

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING CONSULTATIVE BOARD

22 MAY 2012

REPORT OF HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Report prepared by Andrew Paterson

1. UPDATE TO THE ALLOCATION SCHEME

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.2 To consider the proposals in the attached scoping document and provide comments to the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services as forming the basis for broad changes to be included in a new Allocation Scheme.

1.3 Recommendation of Head of Housing and Community Services

1.3.2 That the Board recommends the principles contained in the attached document to the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services as forming the basis of a new Allocation Scheme to be agreed by the Cabinet Member.

1.4 Reasons for Recommendation

1.4.1 The current Allocation Scheme has been amended in order to meet various changes made to the statutory framework over the past ten years. The coalition government has made significant changes to the legislation governing how a local authority can frame its Allocation Scheme. This presents the council with an opportunity to carry out a thorough review of the Allocation Scheme and what the council is seeking to achieve through it.

1.4.2 The changes recommended in the attached document reflect current best practice across England together with officer consideration after consultation with other Local Authorities and Housing Association partners in our region.

1.5 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.5.1 The council could choose to maintain the current scheme, however the present scheme does not necessarily assist the council to achieve its

key priorities; has become unwieldy and therefore difficult to administer and does not make best use of the housing stock of the borough.

1.6 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.6.1 By reviewing who has priority to access social housing the council can create policy that rewards applicants who make a positive contribution to the community as well as meeting housing need. This joint aim will benefit both 'For Maidstone to have growing economy' and for Maidstone to be 'A decent place to live'. Better management of the housing stock will also assist in making Maidstone a better place to live.

1.7 Risk Management

1.7.1 If the Allocation Scheme is not properly framed the consequence could be that households in genuine housing need are not assisted. The risk of this occurring will be reduced by consulting with stakeholders and service users together with modelling exercises to help demonstrate how the changes will affect categories of persons on the housing list.

1.8 Other Implications

1.8.1

1.	Financial	X
2.	Staffing	
3.	Legal	
4.	Equality Impact Needs Assessment	X
5.	Environmental/Sustainable Development	
6.	Community Safety	
7.	Human Rights Act	X
8.	Procurement	
9.	Asset Management	

1.8.2 There potential financial implications are that the housing register will be easier to administer and therefore less demanding of resources and freeing up officer time and resources. Any further impact will be fully assessed when the policy is drafted in full

1.8.3 The impact on equalities and Human Rights will be considered more fully when the draft of the policy is developed. As the recommendations represent examples of best practice from other authorities, it would not be envisioned that there are to be any problems in this area.

1.9 Relevant Documents

1.9.1 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Allocation Scheme Principles

1.9.2 Background Documents

Allocation Scheme
Housing Strategy
Homelessness Strategy
Consultation on the Allocation of Accommodation Code of Guidance for Local Authorities
Response to the Consultation on the Allocation of Accommodation Code of Guidance for Local Authorities March 2012

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

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This is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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