Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Craig Warhurst
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis – Head of Community Services
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides an overview of updates made to the Council's Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy (Appendix 1). The policy has been updated in line with a recommendation from Audit during 2017-18, which highlighted that the existing policy needed to be updated to reflect changes around loan limits for applicants and local land charge arrangements. These changes have now been made, and the policy has also been checked to ensure it accurately captures the changing nature of health and adult care services in the local community.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive NOTES the changes made to the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy and RESOLVES to approve its implementation

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications associated with updating this policy.

Legal Implications

3.2 The duties and powers to provide the suite of options available within the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy are set out in various pieces of Housing Legislation. There is also a requirement to adopt and publish a policy in relation to these in the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002.

Service / Operational Implications

3.3 The changes made in light of the recommendation by Audit bring the policy up to date in terms of current procedure and practice in relation to two specific areas. The first of these changes updates the policy so that the Home Repairs Assistance loan limit is set at £10000 per applicant. The second change makes it clear to applicants that charges are now registered as local land charges only.

3.4 More broadly, the policy aims to provide information to applicants about eligibility, products and funding streams into a single document and in as straightforward and transparent way as possible.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.5 The options available within the Private Sector Housing Assistance approach are an important way of helping vulnerable adults and children remain housed and living independently in the district.

3.6 These functions therefore play a role in meeting the Council's Strategic Purposes:

- Help me live my life independently
- Help me find somewhere to live in my locality

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

Audit identified a risk associated with not updating the policy, which they classified as a medium priority. The risk focussed on correct practice, finances and reputation. So making the changes in line with the Audit recommendation removes this risk.

5. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix A – Redditch Borough Council – Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy 2019

6. KEY

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