

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND INVESTMENT REMEDIES POLICY</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND INVESTMENT</b>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>JOANNE CROOKES, CUSTOMER SERVICES MANAGER AND EMILY HOLMES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT</b>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek approval of the new DHI Remedies Policy (Appendix 1).

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The council now has a statutory duty to handle customer complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) Complaint Handling Code (The Code).
- 2.2 Section 7.1, of the Code self- assessment states that where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.
- 2.3 Section 7.2 states that any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.
- 2.4 Section 7.3 states that the remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.
- 2.5 Finally, Section 7.4 of the self-assessment states that Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.
- 2.6 Whilst we had existing procedures for offering small sums to compensate loss we did not have a formal policy document which was in line with the HOS Guidance on Remedies and therefore, we needed to develop and agree one to ensure that we are compliant with The Code.
- 2.7 LTP have been consulted about this report and have made the following comments:
- 1) Recommend the remedies policy be reviewed annually.
  - 2) LTP request that they are provided with an annual report on the volume of compensation administered and areas of service related to.
  - 3) Agree with the proposed compensation amounts and increments system relating to qualifying improvements, gesture of goodwill and payment of compensation to customers.
  - 4) Recommend rent refund for disturbance allowance amount is reduced.

### **3. Organisational Impacts**

#### Strategic Priority

High Performing Services

#### Finance

Compensation payments and allowances should be met from within existing budget provision. These payments should be monitored to assess the effect of the introduction of a published policy.

#### Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

#### Equality and Diversity

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

To ensure that we deliver our Equality Duty we accept complaints from customers via all communication channels. Customers can complain in person, verbally, in writing or via our online complaints template. Customers who need assistance to log a complaint can get help from Customer Services to ensure that they are heard. All complaints received are dealt with equally regardless of how they are made.

#### Community Engagement and Communications.

We welcome feedback from customers and clearly promote the Complaints procedure on our website and in our public buildings.

### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee is asked to comment on the Draft Remedies Policy and make any recommendations prior to referral to Executive.
- 4.2 Members to note the assistance given by the Lincoln Tenant's Panel in developing this policy.

**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?**

One

**List of Background Papers:**

None

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