

Area Panel: **28 August, 3 September, 5 September, 6 September 2018**

Briefing Paper: **Performance Review of Allocations Plan and Minor Amendments to the Allocations Policy**

1. Introduction

1.1 The council introduced a new allocations policy at the Policy, Resources and Growth Committee on the 16th December 2016. Within the policy there was an allocations plan that set up 4 queues within the allocations policy and each queue was given a percentage allocation of properties. The performance review report will go to members in September 2018 to report on the performance of the plan from January 2017 to March 2018. The report will request that the percentage of lets to each of the four queue remains that same at

Homeless	40%
Transfers	30%
Homeseekers	20%
Councils interest	10%

1.2 The report also lays out a number of recommendation to the Housing New Homes Committee to make some minor amendments to the allocations policy. This is seen as good practice following on from the major changes introduced in December 2016 to ensure that the policy remains effective.

2. Review of Performance of the Allocations Plan

2.1 The report shows members that the performance on how the lettings of social housing made between January 2017 and March 2018 went against the targets contained in the allocations plan.

2.2 In general, the performance against the plan was good. There is a tolerance of 5% in either direction before officers have to give an explanation on the variance. In the period of the report there was an under performance in the number of tenants who achieved a move. This was however within the permitted variance. The only queue that did not perform within the plan was Homeseekers. There was an over performance of 8% on properties to this group. The reason of the over performance is that when a property is advertised to a particular group and there are no eligible applicants then the property nearly always goes to the Homeseekers queue. This is because Homeseekers are the largest group on the housing register. Officers are looking at the various ways to take corrective action within the next plan period.

3. Minor Amendments to the Allocations Policy

3.1 Following on from a major policy review such as was carried out on the Allocations Policy in December 2016 it is good practice to take a look at the policy to see that it is operating as it is intended and to tweak any areas that are needed.

3.2 Below is a table of minor changes that members are being asked to approve

Changes requested			
1	Band C Sheltered no other housing need – update to restrict this band reason to bids only on sheltered accommodation and not general needs		
2	Point of clarification – award of extra bedroom	Award for carer in conjunction with Social Care. Need for extra bedroom if unable to share a room under the allocations policy	
3	3 bedroom properties with a dining room – increase minimum number of occupants to maximise occupancy level in large properties	Increase minimum number of occupants will enable to bypass smaller households in very large properties	
4	Decrease total household income in policy to One bed £22,000 Two bed £32,000 Three bed and above £36,000	Current level are:- • Studio/one bed rented £15,000 • Two Bed £27,000 • Three bed or above £30,000	
5	Increase savings cap to four months average rent • One bed £5,000 • Two bed £7,000 • Three bed and above £8,200		
6	Increase savings cap for sheltered applicants only to £16,000	Put this in line with Welfare Benefits limits	
7	Waive savings cap on extra care applications. Waiver cases can only be offered	Allow applicants to be self funding in extra care	

	accommodation if there are no other non-waiver case waiting for extra care		
8	Remove sheltered Panel from the sheltered assessment process	No longer required as supporting people funding is no longer in place and therefore no requirement to assess as low, medium or high needs. Case will still be assessed in line with general allocations policy.	
9	Introduce new Band A – sheltered applicant need to move within the same scheme	Replaces the old Local Lettings Plan in Sheltered – must have a need to move	
10	Affordability of accommodation due to the welfare benefit cap – Ability to by-pass applicant who is not able to afford accommodation.	In small number of cases affordable rents are so high that they are not affordable to those in the benefit cap.	
11	Removal of over 50s in adverts. (not over 55 for sheltered)	Needs to be removed as no longer complies with the council equalities duties.	

3.3 The above proposals have been developed with members of the three political groups to make sure that the allocations policy remain up to date. The proposals will only come into force once they are agreed by the Housing & New Homes Committee and the changes are then written into the policy and published on the council's website. The changes will apply to all existing and future applicants for housing.

