

## Cabinet

04 March 2025

### Part 1 - Public

#### Executive Non-key Decision



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Cabinet Member	Cllr. Kim Tanner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing
Responsible Officer	Sharon Shelton, Director of Finance and Transformation Eleanor Hoyle, Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health
Report Author	William Waight Linda Hibbs

### Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy

#### 1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 A report proposing a new policy setting out the principles to be used when the Council charges rent for “Temporary Accommodation” (TA), requesting Cabinet Members to approve the new policy.

#### 2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 The policy sets out the way in which rental charges will be determined, so as to charge an affordable rent while maximising the Council’s income, where appropriate, from Housing Benefit Subsidy.

#### 3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Cabinet is requested to **APPROVE** the new TA charging policy (**Annex 1**) to come into effect w.e.f. 1 April 2025.

#### 4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 The Council has a legal responsibility to provide TA to certain people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- 4.2 The Council uses a mixture of properties obtained from the private sector, properties provided by a housing association and properties owned by the Council (including where the Council holds a long-term lease).

- 4.3 Any rent or charges due are invoiced to the client on a weekly basis.
- 4.4 In a report to the Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee on 14 December 2023 regarding TA provision, the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health advised that a review of the TA charging policy would be carried out jointly between housing and financial services and brought back to Members in due course. This report brings forward an updated policy for consideration.

## **5 Proposal**

- 5.1 Many clients placed into TA are on a low income and can claim Housing Benefit to pay all or part of the rental charge. The rent charged is at the discretion of the Council. However, the intention is that any rent charged should be at an affordable level.
- 5.2 Because many clients will claim Housing Benefit, for which the Council can be reimbursed in Housing Benefit Subsidy, up to a statutory level, the policy aims to balance the affordability of the rental charge with the ability to maximise income to the Council.
- 5.3 The levels of rent that should be charged are included in the policy at **Annex 1**, at paragraphs 5.0, 6.0 and 7.0 for the different types of accommodation listed at 4.2.
- 5.4 Depending on the type of property offered, there may be service charges payable in addition to the rent. Often these charges are not eligible to be paid by Housing Benefit so, where this is the case, these charges will need to be invoiced to the client, regardless of whether Housing Benefit has been claimed.

## **6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 6.1 The proposed policy seeks to correctly maximise the Council's income from Housing Benefit subsidy, ensuring that the rental charge for each type of accommodation reflects the correct principles for the amount of subsidy that can be claimed in each case.

## **7 Risk Assessment**

- 7.1 The proposed policy ensures that rents set will be affordable and fair.

## **8 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The proposed policy sets a rental level with regard to the relevant Housing Benefit subsidy regulations, ensuring that subsidy can be correctly and lawfully claimed, where appropriate.

## 9 Consultation and Communications

9.1 Once adopted, the scheme will be publicised on the Council's website in the interest of transparency.

## 10 Cross Cutting Issues

10.1 Equalities and Diversity

10.1.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

10.1.2 A sustainability and affordability assessment will be carried out for every customer who is requesting to be placed into TA, therefore meaning that all personal circumstances and situations will be considered.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Annex 1 – TMBC TA Charging Policy Feb 2025