



Lewes District Council

Meeting: Cabinet
Date: 27 March 2019
Subject: Discretionary Housing Payment Amended Policy 2019/2020
Report of: Head of Customer First

The Cabinet is asked to consider the minute and resolution of the Scrutiny Committee held on 7 February 2019 as set out below.

Minute extract Scrutiny Committee – 7 February 2019

44 Discretionary housing payment amended policy 2019/2020

The Committee received the report which detailed the revised Discretionary Housing Payment Policy for Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council.

The Senior Specialist Advisor for Thriving Communities (SSATC) explained that prior to the Joint Transformation Program, Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils had two separate Discretionary Housing Payment Policies (DHPP). As a result of the implementation of a shared services model, the 2 DHPP were reviewed and consolidated into one policy across both authorities.

The SSATC highlighted the main changes to the DHPP as detailed in section 3 of the report. She further highlighted the factors which may be taken into account when the eligibility for discretionary housing payments was decided, as detailed in appendix 1.

The Committee expressed its concern with bullet point 5 in section 4.1 of appendix 1. The Committee was concerned that if a landlord had insurance to cover rent arrears and the landlord was approached by the authority in the first instance, the relationship between the landlord and the tenant would be adversely affected. The Director of Service Delivery clarified that DHP applied to instances of short term financial issues, with the landlord being approached regarding their insurance for rent arrears as a result of long term financial issues.

The Committee wished to thank the SSATC and her team for aligning the policies but it would not support the policy with the inclusion of bullet point 5 in section 4.1 of the report.

Resolved:

That Cabinet be recommended to adopt the Discretionary Housing Payment Amended Policy 2019/2020 subject to the exclusion of the bullet point 5 in section 4.1 of appendix 1 to the report.

Reason:

To ensure that the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme is administered consistently across both Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils.

For a copy of the report please contact Democratic Services

Tel. (01273) 471600.

E-mail: committees@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

A copy may be downloaded on the Council's website by following the link below:

<http://democracy.eastbourne.gov.uk/mgGeneric.aspx?MD=CommitteesLanding&bcr=1>