

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:

2753

Author:

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Department:

Development

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Subject:

Local Lettings Policies Operated by Nottingham City Homes

Total Value:

Nil (Type: Nil)

Decision Being Taken:

To approve the revised local lettings policies proposed by Nottingham City Homes following a period of consultation by the Tenancy and Estate Management Team.

Reasons for the Decision(s) Local lettings policies are a helpful tool to bring sustainability to areas which have been affected by issues such as crime and anti social behaviour. It is appropriate to review the policies on a regular basis and to take into account emerging issues within areas.

There are currently 3492 properties covered by a local lettings policy, representing 13% of the stock, however this did not include the Victoria Centre policy and this would have made the total 3955. The impact of the proposals in this report is to increase this to 4512, representing 16.3% of the stock.

The proposed amendments will benefit customers by increasing the bidding opportunities for applicants on the housing register who may not have previously been considered due to a local lettings policy.

An emerging issue are changes to Housing Benefit that will see a reduction in the amount allowed to those under 35 from April 2018 and this is reflected in the relevant Local lettings policies where affordability may be an issue.

A comprehensive review has been undertaken by each Housing Office team with consultation with councillors, the Police, partner agencies and stakeholders

Appendix 1 shows the statistical summary of the proposals.

Appendix 2 shows the Equality Impact Assessments

Other Options Considered: Not to have local lettings policies - rejected as following consultation it is apparent that the policies are still required in some specific areas.

Background Papers: Summary of local lettings policies

Unpublished background papers: Copy of LLP summary for PHD 140217.xlsx

Published Works:

Affected Wards: Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests: None.

Consultations: Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

**Crime and Disorder
Implications:**

Following the implementation of the current Allocations Policy in June 2013, risk assessments are now carried out on those applicants who have engaged in behaviour which is considered unacceptable to the Council. Unacceptable behaviour includes but is not limited to non-payment of rent, antisocial behaviour or any behaviour that would be considered a breach of the terms and conditions of the Council's tenancy agreement. This unacceptable behaviour includes the past and present behaviour of any member of the applicant's household either at the time they are making an application for housing, or at any point before or during which they receive any offer of accommodation if their application is registered. In deciding whether or not an applicant is not accepted on to the housing register because of unacceptable behaviour an assessment is undertaken which will take into account steps taken to address the behaviour and any support needs.

The Council and Nottingham City Homes want to create stable and sustainable communities: local lettings policies act as a tool to achieve this. A blanket approach has not been taken; only areas with specific issues have a proposed local lettings policy.

Equality:

Please login to the system to view the EIA document: EIA 160816.doc

Decision Type:

Portfolio Holder

Subject to Call In:

Yes

Call In Expiry date:

03/03/2017

Advice Sought:

Legal, Finance, Equality and Diversity

Legal Advice:

It is an absolute requirement under the Housing Act 1996 for local housing authorities to have an allocations scheme. Nottingham City Council complies with that requirement.

The changes proposed to the local lettings policies within the scheme are highlighted in red in Appendix 1 and amount mainly to the removal of the anti-social behaviour criteria in respect of a number of streets. There is the removal also of age criteria in respect of two areas and one in respect of pre-school children. The changes are suggested following a review by Nottingham City Homes, which took in to account statistical information in respect of each area.

Regular reviews of allocations schemes are encouraged in the relevant government guidance on allocations of social housing and this review complies with that.

When a local housing authority proposes to make significant changes to its policy then it must first carry out any impact assessment necessary to ensure compliance with equalities legislation and its own equalities policies. This has been done.

I do not consider that the changes proposed to the local lettings policies amount to a major change in policy such that it would trigger a wider consultation with local private registered providers of social housing or require the authority to bring the changes to the attention of those who may be affected by them. Such consultation is not required. Advice provided by Roseann Kane (Senior Solicitor) on 05/12/2016.

Finance Advice:

The impact of the changes in local lettings policies has minimal financial impact. The changes proposed to the local lettings policies mainly result in policies being removed, therefore this has the potential to reduce void durations and so increase rental income.

Advice provided by Julie Dorrington (Finance Analyst (Housing)) on 07/12/2016.

Equality and Diversity Advice:

As with the advice provided by the legal team, the proposal will need to be monitored once implemented to ensure that equity remains at the heart. Advice provided by Adisa Djan (Equalities and Diversity Consultant) on 11/01/2017.

Signatures

Jane Urquhart (Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing)

SIGNED and Dated: 23/02/2017

David Bishop (Deputy CE, CD for Development and Growth)

SIGNED and Dated: 21/02/2017