

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LANDLORD SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

26 JANUARY 2023

Title:

SENIOR LIVING CHECK IN CALLS

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Paul Rivers, Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing

Head of Service: Andrew Smith, Executive Head of Housing

Key decision: No

Access: Public

1. Purpose and summary

To share the draft version of the Senior Living Check In Calls procedure with the Board and receive their feedback and support.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board review the proposed Check In Calls procedure and make any comments.

3. Reason for the recommendation

To update the Board on the actions being taken based on the Senior Living Action Plan and to provide the Board with the opportunity to review the procedure.

4. Background

4.1 The Senior Living Service has eight schemes across the borough and are home to 245 people aged over 60 (or over 50 with a recognised disability). Each scheme has about 30 independent purpose-built apartments with a telecare alarm and access to the communal lounges, laundry, and gardens.

4.2 The service aims to empower tenants to live independently. There are five Senior Living Officers currently in post who work across the eight schemes to manage the building safety and maintenance, manage the tenancies of residents, and promote independence by encouraging residents to organise social activities and signposting them to relevant support services.

4.3 In response to the lockdown measures during the Covid-19 pandemic an informal system was implemented in which the Senior Living Officers rang tenants on a regular basis to check in on their health and wellbeing. The practice was introduced rapidly to ensure the safety of tenants during the pandemic and was never formalised. However, the practice has continued since then, as it has been valued by tenants and officers and therefore, now needs to be formalised to confirm and clarify the roles and responsibilities of those involved.

4.4 In formalising this procedure, we have sought to establish it as a tool that empowers tenants to manage their own independence. To this end, each tenant can choose whether to opt in or out and can adapt the frequency and method by which they are contacted so that it best fits their needs.

4.5 Formalising this procedure will provide greater transparency and clarity about the roles and responsibilities of those involved. The process will be more resilient and able to cope with unexpected changes. It will also mean that the operational procedure can be standardised across the different schemes allowing for a smooth continuity of service when officers cover other schemes.

4.6 The procedure states that Officers will endeavour to carry out a visual check on every tenant each week, even if they have opted out.

4.7 Over the Christmas period, due to the Council office being closed, the Officers were unable to carry out the Check In Calls procedure for a period of ten days. To prevent this from impacting tenants, the procedure states that prior to the Christmas break the Officers will compile a list of those tenants who require a check in over the Christmas period. Careline, the 24/7 monitoring centre, will carry out welfare calls to these identified tenants during this ten day period.

4.8 This process successfully took place over the 2022 Christmas break.

5. Relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Service Plan

The report supports the Council's Corporate commitment to promote "*Good quality housing for all income levels and age groups*" and aim to "*be the best council landlord in the South East and to be acknowledged so by our tenants.*"

The Check In Calls procedure supports the aim of the Senior Living service to empower tenants to live independently.

6. Consultation and engagement

The introduction of this procedure will have little impact on the day-to-day experience of tenants as it is just formalising a process that was already taking place. Therefore, only an informal consultation was held through conversations with tenants and observing the way in which the system functions. This process highlighted the importance of flexibility about the frequency and method as tenants valued being able to tailor the system to their needs.

7. Other options considered

The other option is to do nothing and continue with the informal system that was created in response to the pandemic. In terms of the everyday experience of tenants, this would have little impact. However, by formalising the procedure the service will be more resilient, and tenants will get the opportunity to tailor their use of the system to suit their needs.

8. Governance journey

LSAB review only. Procedure agreed by Co-Portfolio Holder of Housing Operations and Head of Housing Operations.

Annexes:

Annexe 1 – Senior Living Check In Calls Procedure

Background Papers

There are no background papers, as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972).

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