

Committee(s): Enforcement, Environment and Housing	Date: 13 December 2021
Subject: Approval of Pets Policy	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Tracey Lilley, Corporate Director (Housing and Community Safety)	Public
Report Author/s: Name: Angela Abbott, Corporate Manager (Housing Needs and Independent Living) Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: angela.abbott@brentwood.gov.uk	For Decision

Summary

To provide clarity to tenants and leaseholders on keeping a pet, a policy has been developed to provide clarity on how the Council will respond to requests and when issues of anti-social behaviour occur when someone has a pet in a Council owned property or block.

This policy's implementation is supported by the tenancy and lease agreements in place.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

R1. To approve the Pets Policy in Appendix A.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. It is widely recognised that there are health benefits for households to keep pets, including physical and mental health.
2. To help support this where requests are made by tenants and leaseholders in the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) properties, a policy has been developed to provide clarity for both the person making the request and for the Council when taking action because of anti-social behaviour when issues arise.
3. The social housing regulator recommends that registered providers, like the Council, provide opportunities for residents to keep pets and avoid a no pets policy, which previously was commonplace.

4. An approach where responsible pet ownership is encouraged and action taken when this does not exist, is seen as an appropriate way to support residents and manage properties effectively.

Reasons for Recommendation

5. To ensure that the Housing Department has documentation to support the effective management of tenancies and leases, with regards to the keeping of pets.

Consultation

6. Consultations have taken place with the Tenant Talkback group and their minor amendments have been incorporated into the policy.

References to Corporate Plan

7. Drive continuous improvement of our housing services.
8. Continue a service improvement programme to ensure our services are delivered efficiently.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Director of Corporate Resources

Tel/Email: 01277 312829/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

9. There are no financial implications arising from the Council adopting this policy. Providing clear advice and guidance will prevent unnecessary legal action (and the associated costs) by the Council.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Governance Solicitor & Deputy

Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

10. Tenants and leaseholders in HRA properties are expected to comply with the agreements in place covering their tenancy or lease. By providing a policy that sets out this area in more detail will enable the Council's officers to work proactively with residents.
11. Having a policy in place will enable Officers to monitor any anti-social behaviour linked to having pets at a property. The policy linked to the tenancy agreement or lease will assist in any legal proceedings that may be taken.

Economic Implications**Name/Title: Phil Drane, Director of Strategic Planning****Tel/Email: 01277 312610/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk**

12. There are no direct economic implications. It is important that the Council manages and maintains its housing stock for the benefit of residents. Provision of good homes can bring an indirect benefit to the local economy.

Background Papers

None

Appendices to this report

- Appendix A: Pets Policy (November 2021)