



Thursday, 5 February 2026

Report of Cabinet Member for Housing,
Councillor Virginia Moran

Voids Policy

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To inform the Committee of the proposed new Void Policy.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

1. To review and provide comments on the new Void Policy.
2. Recommend the approval of the new Void Policy to Cabinet.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Connecting communities
Sustainable South Kesteven
Enabling economic opportunities
Housing
Effective council

Which wards are impacted? (All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 Whilst there are no financial implications arising directly from this report the management of voids does have a financial impact on the HRA budgets. Ensuring void properties are turned around will improve rent loss performance but needs to be balanced against the cost for undertaking any void re-let works which can be costly. These costs need to be minimised as much as possible and can be supported by undertaking regular checks on properties as part of the tenancy agreement, ensuring the pre-termination visits are completed and actively dealing with rechargeable costs.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer.

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 The Council has statutory responsibilities as a social landlord regarding letting properties and ensuring that properties meet minimum standards prior to letting. Having a void policy in place ensures that the Council is clear as to how it will meet these requirements.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Health and Safety

- 1.3 The Voids Policy outlines key areas of works that will be undertaken to ensure that properties are safe and habitable before being let, as required by the Housing Act 2004.
- 1.4 Failure to comply with the Void Policy carries the potential for financial and reputational risks for the authority. The Council has an obligation to ensure that properties are let as quickly as possible.

Completed by: Phil Swinton, Head of Service for Health, Safety, Compliance and Emergency Planning

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. Landlords need a voids policy for managing properties that are empty between tenancies to minimise financial losses, maintain the quality of homes and ensure quick turnaround for new tenants.
- 2.2. A void period when property is empty results in rent loss for the landlords. It is important to minimise the period that property is empty to ensure that residents on the housing waiting list are offered a home as soon as possible.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The purpose of this policy is to:
 - Minimise the length of time a property is empty, and the amount of rental income lost.
 - Let the property in a clean and safe condition that meets the Council's lettable standard.
 - Meets resident needs and maximises resident satisfaction.
 - Provides value for money to the Council.
 - Meets statutory, regulatory and compliance requirements.
- 3.2. Social landlords must adhere to several regulations listed in the policy related to empty property management and lack of compliance can place a landlord at risk of prosecution or financial penalties and reputational damage.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The alternative option to the proposed new voids policy is to retain the existing policy, however this was ruled out as it was considered out of date and no longer fit for purpose.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The Committee are asked to review and provide comments on the content of the new Voids Policy and recommend approval by the Cabinet.
- 5.2. The Council is required to have strict void policies in place to ensure the safety of properties being let and comply with Regulatory Compliance and Safety Standards.
- 5.3. The Void Policy is required to minimise rent loss and set out the Council's lettable standard to residents.

6. Consultation

6.1. The following groups have been consulted on the new Void Policy:

- Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Housing Department Management team
- Voids team
- Resident workshop and online consultation (the results of these will be presented at the committee).

7. Appendices

7.1. Proposed new Void Policy.