

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet Housing Committee – 26 November 2025

Rent Setting, Repairs, Empty Homes (Voids) and Recharge Policies

Accountable member:

Cllr Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services

Accountable officer:

Claire Hughes, Director of Governance, Housing and Communities

Executive summary:

This report brings forward new policies for the following:

- Rent Setting
- Recharges
- Empty Homes (Voids)
- Repairs and Maintenance for Tenanted Properties

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Housing Committee recommends that Cabinet approves:

1. The Rent Setting Policy (Appendix 2)
 2. The Recharge Policy (Appendix 5)
 3. The Empty Homes (Voids) Policy (Appendix 8)
 4. The Repairs and Maintenance for Tenanted Properties Policy (Appendix 11)
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1 Background

1.1 Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) provides a wide range of local services, including the provision of social housing, maintaining approximately 5,000 domestic properties, communal blocks and schemes.

1.2 As part of our service delivery and the provision of homes it is essential that the council has a robust policy framework in place which clearly sets out to our tenants what they can expect from the council as their landlord.

1.3 This report brings forward a number of new policies for the cabinet housing committee to consider and recommend to cabinet for approval. Each policy is supplemented with a tenant summary.

1.4 All policies have been reviewed by the tenant and leaseholder panels, and their feedback has been incorporated.

2 Rent Setting Policy (Appendices 2 – 4)

2.1 This policy explains how the council sets and reviews rents for its housing stock. It provides information on the difference between social rent and affordable rent and on service charges.

2.2 The policy confirms that rent is charged weekly throughout the year, with four rent free weeks and that rent is payable in advance.

3 Recharge Policy (Appendices 5 – 7)

3.1 This policy provides tenants with information on when they may be recharged for repairs, for example when damaged has been caused to a home or changes have been made without the council's consent. Items which tenants may be recharged for include broken doors or windows, lost keys, unsafe DIY work or rubbish left in the home.

3.2 The policy also provides information on special cases where recharges would not apply, including where damage is a direct result of a crime or domestic abuse.

4 Empty Homes (Voids) Policy (Appendices 8 – 10)

4.1 This policy sets out the council's process for managing empty homes to make sure that they are ready for new tenants quickly, safely and fairly.

4.2 It provides information to tenants on terminating their tenancy and what they can expect during the termination period. It also sets out the council's lettable standard so that tenants know in advance what they can expect from their new home.

4.3 The policy provides KPIs for performance so that the council can measure its performance against the policy standards.

5 Repairs and Maintenance for Tenanted Properties Policy (Appendices 11 – 13)

5.1 This policy sets out the process for repairs and maintenance in the councils tenanted properties. It provides information on how to report repairs, types of repairs, response times and appointment schedules.

5.2 Following feedback from the leaseholder panel it was decided to update this policy to make it applicable to tenants only to avoid confusion between tenant and leaseholder responsibilities. A separate policy for leaseholder repairs and the s20 process is being developed. This will be subject to leaseholder consultation before being brought forward to this committee for consideration in January 2026.

6 Equalities Impact Assessments

6.1 Equalities impact assessments have been completed for each policy and can be found in the appendices

7 Key risks

7.1 Key risks are set out in the risk register at Appendix 1.

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Appendices:

1. Risk Assessment
2. Rent Setting Policy
3. Rent Setting Policy Summary for Tenants
4. Rent Setting Policy Equality Impact Assessment
5. The Recharge Policy
6. The Recharge Policy Summary for Tenants
7. The Recharge Policy Equality Impact Assessment
8. The Empty Homes (Voids) Policy
9. The Empty Homes (Voids) Policy Summary for Tenants
10. The Empty Homes (Voids) Policy Equality Impact Assessment
11. The Repairs and Maintenance for Tenanted Properties Policy
12. The Repairs and Maintenance for Tenanted Properties Policy Summary for Tenants
13. The Repairs and Maintenance for Tenanted Properties Policy Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
1	The Council has a legal duty to ensure that properties it manages are safe and comply with all applicable statutory requirements. If the Council fails to adopt clear policies then this could result in ambiguity potentially putting tenants and residents at risk	Director of Governance, Housing and Communities	5	3	15	Reduce	Produce, approve and implement clear and robust policies and associated procedures.	Director of Governance, Housing and Communities	December 2025
2	If the Council does not have clear policies in place or does not comply with the provisions of the polices then there is a risk that the council could be subject to legal and/ or financial risk.	Director of Governance, Housing and Communities	5	3	15	Reduce	Produce, approve and implement clear and robust policies and associated procedures.	Director of Governance, Housing and Communities	December 2025