

Equality Impact Assessment Report Template

Name of policy, procedure or function: Rents Function

Service Area: Housing Services

Team Members: John Delahunty, Mukesh Patel, Tahir Yaqub, Sarah Cromie, Peter Davey

Date: 19th May 2006

Findings

General

The aim of the service is to:

Collect income due in the most efficient way

Support to prevent arrears

Reducing rent arrears and sustaining tenancy

- Enforcement as a last resort
- Reaching an affordable agreement – income and expenditure
- Links to housing benefits to maximising people income.

Preventative balanced with enforcement

Several issues were flagged up through the housing inspection including:

High rent arrears levels

A lack of performance management information

Lack of information about the customers and their needs and being able to respond to their needs

Difficulty in sharing information across the housing teams as the IT system restricts access and info.

Specific Equality Areas

Issues specific to equality include:

Overcoming communication barriers

Customer confidence

- We have services in place but not sure how many customers know about them.
- Are people confident that they will be treated fairly?

Tackling poverty in older people is an area of concern

The move to Swipecards needs to ensure people understand the system and have access to payment locations.

Further Actions				
Problem/barrier identified	Actions to overcome problem/barrier	Resources required	Responsibility	Target date
Lack of information on interpretation and translation services	Put info in about interpreter service in the starter pack	Officer Time	Housing Allocations	June 06
	Send information out in Housing News	Officer Time	Nick Jones	August 06
	Rents statements have different languages and interpreters	Officer Time	Rents team	June 06
Improve income maximisation	Awareness raising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At sign-up stage refer to Housing Benefits • Day surgeries/Exhibitions in partnership with other organisations and Council departments in provide more information on housing related issues. Include relevant partners from the LSP etc. 	Existing Resources Existing resources	Housing Allocations Team Tahir Yabub	March 07
Older people's Poverty	Carry out a local campaign through the sheltered housing schemes to raise awareness of how older people can access all the benefits available to them	Existing resources	Tahir Yabub	March 07
Staff Awareness of vulnerability issues	Tie vulnerability issues into Service Development Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with child care responsibilities • Home visits at appropriate times • Mental health issues • Cultural issues 	Corporate Training Budget	Kevin Brewin	Sept 06

Increasing information held on vulnerable customers	Improvements to CRM and HMS Ability to pick up more information on hand held devices	Capital Programme	John Delahunty	Dec 07 Dec 08
Communication difficulties within and departments	Carry out a process doctor to develop joint protocol Including housing benefits	Existing Resources	Peter Davey	March 06
Lack of overarching policy statement on fair treatment	Draft fair treatment statement i.e. we won't treat you differently because x,y,z Include in tenants handbook	n/a	John Delahunty	Oct 06
Lack of monitoring information	Set up monitoring arrangements for enforcement and evictions and stages in between	n/a	Mukesh Patel	Oct 06