

TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PANEL
7 July 2015

Lead Officer: Executive Director of Place

Wards: All

Agenda Item: 9

Subject: - Mobile Information Bus

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 The Panel is asked to note the availability of the mobile information bus and make suggestions on ways it can be used to improve communications with tenants and leaseholders on both housing and health awareness issues.

2. Summary

- 2.1 This report introduces the Mobile Information Bus which is managed by Croydon Care Solutions (CCS), primarily to raise health awareness issues across the borough. This is a 12 month pilot scheme and the Housing Revenue Account will contribute £25,000 to the running costs of the bus in the pilot year. In return the bus will prioritise visits to council estates and in addition the housing service will have at least one day per month exclusive use of the bus to promote housing services on council estates.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Partnership for Older People (POP) mobile bus and table top service (the POP Service) had operated in Croydon since May 2006. The service came about as a result of a Department of Health (DH) funded pilot project to release resources from across the health and social care system for reinvestment in to preventative approaches.
- 3.2 When the DH funding stream ended, the Council and the Primary Care Trust (now the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)) agreed to continue the POP service through a joint funding arrangement, with the Council as the lead commissioner. Following a spending review, the CCG announced that it would be withdrawing its funding of the service as from September 2013. As a result of this, options were explored for future use of the funding and associated assets.
- 3.3 In March 2014, the Council agreed the procurement strategy which recommended decommissioning the existing POP service and directly awarding a contract to CCS for provision of a new mobile information service.

- 3.4 The bus has now been refurbished, rebranded and will primarily be used to provide health advice and information services for people of all ages in Croydon.
- 3.5 CCS will work with a variety of statutory services e.g. lead officers from the Council, welfare rights, public health and housing to ensure that information, advice and support delivered is needs-led. CCS will also work with officers from the CCG and other partners to participate in local or national awareness- raising campaigns.
- 3.6 At the end of the 12 month pilot an evaluation of the outcomes will take place and a decision will be taken whether to extend for a further 12 months.

4. How will the housing service use the bus?

- 4.1 The bus will provide the housing service with an alternative method of communicating with tenants and leaseholders across the borough. It is equipped with laptops, printer and wi-fi. There is a seating area and screens to show videos etc.
- 4.2 It is proposed, initially, that the bus be used to provide information to residents on a wide range of housing services and also provide a surgery for residents to report repairs or other housing service requests.
- 4.3 In particular it could be used inform residents about universal credit, provide help to get residents on-line, moving home or options for getting involved. We could also conduct surveys or run focus groups.
- 4.4 The bus has been secured for the exclusive use of the housing service on the last Tuesday of each month from 28 July 2015 until 24 November 2015. However, it should be possible to book additional days if these are required.
- 4.5 It is proposed that the bus visits New Addington in July and Waddon in August. A range of methods will be used to promote the location of the bus and it is hoped that residents' representatives will help with this and perhaps support the officers on the bus when it is in their area. Suggestions for future locations are welcomed.
- 4.6 Performance/evaluation reports will be regularly presented to the Resident Involvement Group (RIG) who will make recommendations to the council on how the bus will be used by the housing service.

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