information

Supporting Information