

HOUSING MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD – 10 NOVEMBER 2021

Report of the Head of Landlord Services

Item 5 UPDATE REPORT ON THE EFFECT OF THE CHANGE IN THE COUNCIL'S POLICY ON BULK WASTE COLLECTION ON COUNCIL DWELLINGS

Purpose of report

To update members on the effect in terms of cost and service change to tenants and the housing revenue account of this change in council policy.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note and comment on the report.

Reasons

This report is for information only and to elicit any comments forthcoming from members.

Report implications

No implications have been identified for this report.

Background papers: None

1. Background to this report

- 1.1 In October 2019 Charnwood Borough Council started charging its residents for the removal and disposal of bulky items of waste. Hitherto this was a free service, funded from residents' council tax.
- 1.2 The (approximately) five and a half thousand council tenants have been affected by this change in that the change in council policy has meant that a previously free service is now chargeable.
- 1.3 In March 2021 members considered a report on the effect of the change in council policy by looking at how it has affected the amount of bulky items being dumped by tenants in council blocks' external [bin stores] and internal communal areas.
- 1.4 The information used to inform that report (records kept by the tenancy and estate management team's housing assistant) covered the months prior to the change in council policy and then immediately afterwards. The end of the period following the change in policy coincided with the first national lockdown and the suspension of many services.

- 1.5 The conclusion from that data was that the number of reported bulk items in the months following the change in policy fell by 46% compared to a similar number of months preceding it.
- 1.6 At the March meeting of HMAB when the report was presented, members requested updated figures to evaluate whether that difference had been maintained or not.

2. Updated findings from the evaluation of data held – internally-dumped items

- 2.1 The records that we have analysed cover the period from October 2020 to June 2021. The local recycling centres were open for all that period of time but by appointment only.
- 2.2 The average number of clearances per month in period before the council's policy was changed was 10.5. From October 2020 to June 2021 the average number of clearances per month was 66. Within this data, the number of clearances for April to June 2021 was around half of this number
- 2.3 The period October 2020 to June 2021 was subject to national restrictions, recycling centres were operating pre-booked appointment systems, and some tenants may have been unable or fearful to leave their properties due to Covid-19, choosing to leave items in communal areas rather than visit the local recycling centre. The Council operates a system of inspections of communal areas, which involves the removal of unauthorised items, and tenants will be aware of this.
- 2.4 The problem for tenancy management staff is that it is extremely difficult to attribute dumped items to one particular property and so the recharge rate is low. Those costs have to be recovered, too, once they are recharged.

3. Recommendation

Members are requested to note this report and raise any points or questions accordingly.

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