

Subject:	Housing Careleavers update		
Date of Meeting:	5th March 2014		
Report of:	Strategic Director of Place		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Sylvia Peckham	Tel: 293318
	E-mail:	<u>Sylvia.peckham@brighton-hove.gov.uk</u>	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The current Council Housing Allocations Policy which was approved by full council on 26th April 2012, gave Band A priority for young people leaving the care of BHCC Children's services who have been assessed as ready to manage an independent tenancy which may include a full package of support to enable this.
- 1.2 Members wished to monitor the impact of this and requested that an annual update be provided to Housing Committee.
- 1.3 This report provides information on the number of careleavers who have been housed under this priority and highlights any subsequent issues with managing those tenancies (appendix 1 and 2). In total we have housed 19 careleavers since the policy change, of which 13 have had no reported issues managing their accommodation which accounts for 68%. Of the remaining careleavers, 6 accrued arrears of which 2 of these are reducing, 1 case is involved with the credit control team about arranging a payment plan on a previous tenancy, and eviction action is being sought against 3 careleavers for rent arrears.
- 1.4 Appendix 3 provides details of the careleavers currently on the Housing Register in Band A waiting for permanent accommodation.
- 1.5 Update on how Childrens services deal with careleaver cases:
If a careleaver is referred for supported housing and follow the young persons housing pathway through Band 2 and Band 3 accommodation. When these projects assess the care leaver as being ready for independent living, they are referred with the support of Children's Services to Housing Options and if agreed by all professionals they are referred to the homemove manager to be placed in Band 'A' for bidding purposes with Homemove in accordance with the agreed policy.

Careleavers can also be referred directly from their looked after placement and the process remains the same within housing.

Care leavers must have completed an Independent Living Skills Course before being referred.

All care leavers retain their allocated Personal Adviser (PA) up to the age of 21 and in some cases, this can be extended up to age 25. The PA gives comprehensive personal support and can also arrange specialist support if or when required eg for education, training and employment; substance misuse; mental health issues; sexual and physical health; relationship issues.

Children's Services has a contract with Sussex Central YMCA to provide tenancy related support to care leavers who require additional support to prepare them for independent living, move to their own accommodation or deal with tenancy related issues that arise. Care Leavers can also be referred to the similar contract arrangement SCYMCA has with Housing.

Brighton & Hove City Council has met its housing responsibilities to care leavers very seriously through very close joint working between Housing and Children's Services and this has been recognised nationally as good practice.

1.6 This report is to update members as requested.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That members note the report.

3. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

3.1 Financial Implications.

The 2013/14 budget for the Home Move team is £0.339m which consists of direct employee costs of £0.284m and non pay costs of £0.055m.

As identified in this report there are 19 care leavers that have been housed since the policy changed which equates to 4.5% of those placed under Band A. It is therefore difficult to quantify any direct impact on other council budgets such as that for Homelessness or Children's.

One of the main financial risks from care leavers is the loss of income due to non payment of rents. As identified in this report, 6 of the 19 care leavers have accrued arrears and with collaborative working with 5 of these care leavers, these arrears have been reduced to a manageable position. Further action has been taken with the remaining 1 and it is estimated that there is a potential pressure of approx, £5k to £6k on income budgets.

The costs to resource the administration of the scheme are being managed within existing budgets.

Finance Officer Consulted: Neil J Smith, Accountant

Date: 20/02/14

4.2 Legal Implications

Full legal implications were attached to the report presented to Council on 26th April 2012. This report is for noting and approval of an existing policy, no proposals for change are made. We are obliged to keep all policies under review from time to time and this is what the report is doing. With no changes there are no new legal implications to take note of.

Legal officer Consulted: Simon Court – Senior Solicitor 4th February 2014

5.2 Equalities Implications

An equalities impact assessment was carried out at the time on the policy changes.

5.3 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications

Failure to adopt the changes prescribed in the attached new Allocations Policy could render the Local Authority vulnerable to legal challenge.

5.4 Corporate / Citywide Implications

Limited social housing stock will be used in the best and most efficient way possible to balance the needs of residents and the council.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 Not applicable.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Report update for noting as requested.

HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING

Agenda Item

Brighton & Hove City Council

Appendix 1

Properties let to careleavers under Choice based lettings since 1.4.13

(TI = Total Indebtedness)

Status or Let Date	Address	Priority Date	Notes
01-Apr-13	Brighton BN2 4RY	07-Sep-12	Council tenant on full HB, no arrears
08-Jul-13	Brighton BN1 3RB	04-Feb-13	RSL tenant no reports
24-May-13	Brighton BN2 1NQ	02-Apr-12	RSL tenant no reports
12-Aug-13	Hove BN3 5PA	13-May-13	Council tenant on full HB, no arrears
24-Jun-13	Brighton BN2 4HB	15-Mar-13	Council tenant who moved in June 2013 - TI went up to £731.18. slowly reduced now to £146.04 - No HB
22-Jul-13	Brighton BN1 3PD	12-Dec-12	Council tenant on full HB, no arrears
26-Aug-13	Brighton BN2 5DD	18-Apr-13	Council tenant who moved in August 2013 – TI went up to £406.60. slowly reduced now to nil - didn't get HB until November
21-Oct-13	Brighton BN1 7EN	23-Jul-13	Council tenant who moved in October – partner works and their account is in credit
04-Nov-13	Brighton BN2 6NF	05-Sep-13	Council tenant who moved in November 2013 - arrears of £390.00 from a previous tenancy as she did not hand her notice in and so this debt has accrued. Have passed to Credit Control to chase the debt

Appendix 2

Moved between 1.4.12 – 31.3.13

Let Date	Address	Priority Date	Offer Date	Notes
27-Aug-12	Hove BN3 3WA	12-Apr-11	21-Jun-12	RSL- no reports
10-Sep-12	Brighton, BN2 9NJ	16-Aug-12	03-Sep-12	No issues
15-Oct-12	Brighton BN1 4LG	02-May-12	13-Sep-12	RSL- no reports
24-Oct-12	Brighton BN1 4LG	02-May-12	13-Sep-12	RSL- no reports
21-Jan-13	Hove BN3 2BH	01-Jun-12	14-Jan-13	RSL- no reports
04-Feb-13	Brighton, BN2 5DL	16-Aug-12	06-Dec-12	£109.33 TI- NOSP warning
04-Feb-13	Brighton, BN2 4LT	08-Jun-12	10-Jan-13	£3160.62 TI- tenancy action underway
04-Mar-13	Brighton, BN1 7HW	20-Aug-12	24-Jan-13	£509.37 TI- NOSP warning
07-May-12	Brighton BN2 3RJ	11-Nov-11	15-Mar-12	RSL- no reports
25-Jun-12	Brighton, BN2 1SU	08-Feb-12	27-Apr-12	No issues

Appendix 3

Careleavers waiting to move:

Status	Surname	Priority Date	Last Bid
careleaver	Client A	22-Oct-13	23-Jan-14
careleaver	Client B	08-Aug-13	15-Jan-14
careleaver	Client C	07-Oct-13	14-Jan-14
careleaver	Client D	07-Jan-13	31-Jul-13