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Corporate Plan Output: Policy Advice	

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about various tenancy issues with respect to the new Gloucester Courts complex.

A meeting was held on 13 August 1999 with interested agencies and groups, to bring them up-to-date with the completion of Gloucester Courts and the proposed management of the complex. Represented at the meeting were:

- Tim Barnett, MP
- Christchurch Budget Services
- City Mission
- Comcare
- East Sector Community Mental Health Service
- HealthLink South
- Hereford Centre
- Methodist Mission
- Poor People's Embassy
- Richmond Fellowship
- Salvation Army
- Stepping Stone Trust
- Tenants Protection Association
- Te Whare Roimata
- Union Medical Centre
- YWCA
- 198 Youth Health Centre

In attendance were Errol Waller (City Housing Manager), the Tenancy Liaison Officers, and Margaret Macadam (Senior Social Policy Analyst).

#### **LENGTH OF TENANCY**

The meeting was informed of the planned tenancy arrangements, as adopted by Council on 22 July 1999. A discussion took place about the proposal that 20% of tenancies come as direct referrals from support agencies, with an agreed support protocol, and that these tenancies be transitional. The short-term nature of these tenancies was viewed, almost without exception, as being potentially detrimental to the rehabilitation of those being referred by the various agencies. The Tenants' Protection Association also commented that it was potentially discriminatory to offer such tenancies, if longer-term tenancies were being offered to other tenants in the same complex. The Council's Legal Services Manager has since advised that, in his opinion, differentiating tenancies within the same complex in this way could be viewed as discrimination.

In the case of the 1- or 2-bedroom units, it is recommended that the referred tenants be given normal tenancies (subject to an agreement with the referring agency to provide the necessary support). Once tenants no longer require the involvement of the referring agency, they will be able to continue living in the same unit, subject to the conditions of the normal tenancy agreement. Additional referrals with agreed support protocols would then be taken, as vacancies arise in other units, to maintain the agreed proportion (20%) of supported tenancies in the complex.

In the case of the 4-bedroom units it is suggested that these be let to the referring agency on a head lease basis, and that letting arrangements for the individual rooms be handled by the agency concerned.

#### **ARRANGEMENTS FOR 4-BEDROOM UNITS**

Since starting the allocation process for the complex, City Housing staff have become aware that, for reasons of tenant compatibility, it may not be possible to let all of the rooms in the four 4-bedroom units as individual bedsits. In addition to the head lease arrangement discussed above, such a unit could be let as a single tenancy, for example to a single parent family or a refugee family. In order to do so, the rent for such an arrangement needs to be agreed upon. It is recommended that the rent for a 4-bedroom unit with a single tenancy be \$175 per week, exclusive of power. This is well below the market rent for such a property, and has been calculated on a similar basis to the other rent levels in the complex.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the previously agreed “transitional” tenancy arrangements be rescinded in favour of the standard (periodic) tenancy arrangements currently being put in place.
  2. In the case of the 1- or 2-bedroom units, that referred tenants be given normal tenancies (subject to an agreement with the referring agency to provide the necessary support), as described above.
  3. In the case of the 4-bedroom units, that referring agencies be offered a tenancy for the unit on a head lease basis, as described above.
  4. That the rent for a 4-bedroom unit, let either on a head lease arrangement to referring agencies, or as a single tenancy, be set at \$175 excluding power.

#### **Chairman’s**

**Recommendation:** That the above recommendation be adopted.