

ADULT, COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 4TH MARCH, 2014

**AT 6.00 pm
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2
THE COUNCIL HOUSE
DUDLEY**

If you (or anyone you know) is attending the meeting and requires assistance to access the venue and/or its facilities, could you please contact Democratic Services in advance and we will do our best to help you

**KIM BUCKLE
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER
Internal Ext – 5242
External – 01384 815242
E-mail – kim.buckle@dudley.gov.uk**

**You can view information about Dudley MBC on
www.dudley.gov.uk/**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

MEETINGS IN DUDLEY COUNCIL HOUSE

Welcome to Dudley Council House

In the event of the alarm sounding, please leave the building by the nearest exit. There are Officers who will assist you in the event of this happening, please follow their instructions.

There is to be no smoking on the premises in line with national legislation. It is an offence to smoke in or on these premises.

Please turn off your mobile phones and mobile communication devices during the meeting.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Your ref:

Our ref:

Please ask for:
Mrs K Buckle

Telephone No.
(01384) 815242

21st February, 2014

Dear Councillor

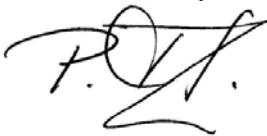
Revised Agenda

Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee **Tuesday, 4th March, 2014 – 6.00PM**

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee to be held on Tuesday, 4th March, 2014 at **6.00pm** in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley to consider the business set out in the agenda below.

The agenda and public reports are available on the Council's Website www.dudley.gov.uk and follow the links to 'Councillors in Dudley' and the Committee Management Information System.

Yours sincerely



Director of Corporate Resources

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

2. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

To report the appointment of any substitute members serving for this meeting of the Committee.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

4. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4th December, 2013.

5. PUBLIC FORUM

To receive questions from Members of the Public.

6. NEW BRADLEY HALL-UP-DATE AND NEXT STEPS (PAGES 1 – 12)

To consider a report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services.

7. FEEDBACK FROM SITE VISITS TO QUEENS CROSS AND THE DEMENTIA GATEWAYS.

8. To receive further information in respect of the following:-

- (a)
 - The Impact of Welfare Reform on Dudley Council Housing Stock. (The Assistant Director of Housing Services – Diane Channings)
 - The Impact of Welfare Reforms on Income Collection within Dudley. (The Assistant Director of Housing Services – Diane Channings)
 - The Development of Micro Services in Dudley. (The Assistant Director of Quality and Commissioning – Matt Bowsher)

AND to invite any comments on the details submitted.

For Information Only on the following:-

- (b)
 - The Homelessness Prevention Strategy Annual Refresh 2013. (The Assistant Director of Housing Strategy and Private Sector – Ron Sims)

9. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE 11.8 (IF ANY).

To: All Members of the Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee:

Councillors Baugh, Body, Evans, Herbert, Islam, James, J. Martin, Miller, Mottram, Vickers and M.Wilson

ADULT, COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 4th December, 2013 at 6.00 p.m.
in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor Islam (Chair)
Councillor James (Vice Chair)
Councillors Baugh, Evans, Herbert, J Martin, Miller, Mottram and Vickers

Officers

Assistant Director, Customer Services (Lead Officer to the Committee);
Assistant Director, Quality and Commissioning, Head of Commissioning,
Efficiency and Making it Real and Head of Finance and Accountancy (all
Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services) and Mrs K Buckle
(Directorate of Corporate Resources)

Also in Attendance

Ms J Leeson, Chief Executive of Changing our Lives and Member of the
Making It Real Board and Ms I Brant, MP in the Dudley People's Parliament
and participant in the Quality of Life Audits.

27. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of
Councillors Body and M Wilson.

28. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members'
Code of Conduct.

29. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That, the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11th
November, 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed.

30. PUBLIC FORUM

No issues were raised under this agenda item heading.

31. MAKING IT REAL AGENDA

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on the impact of the Making It Real Agenda for the people of Dudley.

The Assistant Director, Quality and Commissioning referred to the request of members at their meeting in September for three additional sources of evidence including information about the way Dudley invests in preventative care and real life stories about how people in Dudley had been impacted by the Making It Real Agenda. He referred to the two presentations that would be made by the Head of Commissioning, Efficiency and Making it Real of the Demand Management Model and Ms J Leeson and Ms Brant in relation to Changing Our Lives Quality of Life Audits and Standards.

It was agreed that the presentations would be emailed to Members.

The presentation in relation to the Demand Management Model comprised:-

- Opening remarks about the Demand Management Model that had been created in view of the continual savings that were required in the way health and social care were delivered. It was noted that the model addressed demand and how patients were managed through the care pathway. Data in relation to the number of people who utilized prevention resources and costs were outlined. Comparisons between the current population figures and future trends by 2030 were displayed.
- Details of the Dudley Falls Service, the Occupational Therapy, Community Equipment Service and the Telecare Service were provided together with the effectiveness and average cost of these services to each person. It was noted that these services were effective as they continued to prevent people from entering into long-term care.
- Arising from this aspect of the presentation the Assistant Director of Quality and Commissioning agreed that a geographical mapping exercise would be undertaken in relation to the uptake of preventative services and Members would be provided with details of the areas where the services were being accessed.

- In responding to a Member's question the Assistant Director of Quality and Commissioning advised that 11,000 items of community equipment had been provided to 2062 patients in 2013 with some equipment being recycled. The cost of this service was outlined and it was noted that this provided a preventative rather than a respite care service in order for people to live independently.
- The Reablement statistics were referred to including the community based services, how the services had developed and details of comparative performance. It was noted that in relation to effectiveness 45% of people who had accessed the Community and Residential Intermediate Care Services in 2012/13 did not go on to receive another Adult Social Care Services during this period.
- In relation to Reablement/Intermediate Care details of admissions in 2012/13 into New Bridge House, New Swinford Hall and Tiled House were provided and it was noted that there had been an average of 14 discharges per week in 2012/13. In relation to effectiveness it was noted that 46% of people who used those services had not gone on to receive another mainstream Adult Social Care service during this period. It was stated that the costs of Tiled House had increased as the upper floor was now in use, however the average costs per person had decreased.
- In relation to the Home Reablement service within the Community there had been a significant increase in the hours that this service provided, however average costs per person had decreased with a higher level of care increasing.
- The Assistant Director, Quality and Commissioning reported that the earlier people were met in the care pathway would result in them being able to live independently which would lower costs of health and social care services and evidence supported the business case for investment in the new structure.

Arising from the presentation, members asked questions and made comments and Officers responded as follows:-

- Work was undertaken to provide preventative care services with partners.
- That the Clinical Commissioning Group funded the Tiled House Residential home and was staffed by the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services.
- That partnerships had been formed with 17 Community Pharmacists who sign posted members of the public to the health and social care services provided by the Directorate.

- That there were different performance measures for differing areas of care which depended upon the services provided in different areas and the levels of need and the aim of the services provided were to prevent people entering into long term care;
- Two key areas of significant increases in health and social care had been identified which were for those aged 80 plus being primarily diagnosed with dementia and those aged 50 plus with learning disabilities which would result in a significant increase in resources and the model required further work on interventions in order to address additional care provision within those areas and that engagement with a broader range of people was required in order to make resources work harder.
- That the Telecare service had been operational for a number of years and had been marketed in a number of different ways with work being undertaken with voluntary and private sector partners. Work had also been undertaken with Healthwatch and different ways to raise the profile of services had been undertaken including work conducted with Age Concern, the Warm and Well Service, publicising services when writing to Council tenants and a recent event which had taken place at Himley Hall.
- It was confirmed that should a resident of Borough be registered with a General Practitioner's surgery outside the Borough, they would be offered the same health and social care services as they remained a resident of the Dudley Borough.
- That the effectiveness of services was also measured by perusing data in relation to members of the public using other services for example re-entering the system to access additional services at a later date.
- That the increase in more preventative services including the reablement service had reduced costs;
- In relation to response times, these would be dependant upon the service by looking at time based needs, whether standard equipment was required, the complexity of the case, urgency and individual circumstances.

A further presentation was considered on Changing Our Lives Quality of Life Audits and Standards. The presentation comprised of the following:-

- The Quality of Life Standards were based on people with disabilities being seen and respected as equal citizens in society. The standards had been written by over 650 young people and adults with learning disabilities and autism in partnership with people with physical disabilities and sensory impairments, older people and people with mental health needs.

- Ms Brant outlined the activities that she could now conduct independently following attending a course on travelling on public transport and being able to manage her own money. She also referred to the Quality of Life Audits which were a person centred way of checking quality of life with each audit being led by a paid individual with disabilities and the range of tools available in each audit to gather evidence such as interviewing staff, observation checking activity plans, communication passports and other documents.
- Arising from this part of the presentation in responding to a Member's question Ms Brant advised that communication passports contained details of what an individual person would require to communicate which could range from noise to sign language and that Communication Passports enabled people to communicate independently without the need to involve a third party.
- Ms Leeson referred to the Winterbourne review and the work that would be launched by Norman Lamb, Care Minister in 2014 following this review in relation to developing audit teams lead by people with disabilities and the work that had been undertaken in Dudley in order to produce the Good Practice Guidance which would be show cased in the House of Commons in February.
- Ms Brant referred to her meeting with Norman Lamb, shadowing Jon Rouse, the Director General of Social Care, Local Government and Care Partnerships and also shadowing the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services.
- Ms Leeson referred to the advocacy needs which required further development for vulnerable groups and the Staying Safe Scheme, that provided people with safe places to enter within the Borough should they be out and feel vulnerable which needed to be rolled out across the Country.
- Ms Leeson referred to the position stories in relation to leading a full life with community support advising that these stories could be used to promote the Council's preventative services.
- Following further discussions, Members recommended that the Safe Places scheme should be publicised through small businesses and rolled out to all public facing Council Offices.

Members thanked and congratulated Ms Brant on her excellent presentation.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report, as previously circulated to the Committee, and in the presentations given at the Committee on the Demand Management Model and Changing Our Lives Quality of Life Audits and Standards, be noted.
- (2) That the Assistant Director, Quality and Commissioning be requested to respond to Members direct with the geographical mapping data referred to above.
- (3) That the Lead Officer to the Committee be requested to advise the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services that Members supported the Safe Places Scheme and recommend that it be promoted through small businesses within the Borough and rolled out to all public facing Council Offices.

The meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.

CHAIR

ADULT, COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4TH MARCH 2014

Report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services

New Bradley Hall – up-date and next steps.

Purpose of Report

1. To up-date the Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee about the developments of work to secure a new provider to deliver the residential care services located at New Bradley Hall and for the Committee to comment on possible scenarios once a new provider has taken on the service.

Background

2. New Bradley Hall is a council-owned and administered residential care home. On-site management is provided by a Registered Manager under the Care Quality Commission's requirements. About 40 staff currently work at the home mainly in direct caring roles but also including management, administration, and domestic roles support. A growing proportion of staff are employed on an agency basis. There are 31 rooms available. 26 are allocated to permanent residents and five for people using respite care services.
3. Complying with the Council's Constitution, the following decision was made on 25th October 2013 through the Council's Decision Sheet (Ref. No: DACHS/010/2013) process, by the Cabinet Member for Adults and Communities, Cllr Dave Branwood, *"To take steps to procure a not-for-profit provider to whom the ownership, maintenance and on-going development of New Bradley Hall, Kingswinford, as a going concern including the on-going care to high standards allowing all people who currently live there on a permanent basis to continue doing so with their needs being met as required and securing on-going employment for staff."*
4. The Decision Sheet was not 'called-in' by Scrutiny under the rules of the Council Constitution and as a result work to implement the decision to secure a non-profit provider to take over the residential care provision at New Bradley Hall began. The work which commenced following the decision included the development of the first stage of the tender process through which Expressions of Interests could be made by interested providers. This first stage commenced at the end of October 2013 and 13 expressions of interest from qualified, non-profit providers were received. The next stage of the procurement process commenced on 31st January 2014 when the tender documentation was published in the relevant location.

5. With regard to the wider background, the Adult, Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee are aware of the wider context for the decision given its consideration of the “Making It Real” agenda in adult social care at its meeting of 24th September 2013. Amongst other things, the Committee
- were advised of the background for overall development of adult social care services including the challenging financial context and the need to maintain and develop services across a range from prevention to more complex care
 - noted that the Directorate had a duty to deploy its specialist resource where it would have the most impact and promote independent and good quality outcomes for the residents of the Dudley.
 - acknowledged the reality of a mixed economy of care providers involving the private sector, independent and voluntary sector and in-house as well as the need for the Directorate to continue to strengthen its approach to commissioning, to provide the most robust quality assurance, safeguarding and enable quality of life standards to be achieved.
 - noted that the partnership and shared philosophy of the Directorate with the Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group that any unplanned hospital or residential care admission would be viewed as a failure and this has been developed since the September Committee in work to develop “Better Care Fund” proposals which were considered by January’s Health and Well Being Board.
 - considered how the above combined with the greater choice and control afforded by Making it Real would give the people of Dudley the greatest chance of fulfilled independent lives where institutions were the place of last resort.
6. The Decision Sheet also acknowledged the wider background of the factors affecting and direction for the residential care provision at New Bradley Hall. It also noted the engagement which had taken place as follows:
- the extensive public engagement undertaken during 2012/13 as part of the Council’s work to determine the best direction for this provision in the light of needs of the residents and wider responsibilities of the Council when there was engagement with about 100 people including people who use the service, relatives and friends, representatives, advocates and members of the public through five events managed by the local charity, Dudley Age UK
 - engagement and communication has also continued through the Tender process e.g. communication with people living at New Bradley Hall, their relatives or representatives as well as staff occurred at the time to advise them of the steps being taken and to address any questions that they might have had.
 - communications have been taking place with relevant Trades Unions.
 - weekly meetings with people living in the home and / or their carer / representative were arranged in the period up to Christmas 2013 to shape the Evaluation Criteria to be used in the evaluation of the Tenders. This process recommenced on 22nd January 2014.

7. A number of requests for information have been made by various parties throughout the process and responded to. The Council has received both written requests and questions presented verbally by residents /relatives/ interested parties at weekly discussion sessions on site at New Bradley Hall. Responses to the questions are regularly updated on the Council's web-site at:
<http://www.dudley.gov.uk/media/latest-news/new-bradley-hall/>
8. A public meeting was convened at the Kingswinford Methodist Church, Stream Road, on Tuesday 17th December 2013 by a campaign group. This was attended by Cllr Dave Branwood along with DACHS and finance officers: Brendan Clifford, Assistant Director – Adult Social Care; Stuart Lackenby – Head of Commissioning, Personalisation & Efficiency; and Paul Benge, Head of Accountancy.
9. To add to the re-assurance being given to those concerned as residents, relatives or representatives of people living at New Bradley Hall, one of the comments made at this public meeting was the suggestion to give the Council's Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee further opportunity to consider a range of scenarios linked to the next steps which are being taken. A number of initial questions have been identified, therefore, linked to the requests for information made by the public which have been very comprehensive in their nature. These are placed before the Scrutiny Committee as an Appendix to this Report and oral responses will be made at the Committee as needed. The questions and response made under Freedom of Information enquiries are also attached below.

Finance

10. All financial arrangements relating to the Tender for the transfer to a new provider have been done in accordance with the Council's Sanding Orders and with full engagement from specialist finance and procurement officers. .

Law

11. The Council's responsibilities for commissioning, assessment and provision of care and support for adults are currently covered by a wide range of legislation including the NHS & Community Care Act 1990 and its associated guidance. The current wide range of legislation is being brought together under a new Care Bill which is intended for enactment in 2015.
12. The Council can do anything incidental, conducive thereto, or which facilitates the discharge of this function under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Equality Impact

13. An existing Equality Impact Assessment was updated in support of the Decision Sheet issued on 25th October 2013.

Recommendation

14. That the Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee:

- Note the up-date about the developments of work to secure a new provider to deliver the residential care services located at New Bradley Hall and comment on possible scenarios once a new provider has taken on the service.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrea Pope-Smith'.

Andrea Pope-Smith
Director – Adult, Community and Housing Services

Contact Officers

Brendan Clifford
Assistant Director

Matt Bowsher
Assistant Director

Stuart Lackenby
Head of
Commissioning

APPENDIX A

NEW BRADLEY HALL –

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

1.What will happen if the new provider wants to change the home in any way such as building on the land?

The lease agreement associated with New Bradley Hall, between Dudley MBC and the identified not for profit provider will through clauses of the lease provide the local authority with an absolute veto on any external alterations and structural alterations to the building. This includes the entirety of the land and building associated with New Bradley Hall.

Internal works to improve the quality of the home is permitted outside of this clause.

2.What will happen if the Council is not happy with the quality of the provision?

Maintaining the quality of provision at New Bradley Hall is based around a multi faceted approach that includes;

- The Service agreement
- Annual review of people who use the service
- Access to the statutory complaints procedure
- Care Quality Commission regulation
- Safeguarding approach

The not profit provider successfully appointed through the tender will sign the Council's service agreement (contract) for new Bradley hall. This agreement outlines the council's requirements and expectations with regard to the quality of the provision at New Bradley Hall through the service specification. This agreement is reviewed on an annual basis.

The agreement, through clause 5 enables the council to manage any shortfalls against this service specification. Clause 5 defines in detail the Council requirements, expectations and approach to maintain the level of quality of provision at the home.

The approach is based around an ongoing required monitoring arrangement between the council, CQC and Clinical commissioning group.

The clauses below provide an example of the requirements of the service agreement and consideration given to the ongoing needs of the residents.

5.1 The Service provided shall be of the standard and quality required by this Agreement and any Individual Care Instruction, to the satisfaction of the Contract Manager."

5.2 The Provider must maintain such systems, documentation and monitoring systems as the Contract Manager shall reasonably require.

5.3 The Contract Manager shall have the right to make visits to the home at all reasonable times and without prior notice to assess the performance of the Provider and to inspect all relevant documentation.

5.4 The Contract Manager shall have the right to conduct an audit of care to satisfy the Council that the provision of the Service does not fall short of that specified should occupancy in any single care home operated by the Provider in which the Council has placed a People who use the service fall below half of the total available, registered places.

5.5 The provider shall provide a copy of any Provider Compliance Assessment (PCA) or any equivalent Quality Self Assessment to the Contract Manager not more than four weeks after the provider has submitted the assessment to the Care Quality Commission.

5.6 The provider shall notify the contract manager of any CQC inspection within 28 days, stating the date of the inspection, the inspectors name and details of any immediate requirements or recommendations that were made as part of the inspection.

5.7 The Provider shall provide to the Contract Manager notification in writing of any changes to any quality rating attributed by the Care Quality Commission to the Providers service or to any service(s) within the Provider's group of services where the Council has placed people who use the service. The notification must be made to the Contract Manager within 7 days of the Provider being informed of the quality rating by the Care Quality Commission.

The example clauses above are central to the councils overall approach to Quality and monitoring of the 60 contracted residential and nursing homes in Dudley

In the event of a quality issue being raised the councils approach is again defined in the service agreement but is based around working with the provider to produce action plans to resolve any issues arising.

The service agreement enables the council is a worse case scenario to suspend new referrals to the service and in extreme cases take over the management of the home on a temporary basis until identified issues have been resolved.

3.What will happen if the new provider goes bankrupt?

As with quality monitoring the council takes a proactive approach to ensuring the financial viability of organisations to which it awards contracts. Section 3 of the New Bradley Hall invitation to tender, sets out the financial requirements any organisation must have to be awarded the contract.

The costing model for New Bradley Hall has been built around the standard existing funding levels provided to care homes in the borough and as such has an evidence base around sustainability. Providers in the tender process who quote costs below this level will be excluded from the process.

Upon contract award and service delivery should a provider encounter financial challenges then the council will work with the provider to maintain continuity of care provision to people who use services. In extreme cases this may require the council to take over the management of the home on a temporary basis until identified issues have been resolved. The provision for such response is built in to both the service agreement and the lease.

4. Requests For Information

Questions raised and responses: A wide number of questions have been raised in relation to New Bradley Hall, some of a similar nature. The questions below are the questions most raised and responded to.

Question:- What exactly is going to happen to New Bradley Hall? Will the buildings and its surrounding land be sold as some people tell us it is or is it being given away for nothing to a favoured provider?

Response:- The proposal is for the building to be transferred to the successful bidder on a 99 year leasehold arrangement. Covenants will be established within the said lease to ensure future usage for the benefit and care of older people in the Dudley Borough. The Council will undertake a valuation of the home prior to commencing the tendering exercise. The home will be formally transferred to the successful bidder and the value will be reflected in the contract costs.

Question:- Is New Bradley Hall and its surrounding land being sold?

Response:- The home will be transferred to the new organisation. They will have a view of its value to them and this will in turn be reflected in the charges they quote us for delivering the care. It's not being 'sold' in that money will not change hands directly for the building, and it's not being 'given away' because its value will be reflected in the tender bids. The proposal is for the building to be transferred to the successful bidder on a 99 year leasehold arrangement. Covenants will be established within the said lease to ensure future usage for the benefit and care of older people in Dudley Borough. The Council will undertake a valuation of the home prior to commencing the tendering exercise. The home will be formally transferred to the successful bidder and the value will be reflected in the contract costs.

Question:- What measures will be put in place to ensure the Home is kept as a residential care home?

Response:- We are working closely with legal advisers to ensure that adequate protections are in place. This process will be concluded prior to the tender process being concluded.

Question: - What is "the legal position should the not-for-profit organisation fail?

Response: - We will investigate the financial make up of each organisation that bids to provide the service. These will be organisations which have an established and proven record in delivering services to local people. The Council will work

closely with the chosen organisation to monitor its progress and delivery of service and this will allow opportunities to address and seek to resolve difficulties arising. In the unlikely event that the not for profit organisation should fail it would default on the lease and the home would return to council control.

Question: It is said that 'Following the sale of New Bradley Hall the home would remain open and all residents will be able to stay where they are. Would the Council please advise what contractual guarantees will be put in place to ensure that this happens?

Response: - This will be a matter addressed in any formal contractual discussions. There are no plans to move any of the existing residents unless a) they express a preference to live elsewhere or b) the home cannot continue to deliver the level of care required to meet the assessed needs of the individual in line with registration with the Care Quality Commission. This is at the heart of ensuring the home is viable in the future.

Question: - Will the Council please provide all documentation surrounding the decision to select New Bradley Hall from all the others and ultimately outsource the home?" **And-** "When was the decision to Privatised/Outsource New Bradley Hall made?

Response:- It was confirmed that a Decision Sheet was published on the 25th October 2013 in relation to New Bradley Hall. In addition:- Relevant documents were provided as requested. An extensive public engagement was undertaken during 2012/13 as part of the Council's work to determine the best direction for New Bradley Hall. It was clear from this public consultation that the strong view of the local community was that the home should stay open and the residents should be allowed to remain there. Available options were reviewed and the one which delivered this within existing financial constraints was decided upon.

Question: What allocation of respite care will remain?

Response:- The Council will establish a formal contract for publicly funded residents. The contract will include clauses about provision of respite requiring 5 respite beds for Local Authority use.

Question:- What arrangements will be made to ensure that care fees remain at the level that the Council allocates for the care of the residents that it currently funds?" **Also:-** Could I seek further clarification on the possible impact on self funders?

Response:- The Council will establish a formal contract for publicly funded residents. The Contract will include clauses about annual inflationary increases and third party top ups. The Council will also scrutinise the business model of bidding organisations to ensure there is a clear understanding about the basis for charging self-funders.

Questions:- Firstly, we would very much like to see the documents showing where and when and by whom the decision to outsource New Bradley Hall was made. Secondly, we would very much like to see the document detailing where, when and by whom that decision was ratified?

Response:- Please see attached the Decision Sheet provided to you in November 2013. Complying with the Council's Constitution, a decision was made on 25th October 2013 through the Council's Decision Sheet process, by the Cabinet Member for Adults and Communities, Cllr Dave Branwood, "To take steps to procure a not-for-profit provider to whom the ownership, maintenance and on-going development of New Bradley Hall, Kingswinford, as a going concern including the on-going care to high standards allowing all people who currently live there on a permanent basis to continue doing so with their needs being met as required and securing on-going employment for staff." The Decision Sheet was not called-in by Scrutiny under the rules of the Council Constitution and as a result work to implement the decision to secure a non-profit provider to take over the residential care provision at New Bradley Hall began

Question:- Has a "Best Value" Report been carried out? If so may we see it?

Response:- The Council has not conducted a Best Value Review of New Bradley Hall. The decision to seek an alternative provider is based on safeguarding the future of the home and maintaining the continuity of care. The Council has however benchmarked the unit cost of care at the home against the cost of private and independent sector residential care provision and is confident that a not-for-profit provider could deliver good quality sustainable care.

Question:- Will the Council carry out a Public Consultation on this new proposal?
And:- Why was this decision not consulted upon before its announcement?

Response:- An extensive public engagement was undertaken during 2012/13 as part of the Council's work to determine the best direction for this provision and having listened carefully to the Community a clear plan has been set out in relation to New Bradley Hall. In addition to the communication that has already taken place you will also be aware of the weekly meetings held at New Bradley Hall for Residents, Relatives and Interested Parties.

Cllr Branwood and Senior Council Officers attended a public meeting in December 2013 to answer questions and address any queries raised. In addition the weekly discussion sessions at New Bradley Hall began on the 12th November 2013 and have continued; providing opportunities for Residents, Relatives and Interested Parties to raise any questions or concerns.

Question: The following three questions were received and responded to together. "We are told that the Home needs to be got rid of by the Council because it requires £750,000 to be spent on it. And, "Would the Council please advise how many of the currently cash strapped "non-profit making organisations/charities" that may be eligible to tender for the Home are capable of losing £750,000 from their reserves for purely humanitarian reasons and not see a return?" And, "If there are no charitable or not for profit organisations available

with that kind of money available, then will the Council please advise who will pay the £750,000 required to update the home?

Also:- Additional Questions raised regarding the possible costs of work-with requests for ‘ the building report on New Bradley Hall where it is claimed would cost £750,000?’

Response:- A breakdown of the costs were provided to the individual requestors. A requestor was advised that ‘This situation is one that Councils, regionally and nationally are increasingly faced with. Councils are recognising that they do not have the resources to maintain all services as before and as a result are increasingly looking to Independent Providers to take on the delivery of some services. This does not and will not mean that our ongoing responsibilities and commitment to ensuring the delivery of quality service to local people will be diminished in any way. We will investigate the financial make up of each organisation that bids to provide the service. We will specifically ask about how each organisation proposes to inject capital to address the work that is required at the home. It would not be prudent at this stage to pre-empt how each potential bidder will secure the necessary funding, but the question will be raised as a component of the tendering process. Many not for profit organisations have previous experience, internal resources and expertise with regards to the renovation and maintenance of properties. This ability would see not for profit organisations able to deliver the required capital works in a more cost efficient manner than the Local Authority.

Questions:- If there are no not for profit organisations available with that kind of money, then will the Council please advise who will pay the £750,000 required to update the home? **And** - If the Council is going to carry out the work or provide the new provider with a loan, then why can’t they do it now?

Response:- A breakdown of costs associated with New Bradley Hall was provided together with the following response. In addition to the breakdown I am advised that expenditure on repairs to New Bradley to be approx £30k per year over the last three years. This situation is one that Councils, regionally and nationally are increasingly faced with. Councils are recognising that they do not have the resources to maintain all services as before and as a result are increasingly looking to Independent Providers to take on the delivery of some services. This does not and will not mean that our ongoing responsibilities and commitment to ensuring the delivery of quality service to local people will be diminished in any way.

You ask ‘ If the Council is going to carry out the work or provide the new provider with a loan, then why can’t they do it now? The Council will not be providing a loan to the new provider. We will investigate the financial make up of each organisation that bids to provide the service. We will specifically ask about how each organisation proposes to inject capital to address the work that is required at the home. It would not be prudent at this stage to pre-empt how each potential bidder will secure the necessary funding, but the question will be raised as a component of the tendering process. Many not for profit organisations have previous experience, internal resources and expertise with regards to the renovation and

maintenance of properties. This ability would see not for profit organisations able to deliver the required capital works in a more cost efficient manner than the Local Authority.

Question: What other Local Authority establishments are being considered for sale / give away?

Response:- To assist I can advise that the Councils Revenue Budget Strategy is within the public domain. If you require any assistance in finding the link to it or the details please let me know.

Questions: What negotiations have taken place that gives the Council confidence that it can achieve a sale by April 2014? "What is the Councils contingency plan if there are no bidders for the home come next March?

Response:- The Council is receiving interest from relevant independent providers to this opportunity. If, however, the process does not deliver an organisation capable of securing the long term future of the home then we will review why it hasn't, and consider our options at that point. Any decisions made will need to be part of the medium and long term strategy of the Council. This is a reality for Councils nationally and regionally. Indeed it should be noted that similar interventions have been undertaken successfully within two other Black Country Authorities within the last five years. Such interventions generated sufficient interest in order for an appropriate organisation to be identified, and as such we have no reason to believe that there will be insufficient interest to achieve the outcome being sought.

Question:- With regards the staff, we know that there is TUPE and that their existing terms and conditions may be time-limited. So will the Council advise if they will be offered redundancy or will they be expected to transfer to the new company? If so, what safeguards will be put in place to protect their current salary levels, hours and conditions?

Response:- All matters relating to employee rights will be discussed with staff members and union representatives. It would be inappropriate for separate discussions to take place. It is anticipated the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 will apply to this contract.

Question:- Keeping New Bradley Hall in Council Control. " We have emailed a number of money making suggestions ... No Reply!"

Response:- You may be aware that the decision-making for this is the responsibility of the Directorate of Adult Community and Housing Services and that responses have been provided to the queries raised. Given the significant financial pressures facing the Council we cannot afford to invest significant capital in the site, the need to invest will only increase over time and it would not be prudent or in the interests of residents or staff for the Council to avoid tackling the difficult issue of addressing the long term financial sustainability of the home. A

new provider may wish to consider these ideas in the context of their overall business strategy and we will draw the suggestions to their attention.

Question:- request to clarify “ the contract arrangements and New Bradley Hall”?

Response:- Tender documents were provided to requestors to assist.

Tender Documents:- Tender documentation went into the public domain on Friday, 31st January 2014. Those documents have also been provided directly to a number of people on request.

DACHS Scrutiny Committee Members **Impact of Welfare Reform on Dudley Housing Stock**

Purpose of Report

1. To update Members in respect of the impact of Welfare Reform on demand for our housing stock. This is an information only report.

Background

2. Members will recall from the report considered on 11th November that there is a mismatch between the accommodation that we have available and the accommodation that customers need.

Simply in terms of number of bedrooms, our current stock consists of

No of beds	1 (incl bedsit)	2	3	4+	Total
Stock	6284	6764	9125	603	22776
%	27.59%	29.70%	40.06%	2.65%	100%

Our current waiting list by the number of bedrooms needed (excluding transfers, and applications awaiting assessment) is

No of beds	1	2	3	4+	Total
Waiting list	1773	981	331	115	3200
%	55.41%	30.66%	10.34%	3.59%	100%

3. This mismatch is exacerbated, because households deemed to need two bedrooms are predominantly small families with one child/two children who can share, whereas of our 6764 two bedroom homes, just over half are houses (3919) whilst the other half are mainly family flats and flats reserved for single people and couples, with smaller numbers of bungalows, sheltered housing and temporary accommodation. Additionally, households deemed to need three bedrooms almost invariably want houses, but our stock of 9125 three bedroom homes includes 565 maisonettes and 57 family flats. The issues for our housing supply and demand are therefore:
 - High & competing demands for one bed stock
 - Excessive demand for two bed houses
 - Low demand for two bed flats (particularly high rise)
 - Low demand for three bed maisonettes.
4. A more detailed analysis is available in the Housing Needs Survey & Balancing Housing Markets Report 2012, which is currently being updated.
5. In previous years, we have made the best overall use of our stock by allowing families to be allocated larger houses than they immediately need. Families with two children of any age and sex are allowed three bed houses, and those with two children of opposite sexes are regarded as overcrowded in a two bed as soon as one child is eight and the other five. The bedroom standard, however, says they do not

need three bedrooms until one child is ten, (or 16 if they are of the same sex) and if they are in receipt of maximum housing benefit they will have a shortfall of 14% on a third bedroom until then.

6. Some landlords (especially Housing Associations) have altered their allocation policies to fit the bedroom standard, whereas we have been allowing informed choice, where the implications of the shortfall are explained and our customers make their own choices. Our reasoning is that if we adopt the bedroom standard for allocations
 - Pressure on our one and two bed stock will be even higher
 - Working families will be unfairly excluded from three bedroom homes
 - There will be more churn in our stock as children grow (more transfers & voids)
 - Communities will consequently be less settled.
7. In November we reported that increasing numbers of our tenants were downsizing - 166 between April and September 2013, compared to 74 in the corresponding months of 2012. A further 51 have transferred between October and December 2013, bringing the total for the year to date to 217. However, 90 of these (41%) released flats and maisonettes rather than family houses, and of the 123 houses and 4 bungalows that were released, at least 69 were vacated by older people downsizing for example to bungalows and sheltered housing. Our rate of transfers is relatively high, and this has been a deliberate strategy for several years in order to meet the changing needs of our tenants and make the best use of our stock. It should be noted that a need or desire for larger or smaller accommodation may not have been the reason for moving; for example, a single person may move from a two bedroom home to a one bedroom home because it is in an area they like, or on a different floor level, or because it is within a sheltered housing scheme.
8. This policy of mobility within our stock is assisting us in responding to Welfare Reform, as evidenced by the fact that 115 tenants whose spare room subsidy was removed on 1st April moved home between April and September and a further 27 moved between October and December. Of this total of 142, 115 were already on the transfer list at 1st April, and 27 had joined since April. As at 1st January, there remain 418 tenants on the transfer list whose housing benefit has been reduced, and of these 274 had already joined the list by 1st April and 144 have joined it since. It should be noted that we had been informing tenants of the changes since July 2012, so transfers were already taking place prior to April, and contributed to the number of tenants we expected to be affected being reduced from 4071 in August 2012 to 3333 in April 2013.
9. In April 2013, there were 67 tenants of three bed maisonettes subject to the removal of the under occupation subsidy, and 65 tenants of two bed high rise flats. Of these, we have been able to transfer 30 and 19 respectively up to the end of December, and this is reflected in the increasing numbers of low demand voids.
10. Hard to let/no wait properties continue to be an area of concern. There are 220 of these as at the end of January, of which 110 are immediately available for occupation. A marketing strategy is in place, and a press release in December resulted in 118 enquiries. Since then, 60 no wait properties have been let, either to people who responded to the publicity, or to people who were already on our list. We are taking care to check all applications carefully in order not to let homes to tenants who cannot sustain them and comply with the Conditions of Tenancy.

11. Rather than assume that the current void levels amongst (in particular) two bed high rise and three bed maisonettes are due to Housing Benefit changes, we commissioned independent market research to understand the reasons for the low demand and to provide an insight into how this could be addressed, including:
- Why residents who have left in the last 6 months have given up their tenancies in these blocks
 - Why applicants who are eligible for these properties are not bidding for them
 - Whether there is a market that would create demand for these properties outside of our current waiting list and if so the reasons those who would create this demand cannot or do not access our services
 - Whether there is sufficient potential demand to support high rise Extra Care living.

The final report on this research will be available at the end of March.

Finance

12. This report is for information and has no direct financial implications.

Law

13. The powers and duties of housing authorities in relation to the allocation and management of Council housing are set out in the Housing Acts 1985 and 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002.

Equality Impact

14. The HRA operates in line with the Council's Equality Policies, and any major changes to allocation policies are subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and if they need further information to contact Sian Evans- contact details given below.



.....
Diane Channings
Assistant Director - Housing Services

Contact Officer: Sian Evans, Head of Service – Housing Options
Telephone: 01384 812021
Email: sian.evans@dudley.gov.uk

Report for DACHS Scrutiny Members

Report from the Assistant Director - Housing Services

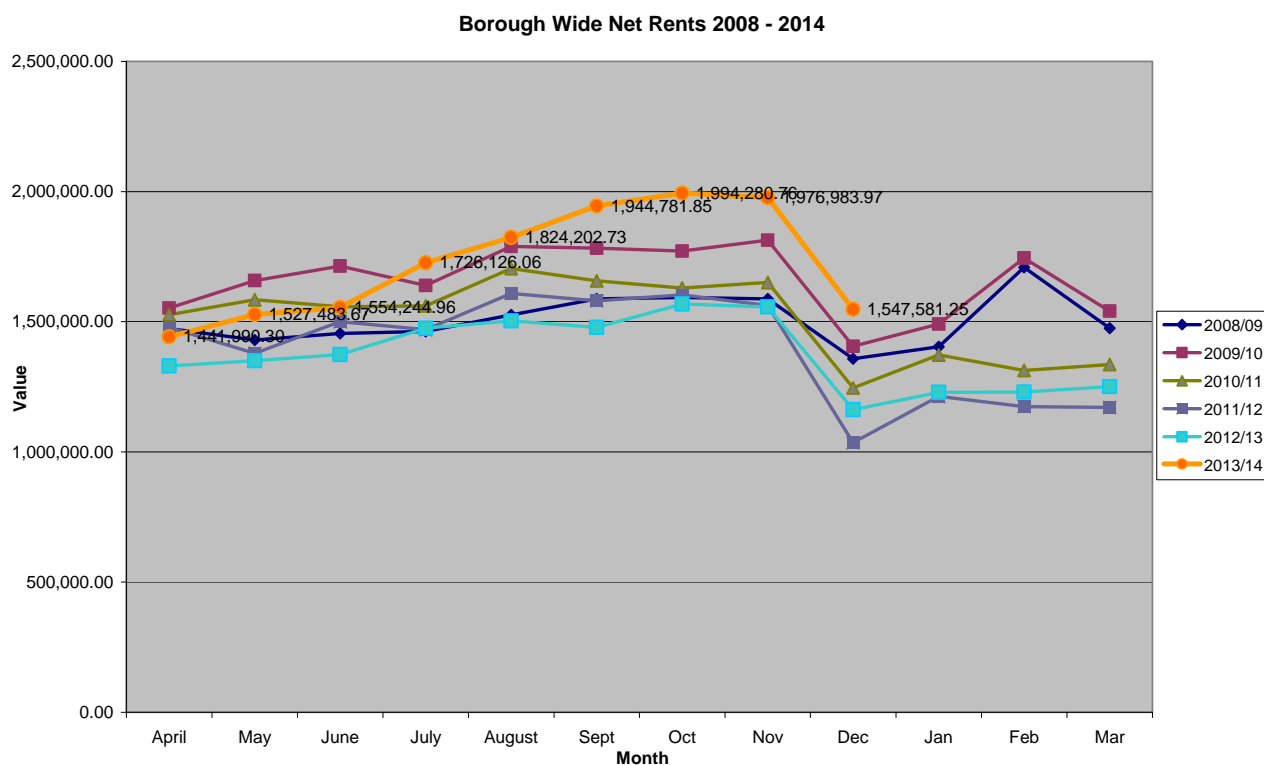
Impact of Welfare Reforms on Income Collection within Dudley

Purpose of Report

1. To provide a further update to Scrutiny Committee on the impact of welfare reforms on income collection within Dudley. This is an information only report.

Background

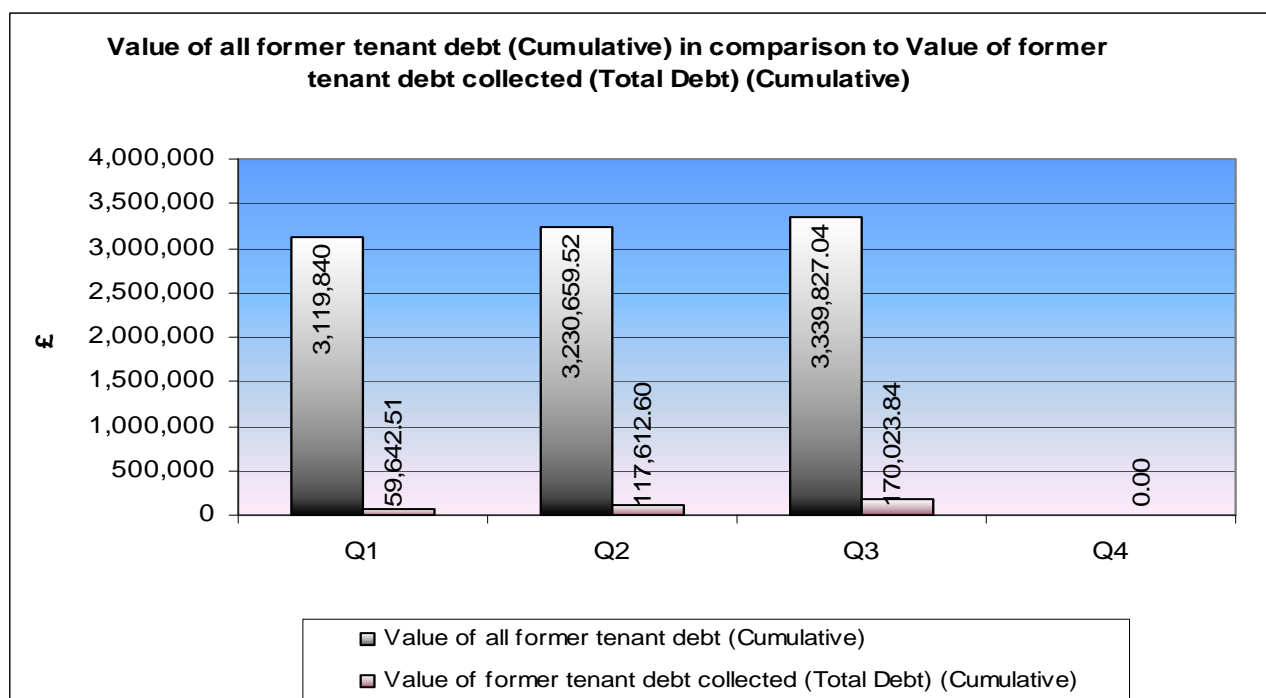
2. Members received a report at its November 2013 meeting entitled 'Impact of the Benefit Cap and the removal of the spare room subsidy on the income collection within Dudley. The information contained in that report related to Quarter 2. This report provides information for Q3 – 31st December 2013.
3. The arrears position becomes more complex in Quarter 3 as it is distorted by the inclusion of two rent free weeks. Members will note on the graph below a downward trend for all years shown for this period. To more accurately evaluate the arrears, the table below shows a comparison of rent arrears month by month for 2012/13 and 2013/14. Since the benefit changes were introduced in April 2013 there has been a growing and significant increase in rent arrears. Based on the percentage increase of 33% in December it is projected that the arrears at the end of the year will be £1.7 million. This would indicate an annual increase of 15.3% compared with a decrease of 5.96% in 2012/13.



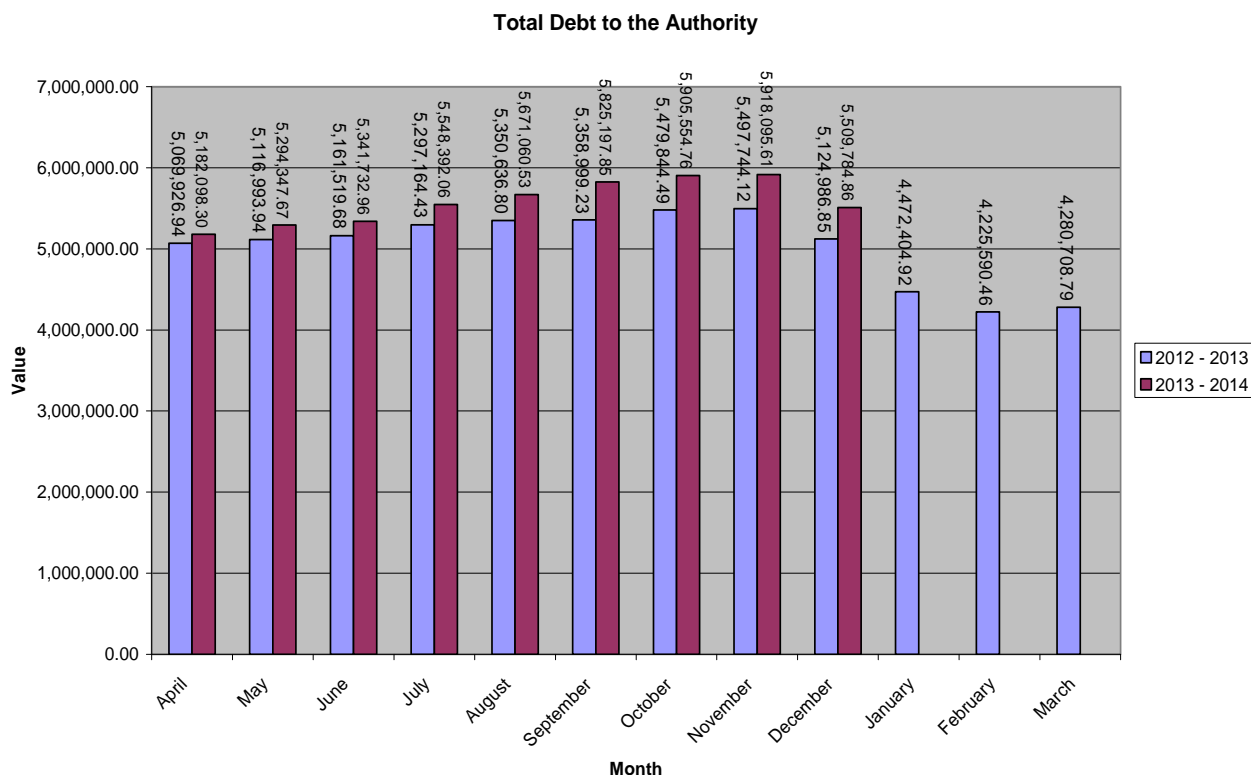
Arrears balances at the end of month 2012/13 compared with 2013/14

Month	2012/13	2013/14	% increase
April	£1,329,818.94	£1,441,990.30	8.44%
May	£1,350,129.94	£1,527,483.67	13.14%
June	£1,374,031.68	£1,554,244.96	13.12%
July	£1,474,898.43	£1,726,126.06	17.03%
August	£1,503,779.00	£1,824,202.73	21.31%
September	£1,478,583.23	£1,944,781.85	31.53%
October	£1,568,570.49	£1,994,280.76	27.14%
November	£1,556,632.48	£1,976,983.97	27.00%
December	£1,163,173.24	£1,547,581.25	33.00%
January	£1,229,720.26	Forecast (£1,635,527.94)	33% forecast
February	£1,229,496.46	Forecast (£1,635,230.29)	33% forecast
March	£1,250,474.75	Forecast (£1,663,131.42)	33% forecast
% Decrease/ increase	-5.96%	Forecast 15.3%	

4. Former tenant arrears continue to increase. It should be noted that former tenant arrears are managed either through an established repayment plan, through a debt collection agency or via civil action. Dudley does not currently use civil action through the courts but this is to be evaluated to determine its potential. See graph below which provides detail on the total value of debt and the former tenant arrears recovered in the same year. There will also be changes to the level of former tenant debt outstanding due to write offs during the year (annual occurrence).



Total debt to the authority (current and former tenant arrears) are shown below, this will include all accounts where there is either a payment plan in place, money recovered via debt collection agency and any debt written off in the year.



Removal of the spare room subsidy rent arrears

- There are 2673 tenants as at 6th January 2014 that are subject to the removal of the spare room subsidy. 1666 tenants are in arrears and 1007 have clear rent accounts. Members will have heard that a legal expert found a loophole in the benefit legislation and the implication is that a number of tenants, subject to specified criteria, should not have been subject to the removal of the spare room subsidy. In Dudley there are 71 cases where the housing benefit service is currently considering exemption and backdating to the rent account. It should be noted that it is the Government's intention to close this loophole.

As at 1st April, 3330 Council households were affected by the removal of the spare room subsidy (14%) as compared with the figure at 6th January 2014 of 2673 (11.6%). The numbers are constantly changing for a variety of reasons, households will fall in and out of the spare room charge if, for example, a new baby in household, tenant takes in a lodger or tenancy ended and therefore no longer subject to the removal of the spare room subsidy.

There are currently 16 cases which are being listed for court action in March 2014. This is significantly less than the original 35 cases due to the hard work of income recovery and housing support staff providing advice and guidance to tenants in terms of payment plans, DHP applications and income maximisation. We are confident that with the 16 cases we have exhausted every avenue to engage with and help the customer.

Benefit Cap

6. The latest information on the benefit cap is as at 27th January 2014 there were 68 accounts subject to the benefit cap. The total arrears balances for these accounts stood at £15,758.28, (50 accounts in arrears, 3 with a nil balance and 15 in credit). This shows an increase from 30th September 2013 when there were 52 accounts subject to the benefit cap and the total balance across all accounts stood at £10,833.28. This shows an increase from 30th September 2013 to 27th January 2014 of 45.5%.

Month	Number of tenants in arrears & subject to the benefit cap	Value of arrears on above accounts – benefit cap arrears
September 13	41	£10,833
January 13	50	£15,758
% Increase	21.9	45.5

Finance

7. Expenditure on managing, improving and maintaining Council dwellings is funded within the Housing Revenue Account (rental income from tenants) which is ring-fenced for income and expenditure on Council landlord services. Any additional resources will be funded from reserves within the HRA, which have been set aside to mitigate the risks of Welfare Reform.

Law

8. The powers and duties of Housing Authorities in relation to the allocation and management of Council housing are set out in the Housing Acts 1985 and 1996.

Equality Impact

9. The HRA operates in line with the Council's Equality Policies and the impact of these changes is subject to an equality impact assessment.

Recommendation

10. Members are asked to note the contents of this report and if they have questions or need clarification on any issues to email Diane Channings on diane.channings@dudley.gov.uk.



.....
Diane Channings
Assistant Director - Housing Services

Contact Officer: Yvonne Steele, Team Manager – Income
Telephone: 01384 811686
Email: yvonne.steele@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

None.

Adult Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee – 4th March 2014

Report of the Director of Adult Community and Housing Services

Development of Micro Services in Dudley

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to inform members about the development of micro services in Dudley since 2010 and how small external providers of social care services have shaped the market in line with the personalisation agenda. Background information will be provided on the growth of micro service in the borough; the diverse range of micro services available; the support available for micro providers; the outcomes achieved for people who use services; and the links to the “*Making it Real-markers for progress*” and the local “*Making it Real*” Action plan. The report will also highlight how micro providers offer quality and value for money and create efficiency savings for the local authority.

Background – What is a micro service?

2. The Dudley micro services project was set up in March 2010 to support the growth of more local flexible and innovative social care related services in the borough. The Project aims to provide targeted and individualised support to new and existing providers. The project has supported people to create employment opportunities and regenerated local communities who have been able to utilise vacant and unused buildings.
3. Micro enterprises are small organisations that employ 5 or fewer full time equivalent workers. Some are set up by ex-front line workers, others by disabled or older people themselves, often with help from families or the local community. They rely on customers who use personal budgets, their own money or grants to pay for the services.
4. Since March 2010 there have been 222 enquiries from existing providers and people wishing to set up their own service. As of 17th February 2014 there are approximately 68 micro providers known to the project.
5. National figures indicate that 50% of new start ups fail within 12 months, with 90% no longer trading after five years. The implementation of the Dudley micro services project in contrast has seen an average failure rate of 5-10% for new start ups within the first year, with at least 95% of services still trading after 3 years.

Range of micro services

6. The project has supported people to be more creative and provide real alternatives to traditional social care models. Some examples of the range of services include a local farm project for people with Learning disabilities, autism and mental health; a care contingency service providing cover for personal assistants and care workers if

they are sick or on leave; a therapeutic bread service - therapy through making bread; fitness services for older people; Healthy lifestyles services; Beauty/hairdressing services; Gardening services; traditional, flexible “home help” services – (from help with cleaning, shopping, meal preparation to companionship and befriending).

Supporting the growth of micro providers

7. The Project coordinator works with various agencies to support the growth of micro providers and has a close working relationship with partner agencies including; Dudley Voluntary Sector Council, Black Country Partnership for Care, Skills for Care, Black Country Chamber of Commerce, Access to Business, as well as various User led organisations.
8. The Dudley Innovation Fund (DIF) was introduced in 2013 to further support the growth of innovative micro enterprises. The DIF consists of two elements; kick-start and progression funding. The kick start element offers grants of between £500 and £2000 and will enable applicants to access professional support from intermediaries such as solicitors and accountant's business support providers alongside support from Dudley Council for Voluntary Services and the Building Blocks programme to develop a full business plan. The progression element offers grants up to £10k and progression funding is intended to get a project up and running and providing services and support for local people. A further round of the DIF has re-launched early this year.
9. In September 2013 events over a 3 day period called “*Your Care, Your Support, Your Way*” were held at various locations across the borough to capture the views, thoughts and ideas from people who use services to establish what services they wanted to see delivered to enable them to have a better quality of life. As well as the engagement and consultation with people who used services, developing and existing micro providers were invited to showcase their range of services to potential customers. Graphic illustrators were appointed to capture the ideas of people in a more innovative way. The events proved successful and information gathered was used to shape the re-launch of this years DIF and will also be used to contribute to market position statements.

What Outcomes are delivered – Quality Mark Scheme

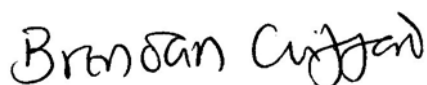
10. Outcomes for people who use micro services have been measured and monitored through the current Quality Mark scheme, a quality assurance scheme for micro providers. The outcomes are benchmarked against the “*Making it Real – Markers for progress*” and “*Quality of life outcomes*”. Feedback gained from people who use and access micro services has demonstrated some of the following outcomes:
 - a. Employment opportunities (mainly people with learning disabilities and mental health)
 - b. Weight loss – better health outcomes
 - c. Confidence building
 - d. Reduction in isolation
 - e. Prevented admissions to hospital and residential care
 - f. Inclusion and participation in the community
 - g. Choice and control on how service has been delivered – tailored to meet needs

Feedback from the people of Dudley

11. Carers have highlighted the advantages have having small, local community based services available for their loved ones. It has enabled them to have a break from their caring roles, which has in turn given them a better quality of life and better health outcomes long term. Carers have also stated that micro providers keep them informed and many of them feel like they are part of an extended family.
12. People who use services have commended micro providers for their ability to be flexible and person centred. Micro providers that provide more traditional care (such as domiciliary care), have moved away from “15 minute” calls to a more flexible and holistic way of working to ensure that individual needs are met at all levels.
13. Both Carers and people who use service have also commented that micro service offer great value for money as they often have lower overheads and provide support in their local area.

Supporting Making it Real

14. The Making it Real agenda is a significant part of the development of micro providers. The progress markers support the measurement of outcomes for the individuals that access the service. The micro provider project sits within the “Workforce Development” Work stream and is part of the local making it real action plan. The aim in Dudley is to build upon our existing development with micro enterprises, in parallel with market position statements, to continue to increase the number of micro providers in the borough. Moving to a default position on direct payments will support increased business and sustainability to such providers.



Brendan Clifford

Assistant Director Adult Social Care

Contact Officer: Lorna Reid
Telephone: 01384 811744
Email: lorna.reid@dudley.gov.uk
microservices.achs@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

This section should include a list of those documents, which disclose facts or matters on which the report is based and which have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report. Published works or documents containing exempt or confidential information must not be included in this list.

Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee 4th March 2014

Report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services

Homeless Prevention Strategy Annual Refresh 2013

Purpose of Report

1. This report is to inform the Committee of the work undertaken to update the Homeless Prevention Strategy. This activity is carried out on an annual basis.

Background

2. The strategy and action plan has been developed in partnership with the multi-agency Homelessness Review Group. It has been subject to wider consultation via the Community Engagement Database. The document has been approved by the DACHS Senior Management Team and the Cabinet Member for Housing.
3. The majority of the data used to develop the strategy is taken from the Homelessness Annual Report 2012/13. The data relates to the period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013.
4. The aim of the strategy is to prevent homelessness from occurring, where possible, by offering timely advice and assistance to households who are at risk of becoming homeless. The number of enquiries to the Dudley MBC Homeless Prevention and Response service has remained relatively stable over recent years at around 2,200 enquiries per year. Most households are provided with advice and assistance and/or take their own actions that prevents them from becoming homeless. During the 2012/13 financial year 171 households were accepted as full duty homeless¹ which is an increase from 158 in the previous year. The most frequent cause of homelessness within the Borough was the termination of assured shorthold tenancy (private rented sector).
5. The strategy will impact on the following corporate issues:
 - Human Rights – The right to enjoy your property peacefully
 - Asset Management – to make the best use of housing stock and return empty homes to use
 - Crime and Disorder – to reduce rough sleeping and any associated anti-social behaviour/fear of crime
 - Health Implications/Inequalities – people who are homeless are at greater risk of health issues and are less likely to be able to access health services
 - Environmental Impact and Sustainability – good quality, affordable homes help to provide a good environment where people want to live

¹ Under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996

- *Neighbourhood Management – by preventing homelessness and providing good quality housing there can be less ‘churn’ in neighbourhoods – empty homes/tenancy failure/abandoned properties*

Finance

6. The majority of the functions will be delivered by utilising the existing budgets and resources of the organisations identified within the action plan. This position will be reviewed annually in line with the budgets that are set. One action that had been identified in the action plan was reliant upon a successful grant funding application (dealing with Rogue Landlords – Department for Communities and Local Government). We have subsequently been informed that this bid was unsuccessful so other opportunities will be explored to try to achieve this objective.

Law

7. The Council's powers and duties relating to homelessness are contained within the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002 and the Council may do anything incidental to, conducive to, or which facilitates the discharge of its functions under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Equality Impact

8. An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced in relation to this strategy.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that:-
 - The contents of the Strategy are noted by the Scrutiny Committee.



.....
Andrea Pope-Smith
Director of Adult Community and Housing Services

Contact Officer: Ron Sims
 Telephone: 01384 815003
 Email: ron.sims@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers



Homelessness
Prevention Strategy



EIA Homelessness
Prevention Strategy