

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member Social Care
Cabinet Member Regeneration

DATE: 22nd December 2010
19th January 2011

SUBJECT: Anchor Staying Put Sefton

**WARDS
AFFECTED:** All

REPORT OF: Robina Critchley (Adult Social Care Director)
Alan Lunt (Neighbourhoods & Investments Programmes
Director)

**CONTACT
OFFICER(s) :** Margaret Milne
(Principal Manager Adult Social Care)

**EXEMPT/
CONFIDENTIAL:** No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To inform Cabinet Members of the notification of Anchor Housing Association to discontinue the "Staying put Service" from 31st March 2011 and to inform Cabinet Members of the proposed interim arrangements.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

Anchor have served notice on the above service and in light of the financial review the directorate are considering sustainability of the service and cost efficiencies for the delivery of the service.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Cabinet Member is asked to note the report.

KEY DECISION:

FORWARD PLAN:

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: 1st January 2011.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:**IMPLICATIONS:****Budget/Policy Framework:****Financial: None**

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2010 2011 £	2011/ 2012 £	2012/ 2013 £	2013/ 2014 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date?				
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal:

N/a

Risk Assessment:

No specific risk assessment has been carried out in respect of this issue although such matters are covered in Departmental risk registers

Asset Management:**CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

Discussions have taken place with Anchor since June 2010.

Anchor have sought expressions of interest for the transferring of undertakings of the service since June 2010 with a range of providers including the Community, Voluntary and Faith sector.

The Head of Corporate Finance and Information Services has been consulted and has no comments on the report. FD 586/10.

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community		√	
2	Creating Safe Communities	√		
3	Jobs and Prosperity			√
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Environmental Sustainability		√	
6	Creating Inclusive Communities		√	
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy		√	
8	Children and Young People		√	

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

- The Chronically Sick and disabled persons act 1970
- Community Care Act 1990
- Putting People First: a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care
- National Health service long term conditions model (DH 2005)
- Section five (Delayed Discharged Act)
- Our Health Our Care, our Say: a new direction for community services
- Liberating the NHS
- A Vision for Adult Social Care: Capable Communities and Active Citizens

Background

The Anchor Staying Put, Home Improvement Agency has been funded by Sefton since it was first established in approximately 1995. The service has been very valuable and cost effective as it helps people to remain independent in their own homes for as long as reasonably possible.

In July this year Anchor Housing Association (the national body) served notice to the Council that it planned to discontinue the provision of Home Improvement Agencies to all Councils from 31st March 2011. In the meantime Anchor has been in discussion with a range of providers about possible transfer of services to other not for profit organisations.

Due to the economic climate there have been few expressions of interest except from the Mears Group who are a profit making organisation.

Anchor Staying Put core services were originally established to provide help and assistance to applicants through the Council's Disabled Facilities Grant programme (DFG). The aim of this is to assist applicants in completing their applications and gathering associated supporting information. They also procure the works on behalf of the client, which includes tendering and managing of the contract on site. This is an essential service to the majority of grant recipients who are elderly or disabled. The Council does not have the resources or the staff to provide this level of support and assistance. Without this assistance the majority of applications may not progress beyond the application phase.

In the current financial year Anchor Staying Put is involved in over £2.5 million pounds worth of work in respect of the Council's DFG programme. The agency generates a fee based upon the volume of work completed in any given year. The fee is currently set at 10% of the Council's approved costs.

Anchor Staying Put Sefton activity funded by Sefton Community Equipment Service (SCES)

- Disability Resource Centre
- Small Aids & Equipment Service
- Intermediate Care Minor Adaptations
- Adaptations & Coordinating Service
- Sensory Impairment Service
- Hospital Discharge Service

Total funding **£133,200** from SCES **plus £2,500** contribution towards the rent of the Disability Resource Centre (DRC).

The costs of the services include overheads (including stationary, equipment, utilities and back office functions).

To match the £5000 that SCES and NHS Sefton pay (50% shared cost) Anchor pay the rest of the rent, a further £5000, plus all the VAT out of their own budget.

Since 2008 there has been additional funds provided through the Supporting People Programme to enhance the level of services to enable people to remain at home.

Supporting People currently fund three services these are:

- Anchor Staying Put Sefton (core service) - **£41,500.00**.
- Handyperson Service - **£38,810.90**
- Enhanced Handyperson Service - **£95,495.00**

Total £175,806

The Enhanced Handyperson Service is funded until March 2011 via a specific time-limited grant received from Communities and Local Government.

The core service relates to work in respect of The Council's Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs).

The Handyperson services involve the conducting of minor repairs and adaptations with work including:

- Fitting locks & bolts, door bells / crime prevention enhancements
- Putting up shelves/curtain rails/tracks and curtains
- Re-hanging doors/moving furniture
- Small areas of plastering and tiling/ decorating
- Basic plumbing i.e. unblocking sinks / tap washers

The Enhanced Handyperson Service also includes the provision of gardening services. Jobs include:

- Cutting Lawns
- Trimming Hedges
- Clearance
- Pruning
- Weeding
- Strimming
- Planting

This service is only available to vulnerable clients. Jobs which take less than two hours to complete, are delivered free of charge with clients only having to pay for materials. For jobs taking more than two hours, the service charge is £10 per hour.

The Staffing Structure for the service may be found at appendix 1.

On 22nd November, the Regional Manager from the Mears Group met with Council officers to advise that with effect from 1st December 2010 they have committed to take over the majority of Anchor HIA (including Sefton's).

Mears advised that they are:

- The leading providers of repairs, adaptations and home improvement to the Social Housing Sector.
- Provide over 4 million hours of domiciliary care to people in the UK in their own homes
- Have the highest customer satisfaction scores in the housing sector and best overall quality rating from the Care Quality Standards Commission

Mears presented their business case in sustaining Home Improvement Agency services in Sefton which included opportunities to reduce costs and improve services and are looking at this work as a long term business development opportunity.

Officers made Mears aware of the current and future financial constraints within the Council and that a review is being undertaken of which essential services we aim to commission from 1st April 2011 and that the present contracts with Anchor are likely to be considerably reduced.

Mears provided assurance that they will provide central support to the Sefton Home Improvement Agency and are committed to maintaining this as a local project and would agree to a one year contract monitored by a working group which would include officers and service users from Sefton.

Corporate procurement has advised that we are required to tender this service in preparation for the expiry of the current contract even though this will likely (due to the uncertain economic climate) be for an initial period of one year with the potential for two twelve month roll over contracts. Mears have been notified of this situation.

Another report will be provided to members early in the New Year to update them of the outcome of that exercise.