

DECISION TAKER: Councillor Mark Reach, Cabinet Member for Good Homes

REPORT Title: Mobility Scooter Policy

17 JUNE 2026

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WARD(S): All

PURPOSE

This policy supports the Council's priority 'Good Homes For all'
The purpose of this paper is to present the revised Mobility Scooter Policy 2026–2029 for approval. The policy establishes a consistent, risk-based and person-centred framework for the assessment, approval, storage, charging and management of mobility scooters within Winchester City Council-owned and managed housing. The policy supports the council's statutory duties relating to fire safety, building safety, health and safety and equality, including compliance with the Building Safety Act 2022, Fire Safety Act 2021, Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and Equality Act 2010.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To agree Mobility Scooter Policy 2026–2029
2. That delegated authority be given to the Corporate Head of Housing to make minor operational, legislative or formatting amendments during the lifetime of this policy.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

1.1 **Greener Faster**

1.2 The policy supports safe and sustainable use of existing housing stock by ensuring scooter storage and charging arrangements do not create avoidable fire, electrical or building safety risks.

1.3 **Thriving Places**

1.4 The policy supports safer shared spaces, particularly in blocks, sheltered schemes and communal areas, by keeping escape routes clear and reducing risks to residents, visitors, staff and contractors.

1.5 **Healthy Communities**

1.6 The policy recognises the importance of mobility scooters in supporting independence, dignity and wellbeing, while ensuring arrangements are safe for all residents.

1.7 **Good Homes for All**

1.8 The policy supports safe, accessible and well-managed homes by balancing individual mobility needs with landlord duties for fire, building and communal safety.

1.9 **Efficient and Effective**

1.10 The policy provides a clear assessment process, written decision outcomes, review routes and consistent operational standards across Property, Housing and Neighbourhood teams.

1.11 **Listening and Learning**

1.12 The policy has been updated to reflect operational experience, complaints learning, Ombudsman learning and current fire and building safety expectations. Tenant feedback will inform future annual reviews and communication improvements.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 Implementation will be managed through existing Property Services and Housing Services resources and funding outlined in the Adaptations Policy 2025-2028. There may be costs associated with assessments, communication materials, storage reviews or safety works. Where damage or non-compliance results in costs to the Council, recharges may be considered in line with the Repairs Recharges Policy 2025–2028.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The policy supports compliance with landlord health and safety, fire safety, building safety and equality duties, including the Building Safety Act 2022, Fire Safety Act 2021, Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and Equality Act 2010. There are no direct procurement implications unless future approved scooter storage facilities or associated works are required.

4 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

4.1 The policy has been informed by operational learning, complaints, safety guidance and cross-service input from Property Services, Housing, Building Safety and relevant operational teams. Resident-facing materials will include a policy-on-a-page summary, resident guidance, application form, agreement and standard letters. Tenant feedback will inform future review activity as part of the annual test-and-learn approach.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 The policy has limited direct environmental impact. Safe charging requirements may help reduce electrical and fire risks. Future storage solutions should consider energy efficiency, safe electrical infrastructure and sustainable design where practicable.

6 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment should be completed or updated for this policy. The policy directly relates to residents with mobility impairments and includes consideration of reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. Adjustments must be lawful, proportionate and compatible with fire, building and health and safety duties.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT

| Risk | Mitigation | Opportunities |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Financial Exposure - Unsafe storage, charging or damage caused by scooters could create repair costs, insurance issues or liability exposure. | Written approval process, risk assessments, recharge provisions and clear resident conditions. | Reduced avoidable damage, clearer cost recovery and improved asset protection. |
| Exposure to challenge - Decisions may be challenged if residents feel mobility needs have not been properly considered. | Evidence-based assessments, written decisions, review rights, complaints route and EqIA. | More transparent, consistent and defensible decisions. |

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| <p>Innovation - Limited risk. The policy supports a test-and-learn approach and may inform future storage solutions or improved resident guidance.</p> | <p>Annual review and monitoring of complaints, incidents and feedback.</p> | <p>Improved resident information, safer storage models and better cross-service learning.</p> |
| <p>Reputation - Poor handling could create reputational risk, either through perceived unfairness to disabled residents or failure to manage fire safety risks.</p> | <p>Person-centred, risk-based approach with clear communication and reasonable adjustment consideration.</p> | <p>Demonstrates balanced decision-making and resident safety leadership</p> |
| <p>Achievement of outcome - The policy may not achieve intended outcomes if inconsistently applied across teams or schemes.</p> | <p>Clear process, staff guidance, standard documents and annual review.</p> | <p>Consistent service-wide practice and improved resident understanding.</p> |
| <p>Property - Scooters stored or charged unsafely may obstruct escape routes, damage communal areas or increase fire risk.</p> | <p>Prohibition on communal storage/charging unless formally approved; assessment of property type and storage location.</p> | <p>Safer buildings and clearer control of communal areas.</p> |
| <p>Community Support - Residents may be concerned about restrictions or removal of informal arrangements.</p> | <p>Clear resident guidance, written decisions, review route and support to provide evidence.</p> | <p>Improved understanding of shared safety responsibilities.</p> |
| <p>Timescales - Delays in assessment may affect residents' independence or create unauthorised storage issues.</p> | <p>Structured assessment stages, clear application requirements and written outcomes.</p> | <p>Faster, clearer and more consistent decisions.</p> |
| <p>Project capacity - implementation may require officer time for assessments, communications and monitoring.</p> | <p>Use standard forms, templates, resident guidance and existing service structures.</p> | <p>Reduced ad hoc casework and clearer operational ownership.</p> |
| <p>Local Government Reorganisation - Fire safety, building safety and equality duties will remain relevant under any future</p> | <p>Clear governance, transferable policy framework and annual review.</p> | <p>Supports future-ready, standardised housing safety practice.</p> |

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| local government arrangements. | | |
| Other - Unauthorised scooter storage may create immediate fire or evacuation risks. | Clear prohibition, urgent action provisions and escalation where safety risks arise. | Stronger prevention and safer communal environments. |

8 OTHER KEY ISSUES

- 8.1 The policy replaces the 2023 Mobility Scooter Policy and introduces a clearer service-wide approach, including written permission, structured assessment stages, resident information and annual review.

9 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 9.1 The council's current mobility scooter has expired in 2023 and needs reviewing.

The Mobility Scooter Policy provides a consistent framework for managing requests to store and charge mobility scooters in council housing. It balances residents' mobility needs with the council's legal duties to maintain safe homes, clear escape routes and compliant communal areas.

The policy reflects updated building safety, fire safety, consumer standards and Ombudsman expectations.

The main changes include:

- a stronger focus on fire, building and electrical safety.
- clearer rules on storage and charging.
- a structured assessment and written approval process.
- greater consideration of equality duties and reasonable adjustments; and
- improved decision, review, complaint and cost recovery arrangements.

The policy also reflects updated legislation, regulatory expectations, National Fire Chiefs Council guidance, operational learning, complaints learning and Housing Ombudsman good practice.

10 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 10.1 No formal alternative policy options were developed for decision. Continuing with the 2023 policy without revision was rejected because it would not sufficiently reflect updated building safety, fire safety and regulatory expectations. Allowing informal or unmanaged scooter storage was also rejected due to unacceptable fire, obstruction, evacuation and liability risks.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Cabinet/Committee Reports or Cabinet Member Decisions:-

Other Background Documents:-

- Mobility Scooter Policy 2026–2029
- Mobility Scooter Policy 2023
- Fire Safety Policy 2025–2028
- Repairs and Recharge Policy 2025–2028
- Adaptations Policy 2025–2028
- National Fire Chiefs Council Fire Safety Guidance for Mobility Scooters and Similar Device

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 - Resident Consultation Feedback Summary

Appendix 3 – Tenant Summary Policy on a Page

Appendix 4- Mobility Scooter Policy

Appendix 5- Mobility Scooter Policy Guidance for Residents

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment

Winchester City Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Section 1 - Data Checklist

When undertaking an EqIA for your policy or project, it is important that you take into consideration everything which is associated with the policy or project that is being assessed.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2.

| | | Yes/No | Please provide details |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement? | No | No Specific complaints. |
| 2 | Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented? | Yes | Consultation undertaken with Property Services, Housing Services, Neighbourhood Services, Fire Safety and Residents. Feedback informed clarity of decision-making and operational feasibility. |
| 3 | Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective? | Yes | Concerns identified regarding potential disproportionate impact on disabled residents, particularly where storage is restricted. Residents raised concerns about independence, dignity, and access. |
| 4 | Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project? <i>(i.e. Have you completed a self-assessment and action plan for the implementation of your policy or project?)</i> | Yes | Risk of perceived discrimination if decisions are not clearly justified. Mitigated through structured assessment process, documented decisions, and appeal routes. |
| 5 | Does any accessible data regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of concern or potential problems which may impact on your policy or project? | Yes | There is an increasing use of mobility scooters, ageing tenant population, and higher disability prevalence in social housing. Fire incident data highlights risks associated with lithium-ion batteries. |

| | | Yes/No | Please provide details |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 | Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from an equality impact point of view? | Yes | Previous 2023 policy implementation identified inconsistency in decision-making and lack of clarity. Learning incorporated into structured, evidence-based approach. |
| 7 | Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant? | Yes | Balancing legal duties: Equality Act vs Fire Safety and Building Safety legislation. Reputational and legal risk if policy not proportionate or clearly justified. |

Section 2 - Your EqIA form

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Directorate: Housing | Your Service Area: Property Services Asset & Planned | Team: Asset & Planned (impacts wider Teams) | Officer responsible for this assessment: Chris Irons | Date of assessment: January 2026 (finalised April 2026) |
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| | Question | Please provide details |
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| 1 | What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed? | Mobility Scooter Policy 2026–2029 |
| 2 | Is this a new or existing policy? | Existing (revised policy) |
| 3 | Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work. | To provide a safe, consistent and lawful framework for assessing, approving, storing and charging mobility scooters in Council housing, balancing resident independence with fire and building safety obligations. |
| 4 | What are the associated objectives of this work? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure compliance with fire, building and housing safety legislation - Promote consistent and evidence-based decision-making - Support independence of residents with mobility needs - Minimise risk to residents, staff and buildings |
| 5 | Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way? | Primarily disabled residents requiring mobility scooters; also, wider resident population benefiting from improved safety and reduced fire risk. |
| 6 | What are the outcomes sought from this work? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safer buildings and reduced fire risk - Transparent and fair decision-making - Improved resident understanding - Reduced complaints and Ombudsman findings |
| 7 | What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes? | <p>Contributors: legislation, staff training, clear processes, resident communication</p> <p>Detractors: limited building infrastructure, lack of storage facilities, perception of restriction, cost barriers</p> |
| 8 | Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work? | Property Services, Housing Management, Fire Safety Teams, Contractors, Hampshire Fire & Rescue (where applicable) |
| 9 | Who implements the policy or project and who or what is responsible for it? | Implemented by Housing and Property teams; accountable to Service Manager and Head of Service |

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| | | Please select your answer in bold . Please provide detail here. | | |
| 10a | Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently in a negative way? | Y | N | |
| 10b | What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? | No direct evidence of disproportionate impact. However, language barriers may affect understanding of requirements. | | |
| 11a | Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sex differently in a negative way? | Y | N | |
| 11b | What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? | No evidence that policy affects individuals differently based on sex. | | |
| 12a | <p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of disability differently in a negative way?</p> <p><i>you may wish to consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical access</i> • <i>Format of information</i> • <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i> • <i>Personal assistance</i> • <i>Interpreter</i> • <i>Induction loop system</i> • <i>Independent living equipment</i> • <i>Content of interview</i> | Y | N | |
| 12b | What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? | Policy directly affects disabled residents who rely on mobility scooters. Restrictions on storage/charging may impact independence, access, and daily living. Evidence from sector guidance confirms this is a high-impact group. | | |
| 13a | Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation differently in a negative way? | Y | N | |

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| 13b | What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? | No identified differential impact. | |
| 14a | Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of age differently in a negative way? | Y | N |
| 14b | What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? | Older residents are more likely to use mobility scooters. Policy may disproportionately affect older people due to increased reliance on mobility aids. | |
| 15a | Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief differently in a negative way? | Y | N |
| 15b | What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? | No evidence of differential impact. | |
| 16a | Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment differently in a negative way? | Y | N |
| 16b | What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? | No evidence of differential impact. | |
| 17a | Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of marriage and civil partnership differently in a negative way? | Y | N |
| 17b | What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? | No evidence of differential impact. | |
| 18a | Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity differently in a negative way? | Y | N |
| 18b | What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? | Limited relevance; no identified impact. | |
| 19 | Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? | Y | Potential indirect discrimination risk, particularly for disabled and older residents if restrictions are applied without proportionality or reasonable adjustment. |

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| 20 | Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic. | Y | N | Any restrictions are justified on the grounds of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protecting life and safety (fire risk) - Legal compliance with Fire Safety and Building Safety legislation - Ensuring safety of all residents, including other vulnerable groups |
| 21 | How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above? | <p>Reasonable adjustments considered case-by-case in line with Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Needs-led assessment process to avoid blanket restrictions</p> <p>Alternative solutions explored (e.g. adaptations, external storage, DFG routes)</p> <p>Clear communication in accessible formats</p> <p>Right to review and complaints process</p> <p>Staff training on equality, safeguarding, and proportionality</p> <p>Support to obtain evidence (e.g. medical confirmation)</p> <p>Monitoring of decisions and complaints to identify disproportionate outcomes</p> | | |
| 22 | Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan? | Y | N | No immediate adverse impact on service plan; however, resource implications for assessments and potential infrastructure improvements will be made and monitored before and during dissemination. The Policy will be reviewed after 6 months. |

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| Signed by completing officer | Paul Salter |
| Service Manager Sign off | Chris Irons |
| Corporate Head of Service | Karen Thorburn |

Appendix 2 – Resident Consultation Feedback Summary

Mobility Scooter Policy – Tenant Feedback 07/04/2026

largely positive, with respondents rating the policy highly (mostly 4–5 out of 5).

The policy is seen as clear, logical, and well-structured, and one respondent described it as a “good policy exemplar.”

Key Strengths

Clarity and structure:

- The policy is generally easy to understand and logically presented.

Comprehensiveness:

- Content is considered thorough, with helpful supporting sections (e.g. glossary).

High satisfaction scores:

- Respondents gave strong ratings across evaluation criteria, indicating overall confidence in the policy.

Areas for Improvement

Visibility and Awareness (Major Issue)

- A key concern is that tenants are not aware the policy exists. It is not referenced in the Introductory Tenancy Conditions booklet, which is seen as a significant gap.

This particularly affects:

- Older tenants (especially 65+)
- Tenants in general needs housing or bungalows, where shared space issues may not arise
- Tenants with health conditions or disabilities

Implication: Risk of non-compliance or safety issues due to lack of awareness.

Document Structure & Navigation

The glossary is very useful, but:

- It should be introduced earlier in the document or clearly signposted at the beginning

Technical & Compliance Gaps

Missing reference to UK GDPR under the “Information Management” section.

Inconsistent referencing style, including:

- Missing years
- Inconsistent use of brackets and abbreviations

Accessibility (Information Access, Not Format)

Concern is less about readability and more about how tenants find the policy.

Suggests a need for better communication and signposting, especially for vulnerable groups.

Respondent Profile Insights

Respondents include:

- A sheltered housing tenant (65–74, with long-term health condition)
- A general needs tenant (55–64)

This indicates feedback reflects perspectives from older and potentially more vulnerable tenants, which is highly relevant for this policy area.

Key Takeaways for Action

- Improve policy visibility and communication
 - Include in tenancy packs and key documents
 - Target communication toward older and disabled tenants
 - Enhance document usability
 - Move or signpost glossary earlier
 - Address compliance gaps
 - Add UK GDPR reference
 - Standardise referencing format
- Strengthen tenant awareness strategy
Consider proactive engagement (e.g. newsletters, housing officer briefings)

Appendix 3 – Tenant Summary Policy on a Page

Tenant Summary – Mobility Scooter Policy

Plain English Guide

Supporting Independence and Keeping Residents Safe

Winchester City Council recognises that mobility scooters can help residents stay independent, active and connected to their community.

However, mobility scooters can also create safety risks if they are stored or charged in the wrong place. These risks include fire, blocked escape routes, electrical hazards and difficulties during an emergency evacuation.

Why This Policy Is Needed

The Council has a legal duty to keep residents, visitors, staff and buildings safe.

Mobility scooters must be managed carefully, especially in:

- Blocks of flats
- Sheltered housing schemes
- Buildings with shared corridors, stairwells, landings or entrances
- Any building where a scooter could block an escape route or increase fire risk

Mobility scooters must not be stored or charged in communal areas unless the Council has provided a designated, risk-assessed storage facility and given written permission.

What You Need To Do

You must ask the Council for written permission before storing or charging a mobility scooter at your home or in any Council-managed area.

You will need to provide information about:

- Your mobility need
- The type, size and weight of the scooter
- The scooter's battery and charging method
- Where you want to store and charge it
- Any support or adjustments you may need

You must not start storing or charging the scooter until written permission has been given.

How We Make Decisions

Each request is assessed individually.

We will consider:

- Your mobility needs
- Whether the scooter is suitable for the property
- Whether it can be stored and charged safely
- Fire safety and escape routes
- Electrical safety
- The impact on other residents
- Whether reasonable adjustments can be made

There is no automatic right to store or charge a scooter. Approval can only be given where the risks can be safely managed.

Possible Decision Outcomes

After assessment, we may decide that your request is:

Approved

You can store and use the scooter, as long as you follow the conditions given in writing.

Approved with conditions

You can use the scooter, but you must follow specific rules, such as where it can be stored or charged.

Deferred

We need more information or further checks before making a decision.

Refused

We cannot approve the request because the risks cannot be safely managed, information has not been provided, or approval would breach fire or safety requirements.

You can ask for a review within 21 days if you disagree with the decision.

Where Scooters Must Not Be Stored or Charged

- Corridors
- Stairwells
- Lift lobbies
- Landings
- Entrance halls
- Communal escape routes
- Any shared area not formally approved by the Council

This also applies to visitor scooters and, where relevant, powered wheelchairs.

Charging in communal areas is not allowed unless it is within a Council-approved, designated mobility scooter storage facility.

Safe Storage and Charging

If permission is granted, you must:

- Store the scooter only in the approved location
- Charge it only where the Council has agreed
- Follow manufacturer charging guidance
- Avoid extension leads or trailing cables

Keep escape routes clear at all times

- Report any damage, faults or safety concerns
- Follow any conditions set out in your written approval

Scooters with lithium-ion batteries may need extra safety checks before approval is given.

Adaptations and Reasonable Adjustments

The Council will consider reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Please refer to the Adaptations Policy 2025-2028

If a Scooter Is Stored Without Permission

If a mobility scooter is stored or charged without written permission, it will be treated as unauthorised storage.

The Council may:

- Contact you to discuss the issue
- Ask you to move or remove the scooter
- Issue written warnings
- Remove the scooter where legally permitted
- Recover costs where appropriate

Where possible, we will give you the opportunity to put things right unless there is an immediate safety risk.

How to apply for scooter storage – to be added