



Report to:

Northwards Housing Board
14th June 2006

Item No:

9e

Title: Report on Recharging Tenants for Rubbish Clearance after Tenancy Termination

Date: 14.06.06

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Confidential: No

For: (Please tick action required)	NOTING	DISCUSSION	APPROVAL √
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

To submit a new policy for recharging tenants for the cost of rubbish disposal when they terminate their tenancy after consultation with our three Local Area Panels.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve the Procurement & Property Sub Committee recommendation:

- 1) Approves the proposed new policy.
- 2) Instructs officers to implement the new policy

IMPLICATIONS

Equality & Diversity:	<i>Quality Public Services affect all sections of the community</i>
Financial:	<i>No direct implication</i>
Staffing:	<i>No</i>
Decency Target:	<i>No</i>
Governance:	<i>No</i>

Consultation/Consideration

	Yes, No or N/A:	Name:	Date:
Sub-Committee:	YES	Procurement & Property Sub Committee	24.05.06
Area Panel:	N/A	All	March 06 cycle
Ward Councillors:	N/A		

Charges for Rubbish Removal

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is a report regarding the proposed introduction of a new policy to recharge tenants for the cost of removing rubbish left in properties at tenancy termination.
- 1.2 There is currently no consistency in what happens as there is no clear guidance on this issue. The tenancy agreement states clearly that belongings should not be left. However the current termination certificate asks for contents to be signed over to the Council. In addition there are inconsistencies between Local Services Offices with regards to who is charged and how the cost for the removal of the rubbish is recorded.
- 1.3 The proposed new policy has been used by Eastlands Homes for two years and we have consulted with the three Local Area Panels (March 2006), regarding implementing this policy – their views have been taken into account.

2. Opportunities for Improvement

- 2.1 At present, tenants complete a ‘tenancy termination’ form when they hand keys back at a Local Services Office. Tenants sign a declaration on this form which states that we will dispose of anything left in the property.
- 2.2 The cost we currently incur for rubbish removal as an organisation is £200 per void (based on a whole years costing – minus 10% for efficiency). This equates to £295k per annum based on last years turnover.
- 2.3 The time it takes to clear some void properties of rubbish increases the amount of time they lie empty.

3. Proposed Implementation

- 3.1 To implement these changes we will be required to update the declaration on the ‘tenancy termination’ form. The exact wording is to be agreed but following advice tenants will have to sign to state that they are aware that they will be charged in accordance with the schedules used with our contractors for the clearance of their property.
- 3.2 Certain exemptions will apply which were brought in to the policy after consultation with the Local Area Panels

- If a tenant dies
- If a tenant goes into care
- Other exceptional circumstances – but have to be signed by Local Services Manager

A further exclusion was insisted upon by the City Solicitor;

- If a tenant goes to prison

3.3 A variable charge will be used according to the amount and type of contents left.

4. Conclusion

4.1 It is anticipated that the implementation of this policy will encourage tenants to responsibly dispose of rubbish/items they don't wish to take with them (to avoid being recharged). There is a risk of fly tipping, however colleagues at Eastlands Homes have reported this has not happened there.

4.2 As an organisation, Northwards Housing will benefit financially from the implementation of this policy which can be used to further invest in our properties. Initially, we will look to save 10% on current costs.

4.3 Relet times for properties will reduce as a result of this policy.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That the Board approve the Procurement & Property Sub Committee recommendation:

- 1) Approves the proposed new policy
- 2) Instructs officers to implement the new policy