

**INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 11  
AUGUST 2020**

**PART I - DELEGATED**

**4. HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY COMPARISON 2013-2020  
(DCES)**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with an overview of the proposed changes to the way the Council allocates affordable rented accommodation through the Housing Register (the waiting list).
- 1.2 The overview of the proposed changes between the current Housing Allocations Policy and the draft Housing Allocations Policy 2020 is in the format of a comparison document. The comparison document is shown in Appendix One.

**2 Details**

- 2.1 The Housing Allocations Policy must incorporate Government guidance relating to the allocation of social housing and housing legislation released since the Housing Allocations Policy was last updated in October 2013.
  - 2.1.1 This in particular includes guidance around HM Forces personnel and their families, the 'Right to Move', victims of domestic abuse and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 2.2 The qualification criteria has been amended to ensure customers who qualify to join the Housing Register have tangible links to the district. Equally, it ensures groups of customers who are disadvantaged by local connection qualifying criteria by nature are not automatically excluded from qualifying to join the Housing Register.
- 2.3 The priority banding scheme has been amended to better reflect the housing need of customers approaching the Council's for housing advice and assistance. This includes making provisions for customers with multiple needs to be awarded higher priority on the Housing Register.
- 2.4 Other amendments detailed in the comparison document ensures the Policy is inclusive and affordable rented housing is a viable housing option for Three Rivers' residents who are unable to access other housing tenures.
- 2.5 The proposed changes are to be reviewed by Committee prior to statutory consultation with members of the public and our partners.
- 2.6 Following consultation, the final proposed Housing Allocations Policy will be brought back to a future Committee meeting for agreement.

**3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Housing Allocations Policy comparison document is approved by the Committee.
- 3.2 The reason for this recommendation is to ensure the Council's Housing Allocations Policy is fit for purpose, recognises the local needs of housing customers in the district and incorporates all relevant legislation and Government guidance.

**4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. The relevant policy is entitled the Council's Strategic Plan.
- 4.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators.
  - 4.2.1 HN01- Maximum number of households living in temporary accommodation on the last day of the quarter (snapshot)
  - 4.2.2 HN02- Maximum number of families in Bed & Breakfast for more than six weeks
  - 4.2.3 HN03- Maximum number of households in temporary accommodation throughout the year
  - 4.2.4 HN10- Number of households prevented from becoming homeless
- 4.3 The impact of the recommendations on this/these performance indicator(s) is:
  - 4.3.1 The proposed priority awarded to customers in priority need and owed the 'Relief duty' will allow some customers living in temporary accommodation to move into 'permanent' accommodation at an earlier stage during the homeless application process.
  - 4.3.2 The proposed priority awarded to customers owed the 'Prevent duty' will prevent the homelessness of some customers who may be rehoused through the Housing Register before they need to leave their existing accommodation.
  - 4.3.3 The introduction of composite needs (customers with multiple needs) may encourage some customers living in unsuitable housing to remain in their current home if they feel they have a realistic prospect of being rehoused through the Housing Register. Without the provision of composite needs, customers living in housing they feel is so unsuitable may choose to make a homeless application.
  - 4.3.4 The proposed changes will assist the Council to prevent homelessness (HN10) and reduce the demand on temporary accommodation (HN01, HN03). This in turn should negate the need to use bed and breakfast accommodation for families except in absolute emergencies (HN02).

**5 Financial, Legal, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

5.1 None specific.

**6 Equal Opportunities Implications**

6.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact? A relevance test will be complete when the full Housing Allocations Policy is submitted to committee for consideration.	No
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	n/a

See above	
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6.2 Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment will be completed when the full Housing Allocations Policy is submitted to Committee for consideration.

**7 Risk and Health & Safety Implications**

7.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

7.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Housing Services service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

**8 Recommendation**

8.1 That the Committee agree the proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Policy in order to consult with our residents on the proposed changes.

Report prepared by: Kimberley Grout, Head of Housing Services

**Data Quality**

Data sources: none

Data checked by: not applicable

Data rating: not applicable

1	Poor	n/a
2	Sufficient	n/a
3	High	n/a

**Background Papers** - none

**APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix One: Housing Allocations Policy comparison document