

NOTICE OF DELEGATION OF DECISION TO CABINET MEMBER BY STRONG LEADER

Section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, the senior executive member may discharge any of the functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet or may arrange for them to be discharged by another member of the Cabinet or Officer. On 1st December 2010, the Council adopted the Strong Leader Model for Corporate Governance 2011 as required under Part 3 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The 2007 Act).

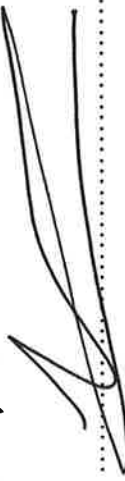
I, J-P Campion, as Strong Leader, delegate the decision to approve the Local Letting Plan for the Supported Accommodation in Bromsgrove Street detailed in the Forward Plan to the Cabinet Member detailed below:

Cabinet Member – Councillor Anne Hingley

Dated:

15th Dec 13.

Signed:


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Leader of the Council

NOTICE OF DECISION OF CABINET MEMBER

Pursuant Section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended by section 63 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the senior executive member may discharge any of the functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet or may arrange for them to be discharged by another member of the Cabinet or Officer. On 1st December 2010, the Council adopted the Strong Leader Model for Corporate Governance 2011 as required under Part 3 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The 2007 Act).

In accordance with the authority delegated to me by the Leader, I have made the following decision:


Subject	Decision	Reason for decision	Date for Decision to be taken
Local Letting Plan for Supported Housing project in Bromsgrove Street, Kidderminster	To approve the proposed LLP	The scheme will be allocated to outside of the Councils Allocation Policy and therefore needs an approved LLP	7 th November 2013

I confirm that the appropriate statutory officer consultation has taken place with regard to this decision.

Dated:

Signed:

Councillor:


ANNE HINGLEY

Cabinet Member

To: Cabinet Member for Place Shaping,

6th November 2013

Supported Housing for Young People – Local Letting Plan

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the current progress on the Bromsgrove Street Foyer – supported accommodation for young people and presents the Local Letting Plan. It also includes some details regarding the establishment of the steering group that will oversee the delivery of the project.

2. Background

- 2.1 In March 2011 a report was brought to Overview and Scrutiny to support the Bromsgrove Street Foyer financially through a grant for affordable housing. Building work commenced in 2013 when the rest of the funding was obtained and the land transfer was agreed with County Council.
- 2.2 The Council, St Basils and West Mercia (Nexus) who own the Foyer have worked together to agree a Local Letting Plan (LLP). Allocations will be made in accordance with the Plan and outside of the Home Choice Plus allocations policy and will therefore require the approval of Overview and Scrutiny.
- 2.3 The supported accommodation will provide 19 units of self contained accommodation for young people aged 16 – 25. They will be required to need and accept support and will be assisted in acquiring (or maintaining) education, employment and training.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 As the proposed Local Letting Plan is outside of the Home Choice Plus allocation policy, we are required to get approval for the Plan.
- 3.2 Allocations to the scheme will be through an established panel of officers, made up from representatives from the Council, St Basils and West Mercia. Other agencies will be invited where relevant.
- 3.3 Referrals can be received from any agency or directly through self-referral and officers will complete the Worcestershire Link Up application form / online form to begin the assessment process.
- 3.4 The LLP includes an appeals process for unsuccessful candidates. It may not be possible to accept all clients due to the risk posed to the scheme and other residents but there won't be any blanket exclusions.

- 3.5 The LLP also outlines the role of the Steering Group that will oversee the supported housing project. This group will be established to oversee the project including its performance and to provide advice, support and partnership working. Membership of the group is to be finally decided but it is proposed that we invite ward members, other young people support agencies and the Police.
- 3.6 The project is currently ahead of schedule and we anticipate the units will start being occupied in mid December 2013. St Basils have been working with the developers and the young people they support in some of the interior design, fixtures and fittings. They have also been able to offer apprenticeship opportunities to clients to help complete the build whilst learning important construction skills.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The LLP has been circulated and agreed by St Basils and West Mercia.

5. Related Decisions

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

- 6.1 Home Choice Plus Allocations Scheme.

7. Implications

- 7.1 Resources: Not applicable
- 7.2 Equalities: The Local Letting Plan will ensure the supported housing is available to all.
- 7.3 Partnership working: The steering group will include partners for relevant agencies who can effective capital working.
- 7.4 Human Rights: Not applicable
- 7.5 E-Government: Not applicable
- 7.6 Transformation: Not applicable

8. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

- 8.1 To be completed once the final LLP has been agreed.

9. Wards affected

- 9.1 All wards.

10. Appendices

- 10.1 Bromsgrove Street Foyer Local Letting Plan.

11. Background Papers

11.1 Not applicable.

Officer Contact Details:

Kate Bailey
Strategic Housing Services Manager
01562 732560

Introduction

Bromsgrove Street Foyer provides supported accommodation for young people aged 16 – 25. The young person must be willing to seek or be engaged in education, employment or training as a condition of occupancy and be willing to have support.

The purpose of this Local Letting Plan is to outline the eligible criteria for the scheme, to cover how the allocations panel will work and also the process for dealing with appeals.

Eligibility Criteria

- Aged 16 - 25.
- Male or Female.
- Homeless, threatened with homelessness, or seeking to move as part of a resettlement programme.
- Identified need for housing related support (vulnerable¹) and a willingness to engage with support as part of their licence agreement.
- Willingness to work towards gaining Education and/or Employment
- A local connection to Wyre Forest or have an “exceptional”² need to be rehoused in the District (as defined by Home Choice Allocations Policy)
- Young People 16-25 with low to medium support needs

Type of Support Provided

The support will be provided by St Basils who will be located on site and providing opportunities for young people to acquire skills to enable them to live independently. Support will include the below;

- help in setting up and maintaining home or tenancy
- developing domestic/life skills
- developing social skills
- advice, advocacy and liaison
- help in managing finances and benefit claims
- help in finding suitable education/training and employment
- emotional support, counselling and advice
- help in gaining access to other services
- help in establishing social contacts and activities
- help in establishing personal safety and security
- peer support and befriending
- help finding other accommodation
- help maintaining the safety and security of the dwelling
- liaison with probation
- risk assessment
- advice and support on repair work/home improvement work

¹ Vulnerable is defined as a young person who has difficulty in living independently without support. This may be due to social circumstances, external pressures or personal factors that limit their ability to cope. Through the Supporting People programme we are contracted to deliver Housing Related Support to help sustain tenancies and prevent vulnerable people from becoming homeless.

² Where a young person has special education / social needs that can be met by a facility / organisation in WF or they are in fear of violence, abuse or exploitation in the area where they have a connection

- access to local community organisations
- security support related to racial harassment
- signposting to culture specific legal services

Exclusions from the Scheme

There are no blanket exclusions from the scheme. Each referral is looked at by its own merit and a risk assessment and risk management plan will be completed to identify if risks are manageable at the project. However the scheme might exclude applicants on the following basis;

- Where one or more of the circumstances for “reduced banding” in the Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy has been met
- Where there is a recent history of serious criminal activity including arson, serious violence, intimidation or harassment
- Where the young person cannot meet the charges associated with the accommodation from their own resources (affordability)
- Where the young person is using drugs or illegal substances or drinking / using solvents inappropriately

16 & 17 Year olds

Where Childrens Services are seeking to place a young person, to whom they have s17 or s20 responsibilities they will be required to sign a rent guarantee, and act as “guarantor” of the licence, until the applicant reaches the age of 18.

In addition, any 16 – 17 year old applicants who apply will only be accepted if they are eligible for and have in place the Income Support or Job Seeker Allowance, as it would not be possible to afford to live in the project without this minimum level of income. This means that the DWP (or its successor body) has accepted that they are permanently estranged from their family, and that they qualify for “severe hardship” payments unless they are a care leaver.

The Allocations Process

Nominations to the scheme will be made through Worcestershire Link Up or the Housing Advice Team based in The Hub, Kidderminster. Referrals should be made on the Link Up paperwork.

A written referral from the relevant agency or self referral will be expected before the applicant is offered an interview. The information shared must be accurate and up to date.

Two members of staff will interview and assess the applicant. The applicant may wish to be accompanied by the referring agency or an advocate

All referrals and allocations to the scheme are strictly monitored to ensure that all lettings are in line with the projects Local Letting Plan criteria, and that they meet the aims and objectives of the project.

When the interview is complete, staff will inform the applicant of the next course of action. They will inform them that the ultimate decision whether they are successful rests with the multi agency allocations panel. They will also inform them as to whether or not there is a waiting list and their position on it.

The Multi-agency Allocations Panel

A panel will be convened when there is a vacancy. The panel can meet, conference call or agree an emergency case via email.

The Multi-agency panel will consist of (as a minimum);

- A representative from St Basils
- A representative from WFDC
- A representative from the Housing Advice Team
- A representative from West Mercia (Nexus)

The Panel will also invite other organisations to attend where appropriate such as Childrens Services, the Police, Health Professionals.

The applicant will be informed within 5 days of the result of the multiagency panel. This is usually done via telephone and followed up with a letter where a contact address is available. In the case of those who are homeless and have no fixed address, this is not always possible and a telephone call will be made.

The officer will also contact the referring agency. The referring agency will always be informed of the final decision in writing.

Should the multi agency panel need more time to consider an application the referring agency will be informed of this in writing. The Service Manager/Co-ordinator will give an update at each multiagency panel meeting to include referrals, rejections, appeals and review requests.

Requests for Appeals

All applicants and their referring agency have the right to appeal regarding the decision to exclude someone from the accommodation (prior to letting).

In the first instance all appeals must be made in writing, outlining the grounds for appeal and should be submitted to the Multi-agency Appeals Panel (via the St Basils service manager) who will then review the decision ensuring that it has been made in accordance with the LLP.

The Multi-agency Appeals Panel will be comprised of;

- Principal Strategic Housing Officer / Strategic Housing Services Manager from WFDC
- Housing Manager at TCHG
- Service Manager at St Basils
- Housing Manager at West Mercia (Nexus)
- An independent member from the Steering Group

Appeals should be made in writing to;

St Basils
3 Bromsgrove Street
Kidderminster
Worcestershire

If the applicant is still not satisfied then they will be referred to the St Basils Complaints Procedure.

Bromsgrove Street Steering Group

It is the intention of the Council, West Mercia and St Basils to establish a steering group to oversee the strategic direction and management of the Foyer.

The Steering Group will ideally be made up of local ward members and partner agencies who have an interest in the success of the scheme.

The initial meeting will be held in advance of the scheme being completed and will be chaired by a senior manager at St Basils.