

REVIEW:	Allocation of Housing	
Committee:	Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee	Chair: Councillor PA Andrews
Lead support officer:	Jamie Burns, Home Point Manager	

SCOPING

Terms of Reference

This review covers the Allocation of Housing through the Choice-Based Lettings Allocations Policy operated by the Home Point Partnership in Herefordshire. The review will cover the following:

- Current waiting list information illustrating the demand for affordable housing in the county and levels of assessed need under the current Allocations Policy.
- Housing stock availability within the Home Point Partnership including properties advertised through the Home Point system and expressed demand for advertised housing. Composition of the Home Point Partnership membership.
- Legislative framework surrounding Housing Allocation Policies including recent consultation for the 'Allocation of Accommodation, Choice-Based Lettings, Code of Guidance for Local Housing Authorities'.
- Review of the current Home Point Herefordshire Housing Allocations Policy and supporting literature together with the Home Point application and bidding process.
- Review of customer satisfaction data and consider options for qualitative and informing consultation activity with stakeholders and service users including RSL members of the Home point Partnership.
- Following the review to make recommendations to Cabinet and the Home Point Management Board regarding Allocations Policy development.

Desired outcomes

- Understand the level of demand and supply for affordable housing in Herefordshire as expressed through the Home Point Housing Waiting List..
- To identify opportunities for Home Point to further support the Council's Homelessness Prevention Agenda.
- To identify opportunities for further development and enhancement of the Home Point system including technological advancements to improve access and customer service.
- To ensure equitable access to the Home Point system for vulnerable applicants
- In consultation with the Home Point Partnership Board to identify improvements and make recommendations to Cabinet on Home Point Herefordshire's Housing Allocations Policy.

Key questions

- What are the current levels of housing demand and supply in Herefordshire as evidenced through the Home Point system?
- How does the current system operate including with regard to the banding scheme and the assessment of the relative need of applicants
- To what extent does Home Point Herefordshire meet Central Government's aims and aspirations for Choice-Based Lettings.
- How accessible is the current Home Point system to all applicants and how can Home Point Herefordshire best work in partnership to support homelessness prevention activities
- What improvements or amendments can be made to Herefordshire's Housing Allocations Policy taking into account current levels of need.
- What technological improvements can be made to improve accessibility and service provision.
- To what degree does / can the Housing Allocations Policy objectively rank housing relative housing within current legislative requirements.

Links to the Community Strategy

- The Review Group will identify how the outcome of this review contributes to the objectives contained in the Herefordshire Community Strategy, including the Council's Corporate Plan and other key plans or strategies.

Timetable	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
Agree approach, programme of consultation/research/provisional witnesses/dates	30 th November 2007 (it is expected that the CBL Code of Guidance will be published during November 2007).
Collect current available data	8 th October 2007
Collect outstanding data	31 st December 2007 (to include stakeholder qualitative feedback)
Analysis of data	31 st January 2008
Final confirmation of interviews of witnesses	7 th February 2008
Carry out programme of interviews	Week commencing 25 th February 2008
Agree programme of site visits	7 th February 2008
Undertake site visits as appropriate	Week commencing 25 th February 2008
Update to Scrutiny Committee	TBC
Final analysis of data and witness evidence	31 st March 2008
Prepare options/recommendations	Week commencing 7 th April 2008 (2 weeks)
Present Final report to Scrutiny Committee	TBC
Present options/recommendations to Cabinet	TBC
Cabinet response	TBC
Implementation of agreed recommendations	TBC
Members	Support Officers
	<p>Richard Gabb, Head of Strategic Housing</p> <p>Jamie Burns, Home Point Manager</p> <p>Louise Norman, Home Point Customer Services Advisor</p> <p>Cath Thomas, Performance & Improvement Officer</p> <p>Richard Gallagher, User Involvement Assistant</p>