

MINUTES OF CABINET MEMBER SIGNING MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2026, 1:00PM – 1:10PM

PRESENT: Councillor Sarah Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning (Deputy Leader)

In attendance: Martin Gulliver, Housing Strategy & Policy Officer, Sara Sutton, Corporate Director Adults & Health, Zarah Maye, Head of Housing-Related Support and Nazyer Choudhury, Principal Committee Co-Ordinator

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Cabinet Member referred to the notice of filming at meetings and this information was noted.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no declarations of interest.

5. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / QUESTIONS

There were no declarations of interest.

6. LICENCE FEES ('RENTS') AND SERVICE CHARGES FOR COUNCIL OWNED SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

The Council was the landlord of five short-term supported housing schemes of which three (Olive Morris Court, Carrol Court, and Hale Wharf) were held in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and two were held in the General Fund (GF). Given the nature of the General Fund schemes, their addresses are not provided in this report but are referred to here as Scheme O and Scheme B.

The schemes were known as short-term Supported Housing as residents were offered these for short-term placements of up to 2 years. These differ from long-term/life-time housing such as Sheltered Housing, Good Neighbour Schemes or Housing First tenancies. Although the rent setting approach was the same for long-term tenancies, these tenancies were excluded from the report as they were set as part of the Housing Revenue Account budget.

The accommodation in the short-term HRA schemes consisted of 32 self-contained properties with a tenure of either a licence or non-secure tenancy. Conversely, accommodation in the GF schemes was provided in 36 rooms with shared facilities. These rooms were all held under licence.

The schemes held in the HRA had their rents and service charges updated annually as part of the HRA rent setting process. However, the GF schemes had not been updated and so had fallen behind.

The report therefore sought to confirm the charging policy applied for both HRA and GF short-term Supported Housing is to - Align Licence Fees (aka Rents) for all short-term Supported Housing at Formula Rent + 10% as set out in the Rent Standard - Fully recharge the costs of any services provided which were not part of the licence fee (Rent). These were in-turn split into Housing Benefit eligible service and personal services. 1.6 The report also sought to update the charges for the GF properties for 2026/27. The HRA charges for the year would be updated by the budget papers.

The progress for future proposals would be continued annually as part of a fees and charges report.

The Cabinet Member RESOLVED

1. The Statement on Licence fees ('rents') and Service Charges for Council owned Supported Accommodation' (Appendix B).
2. Update the General Fund Scheme charges in-line with this statement including the introduction of a personal charge which has not been previously charged to these residents.
3. To implement the above changes with effect from Monday 6 April 2026.

Reasons for decision

Formalising the Licence Fees and Service Charges in one document provided clarity for residents on how the charges were set and confirms the common charging methodology applied to all schemes.

Updating the charges would also provide a standard approach to these in practice.

Alternative options considered

Not formalising the Licence Fees and Service Charges

This option was rejected as this is not transparent, and General Fund rents would continue to be outside the annual rent increase process.

Not updating the General Fund Licence Fees and Service Charges

This option was rejected as this would maintain the differences in the fees charged for similar services.

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR SARAH WILLIAMS

Signed by Cabinet Member

Date23 February 2026.....