

**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of the Executive on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

**Housing Domestic Abuse Policy**

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is Public
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Victoria Dawson, Assistant Director – Housing Management

**PURPOSE / SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is for Executive to review and adopt the proposed Housing Domestic Abuse Policy.

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**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 received Royal Assent in July 2023, and has introduced significant changes to the Social Housing Sector. It was introduced in order to improve the quality of social housing for tenants by tightening the regulations imposed on the social housing sector.
- 1.2 The Act has given increased powers to the Regulator of Social Housing to carry out inspections of Local Authority Registered Housing Providers, at least every four years to ensure they are meeting the consumer standards. The Regulator also has the power to issue unlimited fines to those that fall below the prescribed standard; fines of which, are uninsurable.
- 1.3 The Regulator for Social Housing has after a period of consultation, published its new set of consumer standards and regulatory approach to deliver a “well-governed social housing sector” which provides quality homes and services for tenants. These four standards are effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, and all Registered Providers will be expected to meet these.
  1. The Safety and Quality Standard
  2. The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
  3. The Neighbourhood and Community Standard
  4. The Tenancy Standard
- 1.4 The **Neighbourhood and Community Standard** requires landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes. It also sets out that all Registered Providers must have a policy for how they recognise and effectively respond to cases of Domestic Abuse

## **2. Details of Proposal or Information**

- 2.1 The proposed Domestic Abuse Policy set out how the Housing department, including Dragonfly Management acting on behalf of the Council, will tackle domestic abuse, support victims and survivors of domestic abuse and hold perpetrators to account.
- 2.2 We understand the serious and enduring impact which can be caused by domestic abuse. Therefore, identifying domestic abuse early and providing support to victims and survivors is a key priority for Housing. This will support us to prevent homelessness and improve the safety and wellbeing of residents.
- 2.3 The Policy explains the role of the Specialist Domestic Abuse Officer, who has expertise in this area and whose role is to work with and support victims and survivors of domestic abuse. It explains in detail and has an accompanying pathway flowchart as to how we will support Council tenants who are affected by Domestic Abuse. As well as how non-Council tenants approaching the Council for housing assistance due to domestic abuse are referred into the Housing Options Team for assistance.
- 2.4 The new policy does not propose any changes to the operational management of domestic abuse cases but does create a need for Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding training to be undertaken for some roles. This will include upon starting a position as well as regular training to ensure these skills and knowledge are maintained.
- 2.5 The Policy has been presented to the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> March for review and comment.
- 2.6 The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be completed prior to formal approval and adoption of the Policy.

## **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The Council is required to produce a Housing Domestic Abuse Policy under the revised Consumer Standards.

## **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 An alternative option would be not to adopt a Housing Domestic Abuse Policy, this is rejected due to the fact that the Council would not be fulfilling its regulatory requirements.

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## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 1. That Executive approve and adopt the proposed Housing Domestic Abuse Policy.

Approved by Councillor Phil Smith, Portfolio Holder for Housing

**Finance and Risk**Yes ☐No ☒

**Details:** Whilst there are additional training requirements as a result of the adoption of this policy, this can be incorporated within existing corporate training and within the Housing Service training budgets.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection)**Yes ☒No ☐**Details:**

It is a requirement of the Regulator for Social Housing to have a Housing Domestic Abuse Policy.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Staffing**Yes ☐No ☒**Details:**

Whilst there are additional training requirements as a result of the adoption of this policy, this can be incorporated within existing corporate training and within the Housing Service training budgets.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

**Equality and Diversity, and Consultation**Yes ☒No ☐**Details:**

The policy recognises that domestic abuse can happen across any of the protected characteristics and implementation will have a positive impact across these characteristics. National data shows that some characteristics do suffer disproportionately from domestic abuse and it is important to recognise this but without overlooking that it does go beyond these. It is recommended that data at the local level is collected as far as possible to understand how the policy is impacting across protected characteristics.

**Environment**Yes ☐No ☒

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

**Details:**

No direct environmental implications from this document, as it relates to tenancy management rather than the physical homes.

## **DECISION INFORMATION:**

<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Please indicate which threshold applies:</b></p> <p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> A Key Decision is an Executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more wards in the District or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><b>Revenue (a)</b> Results in the Council making Revenue Savings of £75,000 or more or <b>(b)</b> Results in the Council incurring Revenue Expenditure of £75,000 or more.</p> <p><b>Capital (a)</b> Results in the Council making Capital Income of £150,000 or more or <b>(b)</b> Results in the Council incurring Capital Expenditure of £150,000 or more.</p> <p><b>District Wards Significantly Affected:</b> <i>(to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District)</i> Please state below which wards are affected or tick <b>All</b> if all wards are affected:</p>	<p><b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>    <b>No</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>(a)</b> <input type="checkbox"/>    <b>(b)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>(a)</b> <input type="checkbox"/>    <b>(b)</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>All</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p> <p>If No, is the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decision(s) proposed within this report? <i>(decisions may only be classified as exempt from call-in with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer)</i></p> <p><b>Consultation carried out:</b> <i>(this is any consultation carried out prior to the report being presented for approval)</i></p> <p><b>Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/>   <b>Deputy Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/>   <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>   <b>SLT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   <b>Members</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>    <b>No</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>    <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>Yes</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>    <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

## Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment, Housing

The Housing Domestic Abuse Policy will support the delivery of the following elements of the Council Corporate Plan Bolsover District: The Future 2024-2028 Ambition 2024-2028:

Aim: Our **Housing** by delivering social and private sector housing growth

Priorities:

- Enabling Housing Growth by increasing the supply, quality and range of housing to meet the needs of the growing population Building more, good quality, affordable housing, and **being a decent landlord**
- Maintaining and improving property and housing management standards and ensuring that standards and living conditions in the district contribute towards better health outcomes for all
- Preventing and responding to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions.

### DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

Appendix No	Title
1	Housing Domestic Abuse Policy