

**Decisions taken by the Cabinet Committee: Housing on Tuesday, 4 November 2025**

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision	Reasons	Alternative Options
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**Part A – Items considered in public**

<p><b>A9</b></p>	<p>Disabled Facilities Grants Policy 2025-2028</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Disabled Facilities Grant policy for 2025-2030 be approved, as set out in Appendix 1 of report CAB3521(H).</li> <li>2. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities, to make minor changes or those linked to legislative change to the DFG policy 2025-2030.</li> </ol>	<p>Report CAB3521(H) outlines the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) policy 2025-2030 that directly aligns with the council’s strategic priorities, Good Homes for All, Thriving Communities, and Healthy Communities. The provision of disabled adaptations will continue to be a key part of the council’s role following local government re-organisation; therefore, this policy has a five-year life in order to ensure a smooth transition into any new structure</p> <p>The DFG is a statutory grant provided under the <i>Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996</i>. Its</p>	<p>Not to amend the current policy at which point the council would be at risk of not being able to fulfil the existing policy with the current level of funding from central government. Therefore, not to amend the policy is not an option and rejected.</p> <p>Remove all discretionary elements of the policy. This could put the council at risk of not fulfilling the requirements of the Better Care Fund which could result in increased hospital admissions and delayed hospital discharge. Therefore, this is not an option and rejected.</p>
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			<p>primary aim is to support eligible disabled individuals, defined under the 1996 Act, to live safely and independently in their own homes. The grant funds essential adaptations that facilitate independent living, such as accessible bathrooms, stairlifts, and ramps. It is important to note that this grant does not apply to tenants of Winchester City Council (WCC).</p> <p>Local Authorities are legally obligated to administer DFGs to qualifying applicants. The introduction of the <i>Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002</i> expanded the scope of the DFG, allowing for more flexible and locally responsive use of funds.</p>	

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			<p>Since 2015, DFG funding has been channelled through the Better Care Fund, which promotes an integrated approach to health and social care. This reflects a broader recognition of the critical role that housing plays in supporting health outcomes, a principle embedded in both the current policy and the proposed revisions. The DFG policy 2025 – 2030 address evolving challenges, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased demand for adaptations</li> <li>• Budgetary constraints and stagnant grant allocations</li> <li>• Rising costs of construction and adaptation works</li> <li>• Recommendations from a recent internal audit</li> </ul>	

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A10	Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030	That the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030 be adopted.	<p>The Homelessness Act 2002 placed a duty on Local Authorities to develop a strategy to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping. The strategy should be formulated based on a comprehensive assessment and review of local homelessness within the district.</p> <p>Preventing homelessness remains a core priority for the council, aligning with the council’s wider commitments of good homes for all, healthy communities and thriving places.</p> <p>Report CAB3508(H) presents the updated draft Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025–2030, setting out the council’s approach to tackling</p>	<p>None- It is a legal requirement set out in The Homelessness Act 2002 for local housing authorities to publish a strategy, setting out its plans for preventing and tackling homelessness in its borough/district. If the council fail to develop and publish a homelessness strategy it would be at risk of legal challenge. Dissatisfied applicants could challenge the council’s decision making under the statutory homelessness framework, on the basis it did not have a current preventing homelessness and rough sleeping strategy in place.</p> <p>Failure to publish a homelessness strategy would be at odds with the council’s corporate plan and values. Preventing</p>

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			<p>homelessness and supporting some of the most vulnerable members of our community.</p> <p>The strategy responds to both local needs and national policy, including the Government’s approach to ensure rough sleeping is rare, brief, non-recurring and to prevent homelessness wherever possible. It reflects our learning from recent years, including the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Everyone In initiative, which demonstrated what is achievable through partnership, urgency, and flexibility. The strategy also celebrates the achievements over the last five years with a focus on building on this success.</p>	<p>homelessness and reducing rough sleeping within the borough, amongst our residents, is key to achieving the corporate priorities and ensuring our communities can thrive and have good homes for all.</p> <p>Whilst some local authorities have opted to combine their Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies within their overarching Housing Strategy, the Homelessness Strategy remains a standalone legal requirement. There is merit to ensuring it stands alone among local policies and plans to ensure that it can be consulted on in a focused way and that homelessness remains a visible high priority, not only for the</p>
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			<p>Homelessness is rarely the result of a single factor. It is often driven by a combination of personal, structural, and systemic issues including poverty, mental health challenges, domestic abuse, relationship breakdown, and a shortage of affordable housing. The council's draft strategy adopts a holistic, prevention-first approach, the council's vision is.</p> <p><i>'Working together to ensure that everyone at risk of homelessness has early and effective access to the right support, and where homelessness cannot be prevented, ensuring a safe, suitable, and sustainable home is secured as quickly as possible.'</i></p> <p>Through this strategy the</p>	<p>council, but for the wider system of public services in the local area.</p>

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			<p>council aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create, share, and replicate best practice and innovation in responses to homelessness.</li> <li>• Develop a community and partnership approach to prevent homelessness across the entire system by intervening earlier, developing service pathways, and creating individual solutions.</li> <li>• Respond to homelessness by ensuring individuals have prompt access to homes and tailored support.</li> <li>• Increase the range of affordable settled and supported housing options available.</li> </ul> <p>This Strategy sets out an ambitious plan for</p>	
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			<p>Winchester’s response to addressing homelessness. This Strategy will meet the vision and aims through the delivery of four clear priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making homelessness everyone’s priority through a partnership wide approach.</li> <li>• Prevent and respond to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions.</li> <li>• Meet the complex and unique needs of our customers by preventing rough sleeping and repeat homelessness.</li> <li>• Develop sustainable, supported and settled housing solutions.</li> </ul> <p>Report CAB3508(H) outlines the strategy’s vision, priorities, and delivery plans,</p>	
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			and asks members of the economic and housing policy to comment on the draft strategy and our updated approach across the council and with our partners.	
<b>A11</b>	Housing Compliance policies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the following six Housing Repairs and Maintenance Compliance Policies be approved and adopted, as set out in Appendices 1 to 6 of report CAB3520(H):                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Fire Safety Policy</li> <li>b) Gas and Heating Policy</li> <li>c) Electrical Safety Policy</li> <li>d) Asbestos Policy</li> <li>e) Water Hygiene Policy</li> <li>f) Lift Safety Policy</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head of</li> </ol>	<p>The HRA housing repair and maintenance compliance policies and procedures for approval and adoption in report CAB3520(H) have been developed as a business need, to comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s consumer standards and in support of the housing procurement of the HRA Council Housing Repair, Maintenance and Compliance Activities Contract approved at Cabinet Committee on 21 May 2025 (CAB3506).</p> <p>The landscape of housing</p>	No other options have been considered and rejected as it is a business need and a legislative and regulatory requirement to have appropriate housing Landlord compliant policies in place to ensure our tenants remain safe in their home.

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		<p>Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Good Homes, to make any minor amendments to the policies.</p>	<p>property compliance continues to evolve rapidly, driven by legislative reform, heightened safety expectations and a renewed focus on resident safety. There is a need to navigate a complex framework of statutory obligations, regulatory standards and best practice guidance to ensure council homes are safe and legally compliant. The legislative reform and regulatory frameworks are complemented by the Regulator of Social Housing’s consumer standards which set expectations for safety, quality, transparency and tenant accountability.</p> <p>To ensure the repairs and maintenance compliance policies meet the</p>	

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			<p>requirements of the legislative and regulatory framework. Pennington’s Choices, specialist property and surveying consultants have been commissioned as subject matter experts to develop the six compliance policies.</p> <p>A key objective of the six health and safety compliance policies is to provide assurance that senior management, housing staff, partner contractors and our tenants are clear on our housing landlord legal and regulatory safety obligations.</p>	