

OLDHAM ADULT & COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

SUPPORTING PEOPLE LEASEHOLDER POLICY

1 Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the 2006/07 Supporting People Grant conditions, it is a requirement to have a policy that clearly sets out the local authority's position in relation to leaseholders. This policy is effective from 30 June 2006 so it will govern payments made to leaseholders in Oldham from April 2007.
- 1.2 The former policy on leaseholders dates from November 2004 when the decision was made to restrict Supporting People (SP) funding to five leaseholders who had legacy funding from Minimum Income Guarantee.

2 Background

- 2.1 Leaseholders are (usually) older people who have purchased housing on a shared equity basis or who have purchased their property outright. It is a condition of their occupancy that they pay charges direct to the housing provider to cover the costs of services and support.
- 2.2 In April 2003, leaseholders with a low income were incorporated into the Supporting People framework. Typically, these residents were in receipt of Minimum Income Guarantee.
- 2.3 Previously, their support charges had been paid within benefits from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). However, from April 2003, the DWP was only able to make payments in respect of service charges related to the adequacy of the accommodation i.e. excluding charges for support from a scheme manager or for the provision of a community alarm.

3 Department of Communities and Local Government guidelines

- 3.1 The DCLG have stated within the Supporting People grant conditions that a policy in relation to local leaseholders must be published. This policy includes the eligibility criteria which must be satisfied before payment of the support charge can be made.
- 3.2 The eligibility criteria must include a requirement that the local authority has reviewed the service and considers that the service
 - represents value for money
 - is strategically relevant
 - is of good quality.

3.3 Approach to review of leasehold services

- 3.3.1 As there is no contract held with the support provider, a full service review is not appropriate. It is proposed that a 'light touch' review be undertaken which will focus on the support offered to residents, the quality of the service and whether this fits with the overall strategic aims of Oldham.
- 3.3.2 It is proposed that the SP team review Oldham's four leasehold schemes by 31 December 2006.

3.4 Eligibility criteria for leaseholders

- 3.4.1 Oldham MBC will continue to pay the annual support charge for the four leaseholders who have legacy funding (subject to the eligibility criteria below). No other leaseholder will be considered for SP funding.
- 3.4.2 The following eligibility criteria will apply:
- the leaseholder applying is in receipt of Pension Credit
 - he or she has a need for support e.g. has physical disability, is in receipt of Attendance Allowance
 - the support service is assessed as being strategically relevant, value for money and good quality.

4 Review

- 4.1 The policy will be reviewed as part of the development of the proposed Older People's Housing Strategy and no later than June 2007.

If you have any questions about this policy you can phone Carol Bibby (Supporting People Team Oldham) on 0161 770 8116 or e-mail carol.bibby@oldham.gov.uk