



REPORT TO: Housing Portfolio Holder
LEAD OFFICER: Director of Housing

13 September 2017

Tenant led Scrutiny Review of Sheltered Communal Rooms

Purpose

1. To formally accept the Scrutiny Panel's report – 'A Review of Sheltered Housing Communal Rooms' (**Appendix A**) and approve the Action Plan (**Appendix B**) which sets out how the Council plans to take forward the recommendations and outcomes from the review.
2. This is not a key decision but has been brought before the Housing Portfolio Holder because it sets out proposed actions for the Affordable Homes Service following the Tenant led Scrutiny Review of Sheltered Housing Communal rooms.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Housing Portfolio Holder formally consider the Scrutiny Report of the Sheltered Housing Communal Rooms (**Appendix A**) and agrees to the measures set out in the Action Plan (**Appendix B**) and to suggest changes or additions where required.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. After a recruitment drive in 2012 we supported and provided training for a group of tenants and leaseholders interested in helping us scrutinise and review services. In November 2013 we started our first major tenant led service review and since then the team have completed three scrutiny projects, the latest being the review of sheltered communal rooms.
5. We wish to thank the scrutiny team for their dedication and hard work as volunteers. The review has identified several areas for improvement and for us to work on with residents going forward. In particular many residents taking part in the scrutiny review identified service charge costs and levels of use of the communal facilities as concerns they wished to highlight.

Background

6. In line with our corporate plan 2016-2021 objectives we want to work in partnership with our residents, parishes, businesses and community organisations within the district to develop services which will enhance the quality of life of our residents.

7. The Localism Act 2011 sets out expectations for Local Authorities and registered providers in relation to Consumer Standards. Within the legislation, the Involvement and Empowerment standard states that tenants must be given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved with the management of their homes.
8. Our Resident Involvement Strategy (2016-2018) states - we are determined to provide opportunities for residents to fully participate in the development and improvement of the housing service. We also commit to demonstrating how resident feedback has been used to improve services.

Considerations

9. The Scrutiny Project Team have undertaken a detailed review into the use of the 41 Council owned sheltered housing communal rooms. This included looking into the hiring policy and booking form, the hiring fee and future use of the rooms (Appendix A).
10. An Action Plan (Appendix B) has been developed setting out how the Council will respond to the outcomes and recommendations set out within the Scrutiny Review Report.
11. The Scrutiny Review has also highlighted the need for the Council to undertake a wider review of the communal rooms in light of some of the issues raised in terms of their use and the service charge costs.
12. The Action Plan and the wider review will be taken forward through the establishment of a steering group consisting of elected members, officers and representatives from the scrutiny team to take forward the action plan and further explore possibilities for the future use of communal rooms. A report will be brought back to the Housing Portfolio Holder in spring next year outlining the recommendations following the wider review.

Options

13. The Portfolio Holder is requested to formally consider the Scrutiny Report of the Review of the Sheltered Housing Communal Rooms and agree the measures set out in the Action Plan and to suggest changes or additions where required.

Implications

14. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

There are no significant implications.

Consultation responses

15. As part of the Scrutiny Review consultation took place with:-

Tenant Participation Group members.
Residents living in Sheltered accommodation via face to face meetings/coffee mornings arranged at 6 venues across the District (all sheltered tenants and leaseholders were invited to attend).
Survey questionnaires sent out to all sheltered tenants and leaseholders.
Sheltered Housing Forum attendees.
Leasehold forum attendees.
Estates Officers and other housing staff involved in the review.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Acceptance of this report and action plan fits in with our corporate targets of:

Aim 1 – HOMES FOR OUR FUTURE

16. Secure the delivery of a wide range of housing to meet the needs of existing and future communities.

Aim 2 – AN INNOVATIVE AND DYNAMIC ORGANISATION

17. Adopt a more commercial and business-like approach to ensure we can continue to deliver the best possible services at the lowest possible cost.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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