

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
9 December 2021**

REPORT AUTHOR: Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Economic Regeneration

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor William Powell

Following the recent debate on rodent management at Full Council initiated by the Welsh Labour Group and subsequent incidents reported to me locally, could you please clarify:

- What arrangements are in place by Powys County Council to address the nuisance and public health implications caused by rodents in Council owned rental accommodation, specifically those designed for and occupied by frail elderly or vulnerable persons and those with additional learning needs or anxiety issues?**
- Are reports of rodent infestation made by residents dealt with as matters of urgency and with effective cross portfolio working, from those responsible for Public Protection and Housing?**
- Subject to appropriate Covid-19 precautions, will the Portfolio holder(s) make themselves available to meet residents in the South Powys area, whose quality of life is being adversely affected by these issues?**

Response

Thank you for your enquiry.

The legal framework relating to your query, which informs the way Housing Services responds, is laid down in the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1947.

The 1949 Act requires the Council to: “take such steps as may be necessary to secure so far as practicable that their district is kept free from rats and mice”. The Council may therefore enforce against the owner or the occupier of land where there an infestation of rates, mice and other pests. As a land and property owner itself, it is under obligation to take similar action to which applies to all property owners or occupiers.

Landowners and occupiers are required to inform the Council in writing if substantial numbers of rats, mice and other pests are present on their land. A landowner or occupier is responsible for the control of all pests and any costs incurred doing so on land they own or occupy. Where a property is unoccupied, it is the responsibility of

the land or property owner to rid the site of pests. If a landowner or occupier refuses to make arrangements to remedy an infestation, the Council in its environmental protection role will allow seven days-notice before terminating pests from any land (occupied or not). Any expenses incurred can be recoverable, if necessary, by means of a County Court judgement.

In Council owned property, if rats or rodents have entered such properties through defects, for example holes in the building structure, then the Council is under a duty, provided in the Environmental Protection Act 1990, to put right the defects which have allowed the vermin to gain access to the property.

With regard to your questions, please see below...

- What arrangements are in place by Powys County Council to address the nuisance and public health implications caused by rodents in Council owned rental accommodation, specifically those designed for and occupied by frail elderly or vulnerable persons and those with additional learning needs or anxiety issues?

Housing Services will look at rodent management where vermin have entered a property or communal area in older or vulnerable persons accommodation, or properties where it has been established that entry is due to a maintenance or repair breakdown. Where necessary, repairs will be undertaken to prevent any further or repeat access.

- Are reports of rodent infestation made by residents dealt with as matters of urgency and with effective cross portfolio working, from those responsible for Public Protection and Housing?

Housing Services deals with rodent infestation promptly, liaising with Public Protection and Environmental Health teams for professional advice in how to effectively deal with the infestation and any repair maintenance work needed to prevent a reoccurrence of the problem.”

- Subject to appropriate Covid-19 precautions, will the Portfolio holder(s) make themselves available to meet residents in the South Powys area, whose quality of life is being adversely affected by these issues?

I am always happy to meet with members of the public to discuss matter related to any of my portfolio responsibilities.