

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Report by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability**

**Housing and Communities Committee: 4 November 2020**

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**Subject: West Dunbartonshire Housing Allocation Policy Review**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** This report seeks approval for some technical updates to the Housing Allocations Policy and provides the Committee with a timetable for a full review and update of the policy to be carried out.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Housing and Communities Committee:
- (i) approve the technical changes to the Housing Allocations Policy outlined in this report and proposed Annex to the policy;
  - (ii) agree that these changes can be implemented immediately; and
  - (iii) note the timetable for delivery of a full review and update of the West Dunbartonshire Allocation Policy being proposed.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1** The Housing and Communities Committee agreed the current Housing Allocations Policy in November 2017 following the implementation of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 3.2** It was agreed that a full review of the policy would take place in 3 years, however, the Covid-19 pandemic has delayed this work and a new timeframe is now being proposed and is detailed within this report.

#### **4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** Whilst this full review has been delayed, it would be beneficial if some minor technical changes to the policy are approved and implemented.
- 4.2** The current allocations policy was developed prior to our “No Homes for Domestic Abuse” initiative and policy being adopted.
- 4.3** This reflects the Council’s zero tolerance approach to domestic abuse. It aligns with this approach, supporting victims to stay in their own homes. Our Allocations Policy requires a flexibility to address the housing needs of perpetrators.

- 4.4** This is in line with the Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Bill, which if passed by Parliament will allow social landlords to end or transfer a tenancy of a perpetrator of domestic abuse to prevent a victim experiencing homelessness and enabling them to remain in the family home if they choose to do so.
- 4.5** As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to meet the housing needs of our communities through our More Homes West Dunbartonshire approach we sometimes design specialist properties to meet unique and unusual housing needs which cannot be met by existing housing stock. The Allocations Policy needs to provide the flexibility for these properties to be pre-allocated to ensure that these specific identified needs are met during the build process.
- 4.6** The changes are outlined in more detail in the Annex to the policy attached as Appendix 1.
- 4.7** A timetable for a full review and update of the Allocations Policy is outlined below:-

Milestone	End Date
Research and pre consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish working groups for each section to be reviewed</li> <li>Interim Committee Paper for November outlining changes and timeframes</li> <li>Carry out consultation on any proposed changes</li> </ul>	Oct/Nov 2020
Develop drafts of any areas being refreshed and share with working groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use consultation feedback to shape review</li> </ul>	Dec 2020 – Mar 2021
Review of Allocation Policy Review report to Housing and Communities Committee	May 2021

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** Meeting the requirements of the review of the Allocation Policy is presently being managed from within existing staffing resources within Housing and Employability. Any additional resources required will be identified as the review progresses. This will be monitored effectively to ensure the delivery of key outcomes.

## **6. Financial and Procurement implications**

**6.1** There are no financial implications within this report.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

**7.1** The revisions to the Housing Allocations Policy provides the potential to improve the existing Allocations system to more adequately reflect the change in the tenant base - those applying to and being housed with specific needs which cannot be met within the current stock.

## **8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

**8.1** The agreed reviewed policy will be the subject of a full equalities impact assessment.

## **9. Consultation**

**9.1** The proposed technical changes to the Council's allocation policy has been discussed with tenant representatives at a meeting which was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020.

**9.2** The wider review of the Allocations Policy will be undertaken in close consultation with members, tenants and residents' organisations and all other interested parties.

**9.3** A report on the consultation will be published in line with the requirements introduced through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

**10.1** Having considered the Council's strategic priorities, this report and the subsequent positive outcomes will support all of the Council's key strategic priorities.

**Peter Barry**  
**Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability**  
**Date: 22 October 2020**

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**Appendices:** 1. Annex to the Housing Allocation Policy November 2020

**Background Papers:** No Home for Domestic Abuse Policy, West  
Dunbartonshire Council, October 2020

**Wards Affected:** All