

**Decision Session: Cabinet Member for Health,
Housing and Adult Social Services**

28 March 2012

Report of the Assistant Director of Housing and Public Protection

**Response to Communities and Local Government ‘Allocation of
accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England’**

Summary

1. The government are consulting on a proposals in respect of statutory guidance to local authorities on the allocation of social housing and proposed regulations designed to improve access to social housing for former and serving armed forces personnel. The report provides a response to the government’s proposals and invites the cabinet member to endorse and comment on these proposals

Background

2. This consultation is aimed primarily at Local Authorities. Housing Associations, social housing tenants and waiting list applicants, as well as voluntary and community organisations representing tenants and applicants are also expected to have an interest.
3. The consultation poses 16 questions around prioritising service personnel, those wishing to move when under occupying social housing, housing for adopters and fosters and overcrowding and also look to give some priority to those who are either in paid work, actively seeking employment or are contributing towards their community.
4. While on their own these priorities appear minor they must be considered alongside the other demands and restrictions placed upon allocations policies and availability of social housing
5. The consultation period is 5 January 2012 to 5 pm on 30 March 2012.

Consultation

6. In preparing this response there has been consultation with the housing department, views have been sought from CYC Tenants & Leaseholders Open Day, York Homeless Forum and the views of partner organisations of the North Yorkshire Home Choice (NYHC) choice based lettings (CBL) scheme, relevant Local Authority members and Chief Officers.
7. The NYHC Board at a meeting on 22nd February supported a joint response from all NYHC partners, however acknowledged that where individual partners felt it appropriate, individual responses would also be submitted. Scarborough BC intend to submit an individual response
8. The consultation response document is currently with all partner agencies for final comments and ratification. There may be some slight amendments to Appendix 1 as a result of this; a verbal update will be given at the meeting.

Options

9. Option 1 – To submit 1 response in current form NYHC sub region contained in appendix 1
10. Option 2 – To amend the response and submit an individual response from CYC.

Analysis

11. Detailed consultation and consideration has resulted in the response set out in Appendix 1. This looks at the wider issues of housing demand and need in the region and gives a realistic response to the consultation questions.
12. Discussion relating to the main questions around giving priority to former service personnel resulted in the general view that it was felt the current system whereby NYHC offers an open waiting list to all service personnel but where the allocation of property is based on need was the most appropriate.

13. It was also felt that the current system to encourage people to downsize was satisfactory although additional incentives may be beneficial in specific cases.
14. At consultation it was agreed that while it would be beneficial to assist workers and those seeking work into social housing there are significant constraints upon the stock and this may not be practical as it may be detrimental to those who are vulnerable or in significant housing need.

Council Plan

15. The outcome of this consultation document will affect the way housing need is determined in the city and is directly linked to the council's priority to build strong communities. Specifically *'Addressing housing need to ensure that vulnerable people have supply to meet their needs'*.

Implications

16. The implications arising from this report are:
 - **Financial** None
 - **Human Resources (HR)** None
 - **Equalities** Any changes to the NYHC allocations policy as a result of new guidance will require the council to conduct an equalities impact assessment
 - **Legal** None
 - **Crime and Disorder** None
 - **Information Technology (IT)** None
 - **Property** None
 - **Other** None

Risk Management

17. This is a consultation document therefore there are no known risks

Recommendations

18. The Cabinet Member is asked to:
 - Approve options 1 and agree the detailed response in Appendix 1.

Reason: To ensure that CYC views are included within the consultation response to the DCLG

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**



Date 14th March 2012

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

CLG consultation document 'Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England' Published 5/1/2012

Annexes:

Annex 1 Response to consultation document