

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

2 NOVEMBER 2021

Report Title	MOBILITY SCOOTERS POLICY IN COUNCIL PROPERTIES			
Purpose of Report	To inform Housing Committee of a new Mobility Scooters Policy for all users in Stroud District Council Housing.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to adopt the Mobility Scooters Policy in Council Properties.			
Consultation and Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Involved tenants and Officers.Feedback invited by email to lynne.mansell@stroud.gov.uk			
Report Author	Lynne Mansell Service Delivery Manager (Independent Living) Tel: 01453 754173 Email: lynne.mansell@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Option 1 – By not implementing this policy, fire, health and safety risks may heighten.To implement the policy and continue to increase designated storage facilities with Independent living sites in line with Modernisation programmes.			
Appendices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Appendix A – Mobility Scooters PolicyAppendix B – Equality Impact Assessment			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	Yes	Yes	No

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 More and more people are purchasing mobility scooters to aid their independence as they get older and/or less mobile and the storage of these items in communal areas is a potential hazard especially around fire.
- 1.2 In recent years, mobility scooters have become increasingly prevalent, especially in the Council's Independent Living sites however these cannot be stored, parked or charged in communal hallways and corridors.
- 1.3 Whilst Stroud District Council remain committed to supporting tenants and residents who have mobility issues and wish to utilise scooters to increase their mobility, independence and therefore improve their quality of life; zero tolerance with regard to clutter in communal hallways and corridors is in operation and the Council want to ensure that guidance and recharging of mobility scooters is clear.

2.0 MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 This policy aims to highlight the positive aspects of owning and using a mobility scooter whilst also highlighting that the storage and charging must be accomplished safely for all.
- 2.2 Clear guidance is provided on the safe use and storage of mobility scooters in mobility scooter stores, permitted properties and locations in Independent Living sites, general needs and leaseholder accommodation.
- 2.3 The policy will ensure a consistent approach in considering whether permission should be granted to keep a mobility scooter and not refusing permission unreasonably.
- 2.4 It is recognised that this policy is designed to carefully balance the needs of those tenants and residents whose dependence on mobility scooters is key to their ongoing independence with the health and safety of all users of the buildings.
- 2.5 The policy covers all aspects of storage and charging of mobility scooters in Council properties and once implemented should allow officers to manage the safe storage of mobility scooters much more successfully across the district.

3.0 RISK

- 3.1 The risk is severe limitations to someone's independence if they are refused permission to have a mobility scooter. To mitigate these impacts, the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter, following an Occupational Therapist assessment.
- 3.2 In certain exceptional circumstances where the tenant has severe mobility issues and wholly dependent on the mobility scooter to go about their daily activities the Council will consider rehousing into a more suitable property.
- 3.3 With lack of clear policy guidance, the risk of non-compliance with regard to Fire Risk Assessments and zero tolerance heightens which may potentially lead to risk of tenants' safety being compromised.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The policy reinforces the Council's commitment to enabling tenants and residents to keep their independence whilst providing guidance on how and where mobility scooters can be stored and their batteries recharged.
- 4.2 The policy makes clear that the unauthorised storage of mobility scooters causes hazards in housing blocks as well as being a risk to the health and safety of tenants, residents, visitors, staff and emergency personnel, is also a clear breach of the tenancy agreement.
- 4.3 The Tenancy Agreement already states that all communal areas should be kept clear as well as stating permission must be sought before purchasing a mobility scooter. The development of this policy will provide clarity to the safe storage, charging and use of mobility scooters whilst mitigating the risk of fire and health and safety of the buildings.

- 4.4 This policy will support the Council's ability to meet its obligations for Fire Risk Assessments under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implication arising directly from this report.

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5.2 Legal Implications

The Council has a duty under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 to ensure that its requirements of tenants and leaseholders are not unfair, and a general duty as a local authority to act reasonably.

Adopting a general policy in respect of mobility scooters helps to ensure that such obligations are consistent and fairly applied across the Council's properties, whilst also taking account of its Equality duties set out below.

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5.3 Equality Implications

This report takes into account the Council's duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and the need to have 'due regard' to the impact of the policy on any person with protected characteristics. The Council will work with all tenants and residents to identify appropriate solutions to individual needs.

5.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.