



Report to:	Cabinet	7 November 2023
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Batchelor, Lead Member for Housing	
Lead Officer:	Peter Campbell – Head of Housing	
Key Decision:	Yes The key decision was first published in the September 2023 Forward Plan.	

Council Tenant Disabled Adaptations Policy

Executive Summary

1. In line with the implementation of the Social Housing Regulation Act and the proposed revised Consumer Standards, the Council has reviewed its policy and processes for providing disabled adaptations in our council homes. This sets out the legal requirements, as well as managing the expectations of our tenants in terms of timescales and the types of works provided.
2. The Policy also takes into account a recent Ombudsman determination which requires the Council to publish a policy that includes target timescales for the overall aids and adaptations process, as well as for works completed under it.
3. In developing the policy, officers have looked at good practice and listened to the views of tenant representatives by way of a small working group with officers.
4. The dialogue with the tenant representatives has been constructive and has strengthened the draft policy in terms of clarification. Taking on board tenants' concerns, the timescales provided are considered to be reasonable and achievable.

Recommendations

5. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the draft Council Tenant Disabled Adaptations Policy at Appendix A. And that the Lead Member for Housing is given delegated authority to approve minor amendments, including the financial thresholds that differentiate types of adaptation.

Details

6. The Council has a duty to make reasonable adjustment to policies, practices and procedures and to provide auxiliary aids and services to enable a disabled person to rent a property and facilitate a disabled person's enjoyment of the premises.
7. To ensure compliance with statutory duties, the Council, in consultation with social care, must determine whether the works are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled occupant, and to determine whether the works are reasonable and practicable.
8. In summary, the policy set outs:
 - a. The legal context and links to specific legislation
 - b. Appendix 1 includes the purposes for which adaptations will be considered
 - c. The different classifications of adaptations and their procedure
 - d. How to request an adaptation
 - e. General principles to be considered and limitations
 - f. Reasons an adaptation may be refused
 - g. Timescales and how we will monitor performance

Reasons for Recommendations

9. To provide direction on the delivery of aids & adaptations to council tenants. The policy will demonstrate that the Council has a robust and transparent process in place that meets legislative requirements and has taken into account tenants' views.

Options

10. The Council must have a policy in place as to how it will deliver disabled adaptations to its council tenants. Without such a policy, the Council would be open to challenge and would be non-compliant with the recommendations of the Housing Ombudsman. Therefore, no other option is provided, other than amendments to the draft policy presented.

Implications

11. There are no significant implications.

Consultation responses

12. Tenant representatives have participated in the development of the policy and their views have been taken into account where possible. The draft policy was also endorsed by the Housing Engagement Board on 27 September 2023.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

13. Ensuring that those with a disability can live independently through the provision of disabled adaptations in a council home that is affordable.

Appendices

Appendix A: Council Tenant Disabled Adaptations Policy

Report Author:

Julie Fletcher – Service Manager, Housing Strategy

Telephone: (01954) 713352