



To: Executive Councillor for Housing: Councillor Kevin Price  
Report by: Director of Customer and Community Services  
Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing 29/9/2015 Scrutiny Committee  
Wards affected: All

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**Key Decision                      HOUSING FENCING POLICY**

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## **1. Executive summary**

This report represents a Fencing Policy and sets out proposals for consistent standards of delivery for new and replacement fencing on the City Council's housing estates.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to approve the proposed Fencing Policy as described in sections 3.6. 3.7 and 3.8 below.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. The Council's housing estates include significant lengths of boundary fencing and a wide range of different boundary fencing materials and styles.
- 3.2. The provision, replacement or repair of boundary fencing has become an increasingly high priority for our residents who have concerns about security and protection of their properties. Maintaining the quality of boundary fencing also has a significant impact on the overall appearance of our estates.
- 3.3. Demand for fencing will always exceed resources available and there is a need for a consistent and transparent policy to manage demand and deliver the work fairly within budgetary restrictions that vary and which will, inevitably, always have to apply to this type of work.

3.4. However, no formal fencing policy exists although there is a general standard approach to fencing around Council houses that has been in operation for a number of years.

3.5. The proposals described below therefore represent realistic and reasonable standards which can be readily explained to tenants and can be applied consistently regardless of demand and budgetary constraints. The standards which would be enforced as the “City Council’s Fencing Policy” include criteria for the allocation of annual resources, minimum requirements for individual situations, response times and specifications for the materials to be used to ensure a consistent appearance.

### 3.6 Proposed Fencing Policy (provision standards)

The proposed standard for fencing will be as follows:

Area	Type of fencing to be installed
<b>Council Houses and flats</b>	
Front garden – dividing fences	900mm high PVC coated Pre-galvanised wire chain-link fence with concrete posts
Front garden – boundary fence adjoining highway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 900mm high(nominal) timber fence to match existing style (panel/close boarded/picket)with concrete posts.</li> <li>• Double gates to be installed <u>only</u> if there is a dropped kerb and driveway.</li> <li>• <b>Note:</b> Where none exists then it will be the tenant’s responsibility to arrange and implement any work required in compliance with the procedure for Tenant Alterations.</li> </ul>
Back gardens – dividing fences and rear fences	2m long x 1.8m(nominal) high close boarded timber privacy panel (usually adjoining house wall) with concrete posts, elsewhere to be continued with 1200mm high chain-link fence with concrete posts.

	<b>Note:</b> The provision of any more extensive close boarded fencing is a tenant responsibility and will only be replaced with the minimum standard of fencing as described
Back garden boundaries adjoining public highway/footpath	Generally 1.8m (nominal) high close boarded timber fencing with concrete posts but may be 1m high to suit circumstances and adjoining boundary conditions.
Exceptional circumstances	In exceptional circumstances (eg where required for disability or specialist medical conditions) alternative fencing may be considered as required.
<b>Communal areas</b>	
Parking areas & landscaped areas	600mm high knee-rail type fencing with timber or concrete posts and metal or timber rails to suit location
Recycling areas	1.8m high hit and miss timber board fencing with concrete posts
Drying areas	1.8m high hit and miss timber board fencing with concrete posts
Boundary of Council land	Various
Alleys and public access passageways	1.8m high close boarded timber fencing with concrete posts.
Estate fencing – garage blocks	1.8m high close boarded timber fencing with concrete posts

### 3.7 Proposed Fencing Policy (Materials Specifications)

3.7.1. It is proposed to standardise the fencing specification that is used for all different types of fencing work. Fencing for both existing housing and new build housing projects will therefore be installed to the same specification in future.

- i. Fencing Posts - concrete posts will be used in all future works to maximise the life of fencing and minimise future maintenance

costs. (timber fence posts generally have useful lifespan of only 7-10 years).

- ii. Chain Link Fencing – this will replace the previous practice of delineating garden boundaries using simple post and 3 strands of wire which provides no security for animals or small children. Post and wire has proved unpopular with residents as a minimum standard so the proposal is to use pre-galvanised, plastic-coated chain link fencing as divisional fencing between gardens.

3.7.2. Where timber posts are used for exceptional fencing repairs then min 100 x100 mm tanalised (pre-treated) timber posts will be used.

3.7.3. Consideration will be given to the use of modern materials, such as recycled synthetic (non-timber )long life fencing posts and panels, where it can be demonstrated that improvements in durability and value for money can be achieved.

### **3.8 Proposed Fencing Policy (delivery)**

#### **3.8.1. Planned replacement**

Each year the available capital fencing budget will be allocated

- i. 50% to be spent on targeted “estate” projects identified from cyclical Planned Repairs estate surveys (seven-year cycle). Fencing identified and ordered in a planned way often represents better value for money than carrying out repairs in an ad-hoc responsive way.
- ii. 50% to be spent on individual jobs drawn from a “holding list” of replacement requests reported by residents or via the response repairs team.

Holding List - When fencing has reached the end of its life and can no longer be economically repaired, the replacement work will be added to a “holding list” and completed in order of priority subject to allocated funds as above.

#### **3.8.2. Day to day repairs**

Small fencing repairs will continue to be carried out as a part of the Council’s day to day response repairs service. However this work has to be generally restricted to small repairs(not replacements)and includes attending to single broken fence posts, or urgent work to

make fences safe. Wherever possible, all non-urgent fencing repairs will be put into batches and ordered in a planned way from the “Holding List”.

### 3.8.3. Emergencies

If a fence blows down in the wind, or is vandalised, the Council will attend to make it safe either as an emergency or urgent response, within 24 hours or 3 days respectively depending upon actual circumstances, but full replacement may not take place at the same time. The work to replace the fence will generally be placed on the “holding list” for completion as 3.8.1 ii above.

### 3.8.4. Disability adaptations

Facilitating access to and from gardens, or making access safe, for a disabled occupant is one of the eligible works under the Council’s Disability Adaptations Policy. This could include fencing works and would be carried out subject to an assessment from an Occupational Therapist.

### 3.8.5. Exceptional circumstances

There are sometimes exceptional circumstances that may affect the type of fencing that is installed. This could include requirements for additional security, anti-social behaviour, medical conditions, other social reasons. Sometimes the issues that make circumstances exceptional may be confidential in nature, and this sometimes leads to questions about fairness from neighbours. Decisions about exceptional circumstances will be referred to the Head of Estates & Facilities.

## 4. Implications

### (a) **Financial Implications**

The cost of chain-link fencing with concrete posts is more expensive per metre than single strand wire fencing with timber posts. However the life of the fence will be longer so this will be better value for money overall.

### (b) **Staffing Implications** (if not covered in Consultations Section) None

- (c) **Equality and Poverty Implications**  
Delivery of works to take note of priority groups and requests where appropriate.
- (d) **Environmental Implications**  
The proposal has a low positive climate change impact.
- (e) **Procurement**  
None
- (f) **Consultation and communication**  
None
- (g) **Community Safety**  
Adoption of this policy will result in improved divisional fencing between Council properties. The use of concrete posts will lead to new fencing being longer lasting.

## 5. Background papers

Equality Impact Assessment  
Environmental Impact Assessment

## 6. Appendices

Illustration of Fencing Styles

## 7. Inspection of papers

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# Housing Fencing Policy (2015)

## Illustration of Fencing Styles

### Chain Link fencing

900mm and 1200mm high green plastic coated wire chain link fence on concrete posts  
General garden dividing fence Rear, left and right boundaries:



### Timber picket fence

900mm high (or 1800mm high to drying areas)  
concrete posts and timber gravel boards, single gate to footpath and double gates to driveway



**Close boarded boundary fencing**

1800mm high timber feather-edge fence (with gate on concrete posts where required) and concrete gravel boards. Rear against public right of way:



**Knee rail Fencing**

600mm high tubular metal on timber or concrete posts or timber rails/posts to delineate Car parks and public right of way.





## **Hit & Miss Fencing**

1800mm high timber boards on concrete posts typically as screening to drying areas and recycling areas.

