

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 JUNE 2015

EXECUTIVE – 7 JULY 2015

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

UPDATING THE SHARED OWNERSHIP LOCAL PRIORITIES
CASCADE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To report to Members proposed amendments to the Council's Shared Ownership Local Priorities Cascade.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

That:

(A)	the revised Shared Ownership Local Priorities Cascade be scrutinised ; and
(B)	the Executive be advised of any comments or recommendations

RECOMMENDATION FOR EXECUTIVE

That:

(A)	any comments and recommendations from Community Scrutiny are considered
(B)	the revised Shared Ownership Local Priorities Cascade be agreed.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Affordable Housing in the District consists of rental and shared ownership properties.

- 1.2 The rental properties are owned by Registered Providers and the Council holds the Housing Needs Register from which nominations to the properties are given. The rental properties are only available to persons registered on the Housing Needs Register.
- 1.3 The Shared Ownership properties are owned partly by the Registered Provider and partly by the occupant. They are part buy/part rent properties. To be eligible for a property you do not need to be registered with the Council on the Housing Needs Register.
- 1.4 Shared Ownership properties are allocated by the Registered Provider through a financial eligibility test, a housing needs aspect and the Council's Local Priorities Cascade.
- 1.5 The current Local Priorities Cascade for the Council for Shared Ownership is as follows:
 1. Joint 1st Priority – Social housing tenant living in East Herts. MOD personnel living in East Herts or had lived in East Herts before being posted elsewhere.
 2. Applicant currently resident in East Herts; 1st priority non home owner, 2nd shared owners needing to move to larger accommodation; 3rd relationship breakdown where a person cannot afford to buy on the open market.
 3. Applicant with a local connection, for example with past residence or close family association, to East Herts but not currently living or working in the district.
 4. Applicant permanently employed in East Herts, but resident outside of East Herts.
- 2.0 Report
- 2.1 The report will highlight proposed amendments to this cascade. The changes are proposed to align the Shared Ownership Local Priorities with the Allocations Policy of the Council to ensure that those with a local connection and housing need are prioritised at point of sale.
- 2.2 The first priority is set by Government regarding a current social housing tenant and Ministry of Defence personnel receiving

priority. The suggested change in bold italics is to add in a timescale of 1 year to provide alignment with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy which gives priority through points to residents who have been in the district for one year continuous residency.

- 2.2.1 Joint 1st Priority – Social housing tenant living in East Herts **continuously for 12 months preceding**. MOD personnel living in East Herts or had lived in East Herts before being posted elsewhere.
- 2.3 The second priority identifies those currently resident in East Herts and seeking home ownership or due to family circumstances more suitable accommodation. In bold italics the amendment includes for current private market home owners who need to move to larger accommodation as they can not afford to achieve this in the private market but may be financially eligible for shared ownership once their property has been sold.
 - 2.3.1 Applicant currently resident **and has done so continuously for 12 months preceding** in East Herts; 1st priority non home owner, 2nd shared owners needing to move to larger accommodation; **home owners needing to move to larger accommodation**; 3rd relationship breakdown where a person cannot afford to buy on the open market.
- 2.4 The third priority is for applicants with a local connection to East Herts. Again, the bold italic amendments is to make the wording align with the Councils Housing Register and Allocations Policy and therefore be more specific and tangible by providing timescales for this priority.
 - 2.4.1 Applicant with a local connection, for example with past residence **(have lived in the district for 5 years)** or close family association **(parent/siblings/adult children who have lived continuously in the district for the last 5 years)** , to East Herts but not currently living or working in the district.
- 2.5 The final priority relates to applicants employed in the District and is aligned to the Council's Housing Register and Allocations Policy. The proposed amendments are in bold italic.

- 2.51 Applicant permanently **and currently** employed **for at least 1 year preceding for over 16 hours per week** in East Herts, but resident outside of East Herts
- 2.6 Local Authorities in Hertfordshire have set their own local cascades for Shared Ownership and by way of example below is the St Albans local cascade:
1. Existing social housing tenants living in the district
 2. First time buyers who live or work in the district
 3. Other people who live or work in the district which includes people who may already be owner occupiers / shared owners but who cannot afford to move to an open market home suitable for their needs
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 4.1 Members agree the amended wording of the Shared Ownership Local Priorities Cascade.

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