

MEETING:	GENERAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING DATE:	13 MAY 2013
TITLE OF REPORT	SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY
REPORT BY:	TASK AND FINISH GROUP

1. Classification

Open

2. Key Decision

This is not an executive decision.

3. Wards Affected

County-wide

4. Purpose

To consider the findings of the Task and Finish Group scrutiny review of the Housing Allocation Policy and whether to recommend the report to the Executive for consideration.

5. Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) **the Committee considers the report of the Task & Finish Group – Housing Allocation Policy, in particular its recommendations, and determines whether it wishes to agree the findings for submission to the Executive; and**
- (b) **subject to the Review being approved, the Executive’s response to the Review including an action plan be reported to the first available meeting of the Committee after the Executive has approved its response.**

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 The Committee can agree, not agree or can vary the recommendations. If the Committee agree with the findings and recommendations from the review, the attached report will be submitted to the Executive for consideration. It will be for the Executive to decide whether some, all or none of the recommendations are approved.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 A Task & Finish Group was commissioned to look at the Housing Allocation Policy. The Task & Finish Group has completed its task and its report is required to be submitted to this Committee for approval.

8. Key Considerations

- 8.1 The review's terms of reference were:
- To understand the current housing allocations policy and choice based lettings system.
 - To consider the work currently underway both by the Council and Registered Social Landlords in ensuring there is an efficient and effective use of housing stock.
 - To consider any opportunities arising from current legislation eg the Localism Act, that may be implemented that would improve the overall use and turnover of current and future housing stock in the county.
- 8.2 The Group's findings are detailed in the attached report

9. Community Impact

- 9.1 One of the Council's priorities in its 2013/15 Corporate Plan is that the County has good quality housing to meet everyone's needs.
- 9.2 Understanding Herefordshire 2012 – an integrated needs assessment reports that Herefordshire has the worst housing affordability ratio (house prices are 8.6 times annual earnings) within the West Midlands region. There is high demand for affordable properties in Herefordshire, in particular Hereford City (with an average of 64 bids per property), and the waiting list for social housing is approximately 5,000 households.

10. Equality and Human Rights

- 10.1 If the Committee agree with the findings of the Group the report will need to be considered by the Executive and, depending on their decision equality and human rights issues will need to be assessed.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1 If the Committee agree with the findings of the Group the report will need to be considered by the Executive and, depending on their decision the cost of implementing any of the recommendations will need to be assessed.

12. Legal Implications

- 12.1 The Group has had regard to the legal framework and guidance relating to housing allocation policies.
- 12.2 If the Committee agree with the findings of the Group the report will need to be considered by the Executive and, depending on their decision the legal implications of implementing any of the recommendations will need to be assessed.

13. Risk Management

- 13.1 If the Committee agree with the findings of the Group the report will need to be considered by the Executive and, depending on their decision the risk management implications of implementing any of the recommendations will need to be assessed.

14. Consultees

- 14.1 The Task and Finish Group consulted officers, and representatives of the Civilian and Military Task Group

15. Appendices

- 15.1 Task and Finish Group Report.

16. Background Papers

- 16.1 None identified.