

COMMITTEE: Housing & Environment

DATE: 13 April 2010

DIRECTOR: Pete Leonard

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

REPORT NUMBER: H&E/10/033

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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 approve the exception to the Smoke Free at Work Policy as follows:

- smoking shall be permitted in a designated floor/wing of the properties at the Temporary Accommodation Units at Aberdon House, 165 Crown Street, 77/79 Bon Accord Street and 95 Bon Accord Street.
- 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

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There will be a requirement to install mechanical ventilation at these premises but this can be contained within the current budget.

At Aberdon, this will be done as part of the approved refurbishment costs.

At Crown Street/Bon Accord Street, this will be funded through the Property costs - Repairs & Maintenance line.

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

Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

Vibrant Dynamic Forward Looking - this report is in line with the Council's key aim to enhance the total environment in social housing areas.

There are direct links to the Housing Service Plan 2009-2012 – Modernisation of Service, the Resettlement & Homelessness Strategy and the Temporary Accommodation Strategy.

## **5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

## **6. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1. The report – Homelessness Service Performance and Developments Towards the 2012 Target – considered on 11 January 2010 by the Housing Environment Committee outlined proposed developments in the Service at which time changes to the management of Temporary Accommodation Units was raised.
- 6.2. The principles within which services are provided include “It’s their home”. This statement should, therefore, influence the working practices within, for instances, temporary accommodation.
- 6.3. This should relate to issues such as times of access, how often in the building, visitors, smoking on the premises, drinking on the premises, having a TV, how the premises look/are furnished, access to equipment, etc.
- 6.4. Essentially, if you would not put restrictions on in a tenancy, then restrictions should not be put on in temporary accommodation.
- 6.5. The current practice of not allowing smoking at all within the temporary accommodation unit has led to individuals trying to smoke in a concealed way and attempts to interfere with the fire detection system. The overall risk to others could appear to increase as a result.
- 6.6. The practice also 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 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.
- 6.8. Temporary Accommodation Units would fall into the same category as it is the only home of the individuals at that time.
- 6.9. A full risk assessment for staff will be undertaken and discussed with staff and union officials.
- 6.10. In addition, the health benefits of giving up smoking will be promoted and outlined to customers. Assistance will be organised for residents who wish to give up smoking.

## **7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Smoke Free at Work Policy