

**REPORT TO: HOUSING COMMITTEE - 10TH DECEMBER 2012**

**REPORT ON: AD HOC PROPERTY GUARDIANS**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING**

**REPORT NO: 489-2012**

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. To approve the use of Ad Hoc Property Guardians as an additional mechanism of providing security in empty properties.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Committee:

- 2.1. Approve the use of Ad Hoc Property Guardians on a pilot basis for a small number of properties.
- 2.2. Authorise the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, in consultation with the Director of Housing, to agree the terms of and enter into agreements on behalf of Dundee City Council with Ad Hoc Property Guardians for each of the properties where they are to provide security services.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. None.

## **4. MAIN TEXT**

- 4.1. The Housing Department utilises a variety of mechanisms to ensure security in empty houses, including boarding / steeling houses, security alarms and security patrols.
- 4.2. Ad Hoc Property Management, provides a property security service for vacant buildings by providing property guardians. These guardians are individuals, often living in an area for a short period, who want to rent property on a very short term basis. Ad Hoc Property Management finds occupants (guardians) and then briefs them on the premises and the rules and regulations concerning their temporary occupation of the property.
- 4.3. All guardians have been through a comprehensive selection process that includes face to face interviews where Ad Hoc discusses what they can expect from Ad Hoc Property Management what is expected of them to safeguard the property in an effective manner. Guardians must provide Ad Hoc Property Management with the references including employer and landlord, photographic proof of identity (passport) proof of current address (bank statement, utility bill) and proof of employment (staff card or payslip). All necessary public liability insurances are put in place. The physical presence within vacant dwellings reduces the likelihood of vandalism and the associated costs.
- 4.4. The guardians occupy the properties on licences for their period of occupancy and have no security of tenure.

- 4.5. There is no cost to the Council for using the service. Properties provided by the Council must meet health and safety requirements only.
- 4.6. The Housing Department is now seeking Committee approval to use Ad Hoc Property Management in a small number of appropriate situations, such as demolition areas, to test the success of using such an approach.

**5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

**6. CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1. The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services and all other Chief Officers have been consulted on the preparation of this report. No concerns were expressed.

**7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1. None.

Elaine Zwirlein  
**DIRECTOR OF HOUSING**

November 2012