

HOMES PDG
13 SEPTEMBER 2016

AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS POLICY

Cabinet Member Cllr Ray Stanley
Responsible Officer Mark Baglow, Building Services Manager

Reason for Report: To review the Aids and Adaptations Policy.

RECOMMENDATION(S): Cabinet approves the revised Aids and Adaptations Policy.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The Council must run the Housing Service efficiently and effectively in accordance with legislative requirements and the provisions of the regulatory framework. The Council must consider the impact of an aging population and help people to retain their independence and remain in their own homes.

Financial Implications: The financial implications will be contained within the Housing Revenue Account. It is important to prioritise financial management of the HRA to ensure the all available funds are used to the best effect.

Legal Implications: As a registered provider (RP) of social housing, the Council is obliged to take account of the standards contained within the regulatory framework which is administered by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The Home Standard states that RPs shall co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants needs.

Risk Assessment: Failure to provide housing management staff with the appropriate policies could result in a less consistent and effective service.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The review of this policy reflects changes in good practice and legislative changes. It provides a framework for staff which sets out the Council's approach to providing aids and adaptations for tenants or their household members to help them remain and live independently in the home.
- 1.2 The Aids and Adaptations Policy was approved at the meeting of the Decent and Affordable Homes Policy Development Group in July 2013. The policy is due to be reviewed by June 2017.
- 1.4 Tenants Together approved the draft Aids and Adaptations Policy at their meeting on 11 August 2016.
- 1.5 Cabinet is asked to consider the proposed changes and to agree the adoption of the reviewed policy.

2.0 Proposed policy changes

- 2.1 The policy has been reviewed earlier than expected to bring the Council's policy in line with other providers. Minor amendments to the existing policy have been made. The layout and sub headings have also been amended to take into account changes made.
- 2.2 The policy has been updated to take into account who is eligible for assistance from the Council for aids and adaptations. For example, the policy applies to Council tenants and members of their household including lodgers and sub-tenants (where eligible, in line with the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement).
- 2.3 The policy has been amended to highlight who qualifies for assistance. For example, where a tenant or household member has a disability or a long term illness, the Council will consider providing equipment or adaptations to the home to enable that individual to remain living independently.
- 2.4 A new section on servicing, repairs and maintenance has been introduced which explains that the Council has in place an annual programme to undertake servicing and maintenance of equipment such as stair lifts and lifting equipment.
- 2.5 The policy updates the section on installing your own adaptations. This explains that all adaptations installed by the tenant or household member are at their own expenses. The tenant is required to obtain written permission from the Council prior to carrying out any works.
- 2.6 The policy emphasises that the Council will not fund any alterations or adaptations that may be required to the property following the purchase of a mobility vehicle. If the tenant needs to make changes to the property such as vehicle access, hard standing, pathways or shelters or electric charging points, these will need to be funded by the tenant or household member unless a statement of need is received from an Occupational Therapist making the recommendation.
- 2.7 The previous section relating to transfer has been amalgamated to a new section called moving, transfers and mutual exchanges. An additional clause has been added which states secure and flexible tenants who have adaptations in their home have the right to mutual exchange with other eligible tenants. However, the Council can refuse a mutual exchanges on grounds outlined in legislation.

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Circulation of the Report: Councillor Ray Stanley, Management Team

List of Background Papers: A copy of such papers to be made available for public inspection and included on Website