

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL

Date: Thursday, 11 July 2019

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

Members:

Councillor Mrs K Mandry (Chairman)

Councillor S Dugan (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors I Bastable
J M Englefield
Mrs C L A Hockley
Ms S Pankhurst
Mrs K K Trott

Deputies: L Keeble
S Cunningham



1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 07 March 2019.

3. Chairman's Announcements

4. Declarations of Interest and Disclosures of Advice or Directions

To receive any declarations of interest from members in accordance with Standing Orders and the Council's Code of Conduct and disclosures of advice or directions received from Group Leaders or Political Groups, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

5. Deputations

To receive any deputations of which notice has been lodged.

6. Draft Affordable Housing Strategy Consultation (Pages 9 - 40)

To consider a report by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer which presents the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy Consultation document for Members' consideration.

7. Executive Business (Pages 41 - 42)

To consider any item of business dealt with by the Executive since the last meeting of the Panel that falls under the remit of the Housing Portfolio. This will include any decisions taken by the Executive Member during the same time period.

(1) Void Property Works and Component Improvement Package Works Contract 2019-2022 (Pages 43 - 44)

(2) Use of Flexible Homeless Support Grant (Pages 45 - 46)

(3) Draft Affordable Housing Strategy (Pages 47 - 48)

8. Affordable Housing Update (Pages 49 - 50)

To receive an update by the Affordable Housing Strategic Lead which provides Members with an update on Affordable Housing.

9. Review of Homelessness (Pages 51 - 58)

To consider a report and presentation by the Head of Housing and Benefits which measures achievement against the existing Homelessness Strategy and puts forward for consideration the objectives for inclusion in the new draft Homelessness Strategy Consultation document.

10. Draft Allocations Policy Consultation (Pages 59 - 88)

To consider a report by the Head of Housing and Benefits on the Draft Allocations

Policy Consultation document.

11. Housing Scrutiny Panel Priorities

To provide an opportunity for Members to consider the priorities for the Housing Scrutiny Panel.



P GRIMWOOD
Chief Executive Officer

Civic Offices
www.fareham.gov.uk
27 June 2019

**For further information please contact:
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FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 7 March 2019

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs K Mandry (Chairman)

Councillor S Dugan (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: I Bastable, J M Englefield, Mrs C L A Hockley, Ms S Pankhurst
and Mrs K K Trott

**Also
Present:**



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were tabled for Members' information.

The Chairman advised Members that Vivid Housing has declined the invitation to attend a future meeting of the Panel. However, they have agreed to attend an informal briefing where they will provide an overview of their tenancy management services and new housing development plans.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 13 November 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that in October 2018, the Government launched the Private Rented Sector Access Fund and invited local authorities to bid for funds to provide additional support for single homeless people. Officers submitted a bid for funds and the Chairman was pleased to advise Members that confirmation was received last week that the bid was successful.

The Chairman also announced that a report on the future housing numbers in the Borough will be brought to the next meeting of the Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel which will be held on 12 March 2019. The Chairman of the Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Tom Davies, would like to invite Members of the Housing Scrutiny Panel to attend the meeting as this item may be of interest. The report describes the process for compiling the Housing Need for the Borough using the standard methodology and population projections along with an explanation of why the housing need figures have changed in recent years.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The Panel considered the Executive items of business which fall under the remit of the Housing portfolio, including individual Executive Member decisions, that have taken place since the last meeting of the Panel.

The Panel considered the decision shown at item 6(1) of the agenda.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel considered the following item of Executive Business:

(1) Fareham Housing Development Sites

The Panel discussed the lengthy process involved in preparing sites ready for development and heard how the delegated authority agreed by the Executive in respect of the contract award and appointment of contractor(s) for the Hampshire Rose and Bridge Road development sites has helped to accelerate the delivery of the sites.

7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

Members received a presentation by the Strategic Lead for Affordable Housing which provided the Panel with an update on the progress being made in developing the key sites that are being led by Fareham Housing. The presentation also gave a summary of the processes and procedures that need to be followed in delivering the sites and gave an update on the progress being made with preparing the Council's Affordable Housing Strategy.

A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

8. TENANCY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE REPORT

The Panel considered a report by the Managing Director of Fareham Housing which provided Members with information about the Housing management and maintenance services provided by the Neighbourhood Team and the Repairs and Maintenance Team.

Members discussed the forthcoming informal meeting to be held with Vivid Housing Association and requested that background information such as the numbers of properties held by Vivid and details of other Housing Associations that own properties across the Borough be provided as background information in advance of the meeting.

On considering the report, Members raised a number of questions and comments for clarification which included nomination rights for Housing Association properties, the differences in the levels of Social rents and Affordable rents, some indication that tenancy arrears are rising as a result of the implementation of Universal Credit, responsibilities for people who are made homeless as a result of being evicted from Council properties, reporting measures for responsive repairs and actions arising from Fire Risk Assessments.

The Chairman invited Members who have not yet had the opportunity to visit the depot, to contact the Head of Building Repairs and Maintenance Service to arrange to do so.

RESOLVED that the Managing Director of Fareham Housing be thanked for providing the report.

9. CHANGES TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL FUNDED SOCIAL INCLUSION SERVICES IN FAREHAM

The Panel received a report by the Managing Director of Fareham Housing which sets out the findings of the County's 'Transformation to 2019 Review', the implications to provision of Social Inclusion services in Fareham, and work being undertaken by Fareham Borough Council to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough.

On considering the report, Members raised a number of questions and made comments for clarification which included the changes to the level of floating support as a result of the reduction in County funding.

The Head of Housing and Benefits outlined the successful bid made to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The funding will be used to improve access to private rented accommodation.

Members enquired whether there was anything they could do to assist officers with the provision that is made for rough sleepers. The Head of Housing & Benefits referred Members to the Fareham StreetAid website, which is an online resource that comprises a number of agencies working together to help vulnerable people off the streets of Fareham.

The Panel thanked the Managing Director of Fareham Housing and the Head of Housing and Benefits for providing an extremely well prepared and informative report.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive that the Flexible Homeless Support Grant is used to fund the commissioning of Social Inclusion Services in partnership with Hampshire County Council from 01 August 2019.

10. HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL PRIORITIES

The Panel considered the tabled item – Housing Scrutiny Panel Priorities Plan, attached as Appendix B to these minutes.

Members felt that the plan is a good reflection of the current priorities for the Panel and agreed that changes can be made in due course if necessary.

RESOLVED that the scrutiny priorities for the Panel be approved.

The Chairman announced that the Managing Director of Fareham Housing, Paul Doran, will be retiring at the end of March and that this had been his final meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel. The Chairman placed on record her thanks to Paul for the support and advice he has given over the years and wished him a long and happy retirement.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.55 pm).

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date 11 July 2019

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Draft Affordable Housing Strategy Consultation

SUMMARY

This report provides the Panel with an overview of the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy and invites the Panel to put forward their comments on the document.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Housing Scrutiny Panel consider the report and the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy included in Appendix A. The Panel can then put forward their comments which will subsequently form part of the referral of the document back to Executive once the consultation period on the document has closed.

INTRODUCTION

1. The current Housing Strategy (2010) and Affordable Housing Strategy (2005) have reached the end of their expected period of application. A new Draft Affordable Housing Strategy has now been prepared and was considered by the Executive on 3 June 2019. The Executive agreed that the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy should be published for a minimum six-week period of public consultation.
2. The consultation version of the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy is included as Appendix A to this report. When the consultation period has closed all comments received will be carefully considered and, where necessary and appropriate, amendments will be made to the Strategy. It is then expected that a final draft of the Affordable Housing Strategy will be taken back to Executive in the autumn with the intention of progressing it to adoption.

CONSULTATION

3. Consultation on the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy will take place between 24 June 2019 and 5 August 2019.
4. The draft strategy will be available online during this time and paper copies will also be available in borough libraries and at the Council's reception. The consultation on the draft strategy will be notified/advised through the following: -
 - Press Release
 - Notification through the Council's E-Panel
 - Letter or email to Registered Providers that the Council deal/work with
 - Letter or email to developers/planning consultants that have recently been involved in affordable housing discussions
 - Letter or email to other partners in Aspect Building Communities Ltd.
 - An article in 'Tenants' Voice' (the tenants newsletter)
 - A Tenants' Focus Group
 - An item for introduction/discussion at the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum
5. The comments of the Housing Scrutiny Panel are also sought as part of the consultation process.

THE DRAFT AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY

6. The Draft Affordable Housing Strategy provides relevant context and background together with an understanding of Fareham Borough's affordable housing need. It identifies Key Challenges, as well as Key Objectives and Actions, to help address the need. The strategy also touches on the role of the Local Plan in new affordable home delivery, who/how the actions will be delivered and a timetable for short/medium term achievements as well as an overview of funding.
7. In a slight difference from previous strategies the focus is no longer purely on a quantitative delivery of affordable homes. This new draft strategy not only looks to provide more affordable homes but to also ensure they are the right homes in the right places for those in need of affordable housing.

8. The Draft Affordable Housing Strategy covers the following: -

- Purpose
- A great place to live
- What is Affordable Housing?
- Who can provide Affordable Housing?
- Affordable Housing in Fareham
- Fareham's affordable need
- The Waiting List
- Shared Ownership
- Local Plan
- Key Challenges
- Key Objectives
- Actions
- Who/How and Timetable

HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL

9. Following Executive approval for the draft strategy to be published for a period of public consultation it is now an ideal juncture for the Housing Scrutiny Panel to raise questions or comments in relation to the draft strategy.

RISK ASSESSMENT

10. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report

CONCLUSION

11. This report provides panel members with an overview of the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy and invites the Housing Scrutiny Panel to put forward their comments which can subsequently form part of the referral of the document back to Executive once the consultation period on the document has closed.

Appendices: Appendix A – Draft Affordable Housing Strategy

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Robyn Lyons. (Ext 4305)

FAREHAM'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY

**DRAFT
FOR CONSULTATION**



CONTENTS

3	Purpose
4	A great place to live
6	What is Affordable Housing?
7	Who can provide Affordable Housing?
8	Affordable Housing in Fareham
9	Fareham's Affordable Housing Need
10	The Waiting List
11	Shared Ownership
12	Local Plan
14	The Last Five Years
15	The Next Five Years
16	Key Objectives
17	Key Challenges
18	Actions to Achieve Key Objective 1
20	Actions to Achieve Key Objective 2
22	Actions to Achieve Key Objective 3
24	Funding & Delivery
25	Timeline
26	Have your say

PURPOSE

To provide more affordable homes, ensuring they are the right homes in the right places for those in need of affordable housing.

Helping to deliver Housing Choices





A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE...

Located in an area of some 30 square miles along the south coast of Hampshire between Portsmouth and Southampton, Fareham is a popular and attractive place to live. It is well connected to the M27 motorway and has good rail links to London and the wider rail network. There is also easy access to ferry ports and Southampton airport.

Fareham is growing. Our population has steadily increased over the last 30 years and that trend is expected to continue. People are living longer and we have an increasingly ageing population.

For example, Fareham has experienced the largest rise in the number of residents aged 85+ in Hampshire during the last 20 years. By contrast the number of people of working age living in the Borough has reduced; particularly those aged between 25 and 39.

Consistent with the rest of the country the make-up of Fareham's households is changing. Around a quarter of people now choose to live alone so that adds to the number of smaller homes that we need. Additionally an increase in divorce and break ups means more homes are needed as there are now more 'blended families' living together than ever before. Minority ethnic groups make up a small, but slowly growing, proportion of the population.

Fareham has five distinct communities: **Fareham town; Portchester; Titchfield; Western Wards** and **Hill Head and Stubbington**. The development of **Welborne**, made up of around 6,000 homes, will create a new distinct community.



50,000 | THE APPROX NUMBER OF HOMES IN OUR BOROUGH AT PRESENT

4,200 | THE CURRENT APPROX NUMBER OF HOMES THAT FALL INTO THE CATEGORY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

At present there are around 50,000 homes in our Borough and most of these properties are either owned outright or mortgaged.

Just over 4,000 homes fall into the category of “affordable housing”. Over the next two decades, as the Borough grows, it is estimated that in the region of 10,000 new homes will be built, of which 3,500 will be affordable.

This document provides a definition of affordable housing and explores the level of housing needed in the Borough of Fareham. The Council’s housing waiting list provides a starting point for identifying the level of local need but should not be viewed in isolation. For example, the many people seeking shared ownership properties also form part of the affordable housing market.

This document explains how the need for affordable housing will be built into the Council’s planning and policy documents and how the majority of new affordable properties will be delivered by housing developers as part of the planning process.

As well as taking an overview and providing a policy framework for the provision of affordable housing, we also intend to build new Council houses.

This document identifies the main sites where Council housing can be delivered over the next five years, as well as setting out a vision for delivery of Council housing in the medium term.

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

'Affordable Housing' is formally defined in the National Planning Policy Framework. This includes a number of different affordable tenures/types. Affordable Housing ranges in terms of how affordable it is and who it is intended for.

The average cost of buying a two-bedroom house in our Borough is around £230,000, whilst the average cost of renting such a property is around £840 per month.

For some people, these costs are simply too high, and we have a responsibility to ensure that they have access to a range of 'affordable housing' alternatives.

Eligibility for Affordable Housing is determined by many factors, but mainly it is the level of household income.

Various Affordable Housing schemes exist including Starter Homes and Rent to Buy, but the main options available in our Borough are:

- Homes for Social Rent
- Homes for Affordable Rent
- Shared Ownership

This page describes what these options might cost for a two-bedroom property.

£230,000

THE AVERAGE COST TO BUY A TWO-BEDROOM PROPERTY IN FAREHAM
(Typically over £1,000 per month mortgage repayments).

SOCIAL RENT

Social Rent properties are provided by the council or a housing association.

 **£388**

THE AMOUNT YOU WOULD TYPICALLY PAY PER MONTH

AFFORDABLE RENT

Affordable Rent properties are provided by the council or a housing association.

 **£668**

THE AMOUNT YOU WOULD TYPICALLY PAY PER MONTH

SHARED OWNERSHIP

Shared Ownership properties are provided by the council or a housing association.

 **£728**

THE AMOUNT YOU WOULD TYPICALLY PAY PER MONTH

WHO CAN PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING?



On nearly all large developments housebuilders need to provide a proportion of the homes as Affordable Housing as part of the planning process and in order to get planning permission.

In many cases they will use a Registered Provider (e.g. a Housing Association) to provide and manage the affordable homes. The number, mix and specific location of affordable homes on a development site is normally secured through a legal agreement which the developer has to sign up to before a planning permission is issued.

At the beginning of 2019 there were approximately 800 new affordable homes in the pipeline on development sites approved or in the planning process



Sometimes called Housing Associations, there are a number of different Registered Providers operating in the Borough, who own and manage affordable homes.

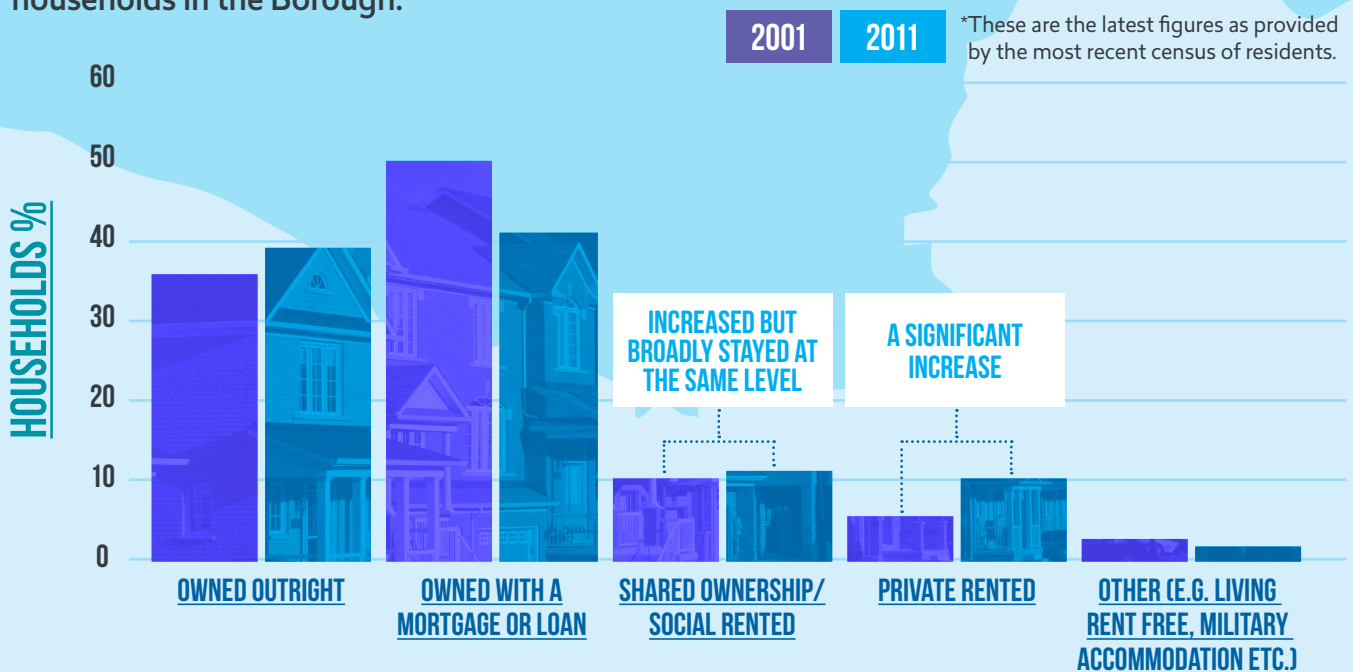
They mainly offer homes for reduced rent (known as Affordable Rent), Social Rent or Shared Ownership. Registered Providers (such as Vivid or Radian Homes) tend to deliver/ manage the Affordable Housing provided on private developments and/or bring forward their own sites. In most instances the Council nominate households from the waiting list to the new affordable homes for rent provided by Registered Providers.



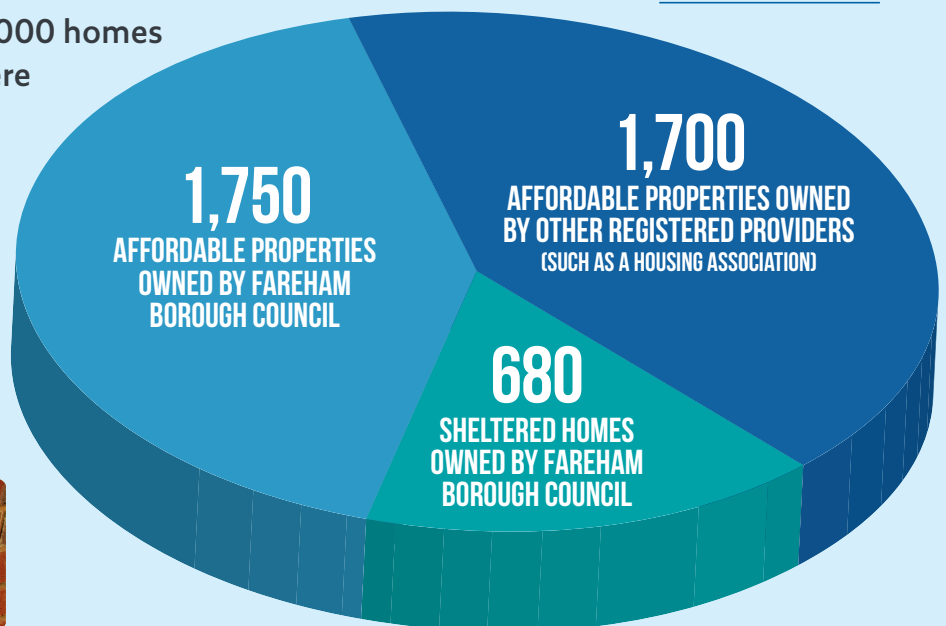
Fareham Housing currently provides Affordable and Social Rent properties, sheltered housing schemes, temporary accommodation and Shared Ownership properties.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN FAREHAM

In the Borough of Fareham most properties are either owned outright or mortgaged. Between 2001 and 2011* there was an increase in the number of properties rented privately or owned outright. The percentage of affordable properties has stayed in the region of 10% of households in the Borough.



In total there are around 50,000 homes in the Borough. Of these there are currently around 4,200 affordable homes. Nearly 60% of these are owned and managed by Fareham Borough Council with the remainder managed by Registered Providers.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED

Our research indicates that the current level of need for affordable homes in the Borough is in the region of 3,000 households.

The waiting list currently stands at around 1,000 households, we know that a similar number of people are seeking intermediate products such as Shared Ownership homes. We also estimate that at least a further 1,000 households are privately renting or sharing parental homes because young families are priced out of homes ownership.



Within this Affordable Housing need is the need for homes for older people. Fareham Borough has experienced the largest rise in the number of residents aged 85+ in Hampshire during the last 20 years and over 20% of the Borough's population are over 65. There is also

an opportunity to improve the quality of some existing older person's Affordable Housing.

Other specific Affordable Housing need can also arise, such as very large family homes or homes fully accessible for the disabled.



FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL'S WAITING LIST

The housing waiting list continually evolves as new customers join the list and others are housed or no longer need housing. The Council's waiting list is for those in need of Affordable or Social Rent

properties. Customers for other forms of affordable housing (such as Shared Ownership) are registered outside the Council, mainly through an organisation called 'Help to Buy South.'

1,000

CURRENT FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL WAITING LIST FOR AFFORDABLE AND SOCIAL RENT HOMES

300 = 30%

**APPROXIMATE PROPORTION IN
GREATEST NEED**

The housing waiting list has not grown significantly in the last three years. This suggests new provision and re-lets of Affordable Housing is generally at pace with the rate of new customers joining the list.

Many households in need can only afford to pay Social Rent and have limited or no alternative housing options.

Many also have strong reasons for seeking properties in a particular area, for example, where children go to school, where their wider family live and access to work.

As we plan for more homes in the future, we will aim to deliver the right type of affordable homes to the right areas including the delivery of properties for Social Rent where the need is greater.





SHARED OWNERSHIP

For customers who don't meet the criteria to be included on the Council's waiting list, Shared Ownership offers an alternative affordable option to get a foot on the housing ladder.

Those interested in this option can register with a Government agency called 'Help to Buy South.' Shared Ownership is typically available to households who earn between £18,000 and £80,000, with savings of approximately £2,500 to cover legal and other costs.

Our research tells us that around 40% of households registered for a Shared Ownership home in our Borough, are currently renting privately, whilst a further 30% are living with family and friends.

Help to Buy South also facilitates the provision of Rent to Buy, another form of affordable housing where the rents are typically 80% of market value with the expectation that the occupiers will purchase the home on a shared ownership basis at the end of the rental period.

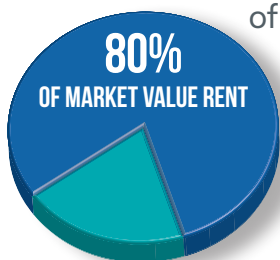


SHARED OWNERSHIP provides a middle ground between those unable to afford an open market house whilst not in need of an Affordable or Social Rent property



Available for households who earn between **£18,000 & £80,000** per annum and those households should also have savings in the region of **£2,500***

*(2018 Help to Buy South website)



LOCAL PLAN

The Borough's overall housing requirement (both affordable and open market) will be set out in the Council's new Local Plan.



- In July 2018 the Government introduced a new way to work out how many homes each area needs to build. This Standard Methodology calculation uses information about expected household growth to work out new housing numbers.
- The number of new homes needed in the Borough of Fareham is likely to be over 500 homes a year up until 2036 (in the region of 10,000 in total).
- The Local Plan will set out what percentage of these new homes should be affordable.
- We estimate that we will need around 3,500 new affordable homes between now and 2036. This is based on the 3,000 identified earlier in this document plus an allowance for growth as new households form.
- Most of these homes will be delivered within market developments, with a smaller number delivered directly by Registered Providers and Fareham Housing.

THE LOCAL PLAN AND PLANNING PROCESS ARE VITAL AS PART OF NEW AFFORDABLE HOME DELIVERY.

The majority of new affordable homes will be delivered alongside market housing, and secured through the planning application process.



IN THE
REGION OF
10,000
NEW HOMES NEEDED
IN FAREHAM BY 2036*

AROUND
3,500
NEW AFFORDABLE
HOMES TO BE BUILT IN
FAREHAM BETWEEN
NOW AND 2036

*Final number to be determined by the Local Plan



THE LAST FIVE YEARS

We can point to a good track record of delivering new affordable homes in the Borough over the last five years.

FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

As a Council, we have built 40 new sheltered housing flats at Collingwood Court in North West Fareham, and 36 new sheltered housing flats at Sylvan Court in Coldeast.

We also constructed six eco-friendly (Passivhaus) homes in Sarisbury and an apartment block of 16 flats in Fareham Town Centre at Stevenson Court.

All of these new buildings fall under the category of Affordable Housing.

DEVELOPERS/ REGISTERED PROVIDERS

Meanwhile, over the last five years, developers and housing associations have provided in the region of 300 new affordable homes.

These were mainly on larger housing developments such as the Coldeast site in Sarisbury and the Strawberry Fields site in Park Gate/Warsash.



400

The approximate number of new affordable homes provided by Fareham Housing and Registered Providers over the last five years.

BUILDING AFFORDABLE HOMES:

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Over the next five years, we plan to build more affordable homes, particularly social rent properties, in the Borough.

FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

HAMPSHIRE ROSE

Fareham North West

18 Affordable homes

123 BRIDGE ROAD

Sarisbury

5 Affordable homes

STATION ROAD

Portchester (sheltered housing)

Over 15 Affordable homes

COLDEAST SCOUT HUT

Park Gate

7 Affordable homes

STUBBINGTON LANE

Hill Head

11 Affordable homes

WYNTON WAY

Fareham North West

Over 10 Affordable homes

Fareham Housing (i.e. the Council) has identified a number of sites that can be developed for Council housing.

Plans and funding are already in place for the Hampshire Rose site in North West Fareham and the Bridge Road site in Sarisbury.

The above lists are not exhaustive and further sites will come forward via private developers, Registered Providers and Fareham Housing.

DEVELOPERS/ REGISTERED PROVIDERS

A larger supply of new affordable homes will come through the planning system where planning policies have required a proportion of new homes on larger sites to be affordable.

When including sites with planning permission, or sites where decisions are expected to be issued shortly (i.e. where Planning Committee has resolved to grant the consent), nearly 800 new affordable homes will be provided. A significant proportion of these should be delivered in the next 5 years.

Some Registered Providers such as Vivid and Radian are also actively seeking and developing sites predominately for Affordable Housing.

CRANLEIGH RD & SEAFIELD RD

Portchester

67 Affordable homes

NORTH & SOUTH GREENAWAY LANE

Warsash

Over 250 Affordable homes

NORTH & SOUTH OF FUNTLEY RD

Funtley

33 Affordable homes

AND MANY MORE APPROVED IN THE PIPELINE

THREE KEY OBJECTIVES



Fareham Borough Council will, through its planning and housing functions, deliver on the following three objectives.

As well as the Council directly providing more affordable homes it will be the policies and requirements through planning, and collaborative working between the Council, Registered Providers and developers, that will help meet the objectives.



To deliver more affordable homes through the planning system.



To ensure those homes are the right homes in the right places and that they are truly affordable for those that need them.



To directly deliver more affordable homes by Registered Providers and Fareham Housing, especially targeting those in greater need.

THE KEY CHALLENGES



- To provide at least 3,500 new affordable homes in the borough by 2036 to help address the affordable need
- To ensure the Council works positively with developers and Registered Providers to get the right amount and type of affordable homes on development sites. This recognises the fact that the majority of newly built affordable homes are delivered alongside market housing on planning schemes (i.e. through the planning system)
- To provide more affordable homes for older people, recognising the ageing demographic of the borough, and improve the quality of existing affordable older person's provision
- To fund more new affordable homes directly by Fareham Borough Council in a financially sustainable way
- To ensure all new affordable homes consider the need, both in terms of size of properties, tenure and location. To support this there is a need to ensure on-going and improved analysis of the Council's waiting list to guide the delivery of new homes
- To address bespoke and particular needs such as wheelchair accessible homes or extra large family homes
- To ensure Affordable Rent is truly affordable for those in need, and that more Social Rent properties are provided
- To ensure policies and strategies used by the Council relating to Affordable Housing reflect the latest legislation/Acts.

ACTIONS

to achieve objective 1

We will:

work positively with the developer(s) of Welborne Garden Village to ensure an appropriate amount and mix of affordable homes is provided

require developers to better match the affordable homes provided on a site to the local affordable need in terms of tenure and size of homes, having regard to the location of the site

continue to review, and where appropriate, critically assess any planning proposals where an Affordable Housing offer is made that does not match our policy and/or local need

be pragmatic, flexible when appropriate and justified, particularly where it facilitates addressing a specific or bespoke affordable need (i.e. more disabled accessible or extra large homes)

develop and progress a new **Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** that addresses Affordable Housing provision; this will be used in planning decisions

encourage appropriate alternative and innovative Affordable Housing approaches such as self build and modular construction

Fareham Borough Council
and Fareham Housing





To deliver more affordable homes through the planning system

Registered Providers and Housing Associations

Housebuilders and Developers



- **Delivering on the actions will not be down to the Council alone. It will also involve housebuilders and Registered Providers, as they play a critical role in providing Affordable Housing. At times it could also involve working in partnerships**
- **The work of the Council will ensure, through policies and an understanding of local need, that the right affordable homes are provided in the right places for those in need of Affordable Housing. Alongside this Fareham Housing will also provide some new affordable homes directly**



ACTIONS

to achieve
objective 2

We will:

produce Key Information on Affordable Housing Need informed by the Housing Waiting List. This will be made available on the website and kept regularly up-to-date. It will focus on the location of need and the mix of size of homes required; this will help inform new Affordable Housing provision

ensure new Affordable Rents (i.e. up to 80% of market rent) do not exceed what could be received in benefits (i.e. a Local Housing Allowance cap)

seek to achieve some of the most affordable of affordable homes, such as Social Rent, both on Fareham Housing led sites and through the planning process. This will be particularly beneficial for those customers subject to the national Benefit Cap

produce a new Allocations Policy. This will include looking at the best way to allocate households to available affordable homes when considering their needs

continue to value partnerships with providers of Affordable Housing and other related supporting organisations to help address Affordable Housing need and homelessness.

Fareham Borough Council
and Fareham Housing



2

To ensure those homes are the right homes in the right places and that they are truly affordable for those that need them.

Registered Providers and Housing Associations

Housebuilders and Developers



ACTIONS

to achieve objective 3

We will:

continue to progress existing Fareham Housing projects to provide approximately 70 new affordable homes across six sites

seek opportunities for larger new build projects, potentially through Aspect Building Communities Limited (the Council's Joint Venture housing delivery company) or in partnership with a Registered Provider

produce a Sheltered Housing Strategy and rolling Sheltered Housing Action Plan to deliver more Sheltered Housing properties for older people and, where required, aim to improve and update existing facilities. Assheton Court in Portchester will be one of the early projects to be addressed

produce a Direct Acquisition Plan outlining the approach to buying a small number of private market houses to be used as affordable homes, particularly when they help address specific needs, principally using Right to Buy receipts

maximise funding opportunities to help provide additional affordable homes

identify and progress regeneration and redevelopment opportunities on existing Fareham Housing land as part of a Fareham Housing Regeneration Strategy.

Fareham Borough Council
and Fareham Housing





To directly deliver more affordable homes by Registered Providers and Fareham Housing, especially targeting those in greater need.

Registered Providers
and Housing Associations

Housebuilders
and Developers



FUNDING AND DELIVERY

In the last few decades there has been a lot of change in how new affordable homes can be funded. Ideally there would be more money to build more.

Registered Providers organise their own funding streams to deliver Affordable Housing. Often this will involve cross-subsidy from other affordable products such as Shared Ownership or even through homes built for the private market.

Fareham Housing projects (i.e. new Council homes) can be funded from the following:

- CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND.
- DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS
- RIGHT TO BUY RECEIPTS
- HOMES ENGLAND GRANT FUNDING
- ADDITIONAL BORROWING ON THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT



TIMELINE



2019/20

- Draft Affordable Housing SPD out for a period of public consultation**
- New Allocations Policy out for a period of public consultation**
- Key Information on Affordable Housing need published on the Council's website**
- Development starts on two Fareham Housing sites**
- Planning applications on at least two further Fareham Housing sites**
- More new starts on new affordable homes.**

2020/21

- New Affordable Housing SPD adopted**
- New Allocations Policy in use**
- Work to complete on two Fareham Housing sites**
- Work to commence on at least two further Fareham Housing sites**
- Direct Acquisition Plan adopted and in use**
- Improved monitoring of Affordable Housing delivery, not just the number but the tenures/sizes provided and any bespoke need addressed**
- New Sheltered Housing/Retirement Accommodation Strategy progressing**
- Regeneration Strategy work progressing with some short/medium term projects identified**

2021/22 & BEYOND

- Remaining Fareham Housing projects delivered and more in the pipeline**
- Increasing delivery of Social Rent compared to previous levels**
- Partnership approach, or delivery through Aspect, to provide more affordable homes**
- Regeneration of some existing stock (sheltered and general purpose)**
- Ultimately achieving at least 3,500 new affordable homes by 2036**

HAVE YOUR SAY

We welcome comments on the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy, whether you are a tenant, Borough resident, developer or any other interested party.

We are keen to understand your comments and views on the draft document. This includes what you agree with or like within the document, as well as what you disagree with.

After the consultation period has closed we will be considering all the comments received before making any necessary or appropriate changes.

Where can I view the document?

The document will be available online at:

www.fareham.gov.uk/haveyoursay

Copies will be available during the consultation period at the Civic Offices reception area and also libraries throughout Fareham Borough.



How shall I submit my comments?

ONLINE

You can use our online survey to submit your comments at

www.fareham.gov.uk/haveyoursay

or, if you prefer, you can print out the survey form and send it to us at the address opposite.

BY EMAIL

Email any comments to

consultation@fareham.gov.uk

If possible please insert 'Draft Affordable Housing Strategy' on the subject line.

BY POST

You can also post any comments to:

**Consultation Team
(Draft Affordable Housing Strategy)**

Fareham Borough Council, Civic Offices
Civic Way, Fareham PO16 7AZ

IF YOU HAVE A QUERY

If you are unable to access the document, or would like a form posted to you, then please call the

Consultation Team on 01329 824409

If you have a query or question about the content of the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy then please contact **Strategic Housing on 01329 824305.**



FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date 11 July 2019

Report of: **Head of Housing and Benefits**

Subject: **EXECUTIVE BUSINESS**

SUMMARY

One of the key functions of this Scrutiny Panel is to hold the Executive Portfolio Holder and Senior Officers to account in the delivery of the service and the Improvement Actions identified in the Council's Corporate Priorities and Corporate Vision.

Members are therefore invited to consider the items of business which fall under the remit of the Housing portfolio and have been dealt with by the Executive since the last meeting of the Panel. This also includes any decisions taken by individual Executive Members.

The relevant notices for decisions taken are attached for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members consider the items of Business discharged by the Executive and make any comments or raise any questions for clarification.

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

2018/19
Decision No.
2081

Record of Decision by Executive

Monday, 4 February 2019

Portfolio	Housing
Subject:	Void Property Works and Component Improvement Package Works Contract 2019-2022
Report of:	Managing Director of Fareham Housing
Corporate Priority:	Dynamic, prudent and progressive Council

Purpose:

To consider the tenders received and to award a contract for the provision of void property works and component improvement package works to council properties.

This report provides the Executive with information on the Council's obligation to maintain its properties to a lettable standard and provide improvements. It provides details on a new contract to provide void property maintenance and component improvement works on a 3-year term, with option to extend for a further 2 years.

Options Considered:

During the discussion of this item, the Executive Leader moved that the meeting temporarily go into private session to enable Members to ask questions about the information contained in the confidential Appendix to the report.

RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 the public and Press be excluded from this section of the meeting on the grounds that the matters to be dealt with involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Following discussion of the information contained in the confidential Appendix to the report, the meeting moved back into public session.

As recommendation.

Decision:

RESOLVED that the Executive awards a contract to the contractor achieving the highest scoring tender based on cost/quality/service as detailed in the confidential Appendix A to the report.

Reason:

To ensure void repair works are delivered to the lettable standard effectively and efficiently.
To provide improvements and disabled adaptations to occupied properties effectively and efficiently. To provide additional support to deliver responsive repairs.

Confirmed as a true record:

Councillor SDT Woodward (Executive Leader)
Monday, 4 February 2019

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

2018/19
Decision No.
2105

Record of Decision by Executive

Monday, 1 April 2019

Portfolio	Housing
Subject:	Use of Housing Flexible Homeless Support Grant
Report of:	Managing Director of Fareham Housing
Corporate Priority:	Providing housing choices

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek Executive approval to allocate funds from the Flexible Homeless Support Grant to ensure the continuation of homelessness support services in Fareham following the reduction in funding for Social Inclusion Services by Hampshire County Council.

In November 2017, Hampshire County Council (HCC) agreed a £2m reduction in the Adult Health and Care budget for Social Inclusion services. These services provide support for homeless people living in supported housing schemes across the county together with community support to vulnerable individuals or families requiring help to access or maintain accommodation.

The decision by HCC to reduce funding for Social Inclusion services from 2019 was part of a set of broader savings options (known as Transformation to 2019 Programme) to reduce spending. Although HCC has no direct statutory responsibilities to deliver homelessness support services, they accept that as these services are relied upon by some of the most vulnerable in society, they will continue to invest, albeit at a much-reduced rate.

In September 2017, HCC set up a Social Inclusion Advisory Group, comprising representatives from Adult Social Care, Mental Health and Substance misuse, Public Health, Children's Services, Probation, Department for Work and Pensions as well as the district/borough Housing teams. This group was tasked with providing input into the reconfiguration of the existing Social Inclusion Services in preparation for public consultation. Following the public consultation on the proposed changes to the existing services, a decision was taken by HCC in December 2018 to deliver a financial saving of £1.8million per annum from 01 August 2019 (the savings figure was reduced following an Equality Impact Assessment in May 2018).

To achieve this level of savings, HCC agreed to cease funding some of the services for homeless people and those threatened with homelessness that are currently available in Fareham. This report sets out the changes that will take effect from 01 August 2019 and how the proposals for additional investment by Fareham Borough

Council will ensure the continuation of homelessness support services for our most vulnerable residents.

Options Considered:

At the invitation of the Executive Leader, Councillor Mrs K K Trott addressed the Executive on this item.

As recommendation.

Decision:

RESOLVED that the Executive approves:

- (a) the commissioning of Social Inclusion Services in partnership with Hampshire County Council from 01 August 2019; and
- (b) a budget allocation of £70,000 from the Flexible Homeless Support Grant to fund the additional investment required for the period 01 August 2019 to 31 March 2021.

Reason:

To secure the provision of homelessness support services in Fareham for those in greatest need.

Confirmed as a true record:

Councillor SDT Woodward (Executive Leader)
Monday, 1 April 2019

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

2019/20
Decision No.
2112

Record of Decision by Executive

Monday, 3 June 2019

Portfolio	Housing
Subject:	Draft Affordable Housing Strategy
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Corporate Priority:	Providing housing choices

Purpose:

To approve the draft Affordable Housing Strategy for a minimum six-week period of consultation.

The draft Affordable Housing Strategy builds on, and provides detail to support, the Council's corporate priority of 'providing housing choices'. It includes relevant context and background information followed by Key Objectives and Actions for the future provision of affordable housing.

The main objective within the strategy is to provide more affordable homes, ensuring they are the right homes in the right places for those in need of affordable housing.

The strategy contains a series of steps that will be taken and will be supplemented by detailed action plans and policies in order to ensure the delivery of the key objective. In addition to committing to the delivery of new Fareham Housing (i.e. Fareham Borough Council) stock, the strategy also recognises the importance of new affordable home delivery through the planning system and by Registered Providers.

If approved, this draft Affordable Housing Strategy will be published for a minimum six-week period of consultation. This will provide the local community and any other interested parties with the opportunity to comment on the content of the Strategy. Following this period, and once any necessary amendments are incorporated, it is intended that the Affordable Housing Strategy will be presented to the Council for adoption, (replacing the current Housing Strategy (2010) and Affordable Housing Strategy (2005)).

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) of the strategy will be undertaken before it is recommended for adoption, Any relevant issues or matters raised as part of the consultation on the draft document, that are pursuant to the EIA, can then be considered as necessary. It is not considered at this time that the content of the draft document has any detrimental impact in relation to EIA considerations.

Options Considered:

At the Invitation of the Executive Leader, Councillor Mrs K K Trott addressed the Executive on this item.

As recommendation.

Decision:

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Executive agrees that the draft Affordable Housing Strategy (as provided in Appendix A of the report) be published for a minimum six-week period of public consultation; and
- (b) the Deputy Chief Executive Officer be authorised to make any necessary minor amendments to the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy, prior to publication, provided these do not change the overall direction or emphasis and following consultation with the Executive Member for Housing.

Reason:

To undertake a period of public consultation as part of the ongoing progression of the Affordable Housing Strategy.

Confirmed as a true record:

Councillor SDT Woodward (Executive Leader)
Monday, 3 June 2019

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Presentation to The Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date: 11 July 2019
Report of: Affordable Housing Strategic Lead
Subject: Affordable Housing Update

SUMMARY

The purpose of the presentation is to inform Members of the Panel of the progress with the Fareham Housing strategy and other relevant strategic housing matters.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members consider the contents of the presentation and make any comments or raise any questions for clarification.

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date **11 July 2019**

Report of: **Head of Housing and Benefits**

Subject: **REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS**

SUMMARY

It is a statutory requirement for the Council to publish a homelessness strategy that sets out its plans to prevent and tackle homelessness in the area. A comprehensive review of homelessness in Fareham is currently underway and has identified key priority areas for the Council to focus on. These are in keeping with the national agenda on homelessness and dovetail with the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy and the Homelessness Reduction Act.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Housing Scrutiny Panel consider and comment upon the findings from the review of homelessness in Fareham as set out in this report thus enabling the production of a draft homelessness strategy. This strategy will be presented to the September meeting of the Executive to seek approval for a period of public consultation.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on all local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness in their area and use the findings to formulate and publish a strategy for the future.
2. There have been a number of significant changes since our last homelessness strategy was published, including the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2018 which was the largest reform of homelessness legislation since 1977.

PAST ACHIEVEMENTS

3. In developing our next strategy, it is useful to reflect upon the objectives and outcomes of our previous strategy. The last strategy formally covered the period 2014 – 2017 and contained 4 key objectives, with specific actions under each objective:
4. Annual reports were made to the then Housing Policy Development and Review Panel to show the progress made in delivering the action plan. However, during the period of the last strategy other events locally and nationally influenced the direction of some of the actions.

Objective 1: *To provide advice, assistance and support to enable homeless and vulnerable households to address their housing needs and to lead independent lives.*

5. The Housing Options Team began a large scale, systems-thinking review of its service in 2015 and identified new and better ways of working. We removed the need for customers to complete housing waiting list application forms and instead invited anyone who had any sort of housing problem or query to talk to a member of the Housing Options Team. The nature of the interviews became more focused on understanding the problem and encouraged a more open, two-way process to find the right solution to each customers problem.
6. This new approach meant that not only were we assisting more people, we were also spending a far longer period of time with them. Therefore, to ensure we were able to meet this demand and to take into account the additional duties placed upon us by the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act, we increased the number of Housing Options Officers from six posts to seven.
7. The number of customers approaching the Housing Options Team for help and advice has grown steadily since the start of the last strategy, from 873 in 2014/15 to 1,346 in 2018/19.

Objective 2: *Adopt sustainable initiatives that deliver housing solutions accessible to those in housing need and that minimises reliance on the use of temporary accommodation*

8. The level of customer demand for assistance set against the availability of social housing and private rental accommodation in the area means that we have not and probably cannot completely eradicate the need to use temporary accommodation.
9. We have seen a reduction in the number of young people and families placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation however the number of single people and couples has remained fairly static.

10. Whilst it is disappointing that we still find ourselves using B&B at all, the fact that we have been able to show some decline in use is an achievement when set against the increasing demand for services (as mentioned earlier).
11. We have achieved a greater degree of success in enabling customers to access the private rented sector at an earlier stage in the homelessness process, both through the changes in our approach to the advice and support given and in the use of loans to help customers meet the deposit and rent-in-advance requirements of securing private rented accommodation. Since the inception of the last strategy, we have developed closer ties with the Housing Benefit team which has led to an increase in the use of Discretionary Housing Payments for this purpose.
12. We have continued to develop and improve our FareLets service, and now have a total of 55 landlords working with us, providing 76 tenancies for our customers.
13. Following a successful bid for additional funds to Central Government, we are now further improving the offer we can make to landlords wishing to join our FareLets service, in particular the introduction of an additional Tenancy Support Officer to help vulnerable tenants maintain their tenancies and thus reduce the risk of repeated homelessness.
14. We are also making better use of the limited social housing stock. Rather than trying to cater for all those who desire social housing, we focus on those who have an identified need for such housing and for whom social housing offers the most realistic opportunity to resolve that need.

Objective 3: *Wherever possible, to prevent homelessness from occurring in Fareham by working in partnership with other statutory and independent sector agencies.*

15. We have developed strong working relationships with a number of key agencies and stakeholders to tackle the level of rough sleeping in Fareham.
16. Changes to the structure of Hampshire County Council funding from August 2019 has provided the opportunity to increase the Outreach service for Fareham and Gosport to 1.5 FTE posts.
17. We have recently been successful in a bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, for short term funding to further increase the Outreach Service with an additional 1.6FTE posts, dedicated to people sleeping rough in Fareham. The posts will sit within Two Saints and work alongside the shared service detailed above.
18. The additional 1.6FTE posts will focus on:
 - developing links with prisons and probation services to reduce the number of those leaving custody to no fixed abode,
 - develop more proactive approaches to reconnect rough sleepers to their original district.
 - harness the goodwill of the public, community and faith groups and local businesses to bring together everyone's efforts to support and reduce rough sleeping.

Objective 4: *Monitor the demand on the service and outcomes, to inform future provision and direction.*

19. The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act forced a review of our IT system. The provider of the system we had been using since 2006 advised us in January 2018 that the existing system could not be redesigned to meet the new data capturing and reporting requirements. As a result, a new system had to be procured and since April 2018 we have been using a system called Locata. The new system has much greater functionality and is enabling improved case monitoring for officers and enhanced analysis of our customers for senior officers to better target resources in the future.

REVIEW OF CURRENT DEMAND AND PROVISION

20. Our review of homelessness in Fareham has included data gathering from internal and external sources.

Fareham's Housing Market

21. The average cost of buying a two-bedroom house in Fareham is £230,000 and the average cost of renting such a property is around £840 per month. For some people, these costs are simply too high and for low income and vulnerable households there is an increasing gap between Local Housing Allowance rates and actual rents due to on-going welfare reforms.
22. High demand for affordable housing is therefore set to continue. Fareham Borough Council's draft Affordable Housing Strategy contains a series of steps that will be taken to deliver more affordable homes over the next five years.

Households approaching the council for help

23. The number of customers approaching the Housing Options Team for help and advice has grown steadily since the start of the last strategy, from 873 in 2014/15 to 1,346 in 2018/19.
24. The main triggers for homelessness in Fareham have remained fairly consistent. Relationship breakdown, eviction by family or friends and the ending of private sector short-hold tenancies are the main causes.
25. We have also seen a small but significant shift from families becoming homeless to single people with increasingly complex needs, in particular around mental and physical health issues and with a changing age profile, toward younger people than would be expected given the general age profile of the Borough. This is a particular issue locally as there are not the sort of supported accommodation options that are available in other areas.
26. Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness and despite significant successes in this area, it is still an issue in the Borough.

PROPOSED OBJECTIVES

27. Our homelessness review has found our approach is delivering effective results in the face of growing demand. It is proposed therefore that we retain our core focus on early intervention and the prevention of homelessness, backed up by high quality joined up support to get people back on their feet when things go wrong. In order to

achieve this, it is proposed that our new Homelessness Strategy will contain the following broad objectives:

1. Meeting Demand
2. Providing Solutions
3. Preventing Homelessness & Supporting Tenancies
4. Ending Rough Sleeping

PROPOSED ACTIONS

28. The Homelessness Strategy will contain an action plan which will give comprehensive details of how Fareham Borough Council will tackle homelessness in the Borough.

Objective 1: *Meeting demand*

29. The nature of homelessness in Fareham is changing. There is a shift from families with children to single people, often needing more complex assistance in order to resolve their homelessness. There is also a changing age profile, with increased numbers of both young and older households. There are problems accessing the private rented sector and home ownership remains out of reach for many.

30. We believe that the first step in meeting these demands is the provision of high quality, consistent housing advice, tailored to the individual and delivered in a sensitive and supportive manner. This is our first and overriding commitment.

31. We will continue to invest in our staff and their training to ensure that they keep up to date with best practice and we will continue to invest in our relationships with key partners.

32. We have recently improved and strengthened the strategic capability within the Housing Options Team, and early work has identified a number of gaps in the information we hold and collect. We will undertake to improve this capacity so as to better inform what we do and place ourselves in a position whereby we can respond more quickly and more effectively to changing demands in the future.

33. Given recent changes to legislation and other developments impacting on housing and homelessness such as the Tenant Fees Act introduced in June this year, we are also aware that our website could provide more information than it does currently. We will also undertake to update all of our factsheets and printed material to ensure they remain relevant to our changing customer base.

Objective 2: *Providing solutions*

34. While ensuring the provision of high-quality advice and information is an essential foundation and necessary to empower those who are able to help themselves, and support those who cannot, it must be backed by effective solutions. It is also clear that not everyone who wants a social housing tenancy can have one, and that this is often not a realistic solution to homelessness or the threat of homelessness.

35. The private rented sector will continue to play an important role in tackling homelessness. Even with the introduction of the Tenant Fees Act in June 2019, we recognise that it can still be difficult for people to access the private sector due to the requirements to find large deposits and rent in advance and because many landlords

are wary of taking on people in receipt of benefits.

36. We will update and improve the offer to private sector landlords as part of our FareLets scheme. It is anticipated that many of the costs of renting privately will be shifted to landlords as a result of the Tenant Fees Act, and we will explore ways to improve the financial benefits to landlords in order to make the FareLets scheme more competitive than it is at present. We have already seen an increase in the number of enquiries in relation to the scheme and hope to capitalise on this and see a growth in the number of affordable, private rented properties.
37. We have already increased the number of Tenancy Support Officers working with households in temporary accommodation since the last strategy was published and will look to extend this service again. We recognise that tenancy support is not only crucial to those households who rely on it, but also in attracting private landlords to work with us.
38. Although we accept the very real difficulties, we think it is still important to commit to a reduction in the use of temporary accommodation and eradicating the use of Bed & Breakfast. This will not happen overnight and will require progress to be made in other areas, such as the Affordable Housing Strategy and the Allocations policy, as well as movement on the building of more affordable homes in the Borough.
39. As a first step, we will aim to reduce the amount of time spent in temporary accommodation and, if we do have to use Bed & Breakfast, we will aim to reduce the amount of time in this accommodation from weeks to days. We will also investigate the use of the private sector to provide more suitable emergency accommodation, as well as investigating options for purchasing property and increasing the number of supported lodgings schemes for younger or more vulnerable single people.

Objective 3: Preventing homelessness & supporting tenancies

40. Many of the objectives set out above will also help to deliver on our third broad aim, to prevent homelessness from occurring in the first place. A large part of this is providing support for those who need it to maintain their tenancies.
41. To further enhance this objective, we will also look at strengthening our mediation capability, whether by engaging the services of an outside agency, or enabling existing staff to receive additional training in this area. Family evictions and evictions by friends are the two leading causes of homelessness in the Borough, and if we are to tackle homelessness we need to find a way of reducing these numbers. We will also look at utilising the expertise of partner agencies such as Inclusion Services to provide on-going support to those with substance misuse issues.
42. We will explore how we can develop better working relationships with key agencies, such as Social Services and Mental Health Teams, domestic violence agencies, Probation and substance misuse services, with the aim being to formalise joint working arrangements.

Objective 4: Ending street homelessness

43. Street homelessness is the most visible form of homelessness and, perhaps, the most challenging to deal with. It is also one of the costliest not only in terms of the resources required to effectively tackle it or to the wider community, but also on the lives of those

rough sleeping. We have already taken major steps in trying to tackle the issue in a firm, but compassionate manner, and we will expand on these efforts over the coming years.

44. As detailed previously, we have gained funding from Central Government to increase the number of Outreach workers provided by our partner, Two Saints, by an additional 1.6FTE posts, which will be dedicated to the Fareham area alone. We will explore ways to provide flexible short-term bed spaces thereby ensuring we can meet emergency demand such as hospital discharges and prison releases

45. We have also made plans for a sublet scheme to help accommodate those rough sleeping or ready for move-on from the hostels. The scheme operates by our partner agency, Two Saints, identifying suitable candidates, who are then made an offer of accommodation through the waiting list. Two Saints will manage the tenancy until such time as the customer is ready to do this for themselves. We will also explore how we can move toward the 'Housing First' model.

46. To address growing concerns about street begging we will further explore ways for people to donate in ways that do not inadvertently support and encourage it.

NEXT STEPS

47. Members are asked to provide their views on the proposed objectives and associated actions detailed in this report which will enable officers to produce a draft Homelessness Strategy for presentation to the Executive in September 2019. A period of public consultation will follow and the results of which will be brought back to the Housing Scrutiny Panel in November 2019.

48. Any necessary changes will be incorporated into the document before the Homelessness Strategy is returned to the Executive with a recommendation to adopt it.

Background Papers: None

Reference Papers: None

Enquiries: For further information on this report please contact Caroline Newman (Ext 4645).

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date 11 July 2019

Report of: Head of Housing and Benefits

Subject: DRAFT ALLOCATIONS POLICY

SUMMARY

It is a statutory requirement for the Council to provide assistance to people in housing need and to have an allocation scheme for assessing and prioritising applications for social housing. Following a comprehensive review of the Housing Service and changes in legislation, an updated Allocations Policy is now proposed.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Housing Scrutiny Panel consider and comment on the draft Allocations Policy in advance of it being presented to the September meeting of the Executive where approval will be sought for a period of public consultation.

BACKGROUND

1. Local Housing Authorities are required by law to provide assistance to people in housing need and to have an allocation scheme for assessing and prioritising applications for social housing.
2. Fareham Borough Council's current Allocation Policy was last reviewed and updated in 2012 following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011. The Act gives councils greater powers to decide which groups of people, within their area, should qualify for housing. Many councils, including Fareham Borough Council, subsequently changed their housing allocations schemes resulting in significant numbers of applicants being removed from their Housing Waiting Lists.
3. Although councils now have greater scope to decide who qualifies for housing in their area, some priority must still be given to the groups of people defined in law as falling into a 'reasonable preference' category. These categories are explained in more detail later in this report.
4. As part of the on-going review of all our services using 'systems thinking' methodology, the housing team (comprising Tenancy Services and Housing Options) undertook a detailed review of their functions in order to fully understand the demand on our current Housing Waiting List and re-evaluate the existing allocations process.
5. The demand for social housing is high and, based on the current number of applicants, far outstrips the supply available, and likely to become available, in Fareham. Within a growing climate of change and housing shortage, it has become even more vital that we ensure our limited social housing stock is only allocated to those with the greatest need.

THE SERVICE REVIEW

6. The review team, comprising members of both housing teams, undertook a detailed assessment of the working practices associated with the allocation of social housing. This is known in systems-thinking as 'check' and simply means getting knowledge about the 'what and why' of current performance and involves a number of steps:
 - (a) Understand what the 'purpose' of our service is from the customer's point of view
 - (b) Identify the type and frequency of the demand on our service
 - (c) Study and map the flow of work to assess what is currently provided, how well we respond to the demands into our service and how well we are achieving our 'purpose'
7. This process enabled the team to conclude that we have two core purposes from a customer's point of view:
 - i. *"help me solve my housing problem"* and
 - ii. *"I want to live in a safe, clean and suitable home that meets my needs"*
8. Assessment of the current working practice highlighted that housing is offered to not only those with a housing 'need' but also to those with housing 'want'. This means that as well as giving priority to vulnerable and homeless or inadequately housed people, priority through the current housing allocation policy is also given to those who simply

want to move to alternative accommodation without any real necessity to move.

9. Those people on our Housing Waiting List with a genuine housing need often wait many years to be re-housed and, in some cases, have to be placed into temporary accommodation.
10. With the limited availability of housing (average of 8 properties become available for re-letting each week) and a significant demand for it (average 20 new applications to the Housing Waiting List each week), any allocation on the basis of want rather than need is not appropriate or equitable.
11. A demand analysis of 1100 customers was undertaken over a 6 week period and demonstrated that approximately 70% of contact from our customers could be classified as 'failure' demand'. Failure demand is when a customer makes contact with us as a result of us not doing something or not doing something right at the first point of contact.
12. Examples of failure demand are:
 - Can you tell me how my bid is getting on;
 - What is happening with my application;
 - What is my bid reference number; and
 - Where am I on the Housing Waiting List
13. This level of failure demand is not uncommon in housing services and takes up valuable officer time which could be used to better assist customers solve their housing problem.
14. The Council introduced the Government's Choice Based Lettings scheme, known locally as LetSelect, a number of years ago. Available properties are advertised on our website and applicants registered on our Housing Waiting List can express an interest or 'bid' on those properties. The adverts run for one week following which, the allocation decision is made based on the banding and position of all applicants who have bid on the property. A verification process will then be undertaken before an offer of accommodation is made.
15. We receive an average of 80 bids for every property advertised on LetSelect.
16. Although Housing Waiting List applicants are required to keep us up to date with any changes in their circumstances, our review concluded that many applications contained out of date information, leading to delay and considerable re-work and duplication.
17. As part of the review, a sample of applicants on the Housing Waiting List were contacted. These were applicants who were actively bidding for properties (either themselves or through an automatic bidding process) and those that had never or very seldom bid. A significant number had already solved their own housing problem so had no need to be on the list or were only on the list for future need, in case their current circumstances should change. Additionally, we were unable to contact many applicants as their contact details had changed or they had moved but had not updated their details with us.

18. Those applicants who were actively bidding generally looked for properties at least once a week but felt that there was not enough information about the properties on LetSelect to really understand what was on offer and whether it would meet their needs.
19. There is substantial evidence that the current process for allocating to vacant properties is administratively time consuming and resource intensive yet in terms of meeting immediate housing need, serves little or no purpose. LetSelect places the onus on customers to fix their housing problem alone and often is unable give enough information to make an educated choice.
20. With the demand for social housing far exceeding supply, many applicants wait for considerable lengths of time to be re-housed and in some cases have no realistic chance of ever being offered a property. This raises customer expectations which are unlikely to be fulfilled and generates the types of enquiries detailed at point 12 above.

THE EXPERIMENT

21. The review team started to experiment with a new way of allocating to Council-owned properties. On receipt of a notification of a property becoming void, we did not advertise it on LetSelect, but matched a suitable applicant from the Housing Waiting List. The process of matching included obtaining up to date and detailed information about the applicant's current circumstances and gaining knowledge of the attributes of the property becoming vacant. For example, does it contain adaptations that could be made use of by an applicant, what are the sizes of the rooms, local knowledge obtained from the Area Housing Officer, etc. By amalgamating all this knowledge, the most appropriate person in the highest need of re-housing was matched to the property.
22. We gradually and carefully increased the number of allocations made in this way until we reached a point where we stopped advertising Council-owned properties completely (Housing Association properties continued to be advertised and allocated to under the existing procedures). As reported in previous reports to the former Housing Policy Development and Review Panel, the experiment has resulted in a better, more efficient process. A similar trial commenced with our main Housing Association partner (Vivid Housing) which has achieved similar results.
23. In addition, in 2017/18 the refusal rate for customers using LetSelect was 16%, compared to 10% of best match offers.
24. The second element of the experiment focused on customers who approached the Housing Options Team for advice and assistance about housing but had no prior dealings with the service and were not already on the Housing Waiting List. These customers were given comprehensive and intensive support, tailored to their specific needs and circumstances. These customers were encouraged not to join the Housing Waiting List unless there was a clear 'need' for social housing that would be met in the timescale required (NB, any customer who qualified to join the Housing Waiting List and wished to do so was not refused). Throughout the experiment, this intensive, tailored support & advice enabled the majority of customers to remain in their existing home or to secure alternative accommodation.
25. The experiment proved successful and most customers were extremely satisfied with the outcome of their contact with us. By providing a more comprehensive and

responsive service, specifically tailored to individuals and at a time when it was most needed, we saw a dramatic reduction in repeat contact and queries thus enabling officers more time to resolve customers' problems. This improved process enabled customers to make fully informed decisions about their housing within a clear and transparent system, in the knowledge that the level of support they required would be available to them by their case officer.

26. This new way of working has now been rolled out to the rest of the Housing Options team and we continue to receive positive feedback from our customers.

THE FUTURE DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

27. The draft Affordable Housing Strategy builds on, and provides detail to support, the Council's corporate priority of '*providing housing choices*'. The main objective within the draft strategy is to provide more affordable homes, ensuring they are the right homes in the right places for those in need of affordable housing.

28. The draft strategy contains a series of steps that will be taken over the next five years and will be supplemented by detailed action plans and policies in order to ensure the delivery of more affordable homes in the borough. In addition to committing to the delivery of new Fareham Housing (i.e. Fareham Borough Council) stock, the draft strategy also recognises the importance of new affordable home delivery through the planning system and by Registered Providers.

NEXT STEPS

29. The purpose of Fareham Borough Council's housing service is to "understand each customer's housing problem and help them to solve it" therefore changes are required to our existing Allocations Policy to enable the service to achieve its purpose. Other changes have been incorporated to reflect changes in legislation and statutory guidance since the last update in 2012.

30. Members are asked to provide their views on the proposed changes as summarised at Appendix A and the proposed draft policy at Appendix B. The Panel are requested to consider these proposals in order for a draft Allocations Policy to be presented to the Executive in September 2019. A period of public consultation will follow and the results of which will be brought back to the Housing Scrutiny Panel in November 2019.

31. Any necessary changes will be incorporated into the document before the Allocations Policy is returned to the Executive with a recommendation to adopt it.

Appendices: **A:** Summary of changes
 B: Draft Allocations Policy

Background Papers: Corporate Strategy 2017-2023
Draft Affordable Housing Strategy

Reference Papers: Housing Act 1996, Part 6 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 (England)

Allocation of Accommodation: Statutory Guidance for Local
Housing Authorities in England
Homelessness Reduction Act 2018

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Caroline Newman. (Ext 4645)

Allocations Policy - Summary of Changes

Background

The Housing Act (1996) requires all housing authorities to have a scheme for determining priorities and procedures in allocating social housing. The Council's existing Allocations Policy was last reviewed in 2014 and does not include legislative changes such as the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) or the Right to Move (2015) statutory guidance.

In addition, changes to the service have followed the 2015 Vanguard intervention which are not reflected in the current policy. The following outlines all the changes made in the new Allocations Policy.

Legislation

The new policy now includes the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015
- Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England: Improving Access to Social Housing for Victims of Domestic Abuse in Refuges or Other Types of Temporary Accommodation (November 2018)

It also includes the Government's proposals (not yet legislation) for assigning a priority to divorced or separated spouses of those serving in the Armed Forces.

Allocation of Properties

The outcome of the Vanguard intervention identified new ways of working, one was the 'Housing Options Method'. This method is an information and advice process to prevent homelessness before it occurs through understanding the customer's personal circumstances and helping them explore all housing options.

The existing policy does not allow for Officers to fully understand the customer's needs and simply requests that an application form is completed. The new policy allows for flexibility in that a drop-in service is available where customers can come and speak to an Officer and are guided through the process.

Should customers be eligible for housing, the new policy uses the 'Best Match Method' to allocate accommodation. This method is where accommodation is allocated to the most suitable applicant in the highest band working down through the housing waiting list. This is different to the existing policy in that customers use 'choice-based letting' to 'bid' for properties, often resulting in a misunderstanding of the suitability of the property.

Priority Bandings

The existing policy bands are 'urgent, high, medium and low'. It was identified that some customers felt that being put in the 'low' band made them feel like they would not ever be housed and were considered to be an insignificant priority. This often led to waste work which in few cases changed the outcome. Therefore, the new policy has renamed the bands by simply lettering them A – D. the 'A' band replaces 'urgent' through to 'D' band replacing 'low'.

Other Changes

Some other, less weighty changes have been made to the policy to give Officers more support and guidance to in turn help customers make an informed housing choice:

1. The medical priorities have been amended to include sensory and mental health conditions and reworded so the unintentional inference that alternative housing would 'heal' them is removed.
2. Where previously an income threshold devised in line with Local Housing Allowance was used, the new policy has removed a threshold altogether. By utilising the housing options method to understand the customer's circumstances, Officers can use incoming payments and outgoing expenses to guide customers in making an informed housing choice. If the customer pays child support or debt instalments it can affect their ability to afford accommodation, regardless of their income.
3. To ensure sheltered accommodation is being allocated appropriately, clearer qualification criteria has been added. The existing policy only states that applicants 'must have a need for the level of support linked with the scheme they apply for'. This criterion is difficult to quantify and open to abuse.

The new policy states that customers would benefit from the sheltered accommodation offered, that their current home is not suitable for their needs and that they have insignificant financial resources to meet their housing needs in the private market.

4. The priority bandings now include the changes in legislation. Two priorities have also been removed; 'a person or household living in any moveable structure with or without formal tenancy arrangements' and 'a tenant living in the borough with dependent children living above the ground floor'.

The reason for these to be removed is that the former criteria has a very low demand and can be administered within other priorities. The latter is that unless other priorities are evident and due to the limited accommodation available, households are unlikely to be rehoused with a garden. In addition, many customers do not express a wish for a garden as a priority, instead understand through discussions with Officers what housing options are available.

5. In order to ensure customers are able to fully understand the process, a summary document has been devised in the style of FAQs. Officers will be able to use this as a daily reference guide with the full, legislatively restricted, policy document used when more detail is required.

Allocations Policy

DRAFT

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Definition of an allocation.....	3
Properties not allocated under this policy	4
Allocations not made under this policy.....	4
Legislation	4
Who must comply	4
The Housing Waiting List.....	4
EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	4
How to apply.....	5
Who can join.....	5
Eligibility.....	5
Qualification criteria	6
Exclusions	7
Income.....	8
Savings & Assets.....	8
Positive contributions.....	8
Other forms of positive contribution	8
Positive contribution and disability	9
Positive Contribution Exceptions	9
Change of circumstances	9
Who to include on the application.....	9
Foster carers and prospective adopters	10
Retention on list.....	10
Allocations to existing tenants	10
Applications from people who are homeless	10
Choice and preference	11
How applicants are prioritised.....	11
Medical and Welfare Priority.....	12
Assigning accommodation.....	13
Size.....	13
Level/Accessible.....	14
Rents	14
Offer.....	14
Verification.....	14
Refusals.....	15
Equality and Diversity	15
Right to a Review.....	15
False or Misleading Claims.....	15
The Decision-Making Process	16
The involvement of elected Members in nomination decisions.....	16
Applications from relatives of Council Employees and Members	17
Amendments	17
Appendix 1 – Priority Bands	19

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Housing Act¹ requires all housing authorities to have a scheme for determining priorities and procedures in allocating social accommodation. This document explains how Fareham Borough Council social housing and affordable rent housing is assigned and sets out the priorities used.
- 1.2 The Government² encourages housing authorities to use a ‘housing options method’ in conjunction with their waiting list. This method is an information and advice process to prevent homelessness before it occurs through understanding the customer’s personal circumstances and helping them explore all housing options.
- 1.3 This method is considered by Fareham Housing to be the best approach; it means that applicants are more easily able to solve their housing problem and those in greatest need do not slip through the net. It also reflects the purpose of Fareham Borough Council’s housing service to “*understand each customer’s housing problem and help them solve it*”.
- 1.4 In helping the applicant solve their housing problem the team will support them to:
- Remain in their current home if this is suitable and possible
 - Find other appropriate accommodation if it is not
- 1.5 The Council will provide free advice and assistance for those who are threatened with, or currently are, homeless. Eligibility for joining the waiting list will be assessed in accordance with the procedural requirement set out in sections 11-15.
- 1.6 The best housing solution for every customer will differ. Where it is appropriate to add the customer to the waiting list and allocate a social or affordable property, the details set out in this policy will come into effect.
- 1.7 The Housing Waiting List and Allocation Scheme is operated on behalf of all Registered Providers that work with the Council.

2. Definition of an allocation

- 2.1 The Council allocates accommodation when it:
- Selects a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by the Council
 - Nominates a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by another authority
 - Nominates a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by a Registered Provider
- 2.2 The properties allocated in this policy include:
- General needs housing (such as houses and flats)
 - Retirement living accommodation (properties for older people who need support in line with the accommodation they are applying for)
 - Specially adapted properties for people with disabilities

¹ The Housing Act (1996), Part 6, (s.166A) (1) as amended by the Localism Act (2011)

² The Allocation of Accommodation: Guidance for Local Housing (2012) (p.3.19)

3. Properties not allocated under this policy

- 3.1 The Council will use selected units as temporary accommodation to fulfil statutory duties owed to homeless households and when necessary to prevent homelessness from occurring. In these circumstances tenancies will be offered as a non-secure tenancy and will not constitute an allocation of accommodation under this policy or under the Housing Act.³
- 3.2 Where a managed move is necessary or where a new or existing housing scheme or development is subject to a 'Local Lettings Plan' the Council and local Registered Providers may nominate to housing accommodation outside of the terms of this policy.

4. Allocations not made under this policy

- 4.1 The following are not considered as allocations under this policy:
- An offer made under exceptional circumstances to someone not meeting reasonable preference criteria⁴
 - Individual circumstances which may include those defined under other legislation⁵
 - A succession to tenancy under The Housing Act⁶
 - A tenancy granted through mutual exchange (HomeSwapper.co.uk)
 - An Introductory Tenancy becoming a Flexible or Secure Tenancy
 - Decants – where the Council initiates moves to alternative accommodation to allow for major repair works

5. Legislation

- 5.1 This policy complies with the Housing Act (1996) and subsequent amendments, the Localism Act (2011) and all other relevant legislation and statutory guidance. Reference has also been paid to the appropriate Fareham Borough Council documents.

6. Who must comply

- 6.1 The Council and all Officers employed by the Council must comply with this policy when processing applications for all social and affordable accommodation that becomes available.

7. The Housing Waiting List

- 7.1 The Housing Waiting List is a record of all households that have registered with the Council to be considered for vacancies that arise in social or affordable rented housing.

8. EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

- 8.1 The Housing Waiting List and all personal information will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Housing Act (1996)⁷ and the Council's Privacy Policy. Any requests to see data held by the Council should be made in accordance with the above.
- 8.2 The Council will share relevant information, which will include financial information or

³ The Housing Act (1996), Part 6 (s.159)

⁴ Where this is the case a panel of Senior Officers from the Housing Department will consider the application before an allocation is made

⁵ Such as displaced workers within the Rent (Agriculture) Act (1976)

⁶ The Housing Act (1985) (s.86A)

⁷ The Housing Act (1996) (Part VI) (s.166A)

details of tenancy related support needs, with Registered Providers prior to the offer of a tenancy.

9. How to apply

- 9.1 Wherever possible the Council aims to prevent homelessness from occurring. Therefore, Fareham Housing operates a drop-in service at the Civic Offices where customers can easily access the assistance they need. When applicants approach the Council, the Housing Options team will offer support and advice so that the applicant can make an informed choice to best meet their housing needs. This can include determining whether they could remain in their current home, how to secure private accommodation, routes to low cost home ownership and accessing affordable or social rent housing.
- 9.2 Officers will explore all available options before an applicant is added to the waiting list. Care will be made to ensure that the applicant understands how the application will be treated under the scheme, whether they are likely to have any reasonable preference and how long before accommodation suitable to their needs is likely to become available.⁸
- 9.3 Through face-to-face discussions, applicants who may require additional assistance in accessing information or applying to the waiting list will not be disadvantaged as support will be tailored to their requirements. Where required, applicants will also be given the opportunity to discuss their needs through telephone interviews or home visits.
- 9.4 Applicants are requested to bring any relevant supporting documentation with them to ensure that their case can be accurately assessed, further verification may also be required to confirm eligibility. The relevant supporting documentation can be found in section 34.

10. Who can join

- 10.1 The Council will consider all applicants over the age of 16 who meet the eligibility criteria and are a qualifying person. Any applicant who is homeless or is threatened with homelessness should contact the Council at the earliest opportunity to discuss their housing options.
- 10.2 Applicants will need to be over 18 to be able to hold a tenancy without a guarantor.

11. Eligibility

- 11.1 Eligibility for inclusion on the waiting list and allocation of accommodation is set out in the Housing Act⁹.
- 11.2 Ineligible applicants (those that are not able to join the waiting list) comprise of:
- A person subject to immigration control within the meaning of the Asylum and Immigration Act (1996) unless they are in a class prescribed in regulations by the Secretary of State
 - Other persons from abroad who are in a class prescribed by the Secretary of State

⁸ Waiting times vary for different property types and areas, and will only be a guide, based on the banding, time on list, and the number of properties offered within each band in the previous 12 months.

⁹ The Housing Act (1996) (s.160ZA) (and as amended in the Localism Act 2011)

as being ineligible for assistance

11.3 In cases where a joint application is made and one of the applicants is a person from abroad who is ineligible, a joint tenancy will not be granted. However, a single tenancy may be granted to the person who is eligible. While ineligible family members will not be granted a tenancy, they may be considered when determining the size of accommodation required.

12. Qualification criteria

12.1 The following groups of people qualify to join the waiting list¹⁰:

- A person for whom the Council has accepted a duty under the Housing Act (1996) s.189B, s.193 or s.195
- Those who are currently serving in the Armed Forces or who were serving in the Armed Forces within 5 years of their application for an allocation of housing¹¹
- Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the Armed Forces where:
 - the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and;
 - the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- Existing or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service
- Divorced or separated spouses or civil partners of Armed Forces personnel who are required to move out of accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence
- Referrals made through Hampshire County Council Adult Services
- Those with an established local connection to the Borough of Fareham where one or more of the following applies:
 - They live in the Borough in settled housing arrangements and have done so continuously for at least 2 years immediately prior to their application
 - They are employed in the Borough. Employment must be permanent in nature and for a minimum of 16 hours per week
 - They need to move to the area to be near to a close member of their family to give or receive essential care and support. The family member must live in the Borough and have been resident continuously for 5 years or more¹²
 - They can demonstrate a strong local connection to the Borough¹³
 - They need to move to receive specialist care and support, which can only be accessed within the Borough of Fareham

12.2 Certain groups who are exempt from the local connection criteria and may still apply:

- Young People leaving the care of Hampshire County Council or other care authority whether or not they currently live in Fareham¹⁴
- Verified rough sleepers, where there is evidence that they have been sleeping in the borough in the last 6 months
- Persons in prison who were continuously living in the borough for 5 years immediately before going into prison

¹⁰ The Housing Act (1996) (s.160ZA) (7)

¹¹ Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012 (p.3)

¹² A close family member is defined as being a parent, sibling, or other relative who has previously acted as a guardian.

¹³ Definition of a strong local connection – the applicant must have been born and lived in the Borough for the majority of their lives (minimum of 70%) and have a close family member residing in the Borough who has been resident continuously for 5 years or more at the point of application

¹⁴ The Housing Act (1996) (s.199) (8) (b)

- Those living in a refuge or other form of safe temporary accommodation having escaped domestic abuse¹⁵
- Existing Council or Registered Provider tenants who reside in another borough but need to move to Fareham for work related reasons¹⁶

There may be circumstances that do not meet any of the above criteria but on consideration the applicant is deemed to have a local connection. These will be determined on a case by case basis.¹⁷

13. Exclusions

13.1 Under the qualifying criteria guidelines as set out in the Housing Act¹⁸ applicants will not be able to join the waiting list if they are categorised below:

- Permanent Council or Housing Association Tenants that are assessed as being adequately housed
- Applicants who have assets, savings or income over the prescribed threshold, as set out in sections 14 and 15
- Have no established local connection unless section 12 applies
- All owner/occupiers unless they cannot stay in their own home and need to move into retirement living accommodation. Applicants who wish to apply for this type of accommodation must meet the following specific eligibility criteria:
 - They are over 55, will benefit from the retirement living services provided or have a significant disability; **and**
 - Their current home is not suitable for their specific needs (further medical evidence may be required); **and**
 - They have insufficient financial resources to secure accommodation that meets their particular housing needs in the private market

13.2 Applicants may also be excluded from joining the waiting list if it is established that:

- False statements have been made or information has been withheld at any stage of the application
- They have debts with the Council or a Registered Provider where it is evident that they are not making arrangements to repay these arrears
- They, or a member of their household are assessed as being unsuitable to sustain a tenancy or otherwise unsuitable to be considered as a prospective tenant, this may be due to (but not limited to):
 - Serious anti-social behaviour¹⁹, nuisance or annoyance to neighbours
 - Illegal or immoral use of the property
 - Serious deterioration of property owned by the Council or Registered Provider resulting from the actions of the applicant, a member of their household or a visitor
 - The applicant or a member of their current or proposed household obtaining a tenancy fraudulently
 - If it is evident that the applicant owes a high level of arrears and a payment plan has not been adhered to²⁰

¹⁵ Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England: Improving Access to Social Housing for Victims of Domestic Abuse in Refuges or Other Types of Temporary Accommodation (November 2018)

¹⁶ Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local housing authorities in England: Right to Move (March 2015)

¹⁷ Where this is the case a panel of Senior Officers from the Housing Department will consider the application before a decision is made

¹⁸ The Housing Act (1996) (S.160ZA) (p.7)

¹⁹ Behaviour that causes harassment, alarm or distress which can include: noise, verbal abuse, drug dealing or violence

13.3 Ineligible applicants or those excluded from the waiting list will be notified in writing and have the right to a review as set out in section 37.

14. Income

14.1 Applicants who are considered to have sufficient financial resources to source suitable accommodation through; renting privately, shared ownership or owner-occupation will not qualify. Officers will guide applicants on best meeting their housing needs in the initial stages of application.

15. Savings & Assets

15.1 Applicants with; savings or assets in excess of £16,000, own or part own accommodation, or who have a legal interest in home ownership (for example through marriage or civil partnership in accommodation owned by their spouse or civil partner) do not qualify to join the Housing Register and will normally be considered to be able to meet their housing need through other avenues.

15.2 Current or former members of the Armed Forces, who have left service within 5 years, with savings in excess of £16,000 may still qualify where a lump sum has been paid as compensation.

16. Positive contributions

16.1 Local authorities are encouraged to consider how their allocation policies can support those in paid employment or who otherwise make positive contributions to their community in other ways.²¹ Due priority will be given as set out in section 27.

16.2 For the purpose of this policy employment is defined as where the applicant or their partner has a formal contract of employment, is working as a temporary member of staff, or is self-employed. Applicants will only qualify if they can supply evidence that they have been employed for 9 out of the last 12 months, are in current employment, and are working for a minimum of 16 hours per week.

17. Other forms of positive contribution

17.1 In addition to paid employment, applicants can be assessed as making a positive contribution where they can demonstrate that they are undertaking voluntary work, are active foster carers, or are full time carers and so unable to undertake paid work.

17.2 Those doing volunteer work will need to have been volunteering for a continuous period of at least 6 months up to the point of application and the same at point of offer. Volunteering must be for a not-for-profit organisation or charity and must be for a minimum of 7 hours per week.

17.3 Carers and foster carers will need to have been providing care for a minimum period of six months up to point of application and the same at point of offer.

17.4 In all instances the onus shall remain on applicants to supply sufficient evidence to

²⁰ If an applicant is found to owe rent on their private sector tenancy, then the landlord or letting agent will be contacted to establish the level of debt and whether any payment plan is in place.

²¹ Allocation of accommodation: Guidance for local housing authorities in England (June 2012), (p.4.27)

support their claim for making a positive contribution.

18. Positive contribution and disability

18.1 The Council recognises that not all members of the community are able to undertake paid employment or voluntary work. Therefore, anyone who is proven to have a chronic disability, is in receipt of Personal Independence Payment or 'limited capability for work related activity' element of Universal Credit will be awarded this priority so that they stand an equal chance of securing accommodation as those in paid employment/undertaking voluntary work.

19. Positive Contribution Exceptions

19.1 There may be instances where someone is serving a 'Community Order' or 'Community Service Order' which requires them to undertake unpaid work. Such circumstances do not constitute either paid employment or volunteering and so are not included in the definitions set out above.

20. Change of circumstances

20.1 Applicants who have previously been deemed not to qualify may make a fresh application to join the waiting list if their circumstances have changed. The applicant will be required to provide the relevant supporting documentation for their application.

20.2 When the Council is made aware of a change in circumstances further investigation may be required to ensure that the applicant is still eligible. Written confirmation of the outcome will be sent to the applicant.

20.3 A change in circumstances can include, but is not limited to:

- A change of address
- Any additions or departures in the household
- Any change in income, savings or assets
- A change in medical conditions

21. Who to include on the application

21.1 Applications can include any member of the immediate family who would normally reside with them or would have an extenuating need to reside with them. This also includes those in the immediate family²² who would normally live with the applicant should circumstances allow.

21.2 The Council will not include family members on the waiting list who do not reside in the UK at the time the application is submitted. Inclusion will only be considered once the family have been reunited and evidence of UK residence can be provided.

21.3 In cases where parents share the residency of children, the Council will classify them as living with the person who provides their main home.

21.4 People who are not immediate family but have an exceptional need to live with the applicant may be considered in the application and may consist of the following people:

²² Immediate family include; the applicant's spouse, civil partner or partner; anyone who lives with the applicant as their partner or would if circumstances allowed, and any dependent children

- A dependant aged 16 or over who has lived with the applicant for over 6 months and is unable to live independently due to a disability or care requirement
- A carer for any member of the household who may need to stay overnight

22. Foster carers and prospective adopters

- 22.1 Consideration will be taken into account for applicants who may require an additional bedroom to accommodate a foster or adopted child.
- 22.2 To avoid over occupation, an agreement will need to have been reached with Social Services and the Housing Options Manager prior to any placement.

23. Retention on list

- 23.1 Periodically, the Council will contact all applicants to review their applications and to confirm if their circumstances have changed.
- 23.2 Reassessment for eligibility, qualification and priority will be undertaken at review. Should a change of circumstance be indicated, the Council may request further information or supporting documentation from the applicant. The applicant will be contacted, in writing, with the outcome of the review decision.
- 23.3 Should applicants not respond within 28 days the Council will assume assistance is no longer required and the application will be removed from the waiting list. Written confirmation of this will be sent to the applicant at the address provided on their application. It is the applicants' responsibility to advise Fareham Housing of any change of address or contact details.

24. Allocations to existing tenants

- 24.1 Allocations may be made to tenants who have made a request for a transfer or who wish to downsize and satisfy the reasonable preference criteria.
- 24.2 Existing tenants who do not qualify under the reasonable preference criteria will be guided to HomeSwapper, a mutual social housing exchange website. This provides tenants with greater opportunities to move and promotes social and economic mobility.
- 24.3 Additional priority will be given to tenants requesting a transfer where their current accommodation is accessible or specially adapted and these elements are no longer required.

25. Applications from people who are homeless

- 25.1 The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) places a duty on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness²³. There is also a requirement to provide advice and services to all of those affected, not just those who have a priority need under the primary legislation.²⁴
- 25.2 The enhanced prevention duty, means that the Council is required to work with people to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage and to help those households already homeless for 56 days to secure accommodation.

²³ The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) (s.1) (2)

²⁴ The Housing Act (1996) (s.189)

- 25.3 If homelessness is not prevented or relieved, a main housing duty is owed to those who are eligible, have a priority need, and are not homeless intentionally. Where a main duty is owed, the Council will discharge its duty through one of the following:
- An offer of a private sector tenancy
 - An offer of a tenancy via the allocation scheme
 - An offer of temporary accommodation until a settled home is available
- 25.4 People accepted as homeless and placed into temporary accommodation by the Council will not be able to exercise the same level of choice as other applicants in all instances. This is because the Council has a limited time to act and must ensure that the small amount of temporary accommodation available in the Borough is managed effectively to be able to meet future housing need.
- 26. Choice and preference**
- 26.1 The Council operates a considered approach to allocating accommodation through understanding applicants' preferences in order to help with the following:
- Ensure no-one in greatest need slips through the net
 - Improve customer satisfaction
 - Focus on need/suitability
 - Reduce anti-social issues and neighbour disputes
- 26.2 At application stage, applicants have the right to express choice and reasonable preference to accommodation type and location. Officers will work with applicants to ensure that they understand whether they will be offered social or affordable housing and, where possible the approximate waiting times.²⁵
- 26.3 Due to the shortage of available accommodation it may not always be possible to offer a home of a particular type or location, but the Council will consider all requests and work with customers to help them achieve the right housing outcome.
- 27. How applicants are prioritised**
- 27.1 The Council uses a banding system to group together applicants and place them according to priority need. Each band takes into account the statutory reasonable preference categories and the Council's local priorities. The bands are as follows:
- Band A – where it is an urgent situation and no other option is available
 - Band B – where a high priority housing need has been identified, such as those leaving the care of Hampshire County Council
 - Band C – where a moderate priority housing need has been identified, such as applicants lacking 1 bedroom
 - Band D – where a housing need has been identified but no higher priority applies, such as those who qualify as 'right-to-move' applicants
- Full definitions are set out in each band in Appendix 1.
- 27.2 In establishing priorities for housing, the Council must give reasonable preference to the following groups of people²⁶:

²⁵ Waiting times vary for different property types and areas, and will only be a guide, based on the banding, time on list, and the number of properties offered within each band in the previous 12 months.

²⁶ Housing Act (1996) (s.166A) (3)

- People who are homeless as defined by Part 7 of the Housing Act (1996)²⁷
- People who are defined as owed a duty under the Housing Act (1996)²⁸
- People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory conditions
- People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or others
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds

Further details on medical and welfare grounds can be found in section 28.

- 27.3 Under the same Act the Council is also able to award priority to the following groups:
- Existing Council or Registered Provider tenants who wish to downsize
 - Households occupying temporary accommodation provided by Fareham Borough Council
 - Existing tenants who have property adaptations and no longer require them
 - Those who are homeless and require urgent rehousing as a result of violence or threats of violence, including intimidated witnesses and those escaping serious anti-social behaviour or domestic violence²⁹
 - Those who have a local connection, as set out in section 12
 - Households with Armed Forces connections, as set out in section 12
 - Foster carers as set out in section 22

The criteria for placement within each band can be found in Appendix 1.

- 27.4 The Council considers that applicants who have deliberately worsened their circumstances or have become homeless intentionally³⁰ should not receive priority over other applicants as a result of their worsened circumstances.
- 27.5 An applicant who is considered to have deliberately worsened their circumstances or become intentionally homeless will be placed in band D.

28. Medical and Welfare Priority

- 28.1 Medical and Welfare priorities will be determined by a Housing Options Officer and agreed by a Senior Housing Officer or the Housing Options Research and Review Officer upon sufficient evidence submitted by the applicant. Evidence could include relevant information supplied by an applicant's GP, Consultant, Occupational Health, other Health Professional or Support Worker and should specify how the accommodation has a negative impact on the applicant's health or condition.
- 28.2 There can only be one medical and welfare priority awarded for each household. The banding will be determined by the worst medical or welfare factor awarded to a member of the household.
- 28.3 The Allocations Officer will check that the factor still applies before making a nomination. Applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their medical and welfare assessment. It will include brief reasons explaining why that decision was made.

²⁷ S.175 (1) (as amended by Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) (s.1)

²⁸ under sections 190(2), 192(3), 193(2) or 195(2) (as amended)

²⁹ This will be at the recommendation of the Council or Registered Provider and usually as a result of information from an organisation such as the Police or Social Services

³⁰ Housing Act (1996) (Part 7) (p.191) (3)

28.4 If the applicant disagrees with the assessment there is a right to review as set out in section 37.

29. Assigning accommodation

29.1 Council and Registered Provider accommodation will be allocated through a 'best match' applicant preference based direct offer. The accommodation will be allocated to the most suitable applicant in Band A, followed by Bands B, C and then D. Applicants with higher medical needs, are working or otherwise making a positive contribution will be prioritised where no other reasonable preference qualification applies. Where there are two or more suitable applicants, those who were added to the waiting list first will be considered first.

29.2 Applicants who are already on the waiting list and are moving between bands due to a change of circumstances, will enter the new band upon the date that their changes are notified to the Council. Applicants who improve their housing situation and consequently move to a lower band will retain their original application date.

29.3 Due regard will also be paid to policies set out by Registered Providers that may not align with the overcrowding measure set out in section 30. Where this is the case, applicants will be advised whether the spare room subsidy applies, and any affordability issues will be discussed.

29.4 The Council will make every effort to match any preferences expressed by the applicant on accommodation type and location, where availability allows. The suitability of the property and the following characteristics will be considered:

- The area in which the accommodation is situated
- Whether the accommodation is a house, maisonette or flat
- The size of the accommodation, including two or more living/dining rooms
- The floor level
- If there is lift access available
- Whether pets are allowed
- Whether any adaptations exist or necessary changes can be made easily
- The weekly rent and any service charges

30. Size

30.1 The Council will measure overcrowding levels for the purpose of awarding reasonable preference. The Secretary of State takes the view that the bedroom standard is an appropriate measure for determining accommodation size and preventing overcrowding.

30.2 The bedroom standard allocates a separate bedroom to the following groups of persons:

- A married or cohabiting couple
- A person aged 21 or more
- Two persons of the same sex aged between 0 and 20
- Two persons aged less than 10 years (regardless of sex)
- Any person aged under 21 years in any case where he or she cannot be paired with another occupier of the dwelling as set out above

- 30.3 For the purposes of this Policy the Council recognises that persons considered for sharing a room must be family members. Therefore, two young adults who are not in the same family and are not in a relationship should be considered as requiring their own bedroom.
- 30.4 For the purpose of this measure; a living room, bathrooms, and kitchens shall not be classed as usable bedroom spaces. However, additional rooms such as separate dining rooms may be assessed as being usable as a bedroom space.
- 30.5 In cases where applicants do not agree with the Council's overcrowding measurement, upon request a further assessment can be made in line with the statutory regulations as set out in the Housing Act³¹ and in conjunction with the Council's Environmental Health Department.
- 31. Level/Accessible**
- 31.1 Applicants with disabilities or wheelchair requirements will be given priority to ground floor, level access accommodation or level-access properties with a lift.
- 32. Rents**
- 32.1 Rents for the same size or type of home may differ between landlords. The Council will consider whether the costs of the accommodation can be met by the applicant. Income and eligibility for appropriate welfare benefits will be taken into account but it will remain the applicant's responsibility to ensure they can continue to meet the rental charge.
- 32.2 Anyone needing help or advice on rent affordability and other debts that may affect their tenancy should speak to a Housing Options Officer to be signposted to appropriate support.
- 33. Offer**
- 33.1 Applicants matched to a suitable property owned by the Council will be contacted and invited to a viewing. They will be given the opportunity to discuss any concerns, repairs or alterations that may be required. An appointment will be arranged to sign the tenancy agreement once the tenancy start date has been confirmed.
- 33.2 Applicants matched to a suitable property owned by a Registered Provider will be contacted directly by them to arrange a viewing and to sign the tenancy agreement.
- 33.3 Applicants will be advised when they are nominated to a property of the type of tenancy being offered.
- 34. Verification**
- 34.1 Before an offer is made a further assessment may be undertaken to ensure the applicant is still eligible and qualifies. This will be made in those cases where a considerable period has elapsed between application and offer, where Officers are aware of a change or believe there to be a change of circumstances.
- 34.2 The information required shall include:

³¹ The Housing Act (1985) (Part 10) (s.68)

- Proof of identity
- Proof of address
- Proof of residency of any dependent children (e.g. child benefit, correspondence with child's school or GP)
- Proof of income and savings (e.g. wage slips, DWP documentation)
- Evidence of local connection (e.g. household bills)
- Evidence to verify housing need (e.g. home visit, proof of tenancy)
- Evidence of positive contribution (where required)

34.3 Requests for further information should be fulfilled within 3 working days to ensure that available accommodation can be allocated correctly and efficiently. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Council if they are unable to supply this information as they may not be allocated accommodation if the documents are not received.

35. Refusals

35.1 Applicants are encouraged to express preferences for location and property type at the application stage. Should an offer be rejected applicants will be required to provide reasons for refusal.

35.2 Applicants who unreasonably refuse an offer of a property may be removed from the waiting list. Applicants may apply to re-join the waiting list, but previous waiting times will not be taken into account.

36. Equality and Diversity

36.1 The Council treats each applicant equally in accordance with their needs, and where possible, their preferences for accommodation. This is regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership status, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation.

37. Right to a Review

37.1 The Housing Act³² states that applicants have the right to request a review of the following:

- The decision to exclude them from joining the waiting list on the grounds that they are ineligible
- The decision to exclude them from joining the waiting list on the grounds that they do not qualify
- The decision to remove them from the waiting list
- A decision concerning the facts which are likely to be or have been taken into account in considering whether to allocate housing.

37.2 Review requests must be made within 21 days of the decision in writing. The Council will consider an extension of the 21 days in exceptional circumstances and applicants should contact the Council for further advice.

37.3 The review will be dealt with by an Officer who is both senior to the original decision maker and who has not been involved in making that decision. Review decisions will be made in writing to the applicant within 8 weeks.

38. False or Misleading Claims

³² The Housing Act (1996) ss.166A (9), As amended by the Localism Act (2011) ss.147(2)(a)

- 38.1 It is a criminal offence for anyone making an application, or anyone providing supporting information to:
 - Knowingly or recklessly supply false information
 - Knowingly withhold information which the Council has reasonably required the applicant to give
- 38.2 The information requested could include:
 - Any information given on an application for social or affordable rent housing
 - Any information given in response to review letters or updates for changes to circumstances
 - Verification information
 - Any information given during the proceedings of a review
- 38.3 Where it is suspected or alleged that false information has been given or deliberately withheld the application will be frozen whilst an investigation is undertaken. No accommodation offers will be made until the investigation is completed.
- 38.4 Where the investigation concludes that no false information was provided or deliberately withheld, the applicant will be reinstated from the date of the original application.
- 38.5 Where the investigation concludes that false information was provided or deliberately withheld, the applicant may be removed from the waiting list or deemed ineligible to join.
- 38.6 The Council may seek possession of a tenancy it has granted as a result of a false statement by the tenant or a person acting at the tenant's instigation. If the tenancy is with another body, for example a Registered Provider, it will advise that organisation accordingly.
- 38.7 If there is evidence that a criminal offence has been committed the Council may take proceedings that could result in a criminal record, a fine or imprisonment.

39. The Decision-Making Process

39.1 The following table sets out the Officers involved in the decision-making process under delegated powers:

Officer	Delegated Powers
Housing Options Officer	The registration of applications and maintenance of the waiting list.
Housing Options Research and Review Officer	All of the above plus reviews of all decisions
Senior Housing Officer	All of the above
Housing Options Manager	All of the above

40. The involvement of elected Members in nomination decisions

41.1 Government regulations restrict the involvement of elected members of the Council in allocation decisions in certain specified circumstances. Normally, under this Policy, allocation decisions are made by Officers of the Council.

41.2 A Councillor is prevented from being part of a decision-making body at the time an allocation decision is made when either the home to be allocated is situated in the Councillor's electoral ward or the person subject to the decision has his or her sole or main residence in the Councillor's electoral ward.

41.3 Councillors may be involved in allocation decisions where the above circumstances do not apply. For example, Councillors are not prevented from:

- seeking or providing information on behalf of their constituents, or from participating in the decision-making body's deliberations prior to its decision, or
- participating in policy decisions that affect the generality of a particular ward's housing accommodation

42. Applications from relatives of Council Employees and Members

42.1 The Council will ask all housing applicants to declare whether they or any of their relatives work for the Council or are elected members of the Council. In the context of this policy the term "relative" applies to:

- anyone living with the applicant as a partner, or as a member of his or her household
- a natural, adoptive or step parent
- a child
- a sister or brother
- a daughter-in-law or son-in-law
- a grandparent
- an aunt or uncle
- an estranged spouse or partner, regardless of whether he or she lives as part of the applicant's household

42.2 In relevant cases the Council will subject applications to authorisation from a senior officer to ensure that the Allocations Policy criteria have been properly applied.

43. Amendments

43.1 This policy may be amended where changes in legislation, housing need or resources require it. Full consultation with Registered Providers and other relevant parties will be undertaken by:

- Sending a copy of the draft scheme, or proposed alteration, to every Registered Provider with interests within Fareham
- Notify existing applicants of the intended amendments and invite them to comment on proposals
- Make use of social media to raise awareness of proposals and invite comment from members of the public

43.2 Although it is not a statutory requirement, the Council will also consult with the Adult Services and Children Services Teams within Hampshire County Council, NHS Hampshire, relevant voluntary organisations and other appropriate and relevant referral agencies. This will ensure that the Allocations Policy reflects the needs of the Borough.

43.3 The Council will aim to allow 6 weeks as the standard minimum time for written

consultation but may determine such other period as it considers appropriate.

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Appendix 1 – Priority Bands

Band A	
Category	Criteria
Welfare	Existing Council or Registered Provider tenants, who are require urgent rehousing as a result of violence or threats of violence, including intimidated witnesses and those escaping serious anti-social behaviour or domestic violence.
Welfare	Existing Council or Registered Provider tenants who have property adaptations and no longer require them.
Medical	<p>Where one or more of the following apply; the applicant, or a member of their household has a condition that requires a move to more suitable or adapted accommodation due to a life-limiting or life-threatening medical condition, to give or receive a high level of care where it cannot currently be sustained in the long term, or where the housing situation is a significant factor in serious and sustained concerns relating to mental health, learning disabilities or sensory medical conditions.</p> <p>The move must be supported by medical evidence from the relevant professional such as the applicant's GP, Social Services or Occupational Therapist.</p>
Property	Existing Council or Registered Provider tenants who are required to move in less than 6 months because their home will be affected by demolition, redevelopment or major works and it's not possible for them to remain.
Armed Forces	Members of the Armed and Reserved Forces or Existing or former members of the reserve forces, having left within 5 years, who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service who have an imminent threat of homelessness or fall into one of the categories above.
Armed Forces	Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.

Band B	
Category	Criteria
Welfare	<p>Applicants with a local connection who are currently living in a Supported Housing Scheme and it has been evidenced that there is a need for social housing and that alternative housing options are unlikely to be successful.</p> <p>The Council will have joint arrangements with the appropriate agency to ensure that applicants are ready to live independently before they can be considered for offers of accommodation.</p>

Welfare	<p>An applicant who is a young person currently being cared for by Hampshire County Council under the Children Act.</p> <p>The Council will have joint arrangements with the appropriate agency to ensure that applicants are ready to live independently before they can be considered for offers of accommodation.</p>
Medical	<p>Where one or more of the following apply; the applicant, or a member of their household, requires a move to more suitable or adapted accommodation due to a significant medical condition that restricts the ability to access essential facilities and/or care (including the administering of care), or where the housing situation is a significant factor in concerns relating to sensory medical issues, mental health or learning disabilities.</p> <p>The move must be supported by medical evidence from a relevant professional such as the applicant's GP, Social Services or Occupational Therapist.</p>
Property	Existing Council or Registered Provider tenants living in the borough who wish to downsize.
Property	Existing Council or Registered Provider tenants requiring retirement living accommodation due to support needs.
Armed Forces	Divorced or separated spouses or civil partners of Armed Forces personnel who are required to move out of accommodation provided by the MOD.
Property (overcrowding)	<p>A household living in accommodation lacking 2 bedrooms or more, where the Council is satisfied that this is the most viable housing option available and has not been contrived.</p> <p>Owner occupiers will normally be assessed as being in a position to be able to resolve their own housing issues and will only be awarded this priority in exceptional circumstances.</p>
Property (Conditions)	<p>A household living in a property that is in significant disrepair and it is unreasonable for them to remain whilst remedial works are undertaken.</p> <p>The applicant must have a legal right to occupy the accommodation in question, it must be located within the borough of Fareham and the repair issues must have occurred after the initial date of occupancy.</p>

Band C

Category	Criteria
Homelessness	Accepted homeless households owed a duty under S.193 of the Housing Act (1996) and have been placed into bed and breakfast or any other form of temporary accommodation, excluding private rented accommodation.
Medical	Where one or more of the following apply; the applicant, or a member of their household, requires a move to more suitable or adapted

	<p>accommodation due to medical conditions where independence is restricted when accessing essential facilities and/or care (including the administering of care) or where the environment is aggravating sensory medical issues, mental health or learning disabilities.</p> <p>The move must be supported by medical evidence from the relevant professional such as the applicant's GP, Social Services or Occupational Therapist.</p>
Property (Overcrowding)	<p>A household living in accommodation lacking 1 bedroom and the Council is satisfied that no other option is viable.</p> <p>Owner occupiers will normally be assessed as being in a position to be able to resolve their own housing issues and will only be awarded this priority in exceptional circumstances.</p>
Property (Overcrowding)	<p>To avoid overcrowding by 1 bedroom and enable fostering or adopting where an agreement has been reached with Social Services and the Housing Options Manager to provide permanent accommodation prior to any placement.</p>
Property (Conditions)	<p>Any other insanitary or unsatisfactory housing conditions where the Council's Environmental Health department have confirmed that Category 1 hazards exist, and that remedial action is not able to be pursued.</p> <p>This will include households where accommodation lacks facilities such as cooking facilities, bathing facilities, a degree of warmth or other utility supplies. It does not include households claiming to be without accommodation.</p> <p>Applicant must have a legal right to occupy the accommodation in question. It must be located within the borough of Fareham and the repair issues must have occurred after the date of occupancy.</p>
Property (Conditions)	<p>A household with a dependent child and in rented accommodation where facilities such as the bathroom or kitchen are shared with other households. This does not include households placed into temporary accommodation by the Council under Part 7 of the Housing Act (1996).</p>

Band D

Category	Criteria
Welfare	<p>Right to move applicants who are existing tenants of other local authorities living outside of the borough but have reasonable preference to move to Fareham for work and failure to do so would cause hardship to themselves or others.</p> <p>Work related reasons means that the applicant already has a job or an apprenticeship within the borough or has a confirmed start date. The work must be more than 16 hours a week and long-term (lasting more than 12</p>

	months). It does not include voluntary work.
Tenure	An applicant who has been assessed as owed a duty by the Council or who is at risk of homelessness where it is likely that engagement can prevent or relieve homelessness.
Tenure	A person or household with no fixed address or otherwise living in unsettled housing arrangements. This will include households having to stay at various addresses or any other accommodation that is regarded as unsettled.
Welfare	Applicants with no local connection who are currently living in a Supported Housing Scheme and it has been evidenced that there is a clear need for social housing and that alternative housing options are unlikely to be successful. The Council will have joint arrangements with the appropriate agency to ensure that applicants are ready to live independently before they can be considered for offers of accommodation.
Tenure	Applicants who have deliberately worsened their housing situation in order to gain an advantage on the waiting list or who have been found intentionally homeless.
Tenure	A person or household living in accommodation that is tied to their employment and where this will come to an end within 6 months of the application being approved.