

Mobility Scooter Policy (Housing, Maggie Ward)

Synopsis of report:

This policy outlines the way Runnymede Borough Council will deal with requests to store or charge mobility scooters within its buildings whilst ensuring that the health and safety of residents, leaseholders, contractors etc. are maintained. This report informs Members of the result of an 8-week consultation on the policy and recommends the new policy for approval.

Recommendation:

Members approve the Housing Mobility Scooter Policy (Appendix A)

1. Context

- 1.1 There is increased use of motorised mobility equipment throughout the population. A policy is required to ensure that the Council manages the use of such items within its buildings to ensure the safety of all residents. A process is necessary for requesting permission to store or charge a mobility scooter within a Council facility.

2. Report

- 2.1 The Housing Mobility Scooter Policy is attached as Appendix A and Members are asked to approve its implementation from the date of this meeting.
- 2.2 The aims of this policy is to ensure:
- The Council meet its statutory obligations in relation to Health and Safety and Fire Safety legislation.
 - Mobility scooters do not cause health and safety hazards.
 - Mobility scooters do not block any communal areas including fire escapes/exits.
 - Clear guidance is provided on how to safely use and store mobility scooters.
 - Residents obtain permission prior to purchasing or leasing a mobility scooter.
 - Residents adhere to their responsibilities relating to storage, charging and use of a mobility scooter.
 - Residents are aware of liability for any injuries or damages.
- 2.3 In this policy “mobility scooter” means Class 2 or 3 machines as defined under the Use of Invalid Carriages on Highways Regulations 1988
- 2.4 There is provision for the storage of mobility scooters in all Independent Retirement Living Schemes (IRL) but the increasing number of residents who want to use a scooter means that provision is not adequate, and this will be addressed in the planned upgrade of IRL Schemes.
- 2.5 It is essential that the Council knows which residents have motorised scooters and can ensure that regular health and safety checks are conducted on them as they can pose a fire risk if not maintained or are used inappropriately.
- 2.6 No scooters may be stored or charged in any communal areas other than those designated for this purpose.

- 2.7 In order to obtain permission for a mobility scooter with allocated storage, applications will need to have a supporting report from a Surrey County Council Occupational Therapist or Trusted Assessors.
- 2.8 Where a property does not have facilities for scooter storage, applications for this to be provided will be dealt with under the Disabled Adaptations Policy for the Council Housing Stock 2021 – 2025.
- 2.9 Mobility Scooter owners are required to hold insurance for their vehicle, it has been explored with the Council's insurers whether this could be organised through our own insurance policy, but this is not possible. Insurance is widely available for mobility scooters and tenants will be referred to comparison sites for accessing their own insurance. All Council tenants should hold contents insurance, which may either already include mobility scooters or could be added within that existing policy.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 An 8-week consultation period focussed on residents who are most likely to be affected by the policy:
- A pamphlet was created with all information relevant to those who reside in the Council's Independent Retirement schemes.
 - A coffee morning was held at each IRL scheme.
 - A dedicated web page was created where tenants could share their thoughts on the policy. The webpage was visited 74 times by non-Council workers.
 - An article on the policy was published in our online tenant's newsletter, Tenant's News.
- 3.2 We recognise that due to the health and safety and fire risks residents will have a limited impact on how the policy can be amended. However, we do not want the policy to be an obstacle for residents to meet their needs. Therefore, when consulting, we provided the following options for residents' views on the policy:
- I think the arrangements are fair and I am happy with them
 - Most of the arrangements are fair and I can live with them
 - One of the arrangements would stop me having a scooter when I believe I need one.
- 3.3 100% of respondents selected 'I think the arrangements are fair and I am happy with them'
- 3.4 Additional comments received were :
- I would like insurance and PAT testing organised by the Council
 - I would like insurance and PAT testing done by RBC. I fully agree with having everything under one umbrella for my own and the Council's peace of mind knowing all procedures are followed
 - Can the Council organise PAT and Insurance testing and add cost to weekly charge?

4 Policy framework implications

- 4.1 This policy is linked to the Older Person's Strategy and the Disabled Adaptations Policy for Council tenants 2021-2025.

5. Resource implications

- 5.1 There will be costs associated within the implementation of this policy but they will be contained within existing budgets and staffing resources. The cost of PAT testing will be recharged to tenants.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 Storage of any type of device on premises owned by the Council takes into account the following legislation;
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order 2005 (FSO)
 - Equality Act 2010
 - The Care Act 2014

7. Equality implications

- 7.1 The Equality Impact screening found a full impact assessment is not required as this new policy is being put in place to ensure fairness with mobility scooter requests in a fair and transparent way.
- 7.2 There is no evidence that tenants with any of the nine protected characteristics will be negatively impacted by this policy. Rather, it is anticipated that this policy will promote equality.
- 7.3 It is therefore considered that the Council will comply with its Public Sector Equality duty when endorsing this Policy and a full impact assessment is not required at this stage.

8. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

- 8.1 None identified however the use of mobility scooters may reduce the use of motor vehicle transport utilised by residents to access the community.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 Members are asked to approve the Mobility Scooter Policy for implementation

(To resolve)

Background Papers

None