

---

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>3<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2005</b>	<b>CATEGORY:</b> <b>DELEGATED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	<b>URGENT:</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>Bob Ledger</b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Amendment to the Housing Allocations Policy</b>	<b>REF:</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE:</b> <b>HCS01</b>

---

1. **Reason for urgency**

- 1.1 An urgent amendment of the allocation policy is proposed in order to maintain its integrity and that of sheltered housing schemes.

2. **Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 To agree the following amendment to paragraph 4.12 of the current allocations policy namely that:  
Allocations to sheltered housing accommodation will normally be made to applicants who have within their households a person who is 60 or more years of age. In some locations there may be limited demand from the over 60 age group (particularly for upper floor flats) and in these cases property allocations will be considered to those in other age groups and particularly the 55-60 age group. Any allocation outside the over 60 age group needs the express approval of the Head of Housing.

3. **Detail**

- 3.1 The current allocations policy allows for sheltered housing property to be allocated to anyone over the age of 55. A recent Government circular on properties that are likely to be exempt from the Right to Buy (RTB) clearly states that properties allocated to those below the age of 60 would not be exempt, no matter the circumstances or nature of the property, from the Right to Buy.
- 3.2 It is proposed therefore to amend the allocations policy as detailed at 2.1 to ensure that as far as possible sheltered housing schemes are

retained for occupation by elderly persons. If properties are bought under the RTB, although they may be purchased by the sitting elderly tenant, they could then be sold on to any purchaser of any age.

- 3.3 There are though some 195 first floor sheltered properties that do not have lift access and to varying degrees are less popular with some applicants because of the stairs involved in access. Some of these are likely to be the subject of further declassification from sheltered to general needs housing in the next 12 months. Others though are integral to a distinct sheltered housing community and therefore straight declassification to general purpose stock may not be the immediate answer. The circumstances of each set of properties is being considered in detail and any recommendations for declassification will be taken through the Committee process.
- 3.4 Members are aware that a number of the lower demand sheltered schemes have already been declassified. In lieu of further declassification and to prevent properties remaining unallocated, with the consequent affect on income and performance indicators, it is proposed that the Head of Housing be given authority where the over 60 waiting list has been exhausted to continue to allocate lower demand property to those under 60 as per 2.1

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 As a result of declassification and lettings of sheltered property to those below the age of 60, additional property is eligible for the Right to Buy and will be sold over time generating capital income, which will be subject to national pooling rules, and reducing on-going revenue income.

#### **5. Corporate and Community Implications**

- 5.1 The change to the allocations policy will seek to keep intact as far a possible the integrity of the allocations policy and Sheltered Housing Schemes