

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LANDLORD SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

23 FEBRUARY 2023

Title:

Senior Living Consultation

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 outcomes of the 2021 consultation with Senior Living tenants and to present the results and draft action plan from the 2022 consultation for the Board's review and comment.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

- review and comment on the completed 2022 Action Plan from the 2021 consultation.
- review and comment on the responses and 2023 Action Plan from the 2022 consultation.

3. Reason for the recommendation

To update the Board on the outcomes of the 2021 consultation and to scrutinise the 2022 consultation responses and 2023 Action Plan.

4. Background

4.1. There are eight Senior Living schemes in Waverley, and each contain around 30 self-contained flats with access to a communal lounge, garden, and laundry. 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. The Officers work as part of a wider Senior Living team which also includes the Senior Living and Careline Services Manager and a Housing Graduate Management Trainee.

- 4.2. Following the change in service in 2018 - from sheltered housing to independent living – the Housing Service committed to carrying out an annual consultation with tenants. An updated version of the 2022 Action Plan from the 2021 Consultation showing the progress made is included as Annexe One.
- 4.3. Of the 18 actions, 16 have now been completed. Two actions: reviewing staff role and responsibilities (no. 18); and sharing decoration programme (no. 6) remain in progress and have been carried forward to the new action plan.
- 4.4. The 2022 Consultation took place in December. Every Senior Living tenant was given the opportunity to provide feedback via a paper or online questionnaire, at a drop-in feedback meetings which were held at each scheme, or via phone or email.
- 4.5. Out of the 256 tenants, 116 provided feedback making the overall response rate 45%. The response rate in 2021 was 35%. Additional methods of providing feedback were offered this year, however, almost all the responses were via the paper questionnaire, which was the only method available last year. Therefore, it is likely that the increase reflects increased engagement due to improved communication and the easing of Covid-19 restrictions.
- 4.6. Across all schemes, 84% of respondents stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided by Senior Living. A summary of the responses for all questions is attached as Annexe Two.
- 4.7. Specific areas of good practice were highlighted in the responses including the friendly and professional approach of the Senior Living Officers, communication through letterbox drops, and the cleanliness of the communal spaces.
- 4.8. The responses also highlighted important areas for improvement around the structure and purpose of the monthly tenants' meetings, the use of the communal spaces, and some building safety and repairs queries. These have been used to create an action plan which is included as Annexe Three.
- 4.9. One of the two key themes in the responses to the 2021 consultation was that tenants would like more communication with their Senior Living Officer. In 2022, the feedback about communication focused on the methods used, not the amount or content, demonstrating that the actions taken have led to an improvement. The feedback about the methods used has informed actions four, six, and ten on the 2023 Action Plan.
- 4.10. The second key theme, from 2021 consultation, was that the role and responsibilities of the Senior Living Officers needed to be clarified. In 2022, there were fewer responses that indicated confusion about the role of the Senior Living Officers. It was only in relation to organising social events that this was demonstrated and this has informed action two on the 2023 Action Plan.

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.*"

6. Implications of decision

6.1. Resource (Finance, procurement, staffing, IT)

Drafted by: Candice Keet, Senior Accountant

The action plan attached as Annexe 3 will mainly be delivered within the current budget. Any additional resources will be requested in line with the normal corporate procedures and subject to the usual scrutiny from the relevant committees.

6.2. Legal

Drafted by: Ian Hunt, Interim Deputy Borough Solicitor

The Council as landlord, has a duty to engage with residents and consult them in relation to changes to its services and programmes. This work supports the Council in this work. The action plan is within the scope of reasonable responses and the powers of the Council.

6.3. Equality, diversity, and inclusion

Tenants were offered support in completing the consultation to prevent anyone being excluded because of their preferred communication method. Any significant changes to the service that result from the action plan will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that they do not have any adverse impacts on equality.

6.4. Climate emergency declaration

Any works resulting from the action plan will be subject to an environmental and sustainability review where applicable.

7. Consultation and engagement

The questionnaire was developed in consultation with the Tenants Panel. The report and action plan were created based on the feedback of Senior Living tenants. The outcomes will be shared with the Senior Living tenants, Tenants Panel, and the Landlords Services Advisory Board.

8. Other options considered

Doing nothing will mean that the feedback received in this consultation will not be used to improve the service and will negatively impact our relationship with tenants.

9. Governance journey

Report to Landlord Services Advisory Board only.

Annexes:

Annexe 1 – 2022 Action Plan.

Annexe 2 – Summary of Responses 2022.

Annexe 3 – 2023 Action Plan.

Background Papers

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

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: David Brown
Position: Senior Living and Careline Services Manager
Telephone: 01483 523358
Email: david.brown@waverley.gov.uk

Agreed and signed off by:

Legal Services: Ian Hunt, Interim Deputy Borough Solicitor, 8 February 2023

Head of Finance: Candice Keet, Senior Accountant, 13 February 2023

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Paul Rivers, 14 February 2023