
REPORT TO:	HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:	14
DATE OF MEETING:	22 ND APRIL 2004	CATEGORY:	DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	HOUSING MANAGER		OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	DAWN DAWSON (Ext 5797)	DOC:	
SUBJECT:	ALLOCATIONS POLICY	REF:	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:	HCS01

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 Members approve the revised Allocations Policy as shown at Annex One.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To advise Members of the proposed alterations, summarised at Annex Two, to the Allocations Policy, as required by the Homelessness Act 2002.

3.1 Background

- 3.1 The introduction of the Homelessness Act 2002, in July 2003, introduced changes to legislation in terms of those persons to be classed as in 'Priority Need' under homelessness legislation, along with changes to the way in which Allocations were dealt with.
- 3.2 Members will recall that at Housing and Community Services Committee in July 2002, approval was given to consult on the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy, summarised at Annex Two.
- 3.3 Following consultation with partner Registered Social Landlords, TACT, other partner organisations, Officers and the Tenants Panel, the summary of alterations at Annex Two, has been amended to include direction in the granting of joint tenancies, and the introduction of performance monitoring. It is proposed that the Allocations Policy will now also include a statement in relation to Choice in Lettings, as required by the Homelessness Act 2002.

3.4 A full policy document which incorporates existing policy, and proposed amendments has been produced, and is shown at Annexe One.

4.0 Choice Based Lettings

4.1 There now exists a direction from Government to promote choice in lettings. The Choice Based Lettings Scheme operates quite differently from historical Allocations Policies, in that the waiting list in it's current format is removed, and potential tenants bid for properties advertised by South Derbyshire District Council in various media. Suggested methods for promotion include some or all of the following:

- Dedicated web site
- Advertisement in local newspapers
- A 'Lettings' shop
- Advertisements in local organisations

4.2 The Choice Based Lettings Scheme has been seen to work well in pilot areas such as Bolton and areas within London. The analysis of the pilots shows that the scheme does promote choice for social housing tenants, similar to the choices available for those purchasing or privately renting. However, most Choice Based Lettings Schemes are costly to establish, and demonstrate higher revenue costs to enable the scheme to run effectively.

4.3 As the housing department is continuing to make fundamental improvements to it's service, it is not proposed to introduce a Choice Based Lettings Scheme at this time, but the Council will continue to promote choice via the 'Choice in Lettings' part of the policy. It is proposed that the Council will keep abreast of good practice in Choice Based Lettings, with a view to implementing a scheme at a suitable point in the future.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 Non relating directly to this report.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 The Allocations Policy is a tool by which the Council can make optimum use of it's housing stock, for the benefit of the community.

7.0 Community Implications

7.1 The Allocations Policy establishes a fair, open and readily understandable mechanism for matching housing need against available resources, for the benefit of the community.