

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

18 December 2012

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL TENANCY STRATEGY 2012 – 2014

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr M Shurmer
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Sue Hanley
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 places a duty on the Local Authority to prepare and publish a Tenancy Strategy by 15th January 2013 that sits alongside the Housing Strategy, Homelessness Strategy and Allocations Policy.
- 1.2 The Act also introduces a number of housing reforms including the ability for local authorities and social landlords to grant fixed term tenancies with limited security of tenure and changes to the allocation of housing and the law relating to homelessness.
- 1.3 The Tenancy Strategy sets out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing in the Borough are to have regard to in formulating their tenancy policies.
- 1.4 The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) has produced a draft regulatory framework for social housing in England which takes effect from April 2012. Currently there is a specific expectation that social housing providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions and tackling tenancy fraud.
- 1.5 The Tenancy Strategy has been developed in partnership with Registered Providers stakeholders and covers all social housing provided in the Borough.
- 1.6 The Strategy now comes before the Executive Committee for approval.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that
the Tenancy Strategy, at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications for the Council in implementing the Tenancy Strategy.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 The Localism Act 2012 has placed a duty on Local Authorities to introduce a Tenancy Strategy by 15 January 2013. This strategy sets out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing in the Borough are to have regard to in formulating their tenancy policies.
- 3.3 The Regulatory Framework for social housing produced by the TSA requires social housing providers to develop a Tenancy Policy.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.4 This is a new strategy however there are no service or operational implications from the implementation of the Tenancy Strategy.
- 3.5 All social housing providers in the Borough will be required to have regard to this strategy in the formalisation of their own individual Tenancy Policies.
- 3.6 The Tenancy Strategy is intended to provide guidance to social housing providers of the Councils aims and objectives in the development of their tenancy policies and practices in order to produce lettings for customers that meet local housing need and improve market functioning. The legislation requires the strategy to explain:
- What kind of tenancies should be offered.
 - Circumstances in which the landlord will grant a tenancy of a particular kind.
 - Where a tenancy is set for a term, the length of the term.
 - Circumstances where the landlord will grant a further tenancy on the ending of the existing tenancy.
- 3.7 The aim of the strategy is to provide the right home, at the right time and in the right place, by making best use of limited stock by offering tenancies not necessarily for life but supporting sustainable communities.

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Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.8 Consultation has taken place with relevant stakeholders in the production of the Councils Tenancy Strategy.
- 3.9 The Localism Act 2011 has given stock holding Local Authorities the ability to give flexible tenancies which are time limited rather than a 'lifelong' tenancy as previously given.
- 3.10 Customers will have the ability to request a review on several matters relating to flexible tenancies. Social housing providers will introduce procedures to undertake a review on the type of tenancy offered, length of a tenancy, the decision not to renew a tenancy.
- 3.11 Social housing providers will be required to provide households affected by the termination of their tenancy with relevant advice and assistance to assist them to successfully relocate to alternative suitable accommodation

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The Social housing providers will need to consider Article 6 & 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the 2010 Equality Act in the decision to grant a flexible tenancy and possession upon the expiry of the fixed term.
- 4.2 There is a risk that the number of properties that are re-let will reduce, due to people being nervous about the changes to tenancies and housing benefits. We will need to effectively monitor this and provide clear advice to residents on the changes.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Tenancy Strategy 2012 - 2014

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Localism Act 2011
Regulatory framework for social housing in England
TSA draft direction on tenure

7. KEY

TSA – Tenant Services Authority

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