

Appendix 1

Proposed changes to Cheshire East's Common Allocations policy

Proposed change	Public Opinion	Provider opinion	Benefits	Recommendation
1.New build properties to be prioritised to applicants with a local connection	80% in favour	From survey the opinion is balanced	Local town/ village residents feel the benefit of a new development	<p>A local letting policy is drawn up for all new build developments – for first let only.</p> <p>Of the people whom place a bid on a property those whom have a connection to the town in which the development is situated will be considered first. Once exhausted then allocations may be made to people without a connection.</p>
2. New build properties to be prioritised to those in employment including voluntary employment of 10 hours per month which has been undertaken for a period of longer than six months and is evidence based. (This will not apply to elderly or disabled applicants)	72% in agreement	84% in agreement	Residents are rewarded for working.	<p>A local letting policy is drawn up for all new build developments – for first let only.</p> <p>Priority under a local letting policy will be given to those with a local connection and working in the first instance.</p> <p>Once exhausted then allocations may be made to people with a local connection and not working and then those who are working without a local connection.</p>

applying for purpose built properties)				
3.Key workers to be considered as a priority for new build developments	56% in favour	63% in favour Board – 4 out of 4	Create mixed sustainable communities	<p>These are to be included in the Local lettings policy as outlined above – on first let for new build properties only.</p> <p>As part of a local lettings policy for new build properties, to include key workers in the list of those whom would demonstrate a local connection to a town and therefore permit keyworkers to be considered before those whom do not have a local connection.</p>
4. Capital limits and income checks to be assessed prior to allocation	<p>Income checks 81% - felt this was fair</p> <p>Capital limits 82% felt this was fair</p>	<p>Income checks - 91% in agreement</p> <p>Capital limits – 94% in agreement</p>	Allocations are made fairly to applicants whom have a genuine need for affordable housing and can afford to sustain the financial costs of maintaining the home	<p>A small paragraph is inserted into the policy to reflect the assessments and limits that may be conducted by housing providers.</p> <p>Providers will work with Cheshire East to develop a transparent policy/ procedure for assessment. Once agreed they will be submitted to homechoice and made publicly available.</p>
5. To ensure that the policy conforms to the legal requirements for	85% in agreement	100% in agreement Board – 4 out of 4	The policy is legal and allocations conducted fairly	The policy is to be amended to identify that it will be continually aligned with future legislative changes – to avoid the need for consultation and to permit the service to operate with a legal policy in the future.

EEA nationals			in line with reforms to immigration and residency requirements	<p>The finer details of legislative assessments will be outlined in the procedures document, used alongside the policy.</p> <p>EEA nationals will be formally assessed to ensure they have been engaged in Genuine and effective work before being offered a property.</p>
6.Longer term housing priority for Cheshire East cared for children	75% in agreement	<p>100% in agreement</p> <p>Board – 4 out of 4</p>	Cheshire East cared for children have easier access to social and affordable housing up to their 26 th birthday	<p>The policy is aligned with this recommendation and the statements pertaining to Cared for Children are amended to state that, where appropriate, priority will be awarded to care leavers in housing need up to the day before their 26th birthday.</p>
7.Applicants whom are subject to bankruptcy & debt relief orders are to be considered along with all other applicants and are not to be penalised with reduced preference	53% in agreement	<p>40% in agreement</p> <p>Board – 4 out of 4</p>	Applicants whom have taken positive action to resolve outstanding debts will not be prevented from accessing social/ affordable housing	<p>The policy in relation to rent arrears and property related debt is amended to reflect the relaxed approach of all applicants whom have a formal order to resolve the debt.</p> <p>This should mean that all providers engage with this regardless to which provider the historic debt relates.</p> <p>Providers would like the flexibility to over look people whom cannot demonstrate affordability and also to require applicants with a history of poor money management to engage with financial support services.</p>

8. Amend the under occupation	Has spurred this change	All in agreement	Those whom have elected to rent or buy a home larger than they need are not awarded priority unless their welfare is affected by the size of the home	<p>To amend the under occupation criteria so that it reflects the statutory requirement, to enable smaller household to release larger properties.</p> <p>Amendments will also be made to the welfare and medical criteria to reflect the impacts that larger accommodation may be having on home owners and tenants of private landlords.</p>
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