

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

OPENNESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES REGULATIONS

2014

OFFICER DECISION WRITTEN RECORD

Reference:	OD/(to be added by Democratic Services)
Subject Matter:	Procedural amendments to the adopted Housing Register and Allocations Scheme to update the income qualification threshold for accessing affordable rented housing in the district to reflect current housing affordability and need within the district.
Date of Decision:	17 th January 2024
Exempt/Confidential information (Yes/No):	No
If Exempt/Confidential – reason why:	n/a
Name of Officer taking decision under delegated authority:	Jonathan Geall – Head of Housing and Health
Source of delegated authority (constitution/express delegation/etc):	On 5 th March 2013, the Executive approved that <i>'authority be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services (following a restructure this role is has since been assumed by the Head of</i>

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	<p><i>Housing and Health), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, for any future minor procedural or process changes to be included in the policy’.</i></p> <p>The relevant Portfolio Holder is the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods.</p>
Exercise of delegated authority approved by: <i>(if different from Officer taking decision)</i>	n/a
Decision:	<p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) increase the gross household income threshold below which applications to the current adopted Housing Register, and Allocations Scheme can be accepted and nominations for social housing can be made, from the current threshold of £48,000 to £60,000 to reflect current housing affordability and need within the district (b) set a maximum threshold for savings of £16,000 to qualify for affordable rented housing, with this threshold acting

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	independently of the income threshold.
Reason(s) for Decision:	<p>The current gross household income threshold of £48,000 was set in 2013 and has not been updated since. Increasingly households are approaching the council where their gross household income is above £48,000 but they are still unable to afford or be considered for market housing due to lack of affordability. Therefore, their only remaining option is to seek affordable housing, thus there is need to increase the income threshold.</p> <p>Raising the maximum gross household income to £60,000 would also have the effect of bringing our qualification threshold into line with other local authorities in Hertfordshire.</p> <p>With regards to savings, currently the council does not specify a capital savings maximum so setting one at £16,000, which is also comparable to other local authorities in Hertfordshire and mirrors eligibility for benefits,</p>

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	would make our scheme more transparent.
Details of alternative options, if any considered and rejected:	<p>Keep the income threshold at £48,000 – NOT RECOMMENDED as this would have an increasingly detrimental impact on affordable housing options for the low-income households residing in the district.</p> <p>Not introduce a maximum savings thresholds – NOT RECOMMENDED as this would continue the unsatisfactory situation of officers needing to make, if required, judgements about applicants’ ability to pay for housing.</p>
Name of Officer who has confirmed with all Members involved in taking this decision whether they have pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest:	Jonathan Geall Head of Housing and Health
Name(s) of any Member who has removed himself/herself from contributing to this decision because of a conflict of interest:	None
Signature of Decision Maker (where decision is taken in consultation with a Member):	<i>Signature redacted</i>

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	Jonathan Geall Head of Housing and Health
Signature of Member consulted by Decision Maker (where decision is taken in consultation with a Member):	<p><i>Note: email in lieu of signature</i></p> <p>From: Mione Goldspink <Mione.Goldspink@eastherts.gov.uk> Sent: 16 January 2024 22:11 To: Jonathan Geall <Jonathan.Geall@eastherts.gov.uk> Subject: RE: IMPORTANT - VIEWS PLEASE - Housing Register - income qualification increase</p> <p>Dear Jonathan, Having discussed with you the proposed income threshold increase to £60,000 and the proposed new savings threshold of £16,000, I am happy to support these changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme. Mione Goldspink.</p> <p>Cllr Mione Goldspink, Deputy Council Leader, Exec. Member for Neighbourhoods, The North Ward, Bishop's Stortford</p>

SIGNATURES TO BE REDACTED