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1 Overall purpose

This policy sets out the principles behind keeping a pet in a Leeds Federated property.

The Policy supports Leeds Federated’s vision of ‘Building Futures Together’ and is aligned with the following goals of the Association:

- Goal 1: Sustain**
- Goal 2: Engage**

2 Context

This policy has been reviewed in light of the Charter for Social Housing Residents with particular focus on Chapter 6: To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in.

3 Background

Leeds Federated recognises the positive effect that pet ownership can have on the general health and wellbeing of our tenants. Leeds Federated will allow our tenants to keep a pet where the property type is suitable, the welfare of the animal is assured, that they comply with the terms of the tenancy agreement and where the safety of staff and the general public is ensured.

This Pet Policy outlines:

- The number of pets allowed in each household.
- The type of accommodation suitable for pets.
- The types of pet and/or breed of animal that we will not allow to be kept in our accommodation.
- The legislation that we will follow in the event of enforcement action becoming necessary.

4 Introduction

Leeds Federated recognises that our tenants may need guidance on the type of pet suitable for their accommodation so they can make informed choices and to ensure compliance with the terms of their tenancy agreement.

Leeds Federated also works closely with our partner agencies in many areas of Leeds, Wakefield, North and West Yorkshire and we are keen to promote responsible pet ownership in these areas.

Tenants must obtain written permission from Leeds Federated if they wish to keep a pet in one of our properties. This permission will not be unreasonably withheld and we will support these applications where possible.

It should be noted that tenants will only be allowed to keep a reasonable number of pets in their property. In making these decisions certain criteria will be taken into consideration such as type of animal, type of accommodation needed for the animal, size of property and the number of people living in the property. We will consider this on a case by case basis.

Special consideration may need to be made in relation to applications for pets, in particular cats and dogs, in the following circumstances and these will be made on a case by case basis but supported where possible:

- Properties where the only outside space is a communal yard or garden
- Flats or bedsits with communal entrances (that is an entrance that is shared by more than one dwelling place), communal walkways, shared staircases or corridors.
- Sheltered accommodation, unless a scheme specific LLP applies.

We will particularly support applications made where the tenant requires the use of an assistance animal due to sensory or health issues. In these circumstances a full appraisal of the accommodation as a whole, household members and the suitability for pets should take place. If it is found that the accommodation no longer meets the needs of the tenant safely and permission for a pet cannot be granted, then a transfer to a more suitable property should be offered or the tenant given assistance to apply for properties with other providers.

All pets must be securely contained when staff and/or contractors attend the property.

Exceptions:

Leeds Federated will not allow dogs referred to in the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 to be kept as a pet in their accommodation.

Other animals that would not be allowed in Leeds Federated properties include:

- If the animal has ever caused injury to a person or is subject to any court action or is dangerous in any way e.g. a venomous or constricting snake. This would include all animals prescribed under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 and any dog subject to the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (which states that any type of dog can be classed as being dangerously out of control and therefore subject to this legislation).
- Animals that are not domestic animals which include wild animals, primates, livestock, poultry (except hens and pigeons in some cases, but not cockerels) and horses.
- Racing pigeons can only be considered if the tenant is a member of the Royal Racing Pigeon Society and again permission would depend on suitability of the tenancy and the property.

Management of permissions:

- Permission to have a pet can be rescinded at any time by Leeds Federated if we feel that the animal being present in the property is having a negative impact on our tenants, staff, contractors or the environment.

- The animal is causing nuisance, by way of barking / fouling or damage to our property
- The number of pets has increased to an unacceptable level or exceed the initial number of pets permitted. Please refer to the Hoarding Guidance.
- We have concerns for the animal's welfare.
- Failure to comply with the Pets Policy may be deemed as a breach in tenancy and action could be taken as a result, which may include possession proceedings.
- In the absence of express permission for specific events, no pets will be allowed in communal lounge and kitchen areas in sheltered schemes.

Enforcement:

Where Leeds Federated receive complaints and/or evidence of pet related nuisance, enforcement action may be taken. This could include (but is not limited to) permission rescinded, Formal Tenancy Warnings, Injunction orders and/or local authority fines. Where necessary matters could also be referred to the police for criminal investigation. Please refer to the ASB Policy and Procedure and Hoarding Guidance.

6 Communication Plan

Leeds Federated will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and any changes through staff induction and team meetings. This will be reviewed through the staff supervision and appraisal process.
- Ensure that tenants are advised of any relevant policy reviews through general communication methods including via the e-News, Leeds Federated website etc

7 Implementation

The Customer Services Management Team are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and reviewed.

It is the responsibility of all Leeds Federated staff to ensure that their work is carried out in accordance with this Policy. This will ensure that the Pets Policy is delivered consistently.

This Policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if necessary to ensure it is meeting its overall purpose and supporting the goals of the Corporate Plan.

8 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Leeds Federated will monitor, evaluate and report on the activities undertaken to deliver this Policy, in particular, through:

- Thorough sign up procedures
- Anti-Social Behaviour policy and procedures
- Hoarding guidance
- Robust Estate Management practices
- Effective complaints procedure
- Staff supervision and management (eg 1:1 meetings, team meetings, feedback)

- Housing management system

9

Equality Analysis

An Equality Analysis for the Pets Policy has been completed.