

Housing –Tenancy Support Framework

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1.0 Introduction

This framework sets out guidance for an efficient and effective approach to Tenancy Support which comply with legislative requirements, other frameworks already in place where applicable and wider corporate objectives.

The policy details how affordability assessments will be conducted by the Income Pre-Tenancy team and how the team will respond in specific scenarios.

2.0 Purpose

The aims of **Tenancy Support** are centred on the main corporate vision and one Council approach:

• Every child able to fulfil their potential

• People are safe, health and live well

• Every neighbourhood thriving

• Extending economic opportunity

• A cleaner, greener local environment

The team serves a wide-ranging purpose that focusses on enabling tenants to sustain their tenancies, by a wide range of holistic tenancy support.

The service provision delivers a joined-up approach that looks to communicate effectively and coherently with customers and third parties at all stages to ensure we support our customers and provide successful tenancy support.

The Financial Inclusion team and Income Recovery team aim to:

Offer a strong tenancy support and financial inclusion service that looks to understand what the barriers are for customers and households to help directly and signpost appropriately for further and specialist support.

• Adopt a ‘firm but fair’ approach that reflects a commitment to prevention, support, and recovery

• Ensure customers have access to appropriate support to maximise their income, receive welfare benefits advice and referrals to other appropriate partners.

• Be respectful, inclusive, and clear in our communications with customers

• Provide an accessible and accountable income management service provision

• Ensure a value for money approach is embedded

• Ensure staff are aware of the framework and understand its aims

The Tenancy Support Team specifically aims to:

• Empower customers to take control of their financial health and sustain a tenancy.

• Give customers access to support which helps to maximise their income, receive welfare benefit advice, and provide referrals to other appropriate partners.

• Look to identify barriers for customers and work with them to break these down.

• Deliver an efficient, effective, and consistent approach to holistic tenancy support

3.0 The Procedure

3.1 Prioritisation

We receive referrals from a wide range of partners, these referrals are assessed prior to allocation to assess the priority and the suitability for the service.

3.2 Allocation

The tenancy support team will be allocated referrals on a priority basis each week and this allocation is recorded centrally within the Financial Inclusion team.

3.3 Support

Tenancy Support officers contact the tenants to arrange a suitable home visit to discuss support needs. At this visit a triage form is completed and a support plan agreed. A signed consent of authority is also obtained for the officer to liaise with other agencies. Support continues until all needs from the tenant are addressed.

Examples of support offered – Maximising Income /Budgeting advice / Registering at Doctors / Applying for Benefits (PIP, LCFW, Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit, Council Tax Support Scheme) Help with opening bank accounts / Attending appointments when necessary / Obtaining I.D / Referring on to other agencies such as With You, Crisis Team, Rotherham Rise / Contacting companies to set up payments and new accounts

3.4 Closing Support

Once all support needs have been addressed the case is closed by the tenancy support officer and referee is notified. We then contact all tenants with a questionnaire asking a few simple questions which enables us to monitor the service we provided. The tenant is provided with contact details should further support arise.

3.5 No Contact/disengagement

If no contact is made from a phone call the tenancy support officer would send a text message and email to the tenant and conduct an unplanned visit. Further attempts a contact would be made within a reasonable time frame and should no contact be made; the referral would be closed and the referee informed. If a tenant initially engages but then stops, again reasonable attempts are made to contact. If these are unsuccessful the referral would be closed.

3.6 Translations

Where a customer requires a translator, we will use the DA Languages facility and connect to them with a speaker of their preferred language.

3.7 Referrals

Where further/additional support is required the tenant support team would signpost tenants to the relevant services

3.8 Related Documents

This framework has been drawn up with reference to relevant legislation, including but not limited to:

• Financial Inclusion Plan 2023/24

• Income Recovery Framework

• Housing Allocation Policy

• Homeless Reduction Act

4.0 Performance

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| **Performance Indicator** | **Indicator Description** | **Target 2023/24** | **Outturn 2023/24** | **Target 2024/25** |
| **FI6** | Amount of additional welfare benefits received by tenants | £266,844.00 | **£455,548.00** | £381,696.00 |
| **FI8** | Customer Satisfaction | 95% | 100% | 95% |
| **FI7** | Prevention from Evictions for Secure tenants | 36 | 41 | 36 |

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The Assistant Director of Housing will retain the overall responsibility for the implementation of this framework. The Financial Inclusion Team Leader is responsible for the operational delivery of this framework and the associated procedures and has the responsibility for ensuring compliance with regulatory and legislative requirements.

6.0 Monitoring, Reviewing and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this Procedure is reported upon monthly with the key performance indicators overseen by the Head of Service. The effectiveness of this procedure will be reviewed at 12 monthly intervals to ensure best practice is always delivered.

7.0 Legislation and Guidance

• Housing Act 1985

• Protection from Eviction Act 1977

• Landlord and Tenant Act 1987

• Civil Procedure Rules 1998

• County Court Act 1984

• Human Rights Act 1998

• Equalities Act 2010

• The Limitation Act 1980

• General Data Protection Regulation 2016

• Any additional supplementary Legislation and guidance

8.0 Policy Control Statement

The Head of Service for Housing Income and Support Services is responsible for ensuring adoption of, and adherence to this framework and its associated procedures.

The Financial Inclusion Manager is responsible for day-to-day operational management of the team The Financial Inclusion Manager is required to develop, implement and maintain relevant guidance and procedures for employees and managers.

All Tenancy Support staff are responsible for the operational aspect of the Tenancy Support service and will ensure there is compliance with relevant legislation and due regard for best practice.

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| Approval meeting: |  |
| Approval date: |  |
| Date of next review: |  |
| Officer/Date: | Comments: |