

## MUNICIPAL YEAR 2019/20 REPORT NO.

### ACTION TO BE TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

### PORTFOLIO DECISION OF:

Cllr Needs Cabinet Member for Social  
Housing

### REPORT OF:

Sarah Cary Executive  
Director Place

Agenda – Part: 1

KD Num: Non Key

**Subject: Minor amendments to the  
Housing Allocations Scheme.**

**Wards: All**

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### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Enfield's scheme for allocating council and housing association homes in the borough (Allocations Scheme) was agreed by Cabinet in November 2012 and implemented in February 2013.

The Allocations Scheme is being monitored and kept under review to ensure it meets the aims and objectives set out in the scheme.

This report proposes two minor amendments:

- i. Amend the wording in the Allocations Scheme regarding who will hear the Exception & Special Applications Appeals.
- ii. To include an explanation on how an existing council and housing association tenant can made an application for a transfer under the allocations scheme.

The proposed amendments are considered minor. Minor amendments can be agreed by the relevant Cabinet Member for Housing as set out in page 12 of Enfield's Allocations Scheme.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1** It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Housing agree the following minor amendments to Enfield's Allocation Scheme:

i. Exceptions and Special Application Panel Appeals

The Allocation Scheme states that appeals against Exceptions & Special Applications Panel will be heard by the Assistant Director of Community Housing. This post no longer exists following the creation of the post of Director for Housing and Regeneration who has responsibility for the the Council's Allocations Scheme. Appeals will be heard by a Head of Service in Housing & Regeneration Service.

ii. Improving information for Council and Housing Association Tenants applying to transfer to a different property

The Allocations Scheme does not explain the process for an existing council of housing association tenant to make an application for a transfer under the Housing Register. Further the process will highlight or refer tenants to the relevant section in the scheme that provides for the Rights of information, review or complaints where applicable.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 It is not necessary for the council to consult prior to introducing these changes as they are not major changes of policy. They merely reflect a change in our structure and recommendations from the Local Government Ombudsmen in carrying out its statutory functions under the Local Government Act 1974.

3.2 Exceptions and Special Application Panel Appeals

This minor change is necessary in order to comply with statutory provisions and Officer recommendations.

3.3 Improving information for Council and Housing Association Tenants applying to transfer to a different property

This minor change is necessary to comply with recommendations from the Local Government Ombudsman

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None. The changes recommended by the LGO although not strictly binding ensures more transparency in the scheme.

#### **5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Please see above.

#### **6. COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

##### **6.1 Financial Implications**

There are not expected to be any financial implications as a result of these minor procedural changes.

##### **6.2 Legal Implications**

The amendments being proposed arise from an Ombudsman recommendations. Although the decision of the Ombudsman's is not binding on the Council, the changes ensure even more transparency / further information in respect of the allocation procedure.

The recommendations proposed are within the council's statutory duties.

##### **6.3 Property Implications**

None

#### **7. KEY RISKS**

The recommendations are necessary to reduce the risk of legal challenges to the Allocations Scheme and limit representational damage through non-compliance.

#### **8. INTERNAL DEPARTMENT IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATION**

Communications to be sent out to relevant stakeholders advising of the changes to the allocations scheme.

#### **9. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES – CREATING A LIFETIME OF OPPORTUNITIES IN ENFIELD**

##### **9.1 Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods**

Making the process of applying for a transfer more transparent will assist those council tenants wanting to move to improve their living conditions.

**9.2 Sustain strong and healthy communities**

Affordable housing is an important contribution towards improving the health and well being of local people by meeting their housing needs.

**9.3 Build our local economy to create a thriving place**

Allocating council and registered provider homes contributes to a reduction in inequalities by offering stable and affordable homes to those in need. This in turn provides households with stability and enhanced opportunities to find work, education and training.

**10. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

None. As the amendments are procedural and in line with recommendations from the Local Government Ombudsman

**11. PERFORMANCE AND DATA IMPLICATIONS**

None

**12. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

None

Background Papers

None.