



Tuesday, 10 February 2026

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran,
Cabinet Member for Housing

Voids Policy

Report Author

Mark Rogers, Head of Service (Technical Services)

mark.rogers@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To approve and adopt the new Voids Policy.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Approve and adopt the new Voids Policy.
2. Agree that any future minor amendments (i.e. changes to wording to reflect changes in process) required through the life of the policy are delegated to the Head of Service – Technical Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing.

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision? No

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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

What are the relevant corporate priorities? 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 Voids 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

- 1.1. Landlords require 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.
- 1.2. 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

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to:
 - Minimise the length of time properties are empty, and the amount of rental income lost.
 - Let properties in a clean and safe condition that meet the Council's lettable standard.
 - Meet residents need and maximise resident satisfaction.
 - Provides value for money to the Council.
 - Meet statutory, regulatory and compliance requirements.
- 1.2. 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

- 1.1. The Cabinet are asked to approve and adopt the new Voids Policy.
- 1.2. 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.
- 1.3. The Void Policy is required to minimise rent loss and set out the Council's lettable standard to residents.

6. Consultation

1.1. 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.

7. Appendices

1.2. Proposed New Voids Policy.