

Customer Access Review – Full Assessment

Assessment details	
Assessment area	Compensation for Improvements Policy
Date of assessment	January 2023
Directorate and Service	Housing and Public Protection, Housing Services
Manager	Tenancy Services Manager
Officer conducting assessment	Housing Policy & Performance Officer
Step 1: Scoping the assessment	
1. What are the aims and objectives of the activity or proposal?	<p>The Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 gives Secure tenants the right to compensation for certain tenant financed improvements that have had the written permission of the Council.</p> <p>The right to compensation for improvements is subject to certain qualifying criteria and regulations contained in The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 1994 Statutory Instrument 1994 No.613.</p> <p>The Compensation for Improvements Policy outlines the process that Dartford Borough Council will follow when assessing and processing a claim for compensation for improvements.</p> <p>The Policy has been reviewed to ensure it remains up to date and this Customer Access Review has been carried out in conjunction with the review.</p>
2. Who will be affected by the activity or proposal?	The policy will affect tenants of Dartford Borough Council.
3. How does the activity or proposal contribute to: a) any key performance indicators? b) policies, values or objectives of Dartford Borough Council?	<p>a) There are no key performance indicators specific to the Compensation for Improvements Policy.</p> <p>b) The Compensation for Improvements Policy contributes to the Corporate Plan aim of ‘facilitating quality, choice and diversity in the housing market, assist in meeting housing need in Dartford and deliver high quality services to service users’.</p>
4. Which aspects of the activity or proposal are dictated by legislation/regulation and where do we have discretion in how they are delivered?	<p>The Compensation for Improvements Policy and its delivery is intended to be compatible with the following relevant legislation and regulation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993, Section 122 & Housing Act 1985, Section 99 – the Council are required to compensate secure tenants where they have made an improvement when the secure tenancy comes to an end. The Council is required to provide written consent to any improvement.

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Step 1: Scoping the assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 1994 Statutory Instrument 1994 No.613 – outlines the items on which compensation is payable and the notional life of the improvement. This legislation also includes the formula to be used when calculating the amount of compensation payable. The Council should pay the qualifying person compensation in conjunction with this.
Step 2: Information collection	<p>5. What do you know about the groups of people who will be affected? (i.e. demographic information in relation to the protected characteristic groups of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership)</p> <p>Dartford population profile</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender – There are slightly more female residents than male residents in Dartford where 51% are female and 49% are male, which is the same as the overall England ratio of females and males Age – The median age in Dartford is 37 years, which is slightly lower than the overall England mean age of 40 years. 21.1% of Dartford’s population is aged 14 years or under. This is followed by residents aged 35 to 44 years (15.7%), 25 to 34 years (15.2%), 45 to 54 years (13.3%), 55 to 64 years (10.8%), 15 to 24 years (10.2%), 65 to 74 years (7.4%), and aged 75 years and over (6.4%) Ethnicity – The largest ethnic group that people in Dartford identify with is White at 74.5%. This is followed by Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African (10.50%), Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh (9.90%), Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups (3.10%), and Other ethnic groups (2.00%) Disability – 15.9% of Dartford’s population are disabled. Of this, 6.6% of people’s activities are limited a lot and 9.3% of people’s activities are limited a little. Religion – 48.1% of Dartford’s population connect or identify with the Christian religion, followed by 3.8% Hindu, 3.5% Muslim, 1.7% Hindu, 0.6 Buddhist, 0.1% Jewish, 0.4% other religion. 36.5% of Dartford’s population did not connect or identify with any religion and 5.3% did not answer this question in the Census. Sexual orientation – 91.2% of Dartford’s population aged 16 years and over identified as straight or heterosexual. 1.5% described themselves as gay or lesbian. 0.91% described themselves as bisexual. 0.14% described themselves as pansexual; 0.03% described themselves as asexual; 0.00% described themselves as queer. 0.01% described themselves as ‘other sexual orientation’. 6.54% did not answer this question in the Census. <p>(Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics)</p>

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Step 2: Information collection	
	<p>Tenant profile The Council currently owns and manages 3,778 general needs properties and 454 housing scheme properties for older people. Information in relation to the protected characteristics of Council tenants is captured by the service, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender – 65% tenants are female and 35% tenants are male. • Age – 6.45% of tenants are aged up to 35 years; 35.44% are aged 35 to 55 years; 34.40% are aged 55 to 75 years; and 13.71% are aged 75 years plus. • Ethnicity – 61% of tenants are from a White ethnic group and 19% are from a Black Minority Ethnic (BME) group. The ethnic group of 20% of tenants is unknown. The Other ethnic group is the largest BME group with 11.89% tenants, the majority of which are within the European Non Irish group. • Disability – 19.95% of tenants have a disability and 80.05% do not have a disability.
<p>6. What consultation has taken place with affected groups? Please describe who was consulted and the key findings</p>	<p>A review of the Policy has been carried out by the Housing Policy team. Due to only minor changes being made to the Policy, in terms of layout and financial updates, wider consultation has not taken place. The Policy will be reviewed by the Head of Legal Services.</p>
<p>7. Are there any gaps in information? If so, what additional research and/or consultation is needed to ensure that affected groups needs and views are taken into account?</p>	<p>No gaps in information have been identified.</p>

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Step 3: Assessing the equality impact

8. Consider whether the activity or proposal has or will have any positive or negative equality impacts on the protected characteristic groups in relation to the following aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- a) tackling unlawful discrimination
- b) promoting equality of opportunity
- c) promoting good relations

Step 3: Assessing the equality impact

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
Age			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<p>Requesting improvements The Council normally requires any claims for compensation to be made in writing by completing an application form. The Council will provide support to residents who may require assistance completing the form, and will make reasonable adjustments where this request cannot be fulfilled.</p> <p>Communication needs In accordance with the Council's Equality & Diversity Document Framework, the Policy and information about compensation for improvements, and the assistance the Council can provide to address any issues, can be provided in alternative formats, including: Braille, audio tape and large print versions of documents. British Sign Language interpreting services can also be provided upon request. Calls can also be received via Relay UK.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Step 3: Assessing the equality impact				
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
Sex			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<p>Alternative format and interpreting services In accordance with the Council's Equality & Diversity Document Framework, the Policy and information about compensation for improvements, and the assistance the Council can provide to address any issues, can be provided in alternative formats, including: Braille, audio tape and large print versions of documents. British Sign Language interpreting services can also be provided upon request. Calls can also be received via Relay UK.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion/Belief			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy/Maternity			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and Civil Partnership*	Not applicable as the Policy does not apply in the context of employment.	Not applicable as the Policy does not apply in the context of employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* Regarding the protected characteristic of Marriage and Civil Partnership – public bodies need to comply with the first aim of the Public Sector Equality Duty and only in the context of employment.

Step 3: Assessing the equality impact	
9. If 'no impact' or 'unknown' was selected, please explain	There are no known circumstances where the Policy will have relevance to or a disproportionate equality impact on the protected characteristic groups of age, sex, gender reassignment, religion/belief, sexual orientation and pregnancy/maternity. Residents will be supported with applications for compensation should they require it, regardless of a tenant's protected characteristics.

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Step 3: Assessing the equality impact	
10. If Dartford Borough Council works with partners to deliver the activity or proposal, please describe any circumstances that could give rise to positive or negative equality impacts between different groups	The Council will not need to work with partners in the implementation of this Policy.
11. Any other comments	No other comments.

Step 4: Action plan	
12. Based on the information in Steps 1 to 3, please list the actions that will be taken to address: a) any gaps in information and consultation b) how any negative impacts on equality will be mitigated or eradicated	
a) If additional information and/or consultation is required or the impact is still unclear, what actions will you put in place to gather the information you need?	

Information needs	Action	Intended outcome	Date for completion	How this will be monitored	Responsible officer

b) If any negative impacts on equality were found, what actions will you put in place to mitigate or eradicate these impacts?

Identified impacts (and who is affected)	Action	Intended outcome	Date for completion	How this will be monitored	Responsible officer

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Step 5: Decision making and future monitoring	
13. Which decision making process does this Customer Access Review need to go through? i.e. who does this need to be approved by?	Head of Legal Services and Director of Housing & Public Protection
14. Is the subject of the Customer Access Review going to committee? If yes, include your findings in the committee report and attach this assessment to the report	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
15. How will you continue to monitor the activity or proposal on protected characteristic groups?	The Council will review its Compensation for Improvements Policy every three years or earlier to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues.
16. When will you review this Customer Access Review?	The Compensation for Improvements Policy will be reviewed every three years and a new Customer Access Review will be carried out in conjunction with the review of the Policy.

Step 6: Final steps	
17. Once this Customer Access Review has been approved, send this assessment to the Policy & Projects Officer	
18. Implement the actions identified from this Customer Access Review and ensure progress is monitored and recorded	

Reviewed by Legal Services: 1st February 2023

Reviewed by Director of Housing & Public Protection: 9th February 2023