

**DECENT & AFFORDABLE HOMES PDG
JUNE 2016**

HOUSING SERVICES ALLOCATIONS POLICY (Addendum)

Portfolio Holder Cllr Ray Stanley
Responsible Officer Nick Sanderson, Head of Housing & Property Services

Reason for Report: The Housing Services Allocations Policy has recently been adopted by the PDG, but it has been pointed out that we can no longer advertise properties as “Sheltered Accommodation”. Due to the withdrawal of funding for Supporting People, and the subsequent ending of floating sheltered housing support, it is prudent to review the definition of “Sheltered Accommodation”, as used by the Council.

“Definition Sheltered Accommodation - Block or scheme of accommodation that consists of self-contained bungalows or flats, with a warden who lives on or near the premises and/or an emergency alarm system.”

The Council no longer has any Sheltered Housing stock and therefore we need to redefine stock that was originally classed as Sheltered Housing for elderly persons. Amending the policy would enable the Housing Options team to allocate the accommodation to those who have a medical need for this type of home and make the best use of the Council’s housing stock to ensure that younger applicants with a medical need are not unfairly disadvantaged.

The addendum report sets out two changes to the current policy that is required to redefine our old stock from “Sheltered” to “Accessible Accommodation (Bungalows)”.

RECOMMENDATION(S): The Cabinet adopts the addendum to the Housing Allocations Policy

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The new corporate plan states that homes are a priority for the Council and that we will continue to manage our Council homes efficiently, by consider the impact of an aging population and help elderly people retain their independence and remain in their own homes.

Financial Implications: As the Council no longer holds Sheltered Accommodation any applicant under the age of 60 now has the ‘Right to Buy’ any accommodation that he/she has been living in for three or more years.

As a strategic housing authority, the Council has to make sure that registered providers make the best use of their stock in order to minimise the cost of meeting the statutory obligations to housing people within the District.

Legal Implications: Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Localism Act 2011) deals with the allocation of social housing. By not following the legislation the Council may run the risk of being challenged under the ‘Right to Buy’ scheme.

Risk Assessment: As a landlord with retained stock, the Council has to let homes in its management in a fair, transparent and efficient way in accordance with the

regulatory framework operated by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The Tenancy Standard sets out a number of expectations and failure to meet these could result in poor publicity and a lack of confidence in the Council as a landlord.

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Circulation of the Report: Councillor Ray Stanley