

**SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND INVESTMENT  
REMEDIES POLICY**

**DIRECTORATE: HOUSING AND INVESTMENT**

**REPORT AUTHOR: JOANNE CROOKES, CUSTOMER SERVICES MANAGER**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek approval of the new Directorate of Housing and Investment (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 there are existing procedures for offering small sums to compensate loss there was not a formal policy document which was in line with the HOS Guidance on Remedies and therefore, a new one needed to be developed and agreed to ensure compliance with The Code.
- 2.6 Lincoln Tenants Panel (LTP) have been consulted about this report and have made the following comments:
- 1) Recommend the remedies policy reviewed annually.  
Response: This has been noted and reflected in the review date information.
  - 2) LTP request that they are provided with annual report on the volume of compensation administered and areas of service related to.  
Response: This has been noted and can be provided.
  - 3) Agree with the proposed compensation amounts and increments system relating to qualifying improvements, gesture of goodwill and payment of

compensation to customers,

Response: This has been noted.

- 4) Recommend rent refund for disturbance allowance amount is reduced.

Response: This has been noted however, the amounts have been suggested are based on the Housing Ombudsman award thresholds.

- 2.7 This policy was reviewed at Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on 31 October 2024 and it was supported that the policy goes to Executive on 18 November for approval. It was also discussed that the report and policy should be presented to Policy Scrutiny Committee on 19 November for further review and consideration.

### **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.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

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 Members to consider and approve the new DHI Remedies Policy.

4.2 That authority be delegated to the City Solicitor in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing to consider and approve any suggested amendments recommended by the Policy Scrutiny Committee on 19 November 2024. Any recommendations which are major will be referred back to Executive for approval.

**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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