

Committee(s): Housing Committee	Date: 27 February 2023
Subject: Policy Schedule	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Julian Higson – Interim Director of Housing	Public
Report Author/s: Name: Angela Abbott, Corporate Manager (Housing Needs and Delivery) Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: angela.abbott@brentwood.gov.uk	For Information

Summary

This report is an update for members to note and presents the Policy Review Schedule to ensure that the Housing Department has the relevant Strategies and Policies in place in order to provide a clear framework of its responsibilities.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. In 2021 the Housing Service undertook a full review of its current Statutory and Local Strategy and Policies that were in place and to identify additional Policy documents that were required.
2. Following this internal review, a full schedule of Strategy and Policy documents was drafted for implementation of various policies between 2021 – 2023.
3. Since 2021, we have been implementing additional Policy documents to ensure that we can demonstrate a clear and transparent framework that the housing department work to across all of the services.
4. During the Municipal year 2023 to 2024 we intend to bring a total of 12 Policies to committee for approval. These are detailed in Appendix A.
5. In light of the One Team implementation, several Policies have been delayed pending the Housing service review.
6. This is to enable officers to review the Policies to ensure they are standardised across Brentwood Borough Council and Rochford District Council. Where this is required, it is detailed within the Policy overview at Appendix A.

7. We are also working with our external partners, Mobysoft, on best practice within Income Collection to take into consideration the Cost-of-Living Crisis and additional support or signposting that needs to be included within the reviewed Policy.
8. This means both the Income Collection and Recharge Policies have been postponed until later into 2023 to allow this piece of work to take place.
9. Mobysoft provide us with a digital platform of analysing payment patterns to recommend which accounts we look at. They have access to many local authority figures and methods of chasing rental arrears so are well placed to assist us with the review of the two policies mentioned above.

Consultation

10. None

References to Corporate Plan

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

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Phoebe Barnes, Director of Assets and Investments

Tel/Email: 01277 312500/phoebe.barnes@brentwood.gov.uk

13. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
14. The work with Mobysoft should assist the authority in reducing it's rental arrears which in turn will financially benefit the HRA by reducing the provision against bad debt

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Steve Summers, Strategic Director

Tel & Email: 01277 315200 steve.summers@brentwood.gov.uk

15. The Council is required to have in place appropriate policies in order to deliver its Housing Services in accordance with relevant legislation.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Director Place

Tel/Email: 01277 312610/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

16. 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 312500 / 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.

Background Papers

None

Appendices to this report

- Appendix A: Policy Review Schedule