

Report to Communities Scrutiny Committee



Portfolio:

Housing and HGGT (Cllr Nigel Bedford)

Subject: Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

To consider, comment and recommend for approval the draft Cabinet report and the supporting document proposing the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

Report:

Cabinet will be provided with the Cabinet report and a proposed Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy. Drafts of these papers are attached to this report. The Communities Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider, comment and recommend for approval the draft papers ahead of presentation to Cabinet.

Reason for decision:

To recommend any amendments to the draft Cabinet papers prior to presentation to Cabinet.

Options considered and rejected:

EFDC need a policy on housing repairs and maintenance to ensure consistent and fair service delivery. During the consultation process, options were considered for each aspect of the policy. We considered these against criteria such as cost, cost effectiveness, safety and customer service.

Consultation undertaken:

The following consultation was undertaken during the development of the proposed approach to the energy efficiency retrofit programme:

- Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel – A sub-group of the Panel met three times to examine and developed the draft policy. The full Panel met on 3 September to review and confirm agreement of the final draft policy.
- Qualis Property Solutions – Qualis was part of the sub-group and contributed to the development of the policy.
- Housing Management team – The draft policy was presented to the Housing Management team for comment.
- Rehousing team – The Rehousing team were consulted on the proposed void relet standard.

Resource implications:

Implementation of this policy will have no resource implications. Qualis Property Solutions have confirmed the revised Void Relet Standard will be no effect on the standard Price per Void.

Legal and Governance Implications, Relevant Statutory Powers:

Implementation of this policy will support EFDC's compliance with the Decent Homes Standard and the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 Consumer Standard.

Corporate Plan Implications:

The housing repairs and maintenance policy will support the following key objective of the Corporate Plan:

- Stronger place – The housing repairs and maintenance policy support our objectives of providing decent homes and a customer focused repairs service.

Background Papers:

- The draft Cabinet report
- Proposed Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

Risk Management:

The key risks arising from the Repairs and Maintenance Policy include:

Risk	Action to Mitigate
Cost of void repairs increases	The Void Relet Standard was developed in consultation with the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel and with Qualis Property Solutions. The development process ensured changes to the Standard were cost neutral.
Tenancy refusals due to inadequate relet standard	The Void Relet Standard was developed in consultation with the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel and with Qualis Property Solutions. The development process prioritised works that would enhance lettable (e.g. the floor and wall finishes) and reduced costly works with limited impact on lettable (e.g. landscaping)
Expenditure on void repairs on properties that are not subsequently let	The policy allows for an option appraisal on properties where the cost of void works would be greater than £10k. In cases where the property performs poorly (e.g. financially or desirability) or where there is a development opportunity, the property can be put forward for an option appraisal.

Equality:

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out and there was no significant impact.

Key Decision:

To consider and comment on the draft Cabinet paper and supporting documents proposing the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy.