

Assheton Court – Decant Policy Principles

These principles will feed into a full and detailed Decant Policy relating specifically to the Assheton Court redevelopment project. The full Decant Policy will be developed well in advance of the need to move any residents and it will be supplemented by an iterative Q&As sheet that will be available to provide information for residents and their families about all matters associated with the project, covering matters of decant, timeframes etc.

The Council recognises the impact that moving to a new home can have on residents and their families. It is therefore essential that residents are given the opportunity to comment on any changes to their accommodation and are able to access the necessary information easily.

In order to frame the policy, the following set of principles have been developed:

- **A dedicated Tenant Involvement Officer** – the Tenant Liaison Officer and the Sheltered Housing Officer will be available to answer any questions or queries and to assist in some of the tasks associated with moving. The Officers will be the essential connection between the Council and residents, offering the reassurance of a familiar face throughout the process. Each affected resident will have a one-to-one meeting so that their needs and desires can be fully understood.
- **Full tenant consultation** – residents will be kept updated via regular contact with the Tenant Liaison Officer, Sheltered Housing Officer and regular newsletters. Residents will be invited to a Q&A session with senior Officers and be given the opportunity to comment on the planning application.
- **The choice for residents to stay within Portchester or select another scheme in the Borough** – it is important that residents are given an informed choice in their accommodation and residents will be advised of the schemes available in the Borough. This will include the nearby Station Road project. Residents will be signposted to accommodation most suitable to meeting their needs.
- **The choice to move back to Assheton following the redevelopment** – the Council understands the strong community links forged at Assheton Court and all residents will be given the option to return to the scheme following redevelopment.
- **All applicable residents will be awarded a Home Loss Payment of £6,400** - a Home Loss Payment is a one-off statutory payment amount set by the Government and is to compensate for the need to move. This only applies to residents holding a secure or introductory tenancy and who've been in residence for one year ending with the date of displacement/moving. The applicable Home Loss Payment in 2019 is £6,400.
- **All residents will be awarded a Disturbance Payment to cover the cost of relocation** – a Disturbance Payment covers the associated costs of moving such as redirection of mail or telephone reconnection. A removal company will

be arranged and paid for direct by the Council to help all residents move to their chosen accommodation.

- **Tenancy agreements will not be affected by the move** – there will be no changes to the type of tenancy following the move.
- **Higher rental charges will be frozen at the existing rate for 52 weeks** – should a tenant move to accommodation with a higher rent, the charge will be frozen for 52 weeks. No changes or uplift will be made without 4 weeks written notice and senior officers will have discretion to extend the period in special circumstances.
- **Should a resident refuse to move, the steps set out in the Housing Act will be followed** - the Council's preferred approach is to come to a voluntary agreement with all our residents for re-housing. However, should a resident refuse to move the Council will follow the steps set out in Section 84 of the Housing Act (1985).
- **All data will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018** – the relevant support agencies, such as Hampshire County Council Adult Services, will be advised that the service user is moving. All information will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.