

## **MOBILITY SCOOTER SERVICE CHARGES**

Report of the Director of Housing & Customer Service

### **1. SUMMARY**

The Derby Homes Mobility Policy includes a requirement to introduce a service charge for the provision of storage and battery charging facilities at Category 2 Supported Living Schemes.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

The City Board is asked to approve an initial charge of £2 per week to cover the cost of the electricity and maintenance of the mobility scooter stores, whilst the possibility of having an electricity supply to the scooter sheds metered separately is investigated.

### **3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 In September 2010 Derby Homes' Local Housing Boards approved Derby Homes' Mobility Scooter Policy. The report recognised the importance of scooters to some tenants as well as setting out the eligibility criteria for the use of scooters. The criteria set out is as follows:

- The applicant should have a mobility impairment which restricts their mobility outdoors and prevents them from carrying out essential daily tasks.
- A suitable location for storage and charging of the mobility scooter must be identified and agreed with Derby Homes before purchase of the mobility scooter.
- The applicant is expected to comply with legal guidance regarding the use of a motorised vehicle on the pavement.

3.2 In some supported schemes there are designated storage facilities for mobility scooters. Service charges will apply for use of these facilities provided at category 2 scheme: Rebecca House, Whitecross House and Kestrel House. These charges are intended to cover the costs of maintenance of the facility and use of the provided electricity supply.

3.3 An exercise has been carried out to estimate the cost of charging the scooters through the electricity supply by attaching a monitor to tenants' scooters.

This process highlighted two issues which needed to be considered:

- The differential in day and night tariffs for the electricity supply
- The power capacity of the batteries which varies in different models

It also became apparent that for these tests to be conclusive, they would have to be carried out over a substantial amount of time. It therefore appears more sensible to identify an initial cost and then explore the possibility of having the supply to the scooter shed metered so that the charge can be adjusted accurately.

- 3.4 Although manufacturer's guidance is scant, (as they have a vested interest in selling the product), they advise that a scooter will use 438 units of electricity a year. When calculated on the day rate charge for electricity this works out at a cost of approximately £38 per year, which breaks down to a weekly charge of 80 pence.
- 3.5 However, other manufacturer's guidance suggests that a scooter battery will need recharging for 12 hours after use, which makes the charge considerably higher. Making the assumption that a battery is charged every day and using the day rate tariff the charge would be approximately £7.00 per week.

#### **4. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

The Mobility Scooter policy which included the ability to charge was agreed at the Local Housing Board in September 2010 after discussions at Housing Focus Groups, and the Derby Association of Community partners open meeting. All feedback has been positive.

#### **5. FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

This charge will cover the cost of electricity and maintenance at the existing 3 schemes (18 bays).

#### **6. LEGAL AND CONFIDENTIALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Under the existing statutory requirements of the 1985 Housing Act, Section 105, Derby Homes is required to consult tenants on changes to our services.
- 6.2 Discussions have been held with Derby City Council's Legal Services Team, particularly on requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1985, Part 3, of which makes it illegal for a service provider to treat a disabled person less favourably than others when providing a service. Legal Services are satisfied that the proposed policy complies with the DDA 1985 and also legislation contained within the Human Rights Acts.

#### **7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

An equalities impact assessment has been completed on the Derby Homes Mobility Scooters policy.

#### **8. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

There is a risk that if Derby Homes/Derby City Council does not have a policy in relation to the safe use and storage of mobility scooters within flats we could be failing in our health and safety obligations to tenants, leaseholders and residents

## 9. POLICY REVIEW IMPLICATIONS

The Mobility Scooter Policy is a key policy of Derby Homes and is/will be included in the Key Policy Review Schedule. In accordance with minute 10/51 this policy will be reviewed no later than 3 years from the date of this meeting.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

- Personnel
- Environmental
- Risk

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or Phil Davies, Chief Executive, [phil.davies@derbyhomes.org](mailto:phil.davies@derbyhomes.org) – Phone: 01332 888528

Author: Lorraine Testro / Customer Services Manager / 01332 888675 /  
Lorraine.testro@derbyhomes.org

Supporting Information: Equality Impact Assessment and Derby Homes Mobility Scooter Policy