

REPORT TO:	HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 6
DATE OF MEETING:	1st OCTOBER 2020	CATEGORY: (See Notes) DELEGATED or RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR SERVICE DELIVERY	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	PAUL WHITTINGHAM. Paul.whittingham@southderbyshire.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	HOMEFINDER, HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY-	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: (See Notes)

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 That the revised Homefinder Housing Allocations Policy is approved for implementation with effect from 1st December 2020.

2.0 Purpose of the Report

2.1 To seek approval of the final version of the Homefinder Housing Allocations policy.

3.0 Executive Summary

3.1 The draft Homefinder Housing Allocations Policy was last presented to the Housing and Community Services Committee on 30th January after consultation with the public.

3.2 The draft Policy has been reviewed by the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the final version is attached at Appendix A.

4.0 Detail

4.1 Allocations Policy

4.2 The draft Homefinder Housing Allocations Policy was presented to the Housing and Community Services Committee on 30th January 2020. The draft Policy contained a number of changes to the existing Policy. These changes are aimed at making the Policy more transparent and user friendly for applicants that wish to join the Housing

Register. The Committee will recall that the key changes to the policy which were outlined in January include:

- Increasing the Income threshold for applicants to £60,000 per household
- Allowing households with one only one family member over the age of 60, or in receipt of disability related benefits to access sheltered and supported housing.
- Allowing applicants requiring sheltered accommodation but with no local connection to join the register

4.3 The draft Policy has been subject to consultation with the public, partners, and other housing providers.

After the conclusion of the consultation process the draft Policy has been reviewed by the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services to ensure compliance with Housing and associated legislation and regulation. It is proposed to implement the revised Policy with effect from 1st December 2020, to allow time for the necessary changes to be made to systems and procedures and also any staff training.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no direct financial implications with the approval of the Allocations Policy

6.0 Corporate Implications

Employment Implications

6.1 There are no direct employment implications contained within this report. The procurement of software will require the support of the Council's ICT and Business Change Service.

Legal Implications

6.2 The Allocations Policy has been reviewed by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to ensure compliance with relevant national and legislative guidance.

Corporate Plan Implications

6.3 The new Housing Allocations Policy directly contributes to the Council's corporate aims:

Supporting and safeguarding the most vulnerable

- With partners encourage independent living and keep residents healthy and happy in their homes.

Deliver excellent services

- Have in place methods of communication that enable customers to provide and receive information.
- Ensure technology enables us to effectively connect with our communities.

Transforming the Council

- Provide modern ways of working that support the Council to deliver services to meet changing needs.

Risk Impact

- 6.4 The revised allocations policy and procurement of software to support this directly contribute to Service Delivery Risk, SD1 - Loss of income to the Housing Revenue Account, by helping to ensure the prompt letting of properties to Housing applicants.

7.0 Community Impact

Consultation

- 7.1 The Housing Allocations Policy has been subject to public consultation.

Equality and Diversity Impact

- 7.2 The Housing Allocations Policy has been subject to both external legal review and an Equality Impact Assessment.

Social Value Impact

- 7.3 The new Allocations Policy contributes directly to the aims of the Community Sustainability Strategy
- Older people, people with dementia and other long-term conditions and their carers have good quality of life, retain their independence for as long as possible, and receive the support they need at the end of their lives
 - More people feel safe and secure in their home and in the community, particularly those who are most vulnerable

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.4 The delivery of Housing register allocations and lettings services through an on-line service reduces the reliance on printed media.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 The revised Allocations Policy provides for greater access to housing for those in housing need
- 8.2 The revised policy will play a pivotal part in reducing the time taken to re-let Council properties.

9.0 Background Papers

Notes:

- * Category – Please see the Committee Terms Of Reference in [Responsibility for Functions - Committees](#). This shows which committee is responsible for each function and whether it has delegated authority to make a decision, or needs to refer it elsewhere with a recommendation.

- ** Open/Exempt - All reports should be considered in the open section of the meeting, unless it is likely that exempt information would be disclosed. Please see the [Access to Information Procedure Rules](#) for more guidance.
- *** Committee Terms Of Reference in [Responsibility for Functions - Committees](#).