

COMMITTEE: Housing & Environment

DATE: 10 May 2011

DIRECTOR: Pete Leonard

TITLE OF REPORT: Temporary Accommodation Units – Smoking – Policy Exception

REPORT NUMBER: H&E/11/042

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report seeks approval for exception to the Smoke Free at Work Policy for the City Councils' Temporary Accommodation Units.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Committee

- (a) approves an exception to the Smoke Free at Work Policy as follows:
- smoking shall be permitted in a designated areas (bedrooms) of the Homelessness Service Temporary Accommodation Units.
  - the Homelessness Manager in conjunction with the Temporary Accommodation Senior Officer and Team Leaders of individual units will designate a proportion of individual rooms as smoking rooms; and
- (b) refers this report to the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee for its information.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There will be a requirement to install mechanical ventilation at these premises but this can be contained within the current budget. This will be funded through the Property costs - Repairs & Maintenance line.

## **4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 4.1. The proposal links to the Single Outcome Agreement and Vibrant, Dynamic & Forward Looking to 'increase the number of temporary homes for homeless people across the City' and 'retain the 24 hours contact point for homeless people'. It also links to the National Indicator and Target 'All unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to settled accommodation by 2012'.

- 4.2. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.
- 4.3. The proposals will assist the Council to deliver against, in particular, one of the five key areas of activity – the services we provide and secure for the most vulnerable members of our community.
- 4.4. There are direct links to the Housing Service Plan 2009 – 2012 – Modernisation of Service, the Resettlement & Homelessness Strategy (2009 – 2013) and the Temporary Accommodation Strategy.

## **5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

A policy will be devised to minimise risks to staff from passive smoking.


## **6. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**


- 6.1. Committee considered a report on this matter on 13 April 2010 and did not approve the recommendations.
- 6.2. However, the renewal of the HMO licences for 77-79 and 95 Bon Accord Street were heard by the Licensing Committee on 22 March 2011.
- 6.3. The Committee heard around 60 objections to the renewal of the licence.
- 6.4. A licence was issued for 18 months only because we outlined how we would tackle the issues which were causing concern to the objectors.
- 6.5. Issues which were raised by the objectors included residents of the Accommodation Units hanging around on the street corners causing fear to passers by. This included drinking and smoking. Agreeing to these recommendations would be one aspect of our commitment to lessening the impact of service users behaviours on our neighbours.
- 6.6. The current practice of not allowing smoking at all within the temporary accommodation unit forces people to smoke outside. This might be all right if these were individual dwellings but in the accommodation unit smoking can become a group activity sometimes causing nuisance to the neighbourhood.
- 6.7. The practice also has led to individuals trying to smoke in a concealed way with numerous attempts to interfere with the fire detection system. The overall risk to others could appear to increase as a result.
- 6.8. Smoking areas are available to the rear of our premises but when residents use these areas they can often do so noisily thus again negatively impacting on the neighbourhood.
- 6.9. The Smoke Free at Work Policy outlines the only exception to that policy will be in designated smoking areas in the Council's residential homes for adults and older people, as these are considered to be a dwelling place.
- 6.10. Temporary Accommodation Units would fall into the same category as it is the only home of the individuals at that time.

- 6.11. A full risk assessment for staff will be undertaken and discussed with staff and union officials.

## 7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Smoke Free at Work Policy