

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE)**

SUBJECT: **TENANCY AGREEMENT**

1.00 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 The purpose of the report is to obtain approval for the final stage of implementation of the council's revised tenancy agreement.

2.00 **BACKGROUND**

2.01 The council gave a commitment to tenants in the 'Choices' document, that if it retained its housing stock, it would update its tenancy agreement. The existing tenancy agreement is over 20 years old, and legislation, policy and good practice have changed in that time.

2.02 Reports were submitted to cabinet both in 2011 and in October 2012 regarding the proposed changes.

2.03 Feedback from the appointed firm of solicitors, tenants, staff and elected members have been incorporated to agree a final version which was consulted on extensively throughout March, April and May 2014.

2.04 An updated report was submitted to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the close of the consultation and it is now requested that Cabinet approve the final implementation of the agreement.

3.00 **CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The consultation was more extensive than was required to enable customers to have sufficient time to respond. A number of consultation methods were employed to provide a wide variety of ways that customers could find out more information and have an opportunity to respond.

3.02 The consultation was launched at the tenant's conference at The Civic Hall, Connah's Quay on 3rd February 2014. This included a

presentation on the proposed agreement, along with copies of the documents to be sent to tenants and an opportunity to come to a presentation stand to look at these and ask questions and give feedback.

- 3.03 A copy of the proposed tenancy agreement along with the preliminary notice of variation was sent to all tenants in March 2014. Accompanying these documents was a summary of the changes between the existing tenancy conditions and the proposed ones. In addition, a schedule of drop-in events which were held across the county in the consultation period was included in the pack. Details of how customers could respond to the consultation along with a form for customers to complete were also sent.
- 3.04 Documents were provided in the medium of Welsh and English along with details of how the documents could be provided in other formats if required. As a result of making the consultation documents available in other formats, a request was received to produce these in audio format for accessibility reasons. This was produced and provided to the customer requesting it.
- 3.05 Details of the consultation were posted on both the council's website and on the Housing in Flintshire Facebook page.
- 3.06 A series of 15 drop-in events was held throughout the consultation period.
- 3.07 Drop-in events were not held in Holywell, Flint or Mold due to staff being available at these locations during office hours to answer questions and accept feedback on the consultation.
- 3.08 The responses to the consultation were positive apart from one query relating to the legality of varying the tenancy agreement, and another query relating to the section on 'tenants rights' which were addressed by the council's legal team when that tenant put these questions to the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.09 The proposed tenancy agreement also contains the right for the council to (in the future) introduce charging for missed appointments. In the event that the council did decide to consider introduce charging, there would need to be a specific policy developed by officers and approved by elected members, alongside consultation with customers throughout the process.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 It is recommended that Cabinet give approval for the final stage of the implementation of the new tenancy agreement.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 Administrative and postage costs for implementation of final stage.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 No negative impact.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 No negative impact.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 No negative impact.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 No negative impact.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 No further consultation required.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 As detailed in the report.

12.00 APPENDICES

Draft tenancy agreement

Details of proposed changed compared to existing agreement.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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