

Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 29 October 2019

City of Edinburgh Council Sheltered Housing

Executive/routine	Routine
Wards	All
Council Commitments	

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee:

- 1.1 Note the content of the report and work ongoing to maintain and improve services for residents of sheltered housing, as well as strengthen resident involvement.

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City of Edinburgh Council Sheltered Housing

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides information on the management of Council sheltered housing. It has been co-produced by the Housing Service and the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 2.2 The report also covers the Council's approach to working with sheltered housing residents to ensure their views inform policy and contribute to service improvement.

3. Background

- 3.1 Sheltered housing is for people with support needs who manage to live independently while having access to telecare equipment and support when required. The Council has 31 sheltered housing developments across the city with around 1,100 mainly older residents living in them. The design of shelters homes means they are accessible for the residents, with support provided to assist older people and people with disabilities to live independently for as long as possible.
- 3.2 The housing service in Place Directorate has landlord responsibility for all Council sheltered housing covering housing management services as well as repairs, maintenance and investment in the properties. Locality based housing officers let the homes, help tenants with any difficulties with payment of rent and deal with any tenancy related matters. They also co-ordinate with wider Council services, such as Parks and Greenspace and Waste to help manage the external areas around the homes and to assist with any issues that arise with services provided to residents in the developments. Repairs and maintenance of the properties and any capital investment in the homes is managed through the housing property service.
- 3.3 Where required, support services for residents living in the properties are provided through the Sheltered Housing Support Service (SHSS), which has been managed through the Health and Social Care Partnership's ATEC24 service, (Assistive Technology-Enabled Care 24 hrs a day) since June 2018.

ATEC24 combines Sheltered Housing Support, the Community Alarm and Telecare function and the Community Equipment Store.

- 3.4 Senior officers meet regularly with Sheltered Housing residents and stakeholders through the Council's Tenant Communication Group, set up by the Health and Social Care Partnership to support the review of the SHSS, and the Sheltered Housing Liaison Group (SHLG), which is a sub-group of Edinburgh Tenants Federation (ETF) which links routinely to Housing representatives from Place. Improvements in Sheltered Housing and SHSS is also being informed by the ETF SHLG [survey](#) carried out in 2018 and survey work that has been carried out by SHSS in all 31 Sheltered Housing developments.

4. Main report

Sheltered Housing – Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership

- 4.1 Traditionally sheltered housing has been used for those with a clearly identified need for support. Over the years, there have been improvements in the provision of caring for people in their own homes, meaning they do not necessarily need to move into sheltered housing, to receive the support they need. A move away from a tied accommodation service model towards a visiting support model of service delivery was agreed by the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee on 1 April 2014.
- 4.2 The current SHSS support provided is predominantly for older people, some with disabilities and/or mental health needs, to sustain independent lives in a supported environment. All residents are assessed for any additional support required and, where identified, this is provided according to their needs.
- 4.3 Following what was a period of significant service change for residents and staff the focus has been on stabilising the service while beginning to explore potential future change opportunities, to strengthen support for those who require it. This review work will take account of the current context for the service, future anticipated need and resident views. Resident views will continue to be gathered through the SHSS surveys, regular resident communication and involvement meetings and through discussions at the SLHG, a sub-group of the ETF.
- 4.4 Since October 2018, the SHSS has been carrying out an annual survey of all 31 sheltered housing schemes throughout the city to ensure the service being provided is both equitable and sustainable. The most recent SHSS survey of residents found that 90% of residents agreed that they received the support they needed and 98% that their support officer always treats them with dignity and respect. A 2018 ETF SHLG [survey](#) of sheltered housing residents found that 93% of respondents said they felt safe where they live and just over 84% that their homes met their needs.

- 4.5 Both surveys did indicate that feelings of social isolation are a concern with 39% of residents not feeling involved in the community where they live, and 42% that not enough social activities are provided in their area. SHSS officers are aware of this matter and have been working to increase social activity in community rooms through partnership working with the third sector and support for tenant/resident groups. Thirteen of the complexes have community rooms attached, which enables social activity to improve the general wellbeing of all residents. The rooms are free to use for residents and any activities being provided to support residents and information on activities available are promoted through an activity flyer. Historically, resident wardens were able to assist with social outings on an informal basis. With the change in service provision, staff no longer have capacity to do this work. The focus is providing planned support to service users and being available on site in emergency situations
- 4.6 The Council's supply of accessible housing must be used as effectively as possible to meet the needs of the population of Edinburgh. Taking account of this context, the SHSS are working with the housing service to use up to four sheltered housing properties across the city to assist with the management of hospital discharges to support the Home First priority indicated in the Integrated Joint Board (IJB) Strategic Plan. This will enable people leaving hospital to live in a homelier environment until appropriate permanent accommodation becomes available. Use of these homes will be determined on a case by case basis based on the needs of the individual households.
- 4.7 There is increasing demand for telecare services across Edinburgh to support the independence and wellbeing of elderly and vulnerable citizens. The recent Health and Social Care transformation reflected this growing demand by supporting an increase in front line posts to 38fte posts to provide additional monitoring and response roles. The operations management team also increased from four in 2018 to nine in 2019, to ensure the smooth running of the service and make improvements and efficiencies where possible. Performance for the service is good. 89% of calls that require an emergency response visit are attended to within 45 mins, the KPI is 90%, this figure includes response times for overnight calls. In 2018/19, a total of 488,308 calls were received by the community alarm and telecare service: 95.61% were answered within one minute and 99.36% within three minutes. There was a total of 1650 responder visits to SHSS or housing association properties during this period. The most recent SHSS resident survey also found that 98% of residents who responded agreed that the alarm equipment is regularly checked to ensure it is in working order.
- 4.8 The key aim of the any future change in services is to maintain or improve outcomes for people through making best use of resources and ensuring that future planning and provision is aligned with the Health and Social Care Partnership's strategic outcomes and the Strategic Commissioning Plan for Older

People. The review will also include strengthening collaborative working with Housing.

Sheltered Housing - Place

- 4.9 As with all Council homes the allocation of sheltered properties is based on housing need and the overall aim is to ensure that the processes are fair and transparent, and they meet the statutory and regulatory standards covering the allocation of social housing. As with other Council homes, available sheltered housing is advertised through the Choice based letting system. Of the 1,100 Council sheltered properties only 99 (9% of homes) became available for let in the last financial year.
- 4.10 Locality based housing patch officers manage the advertising and allocation of sheltered housing. In terms of letting policy preference is given to households over 55 or where a member of the household has a need for this type of accommodation. Not all people moving into sheltered accommodation will have a need for support. They also will work with tenants who are having any difficulties paying their rent and to help with any tenancy related matters and to provide advice and assistance on wider council services for residents such as waste collection and maintenance of external areas.
- 4.11 Responsive repairs in tenants' homes and capital investment in developments are managed through Housing Property (HP). An example of recent improvement work being taken forward with residents is the replacements of washing/drying machines located in 9 of the 31 sheltered housing developments. Consultation was carried out with the residents in each of these developments and in response to the feedback received the machines are being replaced. The specification and timetable are being finalised and once confirmed information will be provided to residents on when the machines will be replaced in their individual developments. Work is also being taken forward to look at some potential improvements to community rooms such as painting and changes to furniture etc.
- 4.12 Sheltered Housing tenants along with other Council tenants will benefit from ongoing work being taken forward through the Housing Service Improvement Plan that was agreed and is being reported regularly through the Housing, Homeless and Fair Work Committee. While a recent [survey](#) carried out by the SHLG found that tenant satisfaction with the quality of their homes was relatively high, there were some concerns expressed about some aspects of the repairs service; The initial focus for the improvement in repairs services across the city, and residents will have opportunities to be involved in providing their views on service improvements as this work is taken forward. includes the introduction of Total Mobile, which will help to identify problems relating to getting repairs jobs completed first time and to reduce delivery costs and improve business performance.

Sheltered Housing - Involving Residents

- 4.13 The Scottish Housing Regulator Charter 2017 (Outcome 3) requires that social landlords manage their businesses so that: “tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.” This includes how social landlords gather and take account of the views and priorities of their tenants; how they shape their services to reflect these views; and how they help tenants, other customers and bodies representing them to become more capable of involvement.
- 4.14 The Sheltered Housing Liaison Group, (SHLG), is a sub group of the [Edinburgh Tenants' Federation](#) (ETF). The SHLG was set by ETF to bring together Sheltered Housing tenants to consider issues of concern to them. The ETF is an umbrella tenant body that brings together tenant groups in Edinburgh to represent their views. The Housing Service has been liaising with the SHLG for many years on repairs and maintenance to sheltered housing and through a Senior Managers Group that looks at improvement across the housing service. The wider range of services provided by the Council can also be the subject of discussion, e.g., estate and waste operations, as well as Government policy; TV licenses for instance. Senior housing officers meet regularly with sheltered housing residents through the SHLG. Housing Officers also attend the Health and Social Care Partnership's Tenant Communications Group as requested.
- 4.15 The SHSS, within the EHSCP, set up a Tenant Communication Group (TCG) in April 2019 to enable residents to meet with the SHSS Management Team and contribute specifically to changes within the service and the planned review of Sheltered Housing support services. Bi-monthly meetings take place in community rooms across localities and ETF is invited to attend. Some members of the SHLG also attend TCG meetings, which assists with information sharing. To date, all 1,100 tenants have been invited to attend with 354 of those attending thus far, from schemes located at Ashton Grove, Ferniehill, Southhouse, Baberton, Currie, Coillesdene, Saughton Mains, Restalrig, Loaning Road, Moira Park, Chesser/Laichfield, Ravenscroft, Calders and Kirkliston.
- 4.16 SHSS surveys and the SHLG survey highlighted that sheltered housing residents would like to see improved communication with residents. A quarter of residents who completed the most recent SHSS felt that they had not been kept well enough informed about changes to the SHSS and a common theme running through the SHLG survey is that residents felt that decisions are being made without their input.
- 4.17 Senior officers from Housing and the Health and Social Care Partnership will continue to attend the Tenant Communication Group and the SHLG. Work is

ongoing to clarify roles and responsibilities for communicating with these groups and on ways to make it easier for residents to become involved and ensure their views are being taken in to account. Adequate notice for meetings will be ensured to support ongoing attendance of key participants. In all group/public meetings with residents, confidentiality and meeting the General Data Protection Requirement all individual residents is paramount.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Senior officers from Housing and the Health and Social Care Partnership will continue to attend the Tenant Communication Group and the SHLG.
- 5.2 Housing will work closely with the SHSS to finalise an action plan being developed in response to the 2018 SHLG survey. The SHLG will be updated on progress on actions taken because of their feedback.
- 5.3 SHSS will develop event guidelines for residents and wider members of the community using the sheltered housing community rooms.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no adverse financial impacts arising from this report. Innovative approaches to managing Sheltered Housing will help to ensure best value for the Council and residents.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 There are no adverse stakeholder/community impact implications arising from this report. This work will help to strengthen communication between tenants and the Sheltered Housing Support Service as well as building on approaches to involve Sheltered Housing tenants.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Tied Accommodation within Sheltered Housing Update, Health, Social Care and Housing Committee, 16 June 2015](#)

9. Appendices
