

Written statement of a key decision
Cabinet

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| Title | Proposed redesign of the Allocations arrangements for Herefordshire |
| Decision maker | Cabinet Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251 |
| Date of decision | 12 April 2018 |
| Report exemption class | Open |
| Reason for being a key decision | This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected. |
| A notice was served in accordance with Part 3 (Key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. | |
| General exception or special urgency (as defined in the constitution) | No |
| Purpose | To approve the proposed redesign of the allocations arrangements for Herefordshire. The council has a range of statutory obligations in relation to allocations, although as it holds no housing stock, the direct control of lettings to tenants rests with social housing landlords. Current arrangements for allocations are managed through Home Point, which is a single integrated form of choice based lettings system (CBL) where applicants on the housing register bid for social housing. Providers have indicated their wish to move away from an integrated system and to manage more of the process themselves. Following discussions with providers, an agreed approach has been identified for the redesign of allocations. It involves each provider making their own |

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| | <p>arrangements for advertising properties and managing lettings. The council will operate the register, monitor how housing need is met by lettings and transfer data to providers so that customers can either be nominated directly for properties or bid for them on provider websites. The anticipated benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choice for customers who will be able to apply both to the council and directly to the providers; • more information about the different tenures available within the housing stock of providers including private market rental and low cost home ownership; • better access to information through more modern and interactive technology; • more effective monitoring of the nomination arrangements and the council's statutory duties; • flexibility for providers to try to ensure that all their housing stock is fully let. <p>The council's role will be focused more specifically on fulfilling its statutory duties around allocations. The separation of component parts of the process requires new and more complex solutions for data transfer and the council is commissioning a new IT system to support this which has been the subject of a separate decision. The council will also have to operate two different nomination/transfer arrangements to reflect the different approaches of two groups of providers. There will be nomination agreements between the council and each provider to help regulate arrangements, following dissolution of the Home Point partnership</p> <p>There is a detailed project plan and process to support the changes and it is intended that they will be implemented between October and December 2018. The allocations redesign, if approved, would also require the further revision of the allocations policy adopted in March 2016 and an item on this issue appears elsewhere on the cabinet agenda today.</p> |
| <p>Decision</p> | <p>That: (a) the following new arrangements for allocating social housing be approved for implementation at the earliest opportunity within the existing budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the closure of the Home Point system and brand • the separation of the housing register from the advertising of properties and the management of bidding and the discharge of the council's duty to nominate people and monitor allocations through multiple arrangements, including automatic data transfer. |
| <p>Reason for the decision</p> | <p>As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=I50025254</p> |

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| Options considered | <p>1. Make no changes to housing allocations arrangements. This option is not recommended as housing providers have confirmed they will not continue to use the current home point arrangements and the council cannot compel or require them to work in a particular way. Such an approach would lead to a breakdown of any organised means of ensuring that people in housing need get housing and would be likely to lead to rapid increases in homelessness and significant regulatory and reputational risk to the council.</p> <p>2. Make changes to improve the existing allocations arrangements but continue with a single integrated CBL system. This option is not recommended as the majority of housing providers have made clear that this would not be an acceptable course of action and it cannot be imposed upon them. The consequences of such an approach would be similar to those in paragraph 1.</p> |
| Declarations of interest (see below) | |
| Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply) | 18 April 2018 |

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| <p>Councillor:</p> <p>Cabinet member finance and corporate services (Councillor NE Shaw) / Leader of the Council (Councillor JG Lester)</p> <p>[Please amend / delete as appropriate, including this message]</p> | <p>Date 12 April 2018</p> |
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- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;
- and
- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted by the relevant local authority's head of paid service.