

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET– TUESDAY, 25 APRIL 2017

Title of report	REVIEW OF HOUSING POLICIES
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Roger Bayliss 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Housing 01530 454780 chris.lambert@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To obtain Cabinet approval for the revised and new housing policies attached to this report as Appendix 1 to 4.
Reason for Decision	To provide a robust policy framework to guide the delivery of housing services
Council priorities	Value for Money Homes and Communities.
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The resource implications of housing policies can be accommodated from within existing approved budgets.
Link to relevant CAT	Keeping the services policy environment up to date ensures that housing business plan and team plan targets for performance can be achieved.
Risk Management	Having a robust policy environment within which to provide services ensures consistency in decision making and minimises the risk of successful challenge of decisions.
Equalities Impact Screening	Equalities Impact screening has been completed for the four policies.
Human Rights	None

Transformational Government	Up to date policies that make use of the latest service delivery options and case law ensure we can provide the most effective services possible in the most efficient way.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory
Consultees	Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), Housing Service Management Team (SMT), Homelessness Working Group, Landlord Services Working Group, Tenants and Leaseholders Consultation Forum (TLCF) and Policy Development Group (PDG).
Background papers	Executive Board - 12 June 2007 – Approval of Housing Policies (Phase1) Cabinet – 18 November 2014 - Approval of Housing Policies
Recommendations	THAT CABINET APPROVES THE FOUR NEW AND REVISED POLICIES ATTACHED AS APPENDIX 1 TO 4 OF THIS REPORT.

1.0 REPORT

- 1.1 The Housing Service periodically reviews and updates the policies that provide Officers with a framework for delegated decision making when delivering services. Attached to this report are three revised policies and one new one which require Cabinet approval.
- 1.2 Anti Social Behaviour Policy - revised (Appendix 1) – a major revision to the previous policy, which has been undertaken in partnership with our colleagues in the Community Focus team to ensure the approach we take in cases involving our tenants is consistent with that taken for private rented tenants and owner occupiers. The policy also reflects a change of focus away from dealing with every reported case based on the tenants’ perception of the level of seriousness, to focusing on the more serious cases, and encouraging self help for lower level issues. This approach will allow resources to be refocused in the more serious cases. The revision also incorporates recommendations made by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel in their report following a review of our approach to Anti Social Behaviour.
- 1.3 Tenancy Policy – revised (Appendix 2) – this policy was introduced as part of our response to the Localism Act in 2011. The Government has announced that from a date yet to be determined, all new social housing tenancies must be “fixed term” with no more

new “lifetime” tenancies. The date for implementing this change and the guidance covering the detailed requirements are still awaited from Government, and are anticipated as being available in the autumn of 2017. The revised policy will allow us to implement the policy change promptly when the detailed guidance is published, and further consultation with stakeholders will be undertaken prior to seeking Cabinet approval for the policy approach to fixed term tenancies.

- 1.4 Compensation Policy – revised (Appendix 3) – the revised compensation policy updates our previous approach in the light of experience from dealing with cases and current best practice.
- 1.5 Private Rented Offer Policy – new policy (Appendix 4) – following a change of legislation recently, we now have the option of being able to discharge our statutory duty to re-house the homeless through an offer of suitable private rented accommodation, rather than just social housing as was previously the case. In order to use this facility we are required to have a new policy determining when and how we will use it.
- 1.6 The next phase of policies to be reviewed will include Repairs and Improvements as well as Aids and Adaptations, and officer and tenant working groups are currently considering these specific issues, which will be brought forward for consideration in the forthcoming months.
- 1.7 The Policy Development Group considered these policies at their meeting on 8 March 2017 and the draft minutes of the meeting are attached as Appendix 5 for Cabinet’s information. A number of suggested amendments to wording which aided clarity were made at the meeting and these have been incorporated into the documents appended to this report.