

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing

Allocations Policy

1. Purpose of Report

To seek Cabinet approval for an updated Allocations Policy.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that the updated Allocations Policy be approved.

3. Detail

The Allocations Policy sets out who can apply for social housing, how priority is given to different applicants and how the housing register is maintained. It is reviewed annually.

In addition to minor amendments that have been made to wording in the policy for clarity there are a number of other amendments that have been made, which include:

- Amendments required due to the change in Choice Based Lettings software, the system is now known as Homechoice not Homesearch
- More information has been added to the policy regarding actions that will be taken to deter and detect fraud
- Applicants will now be able to ask for a review of the decision not to allow them to join the list due to having no location connection. The Head of Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing can approve that someone without local connection as outlined in the policy can join the housing register in exceptional circumstances.

The new policy and a table to show the changes made are included in the appendix.

4. Key Decision

This report is a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 as it is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards or electoral divisions in the Council's area.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

This report has been updated with changes made by Policy Overview Working Group at their meeting on 6 June 2024.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

There are no direct financial implications arising from the proposed updated policy. All actions outlined in the policy will be achieved using existing budgets. Any significant budget implications in the future, over and above virement limits, would require approval by Cabinet.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

The relevant legislation is contained within the policy document, the most relevant one is Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 that requires a local housing authority to adopt an allocations scheme, and, except in defined circumstances, to allocate property only in accordance with the scheme. When framing the scheme, the Council must have regard to statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State and to its own homelessness and tenancy strategies. The proposals in this policy do not conflict with the statutory requirements or the Council's strategies. This, ultimately ensures there is a robust structure in place for the allocation of social housing.

8. Human Resources Implications

The comments from the Human Resources Manager were as follows:

Not applicable.

9. Union Comments

The Union comments were as follows:

Not applicable.

10. Climate Change Implications

The climate change implications are contained within the report.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

As this is a change to policy an Equality Impact Assessment is included at **Appendix 3** to this report.

13. Background Papers

Nil.