

Report of the Housing Portfolio Holder

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNAL AREAS POLICY1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval for an updated Management of Communal Areas Policy.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

NOTE the amendments from the Policy Working Group:

1. **To add a section to the policy for Ring Door Cameras**
2. **To update the Equality Impact Assessment with more information regarding the impact for people with disabilities**

RESOLVE that the updated Management of Communal Areas Policy be approved.

3. Detail

The policy outlines the approach that the Council takes to manage enclosed communal areas and the areas that immediately surround blocks of flats. It applies to tenants and leaseholders, in both General Housing in Independent Living. A clear policy is necessary, so that all areas are managed in a consistent way and so residents can be clear on what is allowed, and the approach that the Council will take to monitor areas and address any issues.

The management of communal areas can often be a contentious issue. Many residents see communal areas as an extension of their own home. As a landlord, the Council has a responsibility to ensure all communal areas are kept clear and accessible so that residents can exit the building as quickly and as safely as possible in the event of an emergency. This may include asking residents to remove items that they have placed in the communal area, either for convenience or with the aim of improving the appearance of the area.

The updated policy includes more details regarding two specific areas: Mobility Scooters and Surveillance Camera Systems. The original policy included some reference to mobility scooters, however since the original policy was written a new Mobility Scooter Policy has been approved. The changes to this policy ensures that the information in both policies is consistent. The original policy did not include information regarding the use of Surveillance Camera Systems. The Council often receives requests for these systems to be installed, including information on how these will be considered within this policy will be beneficial for tenancy management.

The Equality Impact Assessment is included at appendix 1, a change table is included at appendix 2 and the revised policy is included at appendix 3.

The policy was considered by the Policy Working Group on 8 June 2023 and two amendments were proposed.

4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

There are no additional financial implications for the Council with any costs being contained within existing budgets.

5. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

The legal implications are set out in the table of changes namely the relevant legislation has either been updated or added to the policy. In relation to the building regulations it is Building Regulation Act 2010. In relation to surveillance the relevant legislation is Data Protection Act 2018, Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act 2000, Protection of Freedom Acts 2012 and General Data Protection Act 2016.

The Council must have regard to its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This duty requires the Council to have "due regard" to:

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010 (section 149(1)(a))
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (section 149(1)(b))
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149(1)(c)).
- This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding (section 149(5), Equality Act 2010)

By completing an Equality Impact Assessment reflects the Council complying with this duty.

6. Human Resources Implications

There were no comments from the Head of Human Resources.

7. Union Comments

There were no Union comments.

8. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any [OFFICIAL (SENSITIVE)] information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

9. Climate Change Implications

There were no comments from the Climate Change Manager.

10. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any [OFFICIAL (SENSITIVE)] information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

11. Equality Impact Assessment

As this report suggests revisions to existing policies, please find an Equality Impact Assessment at appendix 1.

12. Background Papers

None.