

EXECUTIVE – JUNE 23 2009

ITEM 6 DEPUTATION REQUESTS – COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING

Sceaux Gardens Tenants Association - Comments from the Strategic Director of Environment and Housing

10. Officers are aware of the problem of Voltaire being used as a public footpath and area for shelter. However, before door entry systems can be installed, there are key criteria that must be met. These are:
 - Clear evidence of antisocial behaviour supported by the Police and the Antisocial Behaviour Unit with a recommendation that the additional security of a door entry system will mitigate the problem.
 - The budget must be available to cover the costs.
 - A formal ballot must take place with at least 50% of residents supporting the installation (Note rent and service charges will increase typically by £1 per week after installation).
11. Officers do not have evidence that the criteria are met in Sceaux Gardens at the moment but will commence a process of investigation, starting with confirming the extent of antisocial behaviour, and report back to the Tenants Association as soon as this work is complete.

Review of the Resident Involvement Service - Comments from the Strategic Director of Environment and Housing

12. The Resident's Involvement (RI) Service moved back to the Housing Management Division in January 2009. The restructure that is being implemented, officers believe, will deliver a RI service that is clearly aligned to the delivery of housing services, and that can act as an effective bridge between housing delivery and residents. The Housing Management service was substantially restructured in 2007 to create a more specialist property management wing, and a more resident focussed area management service.
13. No secret has been made of the need to make sure that the RI structure reflected the changes made to the Housing Management division, however in order to deliver this, changes needed to be made to the internal structure. The Council's re-organisation procedure was followed and the RI review was published to staff and trade unions on 30th March 2009 in line with this procedure. The Chair of Tenants Council was informed on the same day, and a commitment made to take a full consultation report to the next meeting of the Tenants Council, scheduled for 20 April 2009.
14. This internal management review does not equate to a change of policy. Rather the review is driven by internal management considerations which are the need to:
 - eliminate duplication between RI and the new resident focussed area management service
 - deliver on the HRA savings commitments agreed as part of the 2009/2010 budget setting

- improve performance given low levels of satisfaction and unclear deliverables in the RI service
15. The Strategic Director of Environment and Housing has made clear that the objectives and targets for the team will be developed with tenants. The offer to support a working party that looked at the future direction of the RI service was put forward formally at Tenants Council on 20th April. The offer extended to involving tenants in an evaluation against those agreed objectives after a full year of operation. It has been made clear, however, that the re-structuring itself cannot be subject to tenants involvement. This is because we are bound to follow a clear management procedure, and because we cannot discuss the future of individual members of staff or staff groups outside of these procedure.
 16. The Head of Housing Management has formally confirmed this offer to the Chair of Tenants Council.