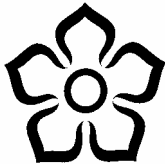


Leicester
City Council



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
Freeman

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

**Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet**

**28th March 2007
2nd April 2007**

Disposal of Frederick Thorpe House Sheltered Housing Accommodation.

Report of the Corporate Director of Housing

1. Purpose of Report and Summary

There is a growing elderly population in the City, and a growing number of frail elderly. Patterns of care have changed and most older people prefer to receive health care and social support in their own homes. In this context the demand for the Council's own Sheltered Accommodation is falling, although individual schemes remain popular and some have a waiting list.

In the last year a number of initiatives were taken to increase demand for the sheltered accommodation. There are, however one scheme where there is still low demand and the report describes the implications of considering its closure.

2. Recommendations for Scrutiny

To advise of the view of Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny on the proposal to close Frederick Thorpe House.

3. Recommendations for Cabinet (subject to outcome of consultations)

- 3.1 To consider the comments from the Adult & Housing Scrutiny Committee and indicate whether, Frederick Thorpe House Sheltered Housing Scheme should be closed.
- 3.2 If the scheme is to close
- (i) Agree that residents receive highest priority for rehousing and are paid statutory homelessness payment, their removal expenses and practical assistance with moving.

4. Financial Implications written by Danny McGrath

The closure of Frederick Thorpe House would have financial implications for both the HRA and the General Fund.

a) HRA

The effect would depend to a large extent on whether the existing tenants are relocated to other vacant HRA properties. Assuming they all are, and that the vacated properties are sold or otherwise removed from the HRA, the effects would be as follows.

Years	First Year	Subsequent
	£000	£000
Increased Housing Subsidy	-	(27)
Reduced maintenance & premises costs	(48)	(48)
Home Loss and Removal Payments	95	-
Lower Capital Resources (MRA)	-	15
Net Cost /Saving	47	(60)

As included above, there would be a reduction of £15,000 pa in the Major Repairs Allowance, starting in the year following disposal, which would affect the Capital Programme. However this would be offset by a reduction in commitments, against the HRA Capital Programme provision for Sheltered Housing Improvements, which for 2007/08 is £200,000.

Any capital receipt from the disposal of the property would be fully reusable for the financing of HRA Capital expenditure.

b) General Fund

The staffing and associated costs of Sheltered Housing are met from Supporting People Grant from April 2003. The effect of the closures would depend on negotiations with SP Team on changes to the funding of the reduced service.

5. Legal Implications written by John Mclvor

It must be established whether any of the tenants affected will be entitled to home loss and disturbance payments. If the tenants are entitled, the payments will need to be assessed in accordance with the rules set out in S20 of the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965, S10A of the Land Compensation Act 1961 and S37 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 (as amended).

Legal Implications relating to any potential disposal will be addressed in the subsequent report referred to above.

John Mclvor
 Team Leader (Management and Development)
 Legal Services ext 7035

6. Report Authors:

Jean Denyer MBE Service Manager Sheltered Housing
 Legal Implication – John Mclvor
 Financial Implications –, Danny McGrath Housing Finance

Key Decision	Yes
Reason	Is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward.
Appeared in Forward Plan	Yes
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)



WARDS AFFECTED
Freeman

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:
Adults & Housing Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet

28th March 2007
2nd April 2007

Future of Frederick Thorpe House Sheltered Housing Accommodation

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Background

There is a growing elderly population in the city and a growing number of frail elderly. Patterns of care have changed and most older people prefer to receive healthcare and social support in their own homes. In this context the demand for the Council's sheltered accommodation is falling. Falling demand for sheltered accommodation is a national issue. Many local authorities have much larger provision than Leicester and face much larger problems of low demand.

The Council's 15 sheltered schemes were largely built in the late 1960's and early 1970's. The idea at the time was that people would move from family size homes into sheltered and then from sheltered to residential care if they became frail. This has changed with the growth in owner occupation and care in the community. The approach now is to support people in their own homes, using short stays in Intermediate Care if needed for health reasons.

A new concept of Extra Care has also been developed. These schemes are like the Council's sheltered schemes in that they are places where people have their own independent tenancies. However, there is 24 hour health and social care on site and, most importantly, accommodation is in one bedroom flats built to be fully wheelchair accessible. Often meals are available on the premises in a café

style environment. Hanover Housing is currently building an extra Care scheme in the Humberstone area of the City.

The Council has made improvements to its own sheltered housing over the last few years. Lifts have been installed in most of the sheltered schemes and there is capital programme provision for improvements to corridors, communal areas and the grounds.

2. Reviewing the way care and support is provided in the Council's sheltered schemes.

Supporting People now finance the housing related care element of many of the sheltered schemes in the city (e.g. in the Council's scheme they fund the Sheltered Housing Officers). The Council is only one of the providers of Sheltered Housing in the City.

Supporting People have assessed the citywide demand and reviewed all sheltered schemes during 2004/5. They have stated that there is an over supply of sheltered housing in the City and have other areas of priority housing for other client groups, i.e. Learning Disabilities. Adult and Housing are currently looking at the way community care packages are delivered to tenants in schemes across the City.

3. Falling Demand in the Council's Sheltered Accommodation

The Council runs 15 sheltered housing schemes, which have a total of 429 flats and bed sits let as individual assured and introductory tenancies to people over the age of 50years.

Tenants surveys show that security and company are the key reasons for wanting to live in sheltered schemes. Many schemes are very popular and tenant satisfaction, in those schemes is high.

In 2001/2002 the overall vacancy rate was 8.5% (number of void weeks as % units x 52 weeks).

Lily Marriott House and William Smith House were closed down in 2004 due to low demand.

3.1 The following initiatives have been taken to increase overall demand: -

- New promotion material distributed widely.
- Regular advert in Link for particular schemes
- Sheltered Housing promoted on the Council's website.

- Capital programme investment in upgrading schemes: showers, corridor improvements, lifts
- Programme of activities in schemes organized by Outreach Worker.
- Regular tenant magazine "Reach Out"
- Conversion of ex-staff homes into new flats, including wheelchair adapted flats.
- Reduction of age criteria to 50
- Tenants Incentive Scheme
- Regular meetings of Sheltered Tenants Forum

3.2 The chart below shows the current position with vacancies at Frederick Thorpe House

The rent loss in the financial period 2005/06 at this scheme was £16,016, in the current year the loss is predicated to be of a similar amount.

Appendix 1 shows the level of voids across the schemes on the 5th February 2007.

Scheme	Current Void	No. of void weeks last year	Number of Tenants	No's of tenants to rehouse if closed	Cumulative vacancies elsewhere
Frederick Thorpe House	7 plus staff house	248	19 (One couple)	18	15

4. Analysis

- As of the 5th February 2006 there are 15 vacancies within the sheltered housing stock to offer rehousing within other schemes to displaced tenants. It is predicated that further vacancies will occur in the schemes prior to the date of closure.
- If Frederick Thorpe House is closed there are two other schemes within the area Rupert House (Featherstone Drive) and Cromwell House (Saffron Lane), which could be offered to those wanting to remain in this area. Please see the attached map. There are currently 2 vacancies being held.

- Sheltered Housing Officers are funded through Supporting People who have been involved in discussions on the withdrawal or reconfiguration of services.

5. Implications of closing a sheltered housing scheme

Tenants are on assured or Introductory Tenancies. They do not have the Right To Buy.

Tenants will be eligible for homeloss payments, which will be £4,000 plus removal expenses and disturbance allowances. The Department would arrange packing and practical help with the move.

Tenants would have priority rehousing to all other sheltered schemes, one-bed flats and bungalows, once a decision to close was made. As at 5/2/2007 there were 15 vacancies in Sheltered Schemes across the City. There are obviously concerns about requiring older people to move home, and there would need to be close liaison with Adult & Housing and Health Department, particularly for those with community care support.

6. Tenants Views

In January 2007 a meeting was held at FTH with the tenants and some family members to discuss with them the possible closure of the scheme. Some of the tenants welcomed the opportunity to be able to move to other accommodation in the City and also the County to be nearer relatives. The tenants were advised to contact the department if they had any comments regarding the closure, to date none have been received. Minutes of the lounge meeting were circulated to all tenants. Ward Councillors were advised about the meeting.

After the cabinet decision there will be a meeting with the tenants to advise them of the decision. If the scheme were to be closed each tenant would be visited to establish where they would like to be rehoused.

7. Future use of vacant schemes

There will be a separate report on the future use of the building if the case for closure is accepted.

8. Financial Implications written by Danny McGrath

The closure of Frederick Thorpe House would have financial implications for both the HRA and the General Fund.

a) HRA

The effect would depend to a large extent on whether the existing tenants are relocated to other vacant HRA properties. Assuming they all are, and that the vacated properties are sold or otherwise removed from the HRA, the effects would be as follows.

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commitments, against the HRA Capital Programme provision for Sheltered Housing Improvements, which for 2007/08 is £200,000.

Any capital receipt from the disposal of the property would be fully reusable for the financing of HRA Capital expenditure.

b) General Fund

The staffing and associated costs of Sheltered Housing are met from Supporting People Grant from April 2003. The effect of the closures would depend on negotiations with SP Team on changes to the funding of the reduced service.

9. Legal Implications written by John McIvor

It must be established whether any of the tenants affected will be entitled to home loss and disturbance payments. If the tenants are entitled, the payments will need to be assessed in accordance with the rules set out in S20 of the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965, S10A of the Land Compensation Act 1961 and S37 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 (as amended).

Legal Implications relating to any potential disposal will be addressed in the subsequent report referred to above.

John Mclvor
Team Leader (Management and Development)
Legal Services ext 7035

10. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting information
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly/People on Low Income	Yes	Throughout

11. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Files held by Director of Housing.

12. Consultations

Legal Services. Supporting People. Residents. Ward Councillors.

13. Aims & Objectives:

The Aim of the Housing Department is 'A decent home within the reach of every citizen of Leicester'. This report supports objective no 3 – "to reduce the number of empty homes".

14. Report Authors:

Jean Denyer MBE Service Manager Sheltered Housing
Legal Implication – John Mclvor
Financial Implications –, Danny McGrath Housing Finance

Sheltered Housing Void Properties as at 5th February 2007

Appendix 1

Scheme Name	No. Flats	No. voids @ 05/02/07	No. of void weeks 06/02/06 – 05/02/07	Estimated Rent loss ³	Staff Accommodation
Frederick Thorpe Hse	26	7	209	13,858	Void
Barnett Janner Hse ¹	33	5	190	12,359	SHO living in
Dudley Hse	26	0	77	5,005	SHO living in
Oronsay Hse	28	2	68	4,489	Converted to flats
Rupert Hse	35	2	63	4,095	Converted to flats
Gumbrill Hse	28	2	60	3,978	Converted to flats
Cromwell Hse	26	0	56	3,640	Passed to management
Bowder Hse	26	0	47	3,106	Converted to flats
Bob Trewick Hse	25	1	39	2,580	None
John Minto Hse	35	1	34	2,234	Converted to flats
Irene Pollard Hse	28	0	33	2,172	Converted to flats
Helena Roberts Hse	35	0	25	1,658	Converted to flats
Norfolk Hse	28	1	23	1,501	Converted to flats
Frederick Jackson Hse	28	1	18	1,194	Converted to flats
Bridges Hse ²	21	0	16	1,088	Passed to management
Total	429	22	933	50,325	

Staff accommodation excluded.

¹ Flats 2 & 3 on long-term void. For conversion.

² West wing handed to management 12/2005.

³ Based on £65 p/week for studio flat & £68 p/week for 1 bed flat.

City Allocation Areas

Council Sheltered Accommodation



Frederick Thorpe House is shown at number 13 on the plan, some of the residents will be rehoused at both Rupert House, shown as number 14 on the plan and at Cromwell House, shown as number 17.

