

Bolsover District Council

Executive

2 November 2015

Housing Department Quarterly Update

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing & IT

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To keep members informed of work activities within the Housing Department.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 This report should be read in conjunction with the statistical appendix.
- 1.2 Rent arrears continue to be challenging with tenants struggling with the impact of welfare reforms. This situation is likely to get worse once Universal Credit is introduced starting from November
- 1.3 The Money Advice Worker started from September 2015 and is already having success in getting arrangements from tenants who have been difficult to reach by other means. It is intended to produce an update and case studies once the postholder has been in post for 6 months.
- 1.4 Repairs continue to perform well, with high levels of satisfaction.
- 1.5 We have engaged an external consultant to carry out the satisfaction survey of tenants. This takes place every three years. The initial report is due back in January with a final report in March 2016.
- 1.6 The new Housing Assistants (Estates) have been in post since June 2015. During this time they have completed a survey of all HRA owned garage sites and have identified a number of sites that may be suitable for building. It is intended to meet with the surveyor to progress this. This project will also identify sites for disposal, and contributes towards the Corporate Target of considering alternative use for 20% of garage sites.
- 1.7 The relationship with Crestra, where the Department managed a number of rented properties on behalf of Crestra has been ended by the Council, as agreed by Executive. However, the Council have been approached by Shirebrook Town Council to manage a property that they own, this would be on a similar basis to the Crestra scheme. Members are requested to consider if they wish to explore this further.

- 1.8 The Council building programme is moving ahead, with a provisional start date for Rogers Avenue of November. As part of this scheme officers have been investigating the possibility of additional funding from the HCA, however to access the funding the Council need to register as a “Qualified Investment Partner”. Members are asked to approve the Head of Housing, seeking this registration.
- 1.9 The Repairs Section has recently recruited 3 new trade apprentices through West Notts college these are 1 x Joiner, 1 x Painter 1 x Plumber and 1 x Electrician who will be on 3./4 year training programmes.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 That members note this report.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 None directly

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 None

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

None, but if the Council do register with the HCA there is an opportunity for future grant funding.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

None

5.3 Human Resources Implications

None

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That members note the progress within the Housing Department.
- 6.2 That members note the request to manage a property on behalf of Shirebrook Town Council.
- 6.3 That Executive considers whether to grant delegated powers to Assistant Director – Community Safety and Head of Housing to enter into an agreement with Shirebrook Town Council to manage the property, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing.

- 6.4 That the Assistant Director – Community Safety and Head of Housing, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, be given delegated power to apply for HCA qualified investment partner status.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	Contact Number
P Campbell	

Report Reference –