



Handling Payment and Transaction Policy

Homes for Independent Living

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Medway Council Landlord Services endeavour to ensure the well-being and safety of both residents living in our Homes for Independent Living schemes and its employees. In order to safeguard and support residents and protect Medway Council employees against any allegations of mismanagement this policy gives guidance on handling payments and transactions within the Homes for Independent Living schemes.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy sets out the circumstances and ways in which Scheme Support Officers should handle payment and transactions in Homes for Independent Living schemes.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to Medway Council Staff and residents of Medway Council owned Homes for Independent Living schemes. This policy will be communicated to both staff and residents, and it will be highlighted that the contents of this policy are in everyone's interest.

4. Legislation and Guidance

4.1 Internal

- 4.1.1 Employee Code of Conduct
- 4.1.2 Homes for Independent Living A Handbook for Residents
- 4.1.3 Tenancy sign up procedures
- 4.1.4 Handling money procedure
- 4.1.5 TV Licence procedure
- 4.1.6 Guest Room booking policy and procedure

5. The Policy

- 5.1 Scheme Support Officers are **NOT** allowed to handle resident's monies in any circumstances, other than where this forms part of their support role (see 5.3).
- 5.2 Scheme Support Officers cannot cash cheques, pay bills or collect money for events or raffles on the behalf of residents.

- 5.3 The only occasion where Scheme Support Officers will be required to handle payments from residents on behalf of the Council is where this forms part of their support role and this includes:
 - 5.3.1 Concessionary TV licences
 - 5.3.2 Guest room payments
 - 5.3.3 Hire of communal facilities
 - 5.3.4 New tenants' advance rent payment
- 5.4 Scheme Support Officer must ensure payments / transactions are made in the following ways:
 - 5.4.1 Large payments e.g. rent in advance – cheque, card payments or direct debt.
 - 5.4.2 Guest Rooms – A Scheme AllPay card to be issued to resident, family/ friend for them to make the payment at the nearest PayPoint and return the card along with the receipt to the Scheme Support Officer.
 - 5.4.3 TV licence – A payment system has been set-up for tenants to be able to pay their TV licence fee by direct debit. Scheme Support Officers will encourage residents to complete direct debit forms to collect this annual fee until the resident reaches the age of 75.
- 5.5 In situations where cheques and receipts are handed to Scheme Support Officers, documented records will be kept showing all details of the transaction. These details will be recorded in the official receipt books provided which should be signed by the payee and Scheme Support Officer.
- 5.6 In all cases a receipt from the scheme receipt book will be completed and a copy given to the payee, and the other copies maintained for records.
- 5.7 Any cheques will be held securely in the locked scheme cash box and banked as soon as feasibly possible.
- 5.8 Social clubs and associated funds are **NOT** the responsibility of the Scheme Support Officer. Scheme Support Officers must not be responsible for the running of bank accounts or holding money relating to social clubs that may exist within the schemes.

6. Role, Responsibilities and Authority

- 6.1 The Assistant Director Physical and Cultural Regeneration retains the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 6.2 The Neighbourhood Services Manager is responsible for the operational delivery of this policy, the associated procedures and has the responsibility for ensuring that this policy complies with Regulatory and Legislative requirements.

7. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

- 7.1 Senior management will regularly monitoring this process to ensure that Scheme Support Officers are handling payments/transactions in line with this policy. Failure to do so could result in the senior manager referring to the Medway Council disciplinary procedure.
- 7.2 The results will be used by Landlord Services to inform future policy review in this area and drive up service standards. All reviews will consider whether:
- 7.2.1 The current policy adheres to legislative and regulatory requirements, and reflects current good practice
 - 7.2.2 The aims and objectives of the policy being met
 - 7.2.3 The current policy outcomes meet the needs and aspirations of the Council's diverse resident base
 - 7.2.4 Residents are aware of and understand the policy and believe it to be consistent and fair
 - 7.2.5 The policy provides sufficient choice for residents; the service offers value for money
 - 7.2.6 Partnership arrangements are working effectively
- 7.3 Overall monitoring and review of the policy will be undertaken in consultation with:
- 7.3.1 Staff groups
 - 7.3.2 Members
 - 7.3.3 Existing and future service users
 - 7.3.4 Resident and community groups
- 7.4 This policy will be reviewed every two years or in line with legislative or regulatory changes.

Policy Version Control Sheet

Policy Title: Handling Payment and Transaction Policy

Policy Author(s): Homes for independent Living Team Leader, Business Development Officer, Policy and Partnership Manager

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Cross References: Homes for Independent Living Handbook, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy, Guest Room Booking Policy.

Amendments Made: This Version: October 18 V.3 5.4.2 amended to just reflect Guest booking payments. Point 5.4.3 added to identify that a scheme has now been set up so that tenants can pay TV licences by direct debit.

July V2 2017 Changes made to previous policy to ensure that it coincides with current procedure.