

HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – 18 SEPTEMBER 2019

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS POLICY FOR HOUSING (LANDLORD SERVICES)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council as 'Landlord' is responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the structure and common parts of its Housing properties as set out in the Tenancy Agreement.
- 1.2 This report deals with the maintenance of the Council's Housing stock covering planned, cyclical and responsive maintenance activities and recommends a new Maintenance and Repairs Policy for Housing (Landlord Services). The new proposed Policy is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.3 Voids, mutual exchanges, empty homes and adaptations to the homes of tenants with disabilities are not covered within the proposed Policy. Separate policies covering these respective areas is being developed and will support this policy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council owns over 5,000 Council properties and is under legal duty to maintain the structure and fixtures of these properties including their communal areas.
- 2.2 The Council is committed to providing an effective maintenance service in order to comply with its statutory responsibilities, including but not limited to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended) and the Housing Act 2004 and to ensure high levels of resident satisfaction and to protect the value of its housing stock.
- 2.3 The Council's maintenance responsibilities are split into three main areas as follows:-
 - **Planned Maintenance** – this involves planning (including financial planning) and implementing the improvements that Council properties need in the medium to longer term;
 - **Cyclical Maintenance** – there are certain functions that have to be undertaken on a cyclical basis to ensure the Council complies with statutory requirements;
 - **Reactive Maintenance** – this involves the Council having in place a 24/7 repair service to deal with repairs that the Council is legally responsible for.
- 2.4 A thorough review of maintenance and repairs has been undertaken by Housing Management in devising the new Maintenance and Repairs Policy for Housing (Landlord Services).

3. THE NEW MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS POLICY FOR HOUSING (LANDLORD SERVICES)

- 3.1 The new Maintenance and Repairs Policy sufficiently addresses the 'Landlord' duties and responsibilities within Housing specific properties, and is structured to ensure the Council complies with its responsibilities as set out in the Tenancy Agreement.

3.2 The Policy's salient points are as follows:

- (a) Clearly sets out the key principles for the maintenance and repair of the Council's Housing stock;
- (b) Clearly identifying legislative and regulatory duties;
- (c) Clear definition of roles and responsibilities;
- (d) Application of the Decent Home Standard;
- (e) Arrangements for developing the planned and cyclical maintenance programme;
- (f) Arrangements for providing effective responsive repairs;
- (g) Arrangements for maintaining boundary walls, fencing and gates;
- (h) Arrangements for the recovery of costs from rechargeable works that are the responsibility of Tenant's;
- (i) Arrangements for Leased and Leasehold properties;
- (j) Arrangements for qualifying repairs in accordance with The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994;
- (k) Arrangements for dealing with Tenant's requests to undertake improvements or alterations to their home;
- (l) Arrangements for dealing with secure Tenants right to undertake and receive compensation for improvements.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 This Maintenance and Repairs Policy sets out the Council's approach in maintaining its properties by being specific to Housing Landlord Services, to achieve statutory legislative requirements, and clearly defines roles and responsibilities.
- 4.2 It is intended that the new Maintenance and Repairs Policy for Housing Landlord Services is implemented on 1st November 2019, following sign off by the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An annual budget funded by the HRA is required to implement and support this policy and this will be agreed as part of the Council's annual budget setting process.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are none.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are none.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel consider the proposed Maintenance and Repairs Policy and make recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services.

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Background Papers:

Public documents.