

<b>Committee(s):</b> Housing Committee	<b>Date:</b> 12th September 2022
<b>Subject:</b> Approval of Aids & Adaptations Policy	<b>Wards Affected:</b> All
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report Author/s:</b> Name: Angela Abbott, Corporate Manager (Housing Needs & Delivery) Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: angela.abbott@brentwood.gov.uk	<b>For Decision</b>

### **Summary**

This report presents the Aids & Adaptations Policy (2022-2027) which covers the Aids and Adaptations placed into the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) properties.

This policy replaces the Aids & Adaptations Policy, which was approved by the Community, Health & Housing Committee on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

The policy provides a clear framework to manage adaptations within its Housing Stock to ensure that properties already adapted for disabled needs are utilised before further adaptations are completed.

### **Recommendation(s)**

**Members are asked to:**

**R1. To approve the Aids & Adaptations Policy included in Appendix A.**

### **Main Report**

#### **Introduction and Background**

1. The Council's Aids & Adaptations Policy was originally approved by Committee in 2018. Following review of the Policy to determine whether the Policy in force was still relevant the revised 2022-2027 version was drafted.
2. The Council provides funding each year for the provision of aids and adaptations to enable occupiers to remain in their home, for as long as it is safe and reasonable to do so.

3. The cost of funding adaptations is solely funded from the Housing Revenue and Capital Budgets Account (HRA)

### **Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

4. The Council receive many Occupational Therapist reports for minor and major adaptations within Tenant's homes each year.
5. Types of adaptation requests include but are not limited to, handrails, ramps, stairlifts and wet rooms.
6. Social Housing is currently in high demand and properties with adaptations are generally more difficult to re-let.
7. When the Aids & Adaptations Policy was approved in 2018, it was agreed that to improve the current service and to better manage budgets an Officer Aids & Adaptations board was set up to review individual requests for adaptations over £400 to consider other available options that would be available before agreeing to carry out adaptations to existing properties.
8. This also allows the Council to better manage not only its current housing stock, explore alternative options whilst demonstrating Value for money as well as meeting it's requirements for tenants.

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

To ensure our current policy is transparent and covers our aims and objectives.

### **Consultation**

This policy has been brought before our Tenant Talkback group who felt that in relation to not fitting level access wet rooms on 1<sup>st</sup> floors, due to possibility of future mobility issues for tenants was a broad statement, as individuals may still be able to use the stairs, but just require more accessible bathroom facilities. A recommendation was made that it should be noted clearly in the Policy that where major adaptations are completed on a property then the right to buy will be removed.

### **References to Corporate Plan**

Drive continuous improvement of our housing services

### **Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

**Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)**  
**Tel/Email: 01277 312500/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk**

9. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

#### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew Corporate Manager (Democratic Services) and Deputy Monitoring Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500/claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk**

10. The Equalities Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people with the protected characteristics which includes disability.

11. Under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and associated regulations disabled facilities grants are available to disabled people when works to adapt their homes are necessary and appropriate to meet their needs and where it is reasonable and practicable to carry out such works given the age and condition of a property. Either option in this matter would require the application of this Act.

#### **Economic Implications**

**Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director - Place**  
**Tel/Email: 01277 312610/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk**

12. There are no direct economic implications arising from this report

#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

**Name/Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager, Communities, Leisure and Health**  
**Tel/Email: 01277 312634/kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic and will in fact support those with a disability.

### **Background Papers**

n/a

### **Appendices to this report**

Appendix A: Draft Aids & Adaptations Policy 2022-2027