

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 24 March 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People and Economy

PORTFOLIO: Health and Wellbeing

SUBJECT: Barkla Fields Bungalows

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To seek approval to enter into an arrangement with Halton Housing Trust relating to specially adapted bungalows at Barkla Fields.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) Executive Board note the report;**
- 2) Executive Board approve entering into an arrangement with Halton Housing Trust to share risks relating to voids at the Barkla Fields bungalow; and**
- 3) Delegated powers be given to the Strategic Director, People and Economy, in conjunction with the Portfolio holder for Health and Wellbeing to implement this arrangement.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Board has previously approved a capital grant of £400,000 to Cosmopolitan Housing Association for the development of 10 specially adapted bungalows for individuals with learning difficulties or physical disabilities. This was due to an acute shortage of suitable accommodation for these clients, and the inability to secure such accommodation using the traditional HCA funding route due to the abnormally high costs per unit.

3.2 Cosmopolitan Housing Association subsequently encountered financial difficulties that resulted in the organisation being taken over by Sanctuary Housing Association, and two of Cosmopolitan's projects in Halton transferred to Halton Housing Trust – this bungalow project and the development of Brennan Lodge homeless hostel.

3.3 Halton Housing Trust (HHT) has developed five specialist adapted

bungalows at Barkla Fields (former Pingot site) at a cost of £1.2m. The Council has contributed £200,000 to this and handover of the bungalows is expected mid-March 2016.

- 3.4 The Council and HHT are seeking to enter into an arrangement for these properties. This will enable social care to nominate adults it supports as tenants of HHT and the arrangement will include an equal risk share relating to the filling of voids including lost rent. Provision will be included to revisit this arrangement if Local Housing Allowance is removed by Government

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 These specialist bungalows support the Transforming Care agenda (Winterbourne View) and minimise the need for assessment and treatment beds and distant placements.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council has made a capital grant to the higher build costs – see 3.3.

- 5.2 The weekly cost of a void is £205 per week and will be shared 50/50 by the Council and HHT. Both parties will seek to minimise any period of voids.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None identified

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The wellbeing of disabled people will be improved through a home environment designed to meet their complex needs.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The arrangement between HHT and HBC will share risks arising from voids.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 The bungalow occupants will be tenants of HHT and awarded the same rights and duties through the tenancy agreement as all HHT

tenants. The social care support includes a responsibility on the provider to support the person to maintain their tenancy.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act