

CABINET - THURSDAY 11 JANUARY 2024

Report of the Director Housing and Wellbeing Lead Member: Executive Member for Public and Private Sector Housing

Part A

DECANT AND DISTURBANCE POLICY

Purpose of report

To present to members a proposed policy [landlord services] for approval that sets out the landlord's approach to dealing with the financial consequences to tenants of moving them temporarily or permanently to alternative accommodation.

Recommendation

That the decant and disturbance policy attached as appendix A be approved.

Reason

To enable officers to provide a service that treats tenants equitably and consistently when they have to move to alternative accommodation for reasons not of their own choosing, primarily for the Council to carry out repairs in their home that cannot be carried out with the tenant remaining in occupation.

Policy justification and previous decisions

There is no existing similar policy. Decisions to recompense tenants for their having to move out of their properties because of repairs that cannot be carried out while they remain in the property have always sought to ensure that a tenant is not financially disadvantaged by having to move into alternative accommodation. This policy, in setting out the circumstances and criteria for recompense, crates rigour in the process and enables officers to apply consistency while giving a certain degree of discretion.

Implementation timetable including future decisions

It is recommended that, subject to call-in, this policy, if approved, comes into effect immediately.

Report implications

Financial implications

There is an existing budget that is used for reimbursing tenants for the expenses they incur when having to move property for reasons not of their own choosing. It is anticipated that this budget will continue to be adequate when this policy is approved. Budget expenditure is monitored continually and any significant financial consequence created by this policy will be identified and acted upon.

Risk management

There are no specific risks associated with this decision.

Equality and diversity

There are no significant equality implications arising from this policy. Some groups may require support to claim all they are entitled to under this policy, and this support will be provided by the tenancy management and support teams.

Climate change and carbon impact

None identified.

Crime and disorder

None identified.

Wards affected

All wards.

Publicity arrangements

The policy will be communicated to tenants through the website and *Your Homes Matter* residents magazine.

Consultations

Charnwood Housing Residents Forum ('CHRF') and the Housing Management Advisory Board ('HMAB') have both been consulted over this policy and have given the policy their endorsement.

Links to the corporate strategy

Caring for the Environment	No
Healthy Communities	Yes
A Thriving Economy	No
Your Council	No

Key decision: Yes

Date included on forward plan 18 October 2023

Background papers: None

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Part B

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 There are occasions when, through maintenance, repair and investment needs with a particular property, tenants have to leave their home in order that the property can have the required work carried out. Alternative accommodation has to be found for the tenant for the duration of the work. This process is known colloquially as 'decanting'.
- 1.2 The process of decanting has inevitable financial consequences for the tenant as well as for the council in terms of costs incurred in tenants moving out of their home but not through their own choice. We have always had internal procedures to enable us to reimburse tenants for these costs; but there has never been an actual policy on this matter.
- 1.3 The proposed new decant and disturbance policy, attached to this report as appendix A brings together existing internal procedures into an explicit policy statement.

2. CONSULTATION OVER THE PROPOSED POLICY

- 2.1 Staff have been consulted internally in the landlord service and the policy has been reviewed by CHRF, where some changes were proposed. Those that were accepted have been incorporated into the proposed policy as set out in appendix A.

Appendices

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| Appendix A | Draft decant and disturbance policy |
| Appendix B | Equality impact assessment |