



Cabinet : 6th February 2024

Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor N Pryce-Roberts

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SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL'S DAMP & MOULD POLICY, AND GOODWILL & DISCRETIONARY PAYMENT POLICY.

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To request approval of two new policies:

- Damp and Mould Policy
- Goodwill and Discretionary Payment Policy

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the policies detailed in section 1.1 be approved.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Work is being undertaken to ensure that the actions and processes that the Housing Service take are documented for complete transparency. By producing formal, written policies and procedures it will improve the service provided to tenants by detailing processes and expectations.

3.2 Legislation and regulation, as detailed in each individual policy, dictates the need for each policy to be formalised and documented.

4.0 DAMP POLICY

4.1 We have an important role to play in keeping tenants in our homes safe, including taking action to address hazards that occur and seeking to prevent hazards where possible. The tragic death of Awabb Ishak as a result of damp and mould in his home has understandably raised the profile of damp and mould as a housing and health risk within both the social housing sector and private rented sector.

- 4.2 We wish to ensure that the homes we provide to our tenants are free from serious hazards, including damp and mould, and that homes are fit for habitation. We treat cases of damp and mould with the utmost seriousness and act promptly to protect our tenants' health.
- 4.3 We have revised our Damp and Mould Policy so that it clearly sets out our approach to dealing with damp and mould in our homes and communal areas. It covers the services that we provide to tenants.
- 4.4 The Damp and Mould Policy at (Appendix A) supports the delivery of our strategic objectives to provide high quality and safe homes, and to meet our legal and regulatory requirements.
- 4.5 The policy developed provides absolute clarity on our policy position, commitments, and processes.

5.0 GOODWILL & DISCRETIONARY PAYMENT POLICY

- 5.1 In October 2022 the Council adopted a revised Customer Feedback Policy. The policy refers to the assessment of and awarding of remedies where there are service failures that follow the Housing Ombudsman guide.
- 5.2 This Policy (Appendix B) applies only to those customers who use or access Housing Services. It provides formal guidance for Officers when considering remedies and manages customer expectations.
- 5.3 This Policy takes account of the Housing Ombudsman guidance and code and ensures that we meet the requirements of the Ombudsman and the Housing Regulator.
- 5.4 The Policy has been developed to provide discretionary payments where quantifiable costs can be offset and or a discretionary goodwill gesture payment where an issue has caused inconvenience. These may be considered as one of the solutions in our efforts put a situation right.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 A more efficient and effective repairs service will generate savings.
- 7.2 Monetary remedies are manageable in budget and monitored.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1

Risk Number	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Rating
1	Lack of a Damp and Mould Policy may lead to the inability to deal with damp and mould effectively. Tenants would also not be aware of how we will deal with damp.	Unlikely	Significant	3 Comfortable
2	Failure to have a policy for Goodwill gestures and discretionary payments may lead to higher fines by the Housing Ombudsman. It may lead to dissatisfaction and different payment levels. Policy allows Customers expectation to be managed	Unlikely	Significant	3 Comfortable

9.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Inadequate repairs can cause health and wellbeing complications. The Policies requested for approval will assist in providing a more effective repairs service and ensure that we acknowledge and offer redress where there has been additional financial burden anxiety or distress.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Appendices

Appendix A – Damp and Mould Policy

Appendix B – Goodwill and Discretionary Payment Policy

Appendix C – Minute of Landlord Services Committee (Cabinet Working Group)