

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL****Report by the Chief Officer, Housing and Employability****Housing and Communities Committee: 23 August 2023**

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**Subject: Nominations Agreement with Veterans Housing Scotland****1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to seek agreement to enter into a new Nomination Agreement with Veterans Housing Scotland and West Dunbartonshire Council to provide two Council properties specifically for veterans on an annual basis.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Housing and Communities Committee
- (i) agree to the proposed nominations agreement with Veterans Housing Scotland attached as appendix 1 of this report;

**3. Background**

- 3.1** West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) is committed to improving the quality and choice of housing options available to those in housing need within West Dunbartonshire and maintains a statutory responsibility to anyone threatened with or experiencing homelessness
- 3.2** In the Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan it was evidenced that veterans are disproportionately at a higher risk of homelessness. The Plan includes an aim to work together effectively to meet housing need and prevent episodes of homelessness of veterans across West Dunbartonshire.

**4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** Allocations by both WDC are carried out in accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, and the operation of the Nominations Agreement (appendix 1) between both parties is recognised Good Practice within the social housing sector.
- 4.2** The agreement to enter into a Nomination Agreement with Veterans Housing Scotland and West Dunbartonshire will result in a 2 Council properties being allocated specifically for veterans on an annual basis. Veterans Housing Scotland are a not for profit landlord/charity providing dedicated support for veterans. They have 650 homes across Scotland and 8 within West Dunbartonshire and are looking to work with local authorities and social

landlords to find homes for more of the veterans they support, typically those experiencing mental or physical challenges following their time in the armed forces and therefore at greater risk of experiencing homelessness.

**4.3** The serious extent and nature of homelessness within the veteran's population is recognised at a national level. Both organisations are committed to giving particular priority to provision which alleviates homelessness. Therefore this proposal will increase housing options for veteran households who may potentially be experiencing homelessness.

**4.4** The Nominations Agreement sets out the arrangement by which housing will be nominated to Veterans Housing Scotland where applicants will be considered for offers for these tenancies by Veterans Housing Scotland. The aim of the Agreement is to enable both parties to work together effectively in partnership to meet housing need and prevent homeless of veterans in West Dunbartonshire. It is proposed that the Nomination Agreement be reviewed on an annual basis.

## **5. People Implications**

**5.1** Meeting the requirements of this nomination agreement would be managed from within existing staffing resources within Housing and Employability.

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

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

## **7. Risk Analysis**

**7.1** There are no significant identifiable risk associated with this project. Similar nomination arrangements have operated successfully with other local authority housing providers for a number of years.

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

**8.1** Equalities legislation requires that new or significantly changing policies or services and financial decisions should be subject to an assessment of their impact on the wellbeing of certain groups of people. The recommendations within this report do alter existing policy but following an EIA screening no negative issues were identified and so is not considered to require a wider equalities impact assessment.

## **9. Consultation**

**9.1** The Council has in place a well-established and proactive tenants and residents organisational structure. The WDTRO meet with the Council (co-chaired by the Convener of the Housing and Communities Committee) on a bi-monthly basis to discuss all issues relating to the Housing Service.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

**10.1** Having considered the Council's strategic priorities, this report contributes significantly to all five strategic priorities and specifically to improve local housing and environmentally sustainable infrastructure.

**Peter Barry**  
**Chief Officer Housing and Employability**  
**Date: 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023**

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**Appendices:** 1. Draft Nominations Agreement with Veterans Housing Scotland

**Background Papers:** EIA Screening, July 2023

**Wards Affected:** All