

Appendix B

Key findings report

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Housing Services
Repairs and Maintenance Policy
Public Consultation

Date of report : 27 September 2016
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1. Key Findings and conclusion

The respondents give support to the policy. They find it easy to read and no one indicates that any part of the policy discriminates. Comments and suggestions have led to improving the policy. The main issue that it is ensured the policy is in line with the specifications required from the Joint Venture Company.

2. Background

2.1. Background to the policy and purpose of consultation

The Council's Housing Service (the Council) is landlord of 5,400 Council homes and 110 leasehold flats. It aims to provide an effective repairs and maintenance service to ensure high levels of resident satisfaction and to protect the value of its housing stock.

This policy describes how the Council plans maintenance and deals with requests for repairs. The policy aims to provide clarity about responsibilities of tenants and the Council, describing who is responsible for which maintenance. The policy also includes rechargeable repairs, repairs to vacant properties, the Right to Repair, tenants improving the property, adaptations and accessibility and how the Council will carry out quality control.

The policy should enable tenants to exercise their rights as Council tenants. It should provide Housing Staff with a reference on which they can base their decisions.

The consultation enabled Housing staff, tenant representatives and external stakeholders to provide comments.

2.2. Background to the consultation and engagement

A draft policy was discussed with members of the Tenants' Liaison Forum's Housing Policies Sub-Group, prior to the public consultation. The members are experienced in giving feedback on policies and recommendations on improving Housing services.

The proposed policy and a survey response form were sent to all Housing staff, Tenants' Liaison Forum members and Housing Services Group 100.

The following external stakeholders have been sent the proposed policy and response form:

- Powys Teaching Health Board
- PAVO
- Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
- Disability Powys
- Age Cymru Powys
- Shelter Cymru
- Tai Pawb
- Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru.

In addition the consultation was advertised on the Powys County Council Tenant Engagement Facebook page.

There was a four week response period.

The consultation process was agreed with the Corporate Consultation Officer.

The Housing Service consults with Tenants Service Monitors and Tenants' Liaison Policies Sub Group to improve the consultation process.

Feed back has been that it should be considered to offer the option to fill in a questionnaire on line. Previously, an on line survey was used for the WHQS compliance policy. The WHQS compliance consultation was published on the Council's "Have your say" page. Developing this facility required additional staff resource, including staff from other services than the Housing Service. The response rates were very low and it was considered not worth the extra effort to have an on line survey in addition to the e-mailed questionnaire. People can opt for questionnaires on paper instead of e-mail.

2.3. Response rate

Ten completed questionnaires have been received. Nine are from Council tenants and one from a County Councillor.

In addition one e-mail response indicated support for the policy. One member of Housing staff responded also by e-mail.

Although the response numbers are relatively small, there is no indication additional responses would have highlighted any additional issues.

2.4. Profile data

Sex

Female	8
Male	2

Age

Under 18	0
18-35 years	0
35-59 years	2
60 or over	8

Disability

day-to-day activities limited a lot	0
day-to-day activities limited a little	5
day-to-day activities not limited	5

Welsh

Speak Welsh	2
Speak, read and write Welsh	0

The response numbers are small, but it stands out no people under the age of 35 have responded.

2.5. A note about market research and consultations

When conducting market research companies use a margin of error and confidence level to ensure that their results are robust and representative of the population they are seeking views from. (I.e. the population of interest).

A consultation however isn't market research as people choose to respond and are not contacted using a sampling methodology. People self-select so sometimes when conducting a consultation you only hear the views of the people who are either strongly in favour or strongly object to a proposal. The silent majority may not have given a view. However when we analyse any consultation results we do consider how robust they are in terms of the population of interest.

When conducting consultation exercise Powys County Council works to the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales.

<http://www.participationcymru.org.uk/national-principles>

3. Question by question analysis

Question 1: Do you find the policy easy or difficult to understand?

Answers

easy	10
difficult	0

Question 2: Please tell us if you find anything unclear

Question 3: Do you feel there is something missing in the policy? Does anything needs changing?

The following comments were received. Below each comment are the Council's Housing Service responses.

- A. 3.4.b Surely a broken window during a storm would be covered by PCC insurance?

Response: repairing of damaged external broken windows is a responsibility of the tenant. The Council is not insured for broken windows. Council tenants can take out the Council's Home Content Insurance which covers damaged external windows. The example relating to storm damaged broken windows has been removed from the policy. The Council will normally not recharge tenants in the event of storm damage.

- B. 5.2.d if defect to be repaired within 7 working days – why have I been waiting since January for my leaking roof to be retiled?

Response: It might be more cost effective to postpone certain repair works until planned works are carried out in the area. Housing staff will need to make a judgement if a defect requires immediate repair, or if it is acceptable to wait for a more cost effective repair job. If this is the case tenants will be informed of this decision.

- C. The repair and maintenance policy/repair standard will form part of the contract with the JVC so once this is approved, the specification will need to be amended.

Response: the Housing Service will work with the JVC to ensure consistency. The Service Standards will not change as part of this policy.

- D. The proposed policy talks about reporting repairs to the council when in fact they will be reported in the main direct to the JVC. Might it not be a better idea to wait until the partner has been appointed and include them in the process so that the wording reflects what will actually happen?

Response: the Housing Service will work with the JVC to ensure consistency.

Question 4: If you think our policy does discriminate or puts a person at a disadvantage compared to another person we would like to hear your views.

The Housing Service wants to be fair to everyone and not discriminate anyone. It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

No responses were recorded, other than that there would be no discrimination.