

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE AND RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS POLICY</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND REGENERATION</b>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>BOB LEDGER – DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND REGENERATION</b>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek comments on the Repairs and Maintenance Policy and the Rechargeable Repairs Policy

## **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 The Repairs and Maintenance Policy and the Rechargeable Repairs Policy are documents providing detail around both landlord and tenant responsibilities for repairs to the Council's housing stock as agreed within the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement.
- 2.2 The policies incorporate the tenancy terms and conditions approved by Executive in 2015.
- 2.3 Both policies were considered by Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee in January 2017 to provide clarity for staff when processing repair requests.
- 2.4 The attached versions include amendments around responsibilities for plastering. The amendments to the policy seek to clarify this issue and ensure fair, consistent and transparent recharges and to reduce officer time in processing complaints.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Repairs and Maintenance Policy and the Rechargeable Repairs Policy are documents providing detail around both landlord and tenant responsibilities for repairs to the Council's housing stock as agreed within the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement.
- 3.2 Repairs that are the responsibility of the tenant can be completed by the Housing Repairs Service and the costs recharged back to the tenant in line with our Rechargeable Repairs Policy.
- 3.3 The current Repairs and Maintenance Policy and Rechargeable Repairs Policy were considered by Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee in January 2017 and captures the content of the tenancy agreement which was previously approved by Executive in 2015.
- 3.4 Over time there have been a number of disputes about recharging for plastering

works. These have been predominantly where incoming tenants have been advised not to steam strip wallpaper but do so resulting in large areas of plasterwork coming away from the walls.

- 3.5 Therefore the Chair of Policy Scrutiny requested that the Housing Management team review and clarify the policies accordingly. The attached draft Repairs and Maintenance Policy has received minor amendments to achieve this (copy included as Appendix One).
- 3.6 Page 8 lists the Council's responsibilities for repairs. An additional line which says "*Extensive areas of plastering required due to the age and condition of existing plaster work*" has been included.
- 3.7 Similarly page 13 currently says "*Any other repairs which investigations establish are not attributable to fair wear and tear.*" This has been amended to read "*Any other repairs which investigations establish are not attributable to fair wear and tear including plastering work required after the use of a steam stripper to remove wall paper coverings.*"
- 3.8 There are no changes proposed to the Rechargeable Repairs Policy, although a copy is enclosed at Appendix Two for information.

#### **4. Strategic Priorities**

##### **4.1 Let's deliver quality housing**

The Repairs and Maintenance and the Rechargeable Repairs Policy ensure that we deliver a fair, consistent and transparent approach to the provision of repairs to maintain the Council's housing stock.

##### **4.2 Let's reduce inequality**

The policy includes the discretion to waive charges for vulnerable tenants in cases where a tenant's vulnerability throws into question whether they should be held responsible for damage that isn't fair wear and tear.

#### **5. Organisational Impacts**

- 5.1 Finance - The implementation of a Repairs and Maintenance Policy and a Rechargeable Repairs Policy ensures that all staff across Housing Services and Customer Services are aware of the Council's responsibilities. Therefore Control Centre staff are better informed to ensure they only send operatives to out of hours calls for emergencies and repairs that are not the Council's responsibility will be carried out at cost to tenants ensuring a more cost effective approach to service delivery.
- 5.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules - none
- 5.3 Land, property and accommodation - none
- 5.4 Human Resources - none

5.5 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights (including the outcome of the EA attached, if required) – the policies ensure transparent and consistent service delivery to all tenants. Inclusion of measures to consider waiving charges for rechargeable repairs in cases where we have evidence of vulnerability e.g. learning difficulty and the tenant did not understand they could be charged. Consideration was given to the Equality Analysis process and there is no negative impact to individuals who exhibit a protected characteristic, nor are there any negative human rights implications.

## 6. Risk Implications

6.1 (i) Options Explored  
Do nothing – some additional clarity is required around plastering works.

Amend policy – will provide clarity around plastering works.

6.2 (ii) Key risks associated with the preferred approach - none

## 7. Recommendation

7.1 Members make comments on the amendments in wording to the Repairs and Maintenance Policy to provide clarity around responsibilities for plastering work.

**Is this a key decision?** No

**Do the exempt information categories apply?** No

**Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?** No

**How many appendices does the report contain?** 2

**List of Background Papers:** None

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