

Report of Mike Camponi, Housing Manager, Leeds Homes

Report to Housing Advisory Board

Date: 2 February 2016

Subject: Tenant Mobility update

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

In November 2015 Housing Advisory Board received a paper proposing a new tenant mobility scheme. This was approved through delegated decision in December 2016. This paper updates HAB on progress to date.

Recommendations

We ask that the Housing Advisory Board note progress and the implementation timetable.

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 To provide an update on the Tenant Mobility Incentive Scheme in terms of progress, the timetable for implementation, monitoring and risk management arrangements.

2 Background information

2.1.1 Housing Leeds has allocated £195K to a new tenant mobility incentive scheme for 2016/17. The scheme aims to promote tenant mobility through a proactive marketing campaign and incentive payments. The focus of the scheme is to support under occupying and overcrowded council tenants to swap homes with each other through a mutual exchange.

2.1.2 A payment of £500 will be available to assist with removal costs and acts as an incentive to move. The budget will cover:

- Publicity and promotional materials
- 2 x citywide 'Big Home Swap' events at the Civic Hall
- Approx. 377 incentive payments @ £500 per tenant exchanging

3. Main issues

3.1 Key actions

3.1.1 Briefing staff

3.1.2 Procedures have been developed for officers on signing up customers, dealing with applications, claims and payment.

3.2 Marketing and promotional materials

3.2.1 The scheme will be marketed to tenants through the Tenants Newsletter, Leeds Homes media, Housing Leeds Facebook, Twitter and website, promotional flyers, posters and targeted mail out to under occupied and overcrowded tenants:

- Leeds Homes Flyer and website – from 6/1
- Social media posts – from January 16
- Posters / postcards – from January 16
- Targeted mail out to 2,889 tenants who are on housing register who are overcrowded (1233) or under occupying (1233) – January 2016
- Tenants Newsletter – feature to be included in Spring edition (TBC)

3.3 Implementation

3.3.1 The scheme was launched in December 2015 to ensure officers are aware of the scheme and are able to advise tenants. This has been followed up with a full promotional launch in January 2016.

3.3.2 A 'Home Swap' event has been arranged for 26 February at Leeds Civic Hall. This will build on the success of the first swap event which was held in July 2015 and attended by over 250 tenants. On the day tenants were able to register on the House Exchange website and meet other people looking for a swap.

3.3.3 Officers from local housing offices and housing associations were on hand to support with online registrations, using the website to find potential matches and to give advice about other housing issues, for example, having adaptations fitted in their homes, the tenant home contents insurance scheme and reporting tenancy fraud.

3.4 Monitoring outcomes and risks

3.4.1 Housing Leeds will monitor the number of moves made under the scheme, broken down by area, size of properties swapped and status of the tenant before their exchange (ie under occupying / overcrowded).

3.4.2 This information will be used to track budget spend, and address any issues with potential under / over spend. Applications will be dealt with on a first come first served basis.

3.4.3 There is a risk of complaints from tenants who are not eligible for the scheme, for example, tenants who exchange but who are not overcrowded or under occupying. The risk will be mitigated by including clear eligibility criteria in the promotional materials, and promoting the benefits of exchanges made outside the incentive scheme to tenants who are not eligible for an incentive payment.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 The scheme has been approved following on from Housing Advisory Board recommendations in November 2015.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 An EIA screening document has been completed as part of the approval process.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

4.3.1 The proposal promotes the vision of the Council's Tenancy Strategy 2013-2015 to create more opportunities for people to live independently in quality, affordable housing.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 There are no major resource implications related to this report.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications related to this report

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 Housing Leeds has outlined plans to monitor the success of the scheme and manage potential risks.

5 Conclusions

5.1.1 The scheme has been launched and is now being actively promoted to tenants. The scheme will be closely monitored.

6 Recommendations

6.1 We ask that the Housing Advisory Board note progress and the implementation timetable.

7 Background documents¹

None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.