

Rother District Council

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	17 October 2022
Title:	East Sussex Temporary Accommodation Policy
Report of:	Joe Powell (Head of Service Housing and Community)
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of Report:	To propose the implementation of the East Sussex Temporary Accommodation Policy and make recommendations to Cabinet.
Officer	
Recommendation(s):	It be RESOLVED : That the East Sussex Temporary Accommodation Policy be recommended to Cabinet and full Council for adoption.

Introduction

1. All Councils in East Sussex aim to work with households to prevent homelessness occurring wherever possible; however, in some cases households will become homeless and require temporary accommodation (TA).
2. The East Sussex Temporary Accommodation Policy was written by the operational housing managers across all five districts and boroughs. The Policy outlines the standards applied to the size and location of TA as well as the processes and procedures we will follow. The Policy applies both within district or borough, and outside of the placement authority area. The Policy is appended at Appendix A.
3. The Policy covers both interim placements made under Section 188 Housing Act 1996 (as amended), during the relief duty and while homelessness enquiries are undertaken, and longer-term TA placements for households accepted as homeless under Section 193 of the Act.
4. The East Sussex Housing Officers Group (ESHOG) has identified that a more consistent approach to the placement of households in TA is needed across East Sussex. The new policy will lead to a more efficient process and procedure for making placements between local authorities and the various private providers of TA within East Sussex.
5. The Policy does not cover the standard of TA used, with these standards being dictated by the national Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) overseen by the different local authority housing teams. In the Rother area, we conduct routine inspections against these standards as demanded by the Housing Services' risk assessments. The operational housing managers within East Sussex are working on aligning the application of the HHSRS standards across East Sussex presently.

The Policy

6. The Policy is relatively limited in its scope, focussing on the suitability standards for the size and location of TA, as well as the processes and procedures local authorities will follow when placing households in TA. The main areas of the Policy are:
- What local authorities agree constitutes suitable TA, in terms of its size and location, enabling us to better manage the expectations of the customer.
 - To provide a more consistent approach to the amount of money households that are working are expected to contribute, if they are not eligible for full housing benefit.
 - That the districts and boroughs do not accommodate pets in TA and how breaches of licence conditions will be addressed.

Conclusion

7. There are many different private providers of TA that local authorities use and it is beneficial for the Council, accommodation providers and the customer to have a consistent approach to making placements across the East Sussex area.
8. It is recommended that the Council adopt the East Sussex Temporary Accommodation Policy. The proposed Policy will enable the Council to work in partnership with the other district and boroughs to ensure a consistent approach across East Sussex.

Financial Implications

9. Historically, the Council would meet more of the cost of TA if a household is working. The Policy will lead to working households making more of a contribution towards the full cost of their placement.

Legal Implications

10. While not a legislative requirement, a Temporary Accommodation Policy will support the Council and its statutory duty to provide interim, temporary, accommodation.

Equalities and Diversity

11. An equalities impact assessment has been completed to accompany the Policy.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	Yes
Crime and Disorder	No	External Consultation	No
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	No	Exempt from publication	No

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Appendices:	Appendix A - East Sussex Temporary Accommodation Policy

Relevant previous Minutes:	None
Background Papers:	None
Reference Documents:	None