

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 MARCH 2018

Title:

**RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE
WAVERLEY SCRUTINY GROUP'S REPORT ON RECHARGES**

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Carole King]
[Wards Affected: All]**

Summary and purpose:

The Waverley Scrutiny Group has completed a review of how the Council manages the process of recharging certain costs to tenants and leaseholders. The report was presented to the Head of Housing Operations in February 2018, and is attached at [Annexe 1](#).

The Recharge Policy, which was adopted in August 2017, is attached at [Annexe 2](#).

This report informs the Housing O&S Committee how the Housing Service team will address the recommendations raised in the Waverley Scrutiny Group's report on recharges.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

The report supports the Value for Money corporate priorities.

Financial Implications:

Implementation of the recommendations raised by the Waverley Scrutiny Group will ensure an improvement on the recouping of costs and also a more controlled, transparent and accurate interpretation of the information.

Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Housing Service is pleased to support independent tenant scrutiny and thanks the Waverley Scrutiny Group for their hard work, effort and dedication in producing the report and recommendations.
- 1.2 As part of the ongoing programme of tenant scrutiny reports, a review of how the Council manages the recharge process has been undertaken. The Waverley Scrutiny Group has been invited to present their report to the Committee. Please refer to [Annexe 1](#) for the full report.

- 1.3 The recharge process is relatively new, with the Policy (Annexe 2) being adopted in August 2017. In September 2017 the Housing Service appointed a Recharge Collection Officer to set up a process to maximise income, provide an emergency service and hold tenants to account for wilful damage.
- 1.4 The Waverley Scrutiny Group presented their report to the Head of Housing Operations and Recharges Collections Officer on 19 February 2018. The comprehensive report covered the following:
- Whether the recharge policy and process is fit for purpose and fair to tenants and leaseholders?
 - How the appropriate teams within the Housing Service are operating the new process?
 - What systems are being used to monitor and regulate collection of recharges?
 - What communication there has been to contractors and tenants in respect of recharge?
 - How cost effective the new process will be and whether it provides value for money?
 - What is being done to assist tenants in avoiding recharges?
 - Recommendations to improve the process.

2. Report recommendations and response

- 2.1 The report identifies fourteen recommendations which the Waverley Scrutiny Group concluded would result in improvements to the current recharge process.
- 2.2 The Housing Service has accepted seven of the recommendations, partially accepted five recommendations and has not accepted two of the recommendations. Annexe 3 sets out all recommendations and the Council's responses.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- thanks the Waverley Scrutiny Group for their report;
- makes any comments or suggestions on the scrutiny recommendations and the Council's responses; and
- supports the implementation of the scrutiny recommendations.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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