



AGENDA ITEM: 5(e)

CABINET: 12 November 2013

Report of: Borough Solicitor

Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (People and Places)

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor I Grant

**Contact for further information: Mrs C A Jackson (Extn. 5016)
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**SUBJECT: TENANT'S CASH BACK SCHEME - ITEM CONSIDERED BY
EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To advise on the decision of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 3 October 2013, following consideration of the report - Tenants Cash Back Scheme, attached at Appendix A.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the report be noted.

2.2 That a Tenant's Cash Back Scheme is not introduced.

2.3 That the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration work with Tenants to explore further how a scheme could be developed which offered skills training to tenants as outlined at paragraph 5.3, of the attached report.

2.4 That call-in is not appropriate as it relates to an item already considered by the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.0 DETAILS

3.1 At its meeting on 3 October, the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee, considered the item 'Tenants Cash Back Scheme' and resolved as follows:

“RESOLVED: A That as a consequence of the discussion on this item it was agreed that the following comments be referred to Cabinet:

1. the recommendation to Cabinet, as set down at 3.2 of the report, “That a Tenant Cash Back Scheme is not introduced” be supported.
2. the recommendation to Cabinet, as set down at paragraph 3.3 “That the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration work with Tenants to explore further how a scheme could be developed which offered skills training to tenants as outlined in paragraph 5.3 of the report”, be deleted.”

4.0 COMMENTS OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION

- 4.1 The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee have expressed some concerns about exploring the options of providing skills training for Tenants of our social housing.
- 4.2 I fully appreciate that it is not the traditional role of the Council as landlord to be a “training agency” or an agency that has the responsibility of assisting people into work or training. However, our role as landlord is changing and I would question whether we need to do more to assist out tenants. The Council has changed its Allocations and Tenure Policies to target social housing towards the most vulnerable and to house people on limited income. Additionally, tenancies generally are let for a period of 5 years when a review of circumstances is undertaken. My view as a responsible landlord should be to try and assist tenants to be in a position to “move on” and release accommodation for those that need it. Currently the Council has around 6200 properties and over 3000 people on the register to be re-housed.
- 4.3 The Council has major investment plans which create employment opportunities like apprenticeships which we currently support. If Members were minded to allow Officer time to explore other options of offering “skills training”, I would like to investigate a range of options that would validate some of the work we support tenants with. For example, Chairman skills for involved tenants which, if turned into an accredited training model, could give the competencies needed for employability. This may create a “win-win” situation by helping some tenants into employment and by encouraging younger tenants into participation with the Council. This is just one example that will meet the aspirations of a range of individuals including skills in decorating etc.
- 4.4 I have reviewed my recommendation in the light of the concerns of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee but feel that this option is worthy of exploration. No work will be implemented without a further report, Member consideration and approval to changes in current arrangements. I think we should look at the benefit of supporting our tenants to achieve their potential and

some will release much needed accommodation for those less fortunate and who require this.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

- Appendix A - Report and Appendices of the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration - Tenants Cashback Scheme.
- Appendix B – Minute of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 3 October 2013
- Appendix C - Minute of Landlord Services Committee Cabinet Working Group held on 6 November 2013 (to follow)