

## Housing Allocations Policy – informal Member consultation 4 February 2021

Please find below a summary of the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy. These are the key proposals that Members can shape.

Proposed change	Reason for change	Current policy
<b>1. Local connection</b> Applicant resident 6 out of last 12 months <u>or</u> 3 out of last 5 years, or family members resident last 5 years	Definition in Homeless Reduction Act – cannot discharge some homeless duties currently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicant resident 2 out of last 5 years</li> <li>Family members resident last 3 years</li> </ul>
<b>2. Unacceptable behaviour – housing related debt</b> Those with more than £250 housing debt have to set up payment arrangement for 12 weeks to access Register	Personal responsibility and accountability – improved behaviour of prospective tenants	More than 8 weeks rent owed to be repaid for 13 weeks
<b>3. Income threshold increased</b> £49,998 - one third of ‘average lower quartile housing sale price’ for the district in October 2020.	Number of applicants on Register is not a true reflection of housing need in district. Developers have raised concern about housing need in the district based on current figures.	Current threshold <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>single people £24,628 gross</li> <li>other households £43,098 gross</li> </ul>
<b>4. Private rented tenants recognised</b> Tenants on Assured Shorthold Tenancies awarded lowest level of priority because of tenancy type.	6 month tenancies. Low number of applicants on Register - not a true reflection of housing need in district	Not able to access Register unless in housing need.
<b>5. Homelessness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urgent housing cases - one offer of accommodation only. Officers select locations and property types.</li> <li>Reduced priority for those homeless/threatened with homelessness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants selective over property type/location resulting in unnecessary homelessness declarations.</li> <li>Register is currently top heavy with homeless cases. Myth that you need to be homeless to be housed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 offers made, applicant chooses location and property type</li> <li>High priority.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Unborn children included</b> Unborn children considered once 26 weeks pregnant	Reduces demand on 1 bed properties and unnecessary voids	Unborn children not currently considered
<b>7. Adapted properties</b> Let to disabled household that needs the adaptations	Correct use of adapted properties – best use of stock	Let to highest housing need
<b>8. New developments</b> Properties let to a mixture of bands 1 and 2	To achieve sustainable developments and shape the Place	Let to high band (band 1) only
<b>9. Management category</b> Increased priority to existing social housing tenants in certain circumstances e.g. no longer need adaptations	Better use of stock – two households off the Register	Not in current policy
<b>10. Panel membership</b> Membership of SHDC Officers and Registered Providers with housing in the district	More transparent approach	SHDC Officer membership only

Vikki Cherry, Housing Services Manager. 5 January 2021