

Cynllun Cymhelliant Tenantiaid (Papur Opsionau)

Tenant Incentive Scheme (Options Paper)

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1. Purpose of the report.

- 1.1. The Purpose of this report is to instigate discussion on whether we should offer incentives to tenants and what form should it take. The report suggests a range of incentive options to consider and seeks Scrutiny members initial views as part of the policy development.

2. What are incentive schemes?

- 1.1. The purpose of the scheme is to encourage and assist tenants to take up a range of incentives which are beneficial to them and the Council alike.
- 1.2. As a Council we are committed to providing a high-quality service to all our tenants¹ and residents. In some circumstances a nudge is required to encourage the take up of some of the schemes that we offer to our tenants. Some of these schemes like the downsizing of properties have a beneficial impact on how best we manage our housing stock efficiently and by freeing up much needed larger properties.
- 1.3. Research by Housing Quality Network suggests that tenant incentive schemes are designed to recognise the loyalty of those tenants on such matters as paying their rent on time, leaving their property in a good condition when they move, keep their property, and garden in good condition and generally abide by the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreement (contract). Incentives may be considered as measures to encourage desired behaviour.
- 1.4. Generally, housing officers spend time with tenants who are in rent arrears and those who do not abide to the tenancy agreement. Limited time is available to the other tenants. That is why incentive schemes can work to help both the 'good' and 'challenging' tenants: the 'good' tenants start to feel more appreciated as they are rewarded at complying to the tenancy conditions

¹ Under the Renting Homes Wales Act 2016 tenants and licensees are called 'contract-holders'. Under the Act, our tenants are now known as Contract-holders and will hold an 'occupation contract' (which replaces tenancy arrangements). Will still prefer to use the term tenants and tenancies.

(contract), thus increasing their satisfaction, and the ‘challenging’ tenants pay their rent more regularly, make more of an effort with their property and can even help to change their behaviour and attitude.

2. What are the types of incentive schemes?

Management of tenancies

1.1. The potential scheme listed below are for the benefit of Council tenants who hold a secure occupational contract and live in our housing stock.

Scheme	Detail	Benefit	Incentive
Direct Debit	<p>Monthly direct debit draws (DD).</p> <p>New tenants who sign up to DD to receive initial payment.</p> <p>Would be automatically entered into the prize draw.</p>	<p>More tenants signed up to DD payments would reduce our transaction cost.</p> <p>Reduces the risk of missed payments.</p> <p>Convenient payment method for tenants.</p>	<p>Quarterly prize draw of £100.</p> <p>New DD payers receive £25.</p>
Golden Goodbye – leave it clean (Leaving a property in good condition)	<p>Final inspection of property before vacation. Certain standard will be required.</p> <p>Tenants (contract-holder) would have had to live at the property for a minimum of 12 months in accordance with the terms of their contract.</p> <p>To qualify, the tenant (contract-holder) would either move to private accommodation or owner occupation. Payment would not be made if moving to another council.</p>	<p>Reduction in void times and costs.</p> <p>Improve turnaround times.</p> <p>Encourage departing tenants to leave the property in a clean and tidy state.</p>	<p>Four weeks rent. There would be a deduction if there were any rent arrears owing.</p>
Surveys Consultation Events	<p>Surveys on tenants’ views to include a prize draw.</p> <p>Automatically be entered into the prize draw.</p>	<p>More respondents and take up.</p> <p>Incentives for participating in resident surveys and events can boost numbers.</p> <p>Reward and incentivise tenants to take part in housing services activities/ surveys.</p>	<p>General surveys £50 per winner.</p> <p>STAR Survey (every 2 years) £250 per winner x3</p> <p>Attending events may include vouchers or out of pocket expenses at</p>

		<p>Promote tenant engagements and participation.</p> <p>Campaigns/events can be useful in gathering customer intelligence and contact information.</p>	the officer discretion.
The Big draw	Tenants are entered into an annual prize draw if their property and garden are in good condition, there are no contractual issues and have allowed first time access to service engineer when they call to carry out routine service appointment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaner properties and estates. Instil a sense of pride. • Reduce the number of aborted servicing appointments. • Link to Home checker visits • Link to estate management offer 	Annual prize draw of £1,000.
Money to Move scheme - Helping tenants move to a smaller property. ²	<p>The scheme is aimed at tenants who want to move to smaller properties and in doing so give up much needed family type accommodation.</p> <p>Restrictions: The money to move scheme applies to Council tenants registered on the Housing Choice Register who hold a secure occupational contract (tenancy agreement). The scheme does not apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Holders (Tenants) moving out of the County. • Contract Holders who have made their own arrangements to move. • Where there is a breach of contract and legal proceedings have commenced. • Tenants who are deferred on the Housing Choice Register 	There are clear benefits for the Council, for example, managing our housing stock efficiently thus reducing the burden on the housing Choice Register and pressures on temporary accommodation.	See table 2 (below)

Table 1: list of proposed incentives

² Please note that the money to move scheme is aligned to Major Works Agreement. For example, we will manage and arrange for the tenant to move to smaller accommodation and pay for the cost of their removals. If additional works are required, we will arrange for these to be done but a deduction will be made from the cash incentive.

Your current home	You decide to move to:			
	Sheltered Housing complex	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms
1 bedroom	£500			
2 bedrooms	£1,000	£1,000		
3 bedrooms	£2,000	£2,000	£1,000	
4 bedrooms	£3,000	£3,000	£2,000	£1000

Table 2: suggested range of incentives that could be offered under the Money to Move Scheme

Questions:

- 1. Do you agree with the principle of offering incentives to tenants?**
- 2. If so, do you believe the above incentives reflect a broad range of options?**

1. Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

- 1.1. To confirm Scrutiny members views on the principle of future tenant incentive schemes as part of the pre-decision process for policy development, prior to submission to Cabinet.