

**REPORT TO:** HOUSING COMMITTEE - 20 MARCH 2006  
SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE - 20 MARCH 2006  
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 20 MARCH 2006

**REPORT ON:** SHELTERED HOUSING WARDENS

**REPORT BY:** DIRECTOR OF HOUSING, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND  
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (MANAGEMENT)

**REPORT NO.:** 84-2006

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. To propose a repositioning of the Sheltered Housing Wardens Service within the Council structure, a transfer of Sheltered Housing Wardens Service staff to the Housing Department, focusing Wardens duties on enhanced tenancy services and regrading Sheltered Housing Wardens to reflect the change in duties.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Housing Committee approves:

- 2.1 The sheltered housing charge be set at £25.00 per week for the financial year 2006/07.

It is recommended that the Housing and Social Work Committees approve:

- 2.2 The transfer for the Sheltered Housing Service from the Social Work Department to the Housing Department.

It is recommend that the Personnel Committee approves:

- 2.3 The establishment of 96.5 Sheltered Housing Wardens, graded GS1-3 (£10,671-£15,063) in the Housing Department;
- 2.4 The establishment of 7 Sheltered Housing Auxiliaries, graded MW1 (£10,671) in the Housing Department;
- 2.5 The establishment of 3 Sheltered Housing Officers, graded AP3 (£18,381-£20,169) in the Housing Department;
- 2.6 The deletion of 108.75 Sheltered Housing Wardens, graded GS1/2 (£10,671-£14,220) from the Social Work Department;
- 2.7 The deletion of 7 Sheltered Housing Auxiliaries, graded MW1 (£10,671) from the Social Work Department;
- 2.8 The deletion of 3 Home Care Organisers, graded AP3 (£18,381 - £20,169).

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. The total full year costs of the Sheltered Housing Wardens Service is £2,508,000, of which £145,000 will be charged to the Supporting People budget.
- 3.2. The service charge has been set to recover the net cost which is eligible for Housing Benefit, and will be charged separately along with housing rent. The remaining Housing Support element will be charged to Supporting People.
- 3.3. The change in structure has the potential to realise £840,000 per annum in savings to the Council's General Fund Revenue expenditure.

### **4. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. Nil.

### **5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. Nil.

### **6. BACKGROUND**

- 6.1. Reference is made to Policy and Resources Committee of 13 February 2006 which agreed in principle the transfer of the Sheltered Housing Services from the Social Work Department to the Housing Department. The Committee instructed the Directors of Social Work and Housing and the Assistant Chief Executive (Management) to negotiate this transfer with Trades Union and submit a further report to the appropriate Committees.
- 6.2. Since the introduction of Community Care provisions in 1991 the national policy emphasis has been on the separation of accommodation from care and support services. This policy was reinforced with the introduction of Supporting People regime in 2003.
- 6.3. The Sheltered Housing Wardens Service has always straddled the line between housing services and care services which has caused some confusion for both provider and consumer. This confusion was partially alleviated last year when Council agreed to split the duties and costs associated with the Sheltered Housing Wardens Service between support/care costs and housing management.
- 6.4. Further assessment and review of the service together with enhancements to alarm technology and changes in demand show that a fuller match with national policy could be achieved by restructuring the service. It is proposed therefore to revamp the Sheltered Housing Wardens Service to focus the Wardens duties on the safety and security of the clients, providing enhanced housing management services and facilitating a more inclusive use of the complex facilities. Wardens will concentrate on these duties thereby freeing up care and support resources which can be utilised by specialist home care staff to provide the necessary support and care services to those clients with an assessed need.
- 6.5. Sheltered Housing Wardens will continue to provide the high quality service they presently do as a crucial aspect of the Joint Future Agenda.

## **7. STAFF RESOURCES**

- 7.1. It is intended to transfer existing permanent staff to the new service and to match staff on a post to post basis.
- 7.2. To reflect the change in duties and the requirement to provide enhanced housing management services it is proposed to regrade Sheltered Housing Wardens, currently graded GS1-2 (£10,938 - £14,576), to GS1-3 (£10,938 - £15,440).
- 7.3. Other posts will remain on the same grades as at present.
- 7.4. A new Sheltered Housing Wardens job description has been developed and is the subject of consultation with staff and trade unions.
- 7.5. The Sheltered Housing Officers will continue with their existing job description and duties when they are transferred to the Housing Department. This will be reviewed in conjunction with staff and trade unions to reflect their current duties and the crucial role they play in linking care, support and housing services, in line with the Joint Future Agenda.

## **8. SERVICE CHARGE**

- 8.1. Changes to the Sheltered Housing Wardens Service will mean that the service charge will be eligible for Housing Benefit. This shift will allow the current spend of the Supporting People Grant to be reviewed and the majority of the sheltered housing element of this to be redirected.
- 8.2. The remaining Housing Support element of the cost of this service will be charged to Supporting People.
- 8.3. As the Sheltered Housing Wardens Service will now be primarily funded by the Housing Revenue Account, an Account which cannot be subsidised by any other Account, the actual cost of the service will require to be found from the service charge. The resulting service charge will increase from £16.13 per week to £25.00.
- 8.4. There are presently a number of abatements in place to protect service users from increased charges arising from previous changes to the charging regime and these will continue in the future. The proposal to increase the apportionment of the charge to Housing Management will result in an increase in the Sheltered Housing Service Charge, however it is proposed that a protection scheme will be introduced to ensure that no existing users will pay more in 2006/07. It is, however, proposed to phase out abatements starting in 2007/08, the impact on current tenants will be restricted to 50p per week each year.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1. A revamp of the Sheltered Housing Wardens Service reflects national policy on accommodation, care and support needs.

## 10. CONSULTATION

- 10.1. The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and all Chief Officers, Trade Unions and Dundee Federation of Tenants Associations have been consulted regarding the contents of this report.
- 10.2. As there is a material change in the existing clients condition of tenancy, tenants representative groups will be consulted.

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1. None.

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Director of Housing

**(March 2006)**

Alan Baird  
Director of Social Work

**(March 2006)**

James C Petrie  
Assistant Chief Executive (Management)

**(March 2006)**