

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

AGENDA  
ITEM NO

HOUSING COMMITTEE

27 SEPTEMBER 2016

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<b>Report Title</b>	<b>TENANT SERVICES COMPENSATION POLICY</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	For Committee to agree the revised policy which was first introduced in November 2013.
<b>Decisions</b>	The Committee <b>RESOLVES</b> to approve the revised Tenant Services Compensation Policy.
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Tenant Services Senior Management Team (12/7/16) Tenant and Residents Forum (5/9/16) Corporate Team (22/8/16)
<b>Financial Implications and Risk Assessment</b>	<p>The report outlines an update to the Compensation Policy which can be met from existing resources.”</p> <p>David Stanley – Accountancy Manager Tel: 01453 754100 Email: <a href="mailto:david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk">david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk</a></p> <p>The Policy provides relevant information and guidance on what does and does not attract compensation for service failure in line with statutory requirements, the fact that we have a robust policy reduces risk of challenge and vexatious complaints.</p>
<b>Legal Implications</b>	<p>It is understood that this report is simply intended to provide a general guide for Tenants Services Officers who deal with complaints and on the situation when compensation may be appropriate. In most cases the level of compensation will need to be determined on a case by case basis within a statutory framework and as such management approval within the team will be required.</p> <p>Karen Trickey Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer Tel: 01453 754369 Email <a href="mailto:karen.trickey@stroud.gov.uk">karen.trickey@stroud.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Report Author</b>	Kevin Topping, Head of Housing Contracts Tel: 01453 754196 Email: <a href="mailto:Kevin.topping@stroud.gov.uk">Kevin.topping@stroud.gov.uk</a>
<b>Options</b>	Continue with the current policy which is no longer reflective of the current position of the service.

<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	12 month review via briefing note to members on status and effectiveness of the policy in light of any legislative or other impacts.
<b>Background Papers/ Appendices</b>	Appendix A – Policy and Procedure

## **1.0. Background**

- 1.1. Tenant Services is constantly seeking to improve and deliver its business effectively, efficiently and in a timely manner. Co-regulation legislation places an emphasis on effective complaint handling and learning from feedback, it is therefore seen as good practice within the industry to have a clear compensation policy.
- 1.2. This policy is for managers to use when dealing with a complaint. Compensation would only be offered where there has been a proven failure in service delivery or when we are obliged by statute to pay compensation.

## **2.0. Benefits**

- Clear guidance for managers when handling a serious complaint, ensuring consistency of complaint responses across the service
- Reduced risk of Ombudsman involvement
- Promote excellent customer service across Tenant Services
- Long term value for money savings as a result of improved service delivery
- Stricter guidelines ensure staff will be in a stronger position when dealing with vexatious complainants.

## **3.0 Outcomes**

- The document content has been reduced by 9 pages
- Clearly defined what is the policy and what is the procedure
- Removed irrelevant items such as full legislative text
- Brought clarity to roles and responsibilities
- Changed compensation claims to compensation assessments as a claim implies failure
- Stripped out nonsense amounts e.g. for every extra day you wait for a repair, you will get another £2 or £3 per day for the inconvenience incurred from loss of heating and hot water. These will now be assessed on a case by case basis which is reasonable, proportionate and reflective of any disruption.
- Changed arrears check to council debt check in terms of off setting any compensation payments
- Neighbour nuisance – more ownership goes back to the tenant to resolve in the first instance in line with the redesign of our service
- Tenants and Residents forum at their meeting on 5 September 2016 unanimously supported the revised document