

**DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**CONSULTATION- FUNDING FOR SUPPORTED HOUSING - NOVEMBER 2016**

**Suggested Response - West Lancashire Borough Council**

The Council are unable to provide a response to the consultation in the format requested due to the timescales involved and the scale of the issues in question which require careful consideration and discussion with other providers of supported housing. A general response has however been prepared.

We welcome the intention to ring-fence the devolved top-up funding to ensure that the vulnerable and those in need are not disadvantaged. Our areas of concern are:

- Whether the intended level of the top- up funding made available will be sufficient to meet local needs. Comparisons have been made with Supporting People funding which was initially ring-fenced but then faced funding reductions in subsequent years.
- Whether funding levels will have an annual uplift.
- How the funding will be applied locally as we are a 2<sup>nd</sup> tier authority. Initial indications were that funding would sit at 1<sup>st</sup> tier level, therefore with Lancashire County Council, who is responsible for commissioning the majority of supported housing services that are currently in place. There would be a significant administrative impact for this Council if we were responsible for administering the top-up funding for the Borough.
- That no-one with support needs should end up in accommodation that does not meet their individual requirements, or become homeless as a result of the changes.
- That the actual level of housing and support costs will be met in full and funding will meet levels of demand.
- That sufficient time is given to manage the transition period to any new funding system.

The Council will work closely with local providers of supported housing to help develop and shape the new funding model and ensure that residents of West Lancashire are not disadvantaged. We will also contribute to the formal feedback through the Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH) of which we are a member.