

COUNCIL 26th JULY 2023**Cabinet 10th July 2023****27 HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

Councillor Lynn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities, presented a written report of the Director, Public Services which provided an up-to-date Housing Enforcement Policy. Several highly significant issues had arisen within the housing arena within the past few years, and the provision of good quality housing had been a focus of government since. It was generally accepted that there were several occupants within the Borough who were severely affected by poor housing conditions, thereby making them vulnerable. This had caused the creation of multiple significant changes in housing legislation. Consequently, there was a need for the Community Protection Team to introduce an up-to-date Housing Enforcement Policy which considered the new Acts and Regulations made therein, in an effort to protect occupants and keep them safe.

The Community Protection Team came into being in September 2019, and as part of the enforcement review which occurred at that time, the Director, Public Services gave commitment to deal with offenders swiftly and effectively, and to make smarter use of the Council's resources whilst doing so, by having "the right resource in the right place at the right time." Housing enforcement was specifically considered as part of that enforcement review, so this new Policy extends and supports that commitment and objective.

Adoption and approval of the new Policy would enable authorised Officers to deliver a robust and effective regulatory regime against landlords, agents and tenants using a range of statutory powers. It would ultimately create greater effectiveness within the Community Protection Team and would enable officers to tackle significant housing issues by means of various regulatory responses, whilst simultaneously educating tenants and landlords and through delivery of proactive campaigns and focussed, targeted areas of work.

The report outlined background information, options considered, financial, legal, human resources and organisational development, environmental, health and economic implications.

During discussions Members welcomed the report and reinforced how important it was for people to live in well maintained accommodation. Members also noted that housing covered many directorates including public health, adults and children's services.

***RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council that:**

(a) the new Housing Enforcement Policy in its current form be approved and adopted; and

(b) the Director, Public Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities be given delegated authority for implementing any future operational changes to the Policy.