
Communal Cleaning Maintenance Charges

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: 26 August 2025

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Gurjit Kaur Minhas
- Author contact details: 0116 454 5144
- Report version number: V3

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the findings of a review of cleaning and associated charges for communal areas in council owned sheltered housing and flatted accommodation. The report also highlights the improved and enhanced cleaning standards, which are now being rolled out across council estates.
- 1.2 The need for this review stemmed from enquiries about cleaning from residents living in the Burns Flats on Aikman Avenue in 2023/24. This led to a wholesale city-wide review of communal cleaning provided to council tenants and leaseholders during 2024/25. The review has identified that the service level of cleaning needed to be enhanced to address current service issues.
- 1.3 The Council do not make money out of communal cleaning charges, overall the service cost equals the charges to tenants.
- 1.4 There is no evidence of a review being carried out before, service levels have evolved over time. The charges appear to be associated with the level of service that was provided when the cleaning arrangements were initially set up.

2. Recommended actions/decision

- 2.1 To note the findings of this report and to agree the recommendations set out in section 4.2.

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

- 3.1 Housing Officers have engaged and been working closely with the Burns Flats Action Group, the group has been set up by residents, with the support of the Housing Division and Ward Cllrs from the Western Ward. Council officers have worked closely with the group to improve and enhance cleaning at the Burns Flats. One of the requests of the group was that the council take a deeper dive into cleaning to check that all tenants across the city were getting value for money.

4. Background and options with supporting evidence

- 4.1.1 Clean and tidy communal areas are important to Leicester City Council residents, in fact satisfaction with communal areas is a question contained within the annual Tenants Satisfaction Survey, an area we have significantly improved from 23/24 when it was 49% to 70% in 2024/25.
- 4.1.2 The charging for cleaning in sheltered housing and other council flatted accommodation was aligned to the service needs at the time when arrangements

were initially set up and was based on historic calculations. There appears to be no evidence of a review having been carried out before.

4.1.3 We have now also recognised that other communal charges have not been reviewed, cleaning is the first area we have reviewed: further reports will be brought to you about other communal charge areas in due course.

4.1.4 Not all communal areas are cleaned by the council, in some cases residents decided to clean the areas themselves, so as not to pay an additional charge. This is the case for some blocks in the Rowlatts Hill area and other parts of the city. This needs to be reviewed locally as complaints are being received, where residents are not carrying out the cleaning in these blocks as originally agreed and the council is having to carry out deep cleans at an additional cost to the HRA.

4.1.5 Over 50 sites are cleaned, and over 5500 properties are chargeable for communal cleaning. The cost of cleaning is based on the time spent and frequency of cleaning taking place in each block.

4.1.6 The cleaning of communal areas is carried out by our internal cleaning teams, who are based in Estate & Building Services. The overall cost last year charged to the Housing Revenue Account for this service was £870k. The income that potentially could be collected from residents is approximately £965k, however once void properties and non-payments are factored in, the actual amount of income collected would be reduced and would approximately equate to the cost the housing division pays for cleaning services. The full list of cleaning charges is attached at appendix A.

Review Findings

4.1.7 The review has identified that service levels needed to be enhanced, due to increased service needs. As part of this review, we have been able to secure increased and enhanced levels of cleaning, and we are confident that the level of cleaning now aligns to the charges. The rolling programme of enhanced cleaning has taken place across the city and significant improvements have now been made on sites such as the Burns Flats with sustained positive feedback received from residents. See below communal areas and laundry room after enhanced level of cleaning was introduced at the flats.



- 4.1.8 The review has also identified that some residents are not being charged for the level of service they are receiving, however in most cases there are not significant differences in the charge applied and the actual cost of the cleaning carried out.
- 4.1.9 For sheltered housing the review has identified a significant disparity between the charges made to tenants and the level of cleaning provided. It appears we are not charging for the full cost of the service. This is because some cleaning was previously carried out by sheltered housing wardens, who were based on site all the time. Since moving away from this model of operating the service, arrangements have changed. Therefore, we need to carry out a more detailed review of all charges across all sheltered housing, along with a review of investment that is required in these units to enhance services provided to tenants.

4.2 Recommendations:

- 4.2.1 To note the findings of the report
- 4.2.3 We can use the review as an opportunity to see if flats that have previously opted out wish to consider opting back in, to having their communal areas cleaned by the council.
- 4.2.4 To note that more formal monitoring arrangements have now been put in place and housing and cleansing staff are meeting regularly to ensure that cleaning standards are being met across the City. An annual review will now take place to ensure that cleaning charges align to the service being provided.
- 4.2.5 To resource a specific project to review the sheltered housing offer, so that an in-depth review of can be carried out of all sheltered housing charges and the service provided.

5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The cleaning service currently costs £870k per year. If annual reviews are being set up, it needs to be ensured that any change to costing is recharged back to the tenants as required so that the HRA isn't subsidising the service. The same applies for any new blocks opting into the service.

Signed: Jade Draper, Principal Accountant

Dated: 05/08/2025

5.2 Legal implications

The Leicester City Council is entitled to charge for the cost of communal cleaning pursuant to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, the Council's tenancy agreements and under the Council's Terms and Conditions of tenancy.

The costs however must be reasonable, and the service provided should also be to a reasonable standard.

It would follow that if the Council is undercharging some tenants for a service, that sum can be increased and where the Council is overcharging, the sums should be refunded or reapplied to the tenant's account. This would ensure fairness and transparency across the various estates which are managed by the Council where service charges are applicable.

Signed: Shazmina Ghumra (Principal Lawyer – Civil Litigation)

Dated: 12 August 2025

5.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The report outlines the findings of a review of cleaning and associated charges for communal areas in council owned sheltered housing and flatted accommodation, as well as highlighting the improved and enhanced cleaning standards, which are being rolled out across council estates. Recommendations in section 4.2 cite how this work will be progressed, and we need to be clear about any equality implications these may have.

We must consider the likely impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed review of all sheltered housing charges and the service provided, their protected characteristics, and in this case having a disproportionate impact on older people as they are the main residents of sheltered housing schemes. Where negative impacts are anticipated, mitigating actions that can be taken to reduce or remove that negative impact should be considered. It is recommended that an Equality Impact Assessment be undertaken, to demonstrate, that the consideration of equalities impacts has been taken into account as part of the proposed review and as an integral part of the decision-making process.

Signed: Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer

Dated: 5.8.2025

5.4 Climate Emergency implications

There are no climate emergency implications arising directly from this report.
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Signed: Phil Ball, sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2246
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Dated: 8 August 2025

5.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

6. Background information and other papers:

7. Summary of appendices:

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

9. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?

Appendix A

Site	What We Charge 2025
Aikman Avenue	£5.53
Beatty Avenue	£2.26
Beaumanor Road	£4.36
Beaumont leys	£2.64
Beaumont Leys - Bluegates	£1.68
Colserdale flats	£2.26
Gisborne Court	£2.26
Grantham Road	£3.45
Highfields Multi - Occupancy	£3.41
Lombardy Rise	£2.26
Martindale Close	£2.26
Mowmacre Estate	£1.34
Neston Gardens	£1.22
Rowlatts Hill	£2.26
Rushey Mead	£2.26
St Leonards Court	£2.26
St Marks	£5.53
St Matthews	£5.53
St Peters	£5.53
Tatlow Road	£1.25
West Court	£5.53
West End	£2.26
Wiltshire House	£2.26
Citygate	£2.59
Zip Building	£2.59
Sheltered Housing Schemes	£2.26