

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION – 26 APRIL 2023

MOBILITY SCOOTER POLICY FOR HOUSING (LANDLORD SERVICES)

1. INTRODUCTION

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

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council is committed to supporting the quality of life of its tenants 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.

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

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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).

- 3.4 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.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 The Policy has been presented and considered by the Tenant Involvement Group (TIG) on two occasions. TIG are in favour of the Mobility Scooter Policy being introduced to keep residents and their neighbours safe. Feedback from the TIG and Resident Approved Panel (RAP) was sought and considered by Senior Managers and, as a result, the original document was updated and amended to incorporate tenant suggestions. The final consultation response received from the TIG is set out at section 4.4.
- 4.4 Drafting the policy must have been quite a challenge and the document now seems to be clear and set out in a logical way to clarify the expectations of mobility scooter owners. Communication will be key over why this policy has been introduced and the message needs to be that there is a genuine reason for it. It is about working with residents to create a safer environment, rather than the council telling residents what to do for the sake of it.
- 4.5 The Policy was presented to the Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 18 January 2023 and was supportive for approval by the Housing and Homelessness Portfolio Holder.
- 4.6 The new Mobility Scooter Policy for Housing (Landlord Services) is proposed to be adopted on 5 May 2023 or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are none directly associate with this report.

6. CRIME AND 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. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness approve the Mobility Scooter Policy for Housing (Landlord Services) for implementation from 5 May 2023 or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

10. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENDORSEMENT

I have agreed to the recommendation of this report.

Sign: Cllr Edward Heron

Date: 26 APRIL 2023

For further information contact:

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Background Papers:

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

[Housing and Homelessness Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 18th January, 2023](#)

Date on which notice given of this Decision – 26 April 2023

Last date for call in – 4 May 2023