

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting:	HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
Date and Time:	WEDNESDAY, 18 JANUARY 2023, AT 6.00 PM*
Place:	BRADBURY ROOM - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA
Enquiries to:	Email: karen.wardle@nfdc.gov.uk Karen Wardle Tel: 023 8028 5071

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Members of the public may watch this meeting live on the [Council's website](#).

*Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme:

- (a) immediately before the meeting starts, on items within the Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
- (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to speak should contact the name and number shown above no later than 12.00 noon on Friday, 13 January 2023.

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

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This agenda can be viewed online (<https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk>).

It can also be made available on audio tape, in Braille and large print.

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2022 as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an

agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To note any issues raised during the public participation period.

4. HOUSING SERVICES RESOURCES 23/24 - ARISING FROM THE NEW SOCIAL HOUSING REGULATION CHANGES (Pages 5 - 14)

To consider the proposed impact on resources arising from the New Social Housing Regulation Bill and Social Housing Charter.

5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND THE HOUSING PUBLIC SECTOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME FOR 2023/24 (To Follow)

To consider the HRA budget and the housing public sector capital expenditure programme for 2023/24, including a presentation on the 30 year Business Plan.

6. HOUSING SERVICES RENT SETTING AND SERVICE CHARGE POLICY (To Follow)

To consider the proposed Rent Setting and Service Charge Policy for 2023/24 and beyond.

7. MOBILITY SCOOTER POLICY FOR HOUSING (LANDLORD SERVICES) (Pages 15 - 44)

To consider the Policy for Mobility Scooters for Housing (Landlord Services).

8. HOUSING STRATEGY / HRA PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION UPDATE

To receive an update on the progress of the Housing Strategy and HRA property development and acquisition.

9. HOMELESSNESS UPDATE

To receive an update on homelessness.

10. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S REPORT AND PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD (Pages 45 - 46)

An opportunity for the Portfolio Holder to provide an update to the Panel on developments within their portfolio.

11. DATES OF MEETINGS 2023/24

To agree the following dates of meeting (Wednesdays at 6.00pm):

21 June 2023

20 September 2023

17 January 2024

20 March 2024

12. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 47 - 48)

To consider the Panel's future work programme.

13. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

To:

Councillors

Anne Corbridge (Chairman)
Ann Sevier (Vice-Chairman)
Kate Crisell
Sean Cullen
Philip Dowd

Councillors

Andrew Gossage
Joshua Kidd
Neil Tungate
Alex Wade
Christine Ward

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HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL - 18 JANUARY 2023

HOUSING SERVICES RESOURCES 23/24 - ARISING FROM THE NEW SOCIAL HOUSING REGULATION CHANGES

1. RECOMMENDATION

That the Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel note:-

- 1.1 The resources the Housing Service has requested as part of the 23/24 HRA budget to deal with the changes and improvements required under the Social Housing Regulation Bill, the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures regime and the new Social Housing Residents Charter.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report sets out the resources required (which will form part of the HRA 23/24 budget) to meet the requirements placed upon the Council due to a fundamental new housing improvement regime, starting in Spring 2023, with the introduction of 22 new Tenant Satisfaction Measures, the soon to be enacted Social Housing Regulation Bill and the Social Housing Residents Charter.
- 2.2 The full HRA 23/24 budget report is at item 5 on the Agenda, and this report gives background information as to the nature of the new resources required to enable the Council to fulfil its obligations and to ensure continuous improvement across the Council's Housing services.
- 2.3 EMT have endorsed the need for the extra resources, which will now be taken through the decision making process as part of the 23/24 budget to both Cabinet and Council at their respective meetings on 15 and 27 February 2023.
- 2.4 Members of the Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel have had a series of briefings over the last year on the new Social Housing changes. Officers within Housing have been preparing for the new regime for the last 18 months, including looking at the resources required to deliver what is, a step change, in the performance of social housing regulators across the country.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Preparation for the changes to social housing regulation have been many years in the making, with the catalyst being the Grenfell Tower tragedy in 2017 and will represent the largest national change in Housing for over 40 years. The collective new improvement regime seeks to address the issues identified from the tragedy, sector wide disrepair claims and increasing prominence of issues caused by damp and mould, and puts the safety and quality of social housing, and how tenants are treated by their landlords, at the very forefront of everything that registered providers do.
- 3.2 The new regime will see several new key measures introduced to drive up standards in social housing. These include the following:
 - 3.2.1 The Regulator of Social Housing's powers will be significantly enhanced to allow 'Ofsted-style' routine inspections, and non-routine inspections where it becomes aware of landlords failing to meet the new consumer standards.

- 3.2.2 The Regulator will have greater enforcement powers, including the ability to enter properties with 48 hours' notice, and to carry out emergency repairs, with landlords footing the bill.
 - 3.2.3 A new penal system whereby social housing landlords face unlimited fines for breaching consumer standards.
 - 3.2.4 A requirement for each social housing landlord to submit data against 22 new Tenant Satisfaction Measures annually, as set out at Appendix 1. Ten of these relate to management data and 12 relate to tenant satisfaction. The process to gather the data and to seek views of tenants starts in Spring 2023, with the Regulator publishing the first set of data in the Autumn of 2024 in national league tables.
 - 3.2.5 The new measures will focus on housing quality and safety, tenant engagement, neighbourhood management including the response to anti-social behaviour and complaint handling and will run in parallel with a set of Consumer Standards to ensure that tenants receive the service they deserve, and problems remedied quickly.
 - 3.2.6 All social housing tenants will be put on a level playing field with the ability to compare how their landlord performs with all other landlords across the country for the very first time and will be able to demand information about standards and quality of service.
 - 3.2.7 The Regulator and the Housing Ombudsman will share data on poorly performing landlords, highlighting any failures they observe to each organisation, informing them where they may need to act.
 - 3.2.8 Both the Regulator and Housing Ombudsman will publish findings of maladministration and breaches of standards in the public domain, with the potential for reputational damage for failing landlords.
- 3.3 Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale, due to untreated mould, housing landlords have been *“Put on Notice”*, by the Secretary of State, who in late November wrote to all housing landlords in a series of letters and stated, *“Our Social Housing Regulation Bill will enable a rigorous new regime that holds all landlords to account for the decency of their homes and the service they provide. The Regulator of Social Housing will proactively inspect landlords – and will have the power to issue unlimited fines. It will be able to intervene in those cases where tenants’ lives are being put at risk because landlords are dragging their feet in actioning repairs. And in the very worst cases, it will have the power to instruct those properties are brought under new management.”*
- 3.4 Cases of damp and mould are now high profile nationally and the Council’s own Housing Hub has already received an increased number of calls and reports of issues; The Council’s Housing Services reacts to all reports of damp and mould and as part of this report is requesting further resources to enable faster, more responsive treatment of mould where it occurs, requiring additional triage, analysis, and case management to further improve the service provided to tenants. This is picked up further in Section 4.4.
- 3.5 Whilst the Council has made significant improvement and investment across its Housing Services, there is more that can be done to enable the Council to respond appropriately and timely, to the new duties, which are wide ranging and significant.

- 3.6 Housing Service Managers, working in conjunction with the Strategic Director, have carefully and extensively reviewed the areas of housing where additional resource is required. These are in the following areas: statutory compliance and housing quality, performance management and resident and neighbourhood engagement, and anti-social behaviour.

4. AREAS WHERE NEW RESOURCES ARE REQUIRED

4.1 Statutory Compliance and housing quality

- 4.1.1 The Social Housing Residents Charter and the Regulator of Social Housing's Home Standard place significant emphasis on safe, secure, and quality homes. Ten of the 22 TSMs relate to the collection of data on the Council's response to repairs and safe and quality housing.
- 4.1.2 One key aspect of the new legislation and regime is the requirement for registered providers to appoint a named officer to be the health and safety lead. This is a statutory role and the person appointed will be responsible for ensuring that the landlord is complying with health and safety rules and assessing whether it is at risk of non-compliance and report to the Social Housing Regulator of any risks and failures to comply.
- 4.1.4 The role will also involve advising the Regulator on how these risks and failures can be addressed, whilst self-referring any breaches of health and safety responsibilities. It is clear from the legislation that the social landlord will need to make sure its nominated employee has enough authority, time, and resources to carry out, what are, significant duties. With the recent resignation of the Housing Compliance Service Manager, structures have been considered with the outcome of merging the Council's Compliance Team with the Maintenance Team, as both functions are so intrinsically linked, to sit under a new combined role of Housing Maintenance and Compliance Service Manager (Ritchie Thompson). However, it will be necessary to ensure that there are appropriate resources sitting beneath this senior role to ensure that all functions are discharged to a high standard. The sections below sets out the additional new resources required across both Housing compliance and maintenance functions.

4.2 Gas and Electrical Compliance

- 4.2.1 Mechanical and electrical is one of the largest compliance activities, with this area covering gas, oil, solid fuel, Air Source Heat Pump servicing, maintenance, installation and repair, pressurised cylinders, TMV's, commercial gas plant, electrical testing, inspection, installation and repair, emergency lighting, etc. The Council is a registered business under Gas Safe, OFTEC and NICEIC accreditations and can self-certify relevant work required under Building Regulations.
- 4.2.2 A new post of Mechanical and Engineering and Compliance Manager is being sought, who will assume responsibility for this important area to support the existing day-to-day operational supervisors and be directly answerable to the Service Manager and will act in the capacity of 'responsible person' under the Council's regulated business registrations. It will also assume the role of the management of other core compliance and cyclical servicing activities including legionella checks, lift servicing, mechanical ventilations units,

sprinkler systems, solar panels and play areas. For the sake of clarity, fire safety has its own existing dedicated senior manager resource, due to the significance of that duty.

- 4.2.3 Updated British Standards and Building Regulations relating to standards and guidance for the water treatment, dosing and testing of heating systems place an onus on the council to adhere to the guidance for existing gas central heating systems, including fitting inline filters to all systems, inhibitor dosing upon installation and at 5 yearly intervals alongside water testing annually thereafter throughout the life of heating systems. These additional requirements add additional time to routine servicing. Therefore, an additional Gas Engineer post is proposed, partially offset by an existing 0.19 FTE vacancy to provide the additional hours capacity to fulfil these requirements. These improved measures will provide protection to boilers, extending life expectancy and energy performance, reducing repair costs in the long term.

4.3 Structural/Disrepair Work

- 4.3.1 Currently the primary responder to reports of structural issues falls to 1 post holder who holds the relevant technical diagnostic experience when complex cases occur. This postholder deals with a variety of other maintenance issues. There is a need to supplement the resources in this regard.
- 4.3.2 It is therefore proposed to create a new Senior Building Surveyor (with relevant structural expertise) who will provide additional support to Housing.

4.4 Damp and Mould

- 4.4.1 The recent national high profile of damp and mould cases demonstrates the severity of this issue if it is not properly managed. Damp and mould issues are now regarded a specialist knowledge area and requires specific training to diagnose such issues and apply a consistent and co-ordinated approach across all such reports. In November 2022 alone, 116 new cases were reported. On average the Council is receiving approximately 48 new cases every month.
- 4.4.2 There is a need to ensure that greater resources are in place to bring about a proactive specialist response to such cases and a number of new posts are proposed in this regard.
- 4.4.3 These are set out below:-
- **Disrepair Supervisor** – this will be the single point of contact within Housing for damp and mould cases and who will co-ordinate the response to such cases, arrange for property inspections, set up and maintain arrangements with external contractors and ensure appropriate record keeping of such cases.
 - **Disrepair Inspection Responder** - will undertake damp and mould case inspections including diagnosis evaluation, priority risk assessment and report on remedy recommendations.
 - **Disrepair Trade Responder** - will undertake primary responsive remediation work as directed. This is an operational role, dealing with proactive mould washing, fungicidal treatments, painting, and other general repairs related to damp and mould.

4.5 Stock Condition Surveys

- 4.5.1 The Council has commenced a 2-year programme for an external surveying company to complete more than 5,000 stock condition surveys. At the same time the surveyors carry out a Housing, Health and Safety Rating System assessment to highlight any property hazards which could be harmful to the tenant. This could include inadequate heating, damp and mould or electrical hazards.
- 4.5.2 Due to the large volume of data and information received following the surveys, a new post of Data Analyst role is sought to analyse the surveys and provide the necessary management reports to feed into programmes and action plans, as well as analyse other areas of service performance.
- 4.5.3 The financial implications of the above new posts are set out in the Financial Implications part of the report at section 5.

4.6 Consumer Standards and Performance Management

- 4.6.1 Social Housing Landlords will need to be able to demonstrate to the Regulator that they fully comply with the suite of consumer standards, improved learning from complaints and performance monitoring that drives up standards. There will be a greater emphasis on engaging with tenants through more formal structures including insight surveys to ensure that the Council is engaging appropriately with its tenants. There is considerable overlap here with the Council's corporate role in engaging with its residents and ensuring a sound Performance Management framework across all Council services.
- 4.6.2 It is proposed that a new joint corporate and housing performance management officer post is created, providing support to both Housing and the rest of the organisation to drive up standards with key performance indicators being developed with the ability to carry out regular tenant insight surveys to enable the Council to keep abreast of tenant's views/ concerns.

4.7 Resident and Neighbourhood Engagement

- 4.7.1 There are 3 new satisfaction measures relating to positive and respectful tenant engagement and communication. The Council will also need to ensure it contributes to how neighbourhoods are made safe, secure and clean by working with partners and tenants. There is 1 TSM relating to the Council's positive contribution to neighbourhoods.
- 4.7.2 The Service currently has 2 roles which support formal engagement activity with tenants, through the Tenant Involvement Group (TIG) and the production of the tenant newsletter, Hometalk. Whilst a strong core group of tenants is still required, the service needs to go further to provide a new offer and approach for tenant engagement for all tenants, through the delivery of a new Customer Engagement Strategy.
- 4.7.3 To lead this important area of work it is proposed to create a new role of Housing Resident Engagement Officer to lead on the following:-
- Establish a digital communication strategy and procure a platform to promote and utilise digital surveys and polls, online message boards and meetings on a regular basis.
 - Launch a tenant recruitment campaign.

- Ensure tenant representatives can work alongside members in the regular scrutiny of governance and performance carried out by the Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel.
- Formalise engagement processes with the Council's 123 Leaseholders as stipulated by the Charter.
- Lead the Council's work with tenants to understand what is important to them in their own neighbourhoods and lead the community work with partners, such as Hampshire County Council, other Housing Associations, Town and Parish Councils, and other private residents.
- Launch a programme of regular informal engagement drop ins, meetings, forums and workshops across our estates and neighbourhoods taking engagement to where tenants live, in person, in local areas around the district, rather than inviting tenants to meetings at Appletree Court.
- Support tenants receive the necessary training to scrutinise the landlord function.
- Facilitate and accompany tenants on site visits, inspections and scrutiny.
- Drive through a respectful engagement culture with tenants across the service.
- Review Tenant information and communications from all housing services and publish a framework of safety information and useful information for tenants, particularly around their responsibilities.
- Continually review and monitor website content and provide regular updates to content.

4.7.4 To facilitate this enhanced engagement it is proposed to procure a digital tenancy engagement platform and needs surveys at a cost of around £20,000 in year 1.

4.4 Anti-social behaviour

4.4.1 The Social Housing Residents Charter and the Regulator of Social Housing's Neighbourhood and Community Standard place significant emphasis on the Council's response to nuisance and anti-social behaviour (ASB). There are 2 TSMs collecting data on the Council's response to ASB.

4.4.2 The Charter outlines the Government view that, *"Tenants in social housing are more likely to be victims of crime and experience anti-social behaviour (ASB). These are corrosive behaviours, and this Government has been clear that they are unacceptable in all forms. Tenants have a right to feel safe in their homes, without the stress, fear and tensions that anti-social behaviour and crime can cause."*

4.4.3 The Charter also stipulates that landlords will have to be transparent and report on how they are performing on their ASB outcomes. Tenants and the regulator will then be able to use this information to hold landlords to account and drive better performance. The Government has stipulated it will launch information campaigns targeting social housing tenants to better inform them of their rights and the powers of councils and landlords. One such campaign is the powers available to the Council to tenants in tackling ASB. This will include information on the Community Trigger arrangements (also known as the ASB Case Review). This gives victims of persistent anti-social behaviour reported to any of the main responsible agencies (such as local authorities, police or a landlord) the right to request a multi-agency case review of their case where a local threshold is met and will almost certainly lead to tenants

becoming more aware, resulting in increased pressures and demand for action and positive outcomes by the Council.

4.4.4 Currently, reports of ASB are reported to the Tenancy Management Team, who have generic roles in responding to all manner of tenant related issues, breaches, sign ups of new tenants and any other tenancy related enquiries.

4.4.5 There is the need for more dedicated resources to assist the Service Manager for Estates and Tenancy Management who, due to his particular skills and expertise in this area, plays a lead role in this area of work. Coupled with the new enhanced duties under the Charter and TSMs, where housing providers are expected to achieve better outcomes to ASB cases, there is a need to think differently about the skills and resources that are required to deal with ASB. This can be challenging work, and it is important that the right skills, level, expertise and resource is in place to support the Service Manager in this important work.

4.4.6 A further 1 FTE dedicated and specialist ASB resource, is proposed. This new post holder will sit under the Service Manager and will support Housing Services in dealing with ASB cases.

4.5 Tenant surveys

4.5.1 The new regulatory regime requires the Council to survey its tenants on an annual basis to collect the responses to 12 tenant satisfaction measures. The Council is required to return a minimum of 538 survey responses, representative of our tenants, to be compliant, although we will seek to collect additional responses.

4.5.2 To carry out the surveys it is proposed to procure the services of a Market Research Company to assist the Council collect and analyse the necessary data. The cost in year one is likely to be £26,000 and £15,000-£20,000 each year thereafter where we remain working with the same Agency.

4.6 External Assistance

4.6.1 To meet the requirements of the Charter fully, some external resources will be required to help the Council implement its new arrangements to meet the requirements of the new Social Housing changes. A one off sum of £30k is being sought to procure this assistance.

5. FINANCIAL IMPACT OF NEW RESOURCES/ CHANGES IN STRUCTURE

5.1 The total impact of the proposed resources is shown below:

5.2 **Table 4: Total financial impact on budgets for 23/24**

Activity Area	Additional Costs required
Staff resources (Net)	£328,000
One off costs 23/24	£108,000
Ongoing Costs post April 2024	£23,000
Total	£459,000

6. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The work to implement the full range of requirements of the Charter and Regulation Bill should have a positive impact on local neighbourhoods and communities, in supporting them in partnership be safer, securer and cleaner places to live.
- 6.2 The work to update or introduce new strategies to tackle Domestic Abuse, Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour and to improve neighbourhoods will contribute to and reduce the impact of crime on residents.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Charter and Regulation Bill place a key emphasis on both energy efficient housing and access to green spaces in the design of new homes. Work is well underway as the Council has already published a new Greener Housing Strategy in April 2022, led on by the Greener Housing Delivery Manager, who commenced employment in November 2022, which supports actions to reduce carbon emissions and make council owned homes more energy efficient.
- 7.2 A new Neighbourhood Strategy will provide consideration of access to green spaces for new housing schemes, as stipulated in the charter.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 To provide the critical response necessary an additional allocation of £328,000 is proposed to provide the necessary staffing resources required. This is the net cost of the proposals following the deletion of 3 existing posts whose duties will be redistributed. These costs represent the maximum financial implications, as proposed salary costs are based upon the top of a proposed salary band. It is likely some appointments will be offered a salary at a lower salary scale point. These costs are required to be applied to establishment costs from 23/24 onwards. These additional costs have been fed into the forthcoming Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, along with income from the rent increase next year, proposed to be 7%, a proposal to raise void rents at re-let to the formula rent and additional Service Charge income of approximately £215,000 per annum.
- 8.2 In addition, one off non-staffing costs of £108,000 are required to procure software, market research company services to carry out the annual surveys and a data collection survey to capture needs data, plus consultancy costs to support key activities to engage with tenants and move forward with key strategies required to set our approach the ASB, Neighbourhoods, domestic abuse and engagement. There is likely to be an ongoing revenue cost of £23,000 each year to cover the costs of annual surveys and software support.
- 8.3 The early work on the HRA business plan projections demonstrate the additional budgetary costs are affordable within the confines of the inputs and outputs known at the current time. These projections are to be published in January 2023 as an appendix item in the forthcoming HRA financial report which proposes the annual uplift in rents.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Tenants of New Forest District Council's Housing Landlord Service have a range of diverse needs and backgrounds. To some degree all our tenants are impacted in some

way by our services currently but when things go wrong, or our services are not designed specifically to meet diversity standards the impact will be felt even more.

- 9.2 The new regime allows the Council to take a fresh look how services are provided and capture much more meaningful data on our tenants to feed into service design and improvements. The proposed performance and engagement activities will provide increased opportunity for the Council to listen and receive feedback on how tenants feel and how they are impacted by our services.
- 9.3 The Council will aim to improve the service offer to tenants, making this more reactive to diverse needs and to increase safety where it is required. The Council will aim to improve the culture of respect and transparency to tenants where tenants' voices can be heard and not dismissed.
- 9.4 The regime changes and the actions put forward by the council aim to positively impact equality and diversity for existing and future tenants.

For further information contact:

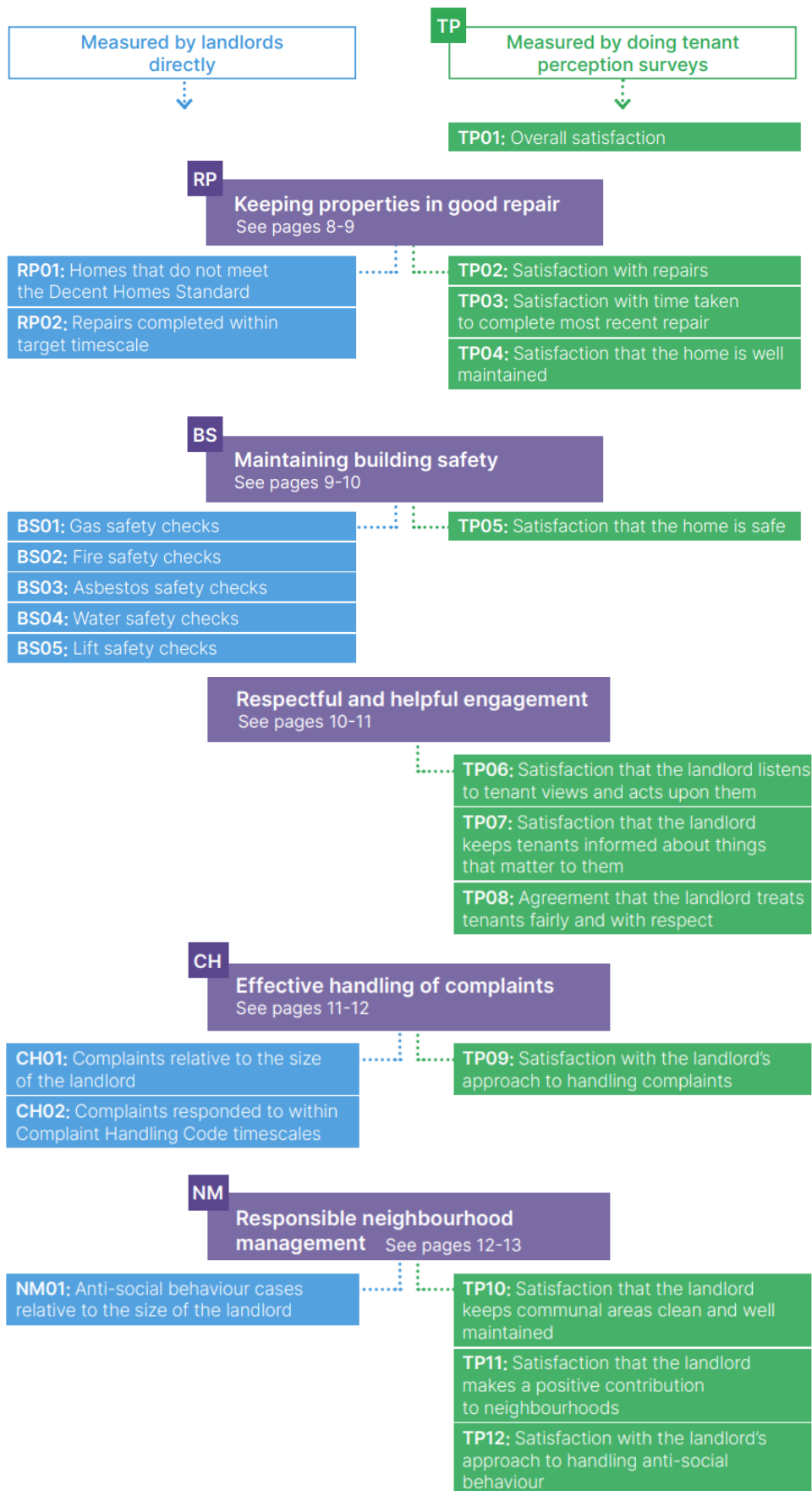
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Background Papers:

Published Documents



HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL – 18 JANUARY 2023

MOBILITY SCOOTER POLICY FOR HOUSING (LANDLORD SERVICES)

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel:-

- 1.1 Consider the proposed Mobility Scooter Policy for Housing (Landlord Services) and make recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report deals with the introduction of a new Council Mobility Scooter Policy for Housing (Landlord Services).
- 2.2 The proposed Council Mobility Scooter Policy for Housing (Landlord Services) is attached at Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is committed to supporting the quality of life of its tenant's and leaseholders residing within the Council's housing stock, including supporting residents to make use of the most appropriate equipment available to enable them to live independently, including the leasing or buying of mobility scooters.
- 3.2 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires that fire risks in common areas are assessed, and actions taken to reduce these risks. The Council undertakes fire risk assessments of all our blocks in accordance with our Fire Safety Policy. In residential buildings, mobility scooter fires can pose a fire safety risk to tenants, leaseholders, employees, firefighters, and others, when stored in communal areas and/or fire escape routes.
- 3.3 This Policy recognises that the Council discharges statutory fire safety duties and functions across its Housing property portfolio to ensure that those visiting, working, or living in such buildings are adequately protected from the risk posed by fire or obstruction to evacuation routes in the event of emergency.

4. THE MOBILITY SCOOTER POLICY FOR HOUSING (LANDLORD SERVICES) KEY COMPONENTS

- 4.1 The policy is designed to ensure that residents living in Council owned properties who wish to purchase or store a mobility scooter can do so safely. The aim of the policy is to bring clarity and structure to the management of mobility scooters in Council owned housing properties and supports the Council's duty to maintain

buildings in full compliance with Fire Safety duties by preventing mobility scooters being charged or stored in inappropriate areas e.g., communal hallways. To own and store a mobility scooter the Council must agree that the mobility scooter can be safely stored and charged in a resident's property or a designated storage area.

- 4.2 The policy reflects legislative and regulatory duties of the Council as Landlord and defines roles and responsibilities across the whole of Housing Services aligned with the current structure.
- 4.3 The policy introduces a Mobility Scooter Registration Scheme which sets out how the Council will consider requests from tenants and leaseholders to store mobility scooters, the factors it will consider when granting or refusing permission and highlights how mobility scooters will be stored safely in accordance with the Council's Fire Safety Policy for Housing (Landlord Services).
- 4.4 The policy will apply to all tenants and Leaseholders living or applying to live within the Council's housing stock. Where residents are considering moving into a council rented or leased housing property, or they are an existing tenant or leaseholder and already have, or require a mobility scooter, they will be required to seek permission in writing from the Council first, to agree appropriate storage of a mobility scooter.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 This Mobility Scooter Policy supports the Council's Fire Safety Policy for Housing (Landlord Services) and commitment to ensuring that the risk of fire is kept as low as reasonably practicable.
- 5.2 The Mobility Scooter Policy was presented to the Tenants Involvement Group (TIG) on 3 November 2022. Members of the TIG fed back mixed views on the policy. TIG members questioned the need for the Policy given the fact there had been no fires reported in NFDC owned accommodation. They were also concerned over the stringent rules for Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) and the requirement to register all scooters, even if they were kept inside the tenant's own property, and not in communal areas. At this time, the TIG is requesting further clarity on the justification of the proposed policy and officers will be attending a meeting with the Group to discuss this further.
- 5.3 In response, Officers are clear the Policy is designed to be pro-active, not reactive, and is designed to reduce the risk of future fires as more and more residents are procuring scooters, and maintain safe evacuation routes in the event of a fire. The safety of all residents is paramount, and the Housing Service is satisfied that a policy is both proportionate, and through co-operation with tenants, not detrimental to existing users that are known to the service. As stated above, Service Managers intend to meet again with TIG on 18 January 2023 to help further explain the need for the policy given the number of fire incidents reported around the country, as a result of battery fires, and will regularly feedback to the TIG on the implementation of the Policy.
- 5.4 The Council's Corporate Health and Safety Team received a copy for early consultation and the new Policy was presented to the Executive Management Team on 13 December 2022 and the Housing Health and Safety Panel on 17 January 2023.

5.5 It is proposed that the Mobility Scooter Policy for Housing (Landlord Services) be adopted (by way of a Portfolio Holder decision), following consultation.

6. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There can be serious implications for housing providers not dealing with their fire safety responsibilities, including criminal sanctions in the most serious of cases.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Council recognises that promoting equality is a fundamental part of enhancing life changes under the Equality Act 2010 and reserves the discretion to consider making reasonable adjustments to a tenant's home to facility the storage of a mobility scooter. An Equality Impact Assessment can be found at Appendix D of the Policy.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are none directly associated with this report.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are none directly arising from this report.

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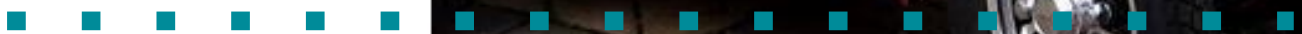
Background Papers

[Fire Safety Policy for Housing \(Landlord Services\) Portfolio Holder Decision - Housing and Homelessness Service 18 August 2022](#)

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HOUSING LANDLORD SERVICES

**Mobility scooter
policy**



Document

Name of policy	Housing Landlord Services Mobility Scooter Policy
Purpose of policy	New Forest District Council (the Council) is committed to supporting the quality of life of its tenants and leaseholders. This includes supporting our residents to make use of the most appropriate equipment available to enable them to live independently, including the leasing or buying of mobility scooters.
Policy applies to	This policy applies to all tenants, including those in Extra Care and Age Restricted Schemes.
Lead officer	Service Manager – Housing Estates, CCTV, Community Safety and Community Alarms.
First issued	1 December 2022
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Review period	At least every two years from date of issue. Otherwise, as required by legislative, contractual, or organisational changes.
Update overview	V1.0 New Policy

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1. Introduction

New Forest District Council (the Council) is committed to supporting the quality of life of its tenants and leaseholders. This includes supporting our residents to make use of the most appropriate equipment available to enable them to live independently, including the leasing or buying of mobility scooters.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires that fire risks in common areas are assessed, and actions taken to reduce these risks. The Council undertakes fire risk assessments of all our blocks in accordance with our Fire Safety Policy. In residential buildings, mobility scooter fires can pose a fire safety risk to tenants, leaseholders, employees, firefighters, and others, when stored in communal areas and/or fire escape routes.

This policy:

- introduces a Mobility Scooter Registration Scheme which sets out how the Council will consider requests from tenants/leaseholders to store mobility scooters.
- the factors it will consider when granting or refusing storage permission.
- highlights how mobility scooters will be stored safely in accordance with the Council's fire safety policy.

2. Legislative and regulatory context

Whilst mobility scooters are currently not regulated in the UK, the primary legislation relevant to the use of mobility scooters in council accommodation, includes:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Use of Invalid Carriages on Highways Regulations 1988.

Information and guidance on mobility scooters is also noted within other publications such as:

- BS EN 12184:2014.
- Fire Safety in Purpose Built Block of Flats Guide.
- NFCC Specialised Housing Guidance.
- NFCC guide - Mobility Scooter Guidance for Residential Buildings (2018).
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) Fire Safety Information and Guidance Note 422.
- RC59 "Risk Control: Fire safety when charging electric vehicles" 2012 published by the Fire Protection Association on behalf of RISC Authority.
- House of Commons Transport Committee, Mobility scooters, Ninth report of session 2009-10.
- Department of Transport: Mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs on the road.

This policy recommends that all new mobility scooters should be manufactured in accordance with BS EN 12184:2014 Electrically powered wheelchairs, scooters, and their chargers. Requirements and test methods.

3. Definitions

Definition of a mobility scooter

Mobility Scooters are defined as an "Invalid Carriage" under the Use of Invalid Carriages on the Highways Regulations 1988 in which they are divided in to three categories:

Class 1 Vehicles Manually operated wheelchairs not electrically powered.

Class 2 Vehicles Powered Wheelchairs and mobility scooters for pedestrian routes and indoor use, that are limited to a maximum speed of 4mph and do not exceed an unladen weight of 113.4 kg.

Class 2 vehicles are not allowed on the public highway and are not required to be registered with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

Class 3 Vehicles Powered vehicles and mobility scooters that are designed to:

- Travel up to 8mph and are used on roads/highways and;
- Fitted with a device to restrict travel to a maximum speed of 4mph on pedestrian routes and for indoor use. Class 3 Vehicles must not exceed an unladen weight of 150 kg.

Class 3 vehicles are not classed as motor vehicles, but they are required to be licensed with the DVLA for road use and cannot be operated by anyone below the age of 14.

For the purposes of this guide, Class 1 vehicles (manually operated wheelchairs with no fairings, batteries, or motors) are excluded from the references to fire tests, fire loading etc. References to obstructions on means of escape still apply.

4. Purpose

4.1 The purpose of this policy

- Ensure the Council meets its statutory obligations.
- Ensure that mobility scooters do not cause an obstruction or fire risk.
- Ensure tenants/leaseholders seek written permission for a mobility scooter – either before obtaining a new one or for any mobility scooter already owned.
- Ensure the Council takes a consistent approach to granting permission to tenants/leaseholders to keep and store a mobility scooter.
- Accommodate requests for permission to keep and store mobility scooters where practicable and not to refuse permission unreasonably.
- Carry out a full assessment prior to a decision on whether or not to grant permission.
- Provide clear information on the terms and conditions permission is granted on.
- Provide a clear, written explanation of the reasons for refusing permission.
- Manage the number of scooters on any one site, so as not to compromise the safety of residents or anyone else on the site.
- Ensure that tenants/leaseholders are aware of their responsibilities to others.

4.2 Residents affected by this policy

This policy applies to all tenants and Leaseholders of New Forest District Council, including those in Extra Care and Age Restricted Schemes.

Where residents are considering moving into a council rented or leased property, or they are an existing tenant/leaseholder and already have, or require a mobility scooter, they must seek permission in writing from the Council first, to agree appropriate storage of the mobility scooter.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is the “responsible person” for the purposes of regulatory reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and nominates one or more persons to act on their behalf to discharge their responsibilities as set out below:

Strategic Director of Housing, Communities and Governance

The Strategic Director of Housing, Communities and Governance has overall strategic responsibility for the Council’s approach to fire safety in social housing controlled by the Council and is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the Fire Safety Order 2005 and Housing Act 2004 and supporting Regulations are applied and implemented and nominates one or more persons to act on their behalf to discharge their responsibilities as set out below:

Service Manager - Housing Estates, CCTV, Community Safety and Community Alarms

The Service Manager for Housing Estates, CCTV, Community Safety and Community Alarms is the responsible person for the operational delivery and compliance of this policy with support from the Housing Fire Safety Manager, and other Housing Service Managers.

Housing Fire Safety Manager

The Housing Fire Safety Manager will lead and manage the Council’s response to fire safety in the Council’s Housing stock, including devising strategies, policies, and assurance processes to ensure compliance with all statutory fire safety laws/regulations/codes of practice and guidance and compliance with this policy.

Building Safety Officers

The Building Safety Officers will undertake regular building safety inspections to monitor all communal area for hazards or obstructions that may impede residents. BSO’s are designated to remove any obstruction or fire risk from within communal areas. BSO’s will support the compliance of this policy and report any non compliance to the Housing Fire Safety Manager.

Tenancy Management Officers/Assistants

Tenancy Management Officers and Assistants will in the course of their duties undertake regular building inspections and home visits to residents. Officers and Assistants ensure tenants adhere to their tenancy conditions and relevant health and safety practices and procedures, and will support the compliance of this policy and report any non compliance to the Housing Estates Service Manager and Housing Fire Safety Manager.

6. Application and decision process

6.1 Application Process

Tenants must obtain consent for the storage and charging of a mobility scooter prior to purchase or obtaining one. To obtain permission, tenants/ leaseholders must submit an application to any member of the Housing Estates Management Team, using the appropriate form [Appendix A]. A decision will be made by the Housing Estates Service Manager within 15 working days after a risk assessment has been completed by the Council's Fire Safety Manager. Completion of the risk assessment will require an assessment within the applicant's home.

Tenants/leaseholders will be expected to ensure the mobility scooter is properly maintained, in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements and paragraphs 6.7 to 6.12 inclusive. Failure to do this may result in the Council refusing or withdrawing consent.

Nomination process and mutual exchange

Residents undertaking a mutual exchange and who wish to take a mobility scooter within them, or acquire one are required to submit an application as outlined in Appendix A in conjunction with their mutual exchange application. If the property sought is not suitable for the safe storage of a mobility scooter, the mutual exchange application may be declined.

6.2 Decision Making Process

The Council will advertise the policy and application process on noticeboards in communal areas. Further advertisement will take place within the tenant's Hometalk magazine and on the council's website. Whilst permission will not be unreasonably withheld, the Council's priority is the health and safety of all residents within NFDC accommodation. Permission will only be granted if the tenant/leaseholder is able to store the mobility scooter in suitable storage facilities where they are available.

In considering whether permission should be granted, account will be taken of the potential impact on other people and permission will only be granted where the needs and wellbeing of other tenants/ leaseholders and other users of the building are not put at risk.

In accordance with this policy, any permission granted will be subject to the conditions set out in Appendix C.

Permission may be declined based upon safety grounds where:

- There is no safe storage in the tenant/ leaseholder's home and no alternative safe storage and charging space can be provided.
- A tenant/ leaseholder lives above the Ground Floor and are unable to self-mobilise to their place of residence.
- A major physical alteration to the premises is required, which the Council believes to be unreasonable in terms of cost and or disruption to other residents.
- The scooter is deemed unsuitable by the Council following an inspection and assessment of the property and type and model of scooter proposed.
- The tenant/leaseholder wishes to keep more than one scooter.
- Other residents' health and safety would be impacted by storage of the scooter.

The Council reserves the right to decline an application on additional grounds, not set out above.

6. Application and decision process (Cont'd)

Examples of safe storage and charging spaces may include:

- A designated space/room within the applicant’s individual property.
- A designated space provided by the Council.

Where permission is declined, a suitability review of the applicant’s accommodation and circumstances will be carried out.

Where an application is approved, this is on acceptance of the terms and conditions as set out below.

6.3 Additional Costs

To ensure the safe charging of scooters, this may require the Council to install additional charging points or restrictors to prevent overcharging.

The Council will require the resident to contribute to the costs incurred by the Council. This will be discussed with the applicant during the application process and an appropriate charge levied where appropriate.

6.4 Allocation of spaces in designated schemes

Where there are designated storage facilities for mobility scooters, tenants/leaseholders who have been medically assessed to require a mobility scooter by the NHS will be given priority.

Storage spaces will be allocated as and when they become available, and applications will be considered in date order of receipt. The Council will request proof of medical assessment by the NHS during the application process if this forms part of the application. Failure to provide this may affect the progress and outcome of the application.

Storage spaces are limited and will be individually allocated on a ‘first come, first served’ basis to all existing tenants/leaseholders. Future applicants will be allocated based on their date of application and approval.

Existing available dedicated storage capacity is set out in the tables below:

6.4.1 Extra Care Housing Schemes

Address	Property Type	Internal / External Store	Scooter Store Capacity
Barfields 1	Extra Care	Internal	7
Barfields 2	Extra Care	Internal	6
Barfields	Garage	External	4
Gore Grange	Extra Care	External	8
Winfrid House	Extra Care	Internal	7
			32

6. Application and decision process (Cont'd)

6.4.2 Age Restricted Housing Schemes

Address	Property Type	Internal / External Store	Scooter Store Capacity
Bannister Court	Aged 60+	External	5
Campion House	Aged 60+	External	8
Compton House	Aged 45+	Internal	4
Corbin Court	Aged 45+	Internal	5
Corbin Court	Garage	External	4
Evergreens	Aged 60+	Internal	3
Evergreens	Garage	External	2
Howard Oliver House	Aged 60+	External	5
Lawrence House	Aged 45+	External	5
Lawrence House	Garage	External	5
Marryat Court	Garage	External	4
Robertshaw House	Aged 45+	Internal	4
Sarum House	Aged 45+	Internal	4
Solent Mead	Aged 60+	Internal	8
Whitcroft	Aged 45+	External	3
			69

Where no spaces are available, a waiting list will be maintained, and alternative options may be explored. This may include supporting the applicant to consider alternative accommodation where suitable storage is available.

6.5 Right to appeal a decision

Where an application is declined, the Council will provide a response outlining the reasons, providing details of the appeal process. The applicant has the right to appeal any decision made by the Council within 21 days. A different Housing Service Manager to the one who made the initial decision, will undertake a review of any appeal. A final written response will be made within 15 working days.

6.6 Terms and conditions of the permission

Permission may be withdrawn by a Housing Service Manager if the terms and conditions of the permission are not adhered to; if the tenant/leaseholder purchases an additional or larger mobility scooter; or if the policy is updated to meet new regulatory requirements and an applicant's circumstances fall outside the scope of the policy.

6. Application and decision process (Cont'd)

6.7 Safe Storage and charging

Mobility scooters are not permitted to be stored or charged in a communal hallway, communal room, or stairwell (unless designated storage and charging facilities have been provided) at any time; because they could increase the risk of fire or obstruct a fire escape route.

Following approval, if a mobility scooter is stored within a tenant/leaseholder's property, they must ensure that adequate space remains within the home for the safe storage and charging. Periodic inspection may be arranged to assess for compliance and any additional fire safety requirements should circumstances change. For the safe and effective use of Mobility scooters and safe management of buildings, they are not permitted above ground floor.

6.8 Portable Appliance Test (PAT)

Tenants/leaseholders are responsible for ensuring their scooter is serviced and maintained regularly and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and have an annual Portable Appliance Test (PAT). This must be carried out by a qualified electrician. If any charging equipment fails the PAT, it is the tenant/leaseholder's responsibility to arrange the repair of it or replace it before using it. The Council will require the PAT certificate at the point of application and applicants will thereafter be required to carry out annual PAT as part of their permission, when they will be subject to periodic checks by the Council.

6.9 Servicing/maintenance

It is important that the scooter is properly maintained and serviced regularly. This will prolong its life and reduce the risk of fire and mechanical breakdown. The manufacturer's handbook will detail how often the scooter should be serviced.

6.10 Health and safety to others

Where designated internal areas have been provided and permission granted to store within a communal area, residents must comply with any fire safety and health and safety procedures that have been put in place.

If a mobility scooter is required to be driven within communal areas, this must be at walking pace, alerting any other residents to their presence, and avoiding damage to Council property.

6.11 Damage

Any damage caused by the scooter to Council property, must be reported immediately to the Council and any repair costs may be recharged to the tenant/leaseholder.

6.12 Lifts

Mobility scooters are not permitted in lifts under any circumstances by tenants/leaseholders or visitors.

6. Application and decision process (Cont'd)

6.13 Monitoring

The Council will maintain records for all registered mobility scooter users, and this will include:

- Client details
- A copy of the PAT certificate for the mobility scooter.
- A completed risk assessment.
- Storage location.
- The make and model of the scooter.

This policy will be fully reviewed every two years, taking into account decisions made, appeals and numbers but will be updated as required subject to regulatory or statutory needs.

6.14 Consent and Right to Withdraw

Mobility scooter owners cannot store mobility scooters on Council property without written consent from the Council, in accordance with this policy.

If the applicant fails to adhere to the conditions as set out within the policy, The Council reserves the right to withdraw permission to store a mobility scooter at any time.

6.15 Reasonable adjustments

The Council recognises that promoting equality is a fundamental part of enhancing life changes under the Equality Act 2010 and reserves the discretion to consider making reasonable adjustments to a tenant's home to facility the storage of a mobility scooter.

In exceptional circumstances where the tenant/leaseholder has mobility issues, is registered disabled and wholly dependent on the mobility scooter to go about their daily activities, the Council will consider an application for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) if deemed necessary and appropriate by an Occupational Therapist. This may include:

- A ramp to allow access in and out of the tenants/leaseholder's home.
- Access Path.
- Hardstanding.
- External charging point.

However, there may be instances where it is not feasible to provide adequate adaptations due to the layout/position of the property, occupancy levels and rehousing to a more suitable property may need to be considered.

6. Application and decision process (Cont'd)

6.16 Equality and diversity

The very nature of this policy will impact on people with disabilities or older people. It is important that all requests to own a mobility scooter are considered on an individual basis and the tenant/ leaseholder is supported as much as possible. These requests need to be considered alongside the overall health and safety principles of all residents.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in support of this policy as set out at (Appendix D).

6.17 Breach of mobility scooter policy

Whilst the Council understands the positive differences to quality of life a scooter can make where there is a breach of this policy, the Council will take the appropriate action.

Where a scooter is stored or charged on Council premises without permission or outside the terms of permission granted, the Council reserves the right to immediately remove the scooter to ensure the health and safety of the residents.

Appendix A

Application Form for permission to keep a mobility scooter

We recognise the benefits of mobility scooter use, enabling people with mobility problems to remain independent. To help us ensure that your mobility scooter does not pose a danger to you and your neighbours please complete this short form and a member of our Estates Management team will be in touch.

Name:	
Full Address:	
Household details:	
Building Type:	House/flat/bungalow
If a flat, what floor are you located on? No of bedrooms No of occupants	Ground, 1 st or 2 nd Floor
Home Tel No:	
Mobile Tel No:	
Email Address:	
Do you currently own a mobility scooter? If yes, please provide details of the mobility Scooter Brand and Name How old is your mobility scooter and when did you purchase it?	Please indicate yes or no Does anyone else in your household own a mobility scooter?
Dimensions of the scooter	
If you currently own a Mobility Scooter, has a qualified person carried out a portable appliance test? When was this? If you have a current PAT certificate, please provide a copy along with this form	
According to the Manufacturer's information how often does the scooter need servicing? When is the next service due?	
Mobility scooters cannot be stored in communal areas or above ground floor. If your building doesn't have a designated mobility scooter storage/charging room, where do you propose to store and charge your scooter?	

<p>Please provide information outlining why you require the use of a mobility scooter?</p>	
<p>I agree that the details submitted above will be held by the Council on its databases for the duration I am a tenant of the Council and for the purposes of monitoring and, maintaining the health of safety of you and Council residents.</p> <p>Signed by applicant:</p>	
<p>Date:</p>	

Return completed form to: EstateManagement@nfdc.gov.uk

Appendix B

Risk Assessment Form - Storage of Mobility Scooters

Assessment is to be completed by the Council's Fire Safety Officer and approved by Service Manager – Housing Estates, CCTV, Community Safety and Community Alarms before the mobility scooter is used or charged.

Tenants Details			
Tenant's Name:			
Tenancy Address:			
Contact Information (Optional)			
Home Tel No:		Mobile Tel No:	
Email Address:			
PART A			
Application Details			
Date of Application:			
		Yes	No
1	Will the mobility scooter be stored and charged within tenant's home? If the answer is 'Yes' go to Question 2 If answer is 'No' go to PART B Question 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Is the layout of the property and home access suitable for the mobility scooter? If 'Yes' go to Question 3 If 'No' go to PART B Question 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Will the storage and charging of the mobility scooter within tenant's home restrict or hinder the tenants or visitors escape from property or prevent emergency services providing assistance in an emergency situation? If the answer is 'No' permission will be granted to store the mobility scooter within the home. Go to PART D and enter summary of the outcome of the risk assessment. If the answer is 'Yes' storage and charging of the mobility scooter will not be permitted in the home. Go to PART B Question 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PART B			
		Yes	No
4	Are there any locations within the property with suitable access, storage and charging facilities for the mobility scooter? If 'Yes' please complete Question 5. If 'No' go to PART C Question 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.a	Please enter below the location of area(s) being assessed and complete Questions 5.b to 5.e for the area(s) for storage and charging of mobility scooter Locations (e.g. storage at window recess directly outside flat)		

5.b	During storage and charging will there be safe access and exit for the location for tenant and others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.c	Can the location be secured to prevent tampering, unauthorised use or of the mobility scooter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.d	Can the location be used for storage and charging without presenting a risk to other users of the property (consideration should be given in respect to fire hazard and safe means of escape)? If a fire hazard or means of escape issue is raised the local fire and rescue safety officer and/or the Health and Safety Officer are to be consulted and their commentary attached to assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Can charging facilities be provided from the landlord's electrical supply at the selected locations with costs recovery available? If any of the criteria in Question 5b to 5e cannot be met, then permission to store and charge the mobility scooter will not be given for the stated locations. Go to Part C Question 6 If all the criteria in Question 5b to 5e can be satisfied, then permission to store and charge the mobility scooter will be given for the locations stated. Go to PART D and enter summary of the outcome of the risk assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part C			
		Yes	No
6	Are there any locations / areas external to the property which may be suitable for the storage and charging of mobility scooters? If 'Yes' please complete Question 7a to 7d. If 'No' permission will not be granted. Go to PART D and enter summary of outcome of risk assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.a	Please enter below the location of area(s) being assessed and complete Questions 7.b to 7d for the area(s) for storage and charging of mobility scooter Locations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.b	During storage and charging will there be safe access and exit for the location for tenant and others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.c	Can the location be secured to prevent tampering, unauthorized use of the mobility scooter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.d	Can the location be used for storage and charging without presenting a risk to other users of the property (consideration should be given in respect to fire hazard and safe means of escape)? If a fire hazard or means of escape issue is raised the local fire and rescue safety officer and/or the Health and Safety Officer are to be consulted and their commentary attached to assessment. If any of the criteria in Question 7b to 7d cannot be met, then permission to store and charge the mobility scooter will not be given for the stated locations. Go to Part D and enter the summary of the risk assessment. If all the criteria in Question 7b to 7d can be satisfied, then permission to store and charge the mobility scooter will be given for the locations stated. If additional facilities can be provided to make it secure, then the tenant will be responsible for all costs unless supported by an OT referral and Disabled Facilities Grant Funding. Please complete Question 8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix C

Conditions of Permission for the Mobility Scooter User Standard

Safe Storage and charging

Mobility scooters must not be stored or charged in a communal hallway, communal room, or stairwell (unless designated storage and charging facilities have been provided) at any time; because they could increase the risk of fire or obstruct a fire escape route.

If a mobility scooter is stored, with appropriate permission, within a tenant/leaseholder's property, they must ensure that there is enough space within the home to store the mobility scooter safely. An inspection may be arranged to assess for additional fire safety requirements. Mobility scooters are not permitted above ground floor level in extra care or age restricted accommodation or in lifts.

Portable Appliance Test (PAT)

Tenants/leaseholders are responsible for ensuring their scooter is serviced and maintained regularly and for having an annual Portable Appliance Test (PAT). This must be carried out by a qualified electrician. If any charging equipment fails the PAT, it is the tenant/leaseholder's responsibility to arrange the repair of it or replace it before using it. The Council will require the PAT certificate at the point of application and as part of their permission, they will commit to carrying out annual PATs before the anniversary of the previous test, when they will be subject to periodic checks by the Council thereafter.

Servicing/maintenance

It is important that the scooter is properly maintained and serviced regularly. This will prolong its life and reduce the risk of fire and mechanical breakdown. The manufacturer's handbook will detail how often the scooter should be serviced.

Health and safety to others

Where designated internal areas have been provided and permission granted to store within a communal area, residents must comply with any fire safety and health and safety procedures that have been put in place.

If a mobility scooter is required to be driven within communal areas, this must be at walking pace, alerting any other residents of their presence, and avoiding any damage to Council property.

Recharge for damage

Any damage caused by the scooter to Council property, must be reported immediately to the Council and any costs to repair the damage may be recharged.

Lifts

Mobility scooter use above ground floor and in lifts will not be permitted under any circumstances.

Location/Tenant Specific Conditions (to be added by Estate Management and the Fire Safety Officer)

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Appendix D

Equality Impact Assessment

1. What is the overall purpose and aim of the policy/project/practice or service?

The policy is designed to ensure that residents living in Council owned properties (all residents including tenants and leaseholders) who wish to purchase or store a mobility scooter can do so safely.

The aim is to bring clarity and structure to the management of mobility scooters in Council owned properties.

This policy contributes towards the Council's duty to maintain buildings in full compliance with Fire Safety duties by preventing mobility scooters being charged or stored in inappropriate areas e.g., communal hallways.

The policy outlines the criteria that the Council will use to establish whether a mobility scooter can be used and stored safely or not.

To own and store a mobility scooter the Council must agree that the mobility scooter can be safely stored and charged in a resident's property or a designated storage area.

The policy will apply to new purchases and existing mobility scooter owners.

2. What are the main aspects of the policy/project/practice or service where consideration of equality impacts, and issues need to be incorporated?

This policy will affect all residents living in Council owned properties (tenants and leaseholders) who own and store a mobility scooter within the property or in the communal areas.

It will specifically affect individuals who have been storing their mobility scooter(s) in a communal area of a block of flats.

The policy will also affect tenants who may need a mobility scooter in the future.

This policy will benefit all residents as implementing the policy will improve fire safety, not just for those who store a scooter, but neighbours and other residents living in and around the block.

Mobility scooters are primarily used by people who are older and/or have a disability so the impact of the residents no longer being able to store mobility scooters in unsafe locations is likely to have a disproportionate effect on people in those groups than any other.

3. Relevance Assessment - which group(s) of people (if any), do you think will, or potentially can be, affected by this policy/project/practice or service? Please state your reasons.

Age

The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on an older person because an older person is more likely to need a mobility scooter.

The impact may be negative if there is not a safe storage and charging solutions available where they live. Where no suitable mobility scooter storage solution is available, or all spaces have been allocated, consideration for a move to an alternative property will be given.

For general needs housing, the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.

Disability

The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on someone with a disability who requires a mobility scooter.

The impact may be negative if there is not a safe storage and charging solutions available where they live. Where no suitable mobility scooter storage solution is available, or all spaces have been allocated, consideration for a move to an alternative property will be given.

For general needs housing, the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.

Gender: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group.

Gender Reassignment: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group.

Marriage and Civil Partnership: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group.

Pregnancy and Maternity: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group.

Race: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group.

Religion and Belief: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group.

Sexual Orientation: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group.

Please indicate if you think the impact is none, low, medium, or high?

Equality Impact Assessment	
Age	Medium
Sex	None
Religious belief	None
Disability	Medium
Race	None
Sexual orientation	None
Marriage/Civil partnership	None
Gender reassignment	None
Maternity and pregnancy	None

Detailed Assessment – Age

What negative/ disproportionate impacts will this proposal have on this protected group?

The impact may be negative if there is not a safe storage and charging solution available where they live. Where no suitable mobility scooter storage solution is available, or all spaces have been allocated, consideration for a move to an alternative property will be given. Full support will be provided to support a tenant to move to a suitable location which meets their needs.

For general needs housing, the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.

In seeking to advance equality, promote good relationships and improve access, what positive impacts could this proposal have on this protected group?

This policy is intended to have a positive impact on this protected group as it will provide safe access to mobility scooter storage, is designed to protect residents of an older age from harm and protect all residents from the risk of fire.

Detailed Assessment - Disability

What negative/ disproportionate impacts will this proposal have on this protected group?

The impact may be negative if there is not a safe storage and charging solutions available where they live. Where no suitable mobility scooter storage solution is available, or all spaces have been allocated, consideration for a move to an alternative property will be given. Full support will be provided to support a tenant to move to a suitable location which meets their needs.

For general needs housing, the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.

In seeking to advance equality, promote good relationships and improve access, what positive impacts could this proposal have on this protected group?

This policy is intended to have a positive impact on this protected group as it will provide safe access to mobility scooter storage, is designed to protect residents with disabilities from harm and protects all residents from the risk of fire.

How will you know if the agreed actions have had their desired results? What monitoring and performance measures/ indicators will be reported?

A register of mobility scooters will be held by the tenancy management team and reviewed periodically.

Reduction in storage and charging of scooters without permission.

Regular building inspections by the Building Safety Officer's (BSOs) will identify if the policy has been breached.

Low numbers, or no, fires or accidents as a result of improper Mobility Scooter use and/or storage/charging.

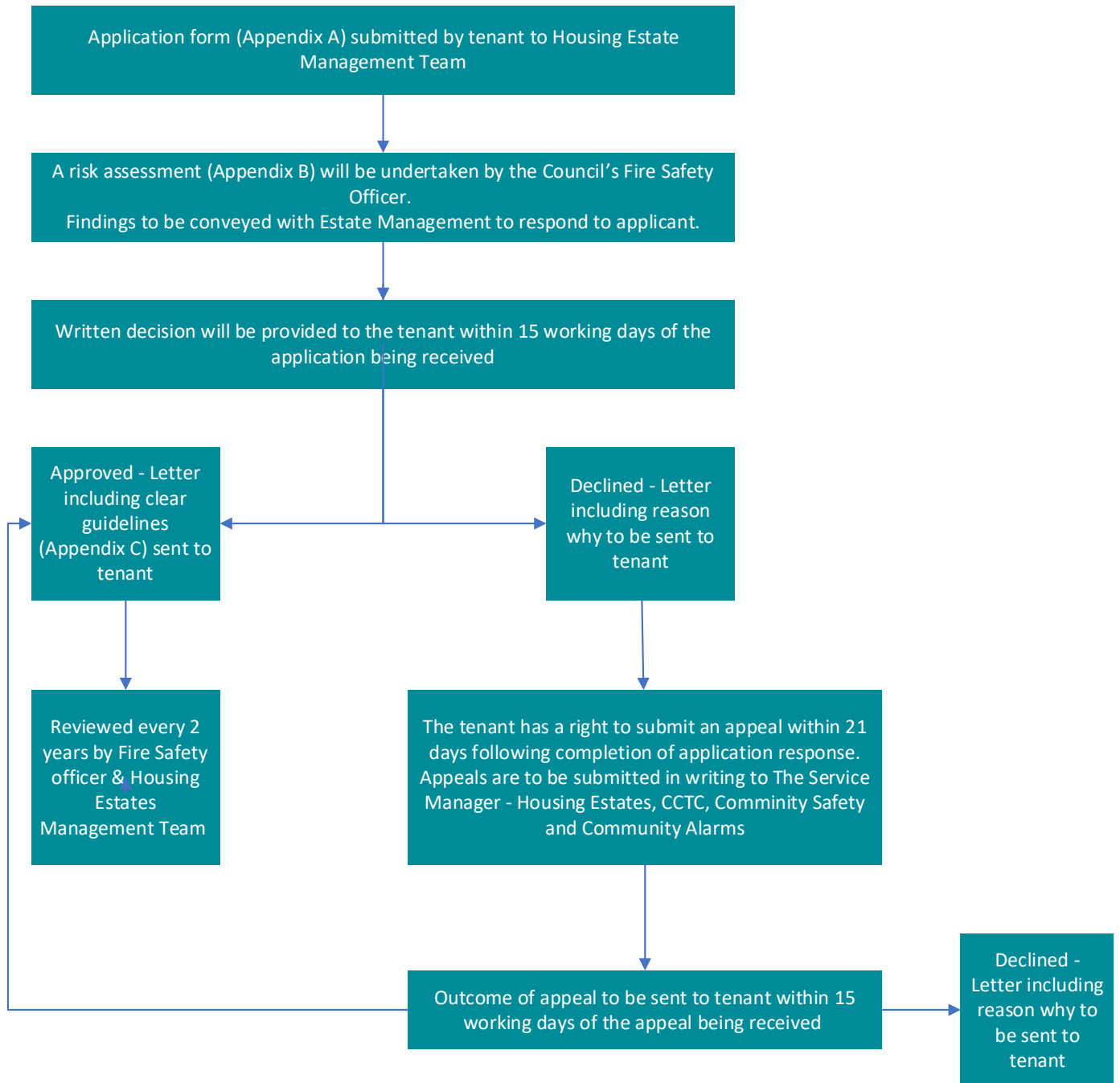
Who has been consulted on this EIA and what were the comments made?

The Mobility Scooter Policy was presented to the Tenants Involvement Group (TIG) on 3 November 2022. Members of the TIG fed back mixed views on the policy. TIG members questioned the need for the Policy given the fact there had been no fires reported in NFDC owned accommodation. They were also concerned over the stringent rules for Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) and the requirement to register all scooters, even if they were kept inside the tenant's own property, and not in communal areas. At this time the TIG remains largely unsupportive of the Policy and are requesting further clarity.

In response, Officers are clear the Policy is designed to be pro-active, not reactive, and is designed to reduce the risk of future fires as more and more residents are procuring scooters, and maintain safe evacuation routes in the event of a fire. The safety of all residents is paramount, and the Housing Service is satisfied that a policy is both proportionate, and through co-operation with tenants, not detrimental to existing users that are known to the service. Service Managers intend to meet again with TIG on 18 January 2023 to help further explain the need for the policy given the number of fire incidents reported around the country, as a result of battery fires, and will regularly feedback to the TIG on the implementation of the Policy.

Appendix E

Process Flow Map



New Forest District Council
Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst. Hampshire. SO43 7PA

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Housing and Homelessness Services Portfolio Performance Dashboard																												
Quarter 2: 1st July - 30th September										Portfolio Holder - Cllr Edward Heron																		
Key Priorities		Key Activities							Key Actions																			
Portfolio Priorities		Key Activity							Specific Actions				Target Date		Status Update													
Meeting local housing needs and promoting sustainable growth		Deliver the key priorities identified within the Housing Strategy 2018											N/A		Overarching priority.													
		Promote and implement greener housing initiatives when maintaining council stock and in the development of new council dwellings							Adopt the greener housing strategy during 2022/23				2022/23		Strategy approved and published 11/08/22. New Greener Housing Delivery Manager commences on 21/11/22.													
		Implement a new strategy to tackle empty properties and bring them back in to use							Continue to deliver the actions from the Empty Homes Strategy				2022/23		The Empty Homes Strategy has now been delivered and a number of key actions in the PSHS have already been completed. First Update to the Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel in January 2023.													
Increasing the supply of high-quality affordable homes		Provide 600 new council homes by 2026 across social rent, affordable rent, and shared ownership tenures, including within New Forest villages							Seek to provide 600 new council homes by 2026 and monitor the overall delivery of affordable housing across the district				2026		See KPIs for progress this year.													
Improving the housing circumstances of those most in need		Minimise the use of emergency Bed and Breakfast accommodation for homeless households											Ongoing		This financial year has seen a significant increase in the use of B&B which will result in a report being submitted to Cabinet on the 2nd November 2022 to request additional budget to meet the demands. The Homelessness team are ensuring compliance with the use of B&B for over 6 weeks for families where possible and sourcing other forms of accommodation. An action plan has been drawn up to secure additional family units and tackle other issues to reduce B&B usage, secure more private sector housing and convert existing stock into family temporary accommodation. Additional budget of £1.3m and 2 additional officers was set to be approved by Cabinet on November 2nd.													
		Design, deliver and enhance a multi-agency approach and housing pathway to achieve long-term accommodation solutions to end rough sleeping in the district							Maintain and develop new and existing multi-agency partnerships developed from the strategic action to design and deliver a multi-agency forum approach to tackle homelessness across the district						Our Multi-Agency approach has evolved to focus on building specific partnerships with single agencies or small groups of local voluntary groups. Work on Strategic Partnerships across Hampshire has continued to work on improving hospital and prison discharges. A joint partnership with Community Mental Health Services in the district has been formed as well as the inpatient teams to work on crisis prevention amongst homeless clients. A Mental Health Homelessness Practitioner has been recruited to promote better pathways to getting support at an earlier stage. A new Building for 7 rough sleepers is due to open in December 2022 and a Support Worker linked to the scheme has commenced employment in readiness. We have also been successful in securing £729k of Government funding to fund Rough Sleeper Services for the next 3 years. This includes employment and counselling services to support rough sleepers back in to work.													
		Reduce homelessness through the provision of multi-agency support to sustain homes and tenancies and through the increase in access to private sector rented homes											Ongoing		A new scheme has been launched to encourage private landlords in the New Forest District to 'Call before you serve' (CB4YS). Landlords have been requested to discuss any concerns with their tenants or issues they may be experiencing in an effort to resolve these situations before they feel it necessary to serve an eviction notice. The Council's landlord Forum has held 3 meetings as at October 2022, with the next meeting in March 2023, and continues to raise awareness of Homelessness in the private rented sector.													
									Continue to monitor and review the delivery of the Allocation Policy 2018				Ongoing		Progress reports and findings are annually reported to the Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel.													
Enabling the best use of housing to meet the needs of people, including support for a high quality, strong private rented sector		Ensure that our existing housing stock is maintained to a high and safe standard							Monitor compliance across housing services to enhance safety of tenants/maintenance of housing stock and report annually to Housing & Homelessness Overview & Scrutiny Panel, and twice yearly to EMT.				Ongoing		Capital works programmes continue on an annual basis across the housing stock portfolio. Actions resulting from Fire Risk Assessments and Asbestos surveys continue to be given priority as well as gas and electrical inspections and other statutory compliance matters. There will be increased monitoring of damp and mould cases in line with government requirements. An annual compliance report is submitted the Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel, and EMT are provided with twice-yearly reports.													
		Protect the health and safety of tenants in private rented properties							Continue to develop initiatives and schemes which prevent homelessness from the Private rented sector				Ongoing		We have launched an additional hospital discharge support scheme out of Fordingbridge hospital, in addition to Lymington Hospital, which supports patients return home and access adaptation if required.													
									Hold two landlord Forums each year which support a safe and thriving private rented sector and which support the council to tackle homelessness				2022/23		The council's third landlord forum took place in September 2022 with another due to be scheduled in for March 2023.													
Key Performance Indicators									General Fund Financial Information - Budgets £'000					Housing Revenue Financial Information - Budgets £'000														
KPIs (Annual Targets)		Unit	Freq.	Last Quarter	2022/23 Target	2022/23	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status	Budget Description	Original Budget	July Cabinet	November Cabinet	Latest Budget	Budget Description	Original Budget	July Cabinet	November Cabinet	Latest Budget									
Additional council homes		Num (Cumulative)	Q	3	43	17	Up	Up		General Fund Revenue Position	2,025	135	1,267	3,427	HRA - Revenue Position - Income	-30,225	0	187	-30,038									
Additional affordable homes delivered by others		Num (Cumulative)	Q	7	60	14	Up	Up		Variation Percentage		6.7%	62.6%	69.2%	HRA - Revenue Position - Expenditure	30,425	866	359	31,650									
KPIs (Quarterly Targets)		Unit	Freq.	Last Quarter	Target	This Quarter	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status	Supporting Narrative		Homelessness Costs £1.3m, Staff Vacancy Housing Development -£40k, Changes to Pay Spine £7k		Supporting Narrative		Dwelling Rent Income Voids +£200k, Service Charge Review -£13k												
Prevention duty cases successfully prevented		%	Q	52%	50%	53%	Up	Up		General Fund Capital Programme	1,200	0	-300	900	HRA Capital Programme	24,900	0	-4,000	20,900									
Private sector property inspections resulting in Category 1 hazards		%	Q	7%	<40%	15%	Down	Up		Variation Percentage		0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%	Variation Percentage		0.0%	-16.1%	-16.1%									
Rough sleepers entering accommodation pathway		%	Q	61%	32%	61%	Up	-		Supporting Narrative	Disabled Facilities Grants -£300k		Supporting Narrative		Housing Development Strategy Programme -£4m													
Households in external emergency B&B accommodation		Num	Q	94	<70	71	Down	Down																				
High Risks																												
High Risk Area									Prob.	Impact	Score/ RAG	Mitigation actions						Prob.	Impact	Score/RAG								
Increase in Homelessness									4	4	16	Prevention focussed service, Landlord Liaison role and Forum, Partnerships, Housing Support Team. New Action plan commenced September 2022 including recruitment of 2 additional posts.						4	2	8								
Loss of annual Government funding including, Homeless, Rough Sleeper Initiative and Discretionary Housing Payments									2	4	8	Maximise the use of council-owned emergency temporary accommodation, and funding to access the private rented sector. Ongoing lobbying of Government. Rough Sleeper funding has been extended for a further 3 years to 2025.						2	3	6								
Loss of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) income through increase in rent arrears and void rent loss									3	3	9	New Arrears Management software procured to enable monitoring and early intervention and new arrears recovery initiatives introduced. Officers are members of a district wide partnership group looking at initiatives to tackle food and fuel poverty.						3	2	6								
Compliance with property safety inspections (Gas, Electric, Fire, Legionella etc), including damp and mould requirements.									2	3	6	All statutory compliance matters treated as priority with additional resources in place to deal with scaling up of fire safety matters and asbestos actions. Review underway in respect of damp and mould cases. Regular reports to EMT and HHOSP.						2	2	4								
Increasing budget requirements to discharge housing functions (increase in homelessness, maintenance price increases and supply chains).									2	2	4	Clear understanding pre-budget of anticipated costs likely to be incurred in light of national pressures.						2	2	4								
Changes in the Housing Market, valuations and legislation affecting housing development programmes									2	3	6	Maintain close liaison links with affordable housing providers and Homes England. Flexible approach to rent designation of properties and Shared Ownership/rent designation. Search for available opportunities ongoing.						2	3	6								

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HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2022/2023

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
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15 March 2023

Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy	To consider the implementation of the revised enforcement policy	Report to Panel	Richard Knott / Grainne O'Rourke / Kirsty Farmer
Private Sector Housing and Empty Homes Strategy Update	To receive an update on the progress of the priorities identified within the Private Sector Housing and Empty Homes Strategies	Update to Panel	Richard Knott / Grainne O'Rourke / Kirsty Farmer
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Financial Assistance Policy	To consider the revised DFG financial assistance policy	Report to Panel	Richard Knott / Grainne O'Rourke / Kirsty Farmer
DFG Minor Works Policy for NFDC owned stock	To consider implementing a minor work policy for our own housing stock	Report to Panel	Richard Knott / Grainne O'Rourke / Kirsty Farmer
Housing Maintenance Compliance Update	To receive an update on the progress made against the Council's compliance policies	Report to Panel	Richard Fudge / Ritchie Thomson
Housing ombudsman housing complaint handling code		Report to Panel	Amanda Wilson
Housing Strategy / HRA Property development and acquisition update	To receive an update on the progress of the Housing Strategy and HRA property development and acquisition	Update to Panel	Tim Davis
Homelessness Update	To receive an update on homelessness	Update to Panel	Richard Knott

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