

Committee: Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee	Date: 27/11/2018
Subject: Estate Management Policy	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Decision
Report author: Liam Gillespie, Head of Estates	

Summary

As part of the Estate Standards Review, an Estate Management Policy has been drafted which outlines how we will manage cleaning, caretaking and grounds maintenance functions on our estates.

The policy outlines our commitment to implementing objective cleaning standards on our estates and it explains how we will monitor the standard of our estates via regular estate inspections. Results will be published to residents and will be used by senior management to monitor performance and allocate resources appropriately.

The Estate Management Policy also deals with our management of communal areas on estates and complements other policies, such as the Fire Safety Protocol, which are designed to enable the safe management of our residential blocks.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Approve the Estate Management Policy for use by the Housing Service.

Main Report

Background

1. Members will be aware that the Estate Standards Review project is currently underway. A report submitted to this Committee on 27th July 2018 contains full details of the scope of this project.
2. One aspect of the project is a review of our existing policies and procedures in relation to estate management, which covers cleaning, caretaking, grounds maintenance and the care of communal areas in residential blocks.
3. The Estate Management Policy is the overarching policy that will govern our approach to these matters. It is supported by other policies such as the *Fire Safety Protocol (Communal Areas in Residential Buildings)*.

4. The main aim of the policy is to explain how we will manage caretaking, cleaning and grounds maintenance on our estates. It also explains that we will maintain an estate inspections regime which, once objective estate cleaning standards are introduced, will allow us to monitor our performance against those standards and publish these results to residents.
5. The policy also emphasises the importance of resident involvement in the estate inspections regime and we are committed to involving residents in the management of their estates in a meaningful way, as well as increasing transparency and accountability by reporting on our performance against objective standards at regular intervals.
6. In common with other housing management policies forming part of the review taking place in 2018/19, the Estate Management Policy aims to support our aim of providing communal spaces and properties which are safe and well-managed.

Current Position

7. The Estate Standards Review has been underway since July 2018. HouseMark, an organisation specialising in performance management in the social housing sector, has assisted us with the project.
8. A review of our current practices has been completed and a report containing recommendations is due to be submitted. Draft estate standards have been submitted for consideration. Once these are tailored to the needs of individual estates, they will form the basis of consultation with residents, staff and Members.
9. Officers are also in the process of reviewing the estate inspections process. We are looking at options for introducing electronic forms for our inspections, which will enable estate staff to complete inspections on a tablet. This would have the benefit of reducing administration and enabling management oversight of estate inspections and standards generally, via effective report running.
10. The draft Estate Management Policy forms part of this project and introduces the idea of estate standards and how they are monitored. As the Estate Standards Review progresses, we will look at our communications with residents and will publish more details on the cleaning standards.
11. We will also consider the information we publish on our estates and online relating to estate management performance. The policy makes a commitment to reporting the results of estate inspections regularly and publishing useful information in notice boards, the standard of which forms part of the estate inspections process.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. The Estate Management Policy supports the aims outlined in the Corporate Plan for 2018-23, specifically the aim of 'Shaping Outstanding Environments'. The

outcome it supports most directly is 12a, 'We will maintain our buildings, streets and spaces to a high standard'.

Policy Management

13. This is a new policy. The approaches taken in the policy are informed by established practice on our estates, as well as good practice in social housing management elsewhere. The policy is influenced by other policies already in place, for instance the Fire Safety Protocol. We have also incorporated some early recommendations from HouseMark arising out of visits to our estates and their desktop study of our current procedures.

Conclusion

14. The Estate Management Policy has been drafted as part of the Estate Standards Review. It outlines our revised approach to estate management and introduces the objective standards for cleaning, caretaking and grounds maintenance which are currently being formulated.

15. The policy explains our approach to many common estate management issues. It also makes a commitment to having more useful estate inspections, the results of which will be published, and which are capable of being monitored centrally by senior management, enabling more effective reporting and performance management.

16. As with many policies we have introduced, or are due to draft, as part of the review of housing management policies in 2018/19, the Estate Management Policy supports our aim of providing safe and well-managed communal spaces on our estates.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Estate Management Policy
- Appendix 2 – consultation comments and responses

Background Papers

- Estate Standards Review, Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee, 23/07/2018

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