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Our reference:
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Date: 28 November 2012

To all Members of the Community Development Group

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP will be held on Thursday 6 December 2012 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

Yours sincerely

Head of Corporate Services

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Notes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 30 October 2012 (pages 1 - 6)
4. Draft Allocations Policy

The report of the Strategic Housing Manager is attached (pages 7 - 43).

5. December Work Programme

The report of the Head of Community Shaping is attached (pages 44 - 45).

Membership

Chairman: Councillor N C Lawrence
Vice-Chairman: Councillor T Combella
Councillors S J Boote, N K Boughton-Smith, L B Cooper, J E Greenwood,
M G Hemsley, Mrs M M Males, G R Mallender

Meeting Room Guidance

Fire Alarm Evacuation: in the event of an alarm sounding please evacuate the building using the nearest fire exit, normally through the Council Chamber. You should assemble in the Nottingham Forest car park adjacent to the main gates.

Toilets are located opposite Committee Room 2.

Mobile Phones: For the benefit of others please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off whilst you are in the meeting.

Microphones: When you are invited to speak please press the button on your microphone, a red light will appear on the stem. Please ensure that you switch this off after you have spoken.



NOTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP
TUESDAY 30 OCTOBER 2012

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors N C Lawrence (Chairman), S J Boote, N K Boughton-Smith, T Combellack, L B Cooper, J E Greenwood, Mrs M M Males, G R Mallender

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors J R Bannister and R M Jones.

OFFICERS PRESENT:

C McGraw	Head of Community Shaping
V Nightingale	Senior Member Support Officer
P Randle	Deputy Chief Executive (PR)
D Swaine	Head of Corporate Services

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

There were no apologies for absence.

7. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

8. Notes of the Previous Meeting

The notes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17 July 2012 were accepted as a true record.

The Deputy Chief Executive (PR) stated that whilst discussing the Development Control notification process Members had put forward several ideas for officers to consider. He explained that the department were now sending out notifications to a Member if someone in their ward had been notified even though the application was in an adjacent ward. Councillor Boote stated that he had raised the issue of an application being referred to Committee if an adjacent ward Member objected to the proposal. However, he was informed that such a change would require revisions to the Council's Constitution.

The Group was informed that Members were being contacted before some site visits and that site notices were being sent to parish councils for inclusion on their notice boards. With regard to community associations in their area Members could pass on information to them and if the group contacted the Council they could receive the weekly list that was sent to parish councils. In respect of the QR code this would be considered further as technology improved.

In respect of the item on Choice Based Lettings Members were updated with contact details for Metropolitan Housing Trust and the Head of Community Shaping agreed to circulate this number to all Members.

7. Assets of Community Value – Draft Procedure

The Head of Corporate Services presented a draft procedure for the administration of Assets of Community Value. He explained that the Localism Act had intended to enable communities to register any assets that they felt were of value to the community and for which they would put in an offer if the asset was to be sold. Cabinet had received an initial report in October 2012 and had felt that as part of the Group's policy development role this should be referred to the Group for scrutiny. The document presented a visual interpretation of the procedure to aid Members to identify the different stages including the eligibility of the proposing body, the assessment of the land/building and finally the timeframe for that body to purchase the asset if required. It was agreed that the procedure would reflect the more detailed guidance with regard to eligible nominations. The Head of Corporate Services explained that a group could nominate local authority land and assets, however the local authority could not nominate its own land or asset.

Members were informed that the Council had a duty to publish the register including nominations that had been rejected, with reasons for the rejection.

Following a question the Head of Corporate Services explained that if the registered asset became available to purchase the nominating group had a six week window of opportunity to put together an Expression of Interest. This would then give the group six months to put together a bid. However, this did not mean that their bid would be automatically accepted. In recognition of this six month moratorium the Department for Communities and Local Government had indicated that they would reimburse local authorities for any compensation claims over £20,000 paid out in any year, regardless of whether this was due to one large claim or several smaller claims.

Members were concerned that the owner of the asset could, by being on the register, inflate the price in order to gain financially. The Head of Corporate Services explained that this could happen; however the price would need to be commercially viable as the asset would have to be sold as a going concern and if priced too high the owner would run the risk of the asset not being sold. The Chairman stated that he believed that by having the asset placed on the register it would help prevent the owner applying for planning permission to change its use, ie an owner of a village pub would not be able to apply for permission to build houses on the land.

The Group discussed the proposed procedure and what they felt would be classed as an asset of community value. In respect of eligible groups Members queried if the 21 voters had to be within the Borough. The Head of Corporate Services clarified that it was within the relevant local authority's area or that of a neighbouring authority. In relation to the parishes a parish council was an eligible body whereas a parish meeting was not. It was also felt that it would be beneficial for the eligible body to involve the parish council in any bid

as they had the necessary infrastructure. Following a question regarding Neighbourhood Forums and the Local Area Forum in West Bridgford the Head of Corporate Services agreed to consult with Nottinghamshire County Council to identify how the West Bridgford Local Area Forum had been constituted and whether neighbourhood forums were formed under Section 61 of the Town and Country Planning Act and if they would be classed as an eligible body within the guidance. Following a discussion it was agreed that the relevant parish council could be included on the list of consultees.

Some Members were concerned that the decision to include something on the register would be made by officers and not by Members. The Head of Corporate Services stated that this was in line with Department for Communities and Local Government's guidance; however, this could be reviewed in the future. The Deputy Chief Executive (PR) stated that the procedure was very transparent, especially as all the decisions had to be published.

It was felt that this procedure was a valuable concept and would be very beneficial for the smaller communities.

It was AGREED that the procedure for dealing with Assets of Community Value should be recommended to Cabinet for approval, following minor alterations to reflect the Group's discussions.

8. Community Right to Challenge – Draft Procedure

The Head of Corporate Services presented a draft procedure for the administration of the Community Right to Challenge. As with the previous item this had been considered by Cabinet who had felt that as part of the Group's policy development role this should be referred to the Group for scrutiny. Under the Localism Act 2011 there was provision for a broad range of alternative service providers to run council services but not council functions. An eligible body would have to submit a detailed expression of interest, which would outline the viability and sustainability of the bid. The Group were informed that the list of people eligible to submit an expression of interest included voluntary or community bodies, a body or trust which had been established for charitable purposes only, a parish/town council, two or more employees or any other person or body specified by the Secretary of State. It was recognised that the eligible bodies should be of a social enterprise nature.

The Head of Corporate Services explained that if an initial expression of interest was accepted then this would trigger a procurement exercise. This would then involve the wider market and would adhere to the procurement rules as set out in the Council's Constitution.

Following a question Members were informed that the guidance did not specify if an expression of interest should be decided by Members or officers. It was felt that this would depend on the complexity of the bid and that each bid would be considered on its own merit. Members were informed that the Council would have a duty to publish any expressions of interest and give reasons why these had not been accepted.

Members queried who considered the expression of interest and who dealt with any appeals against that decision. Officers stated that the guidance was not clear on this point. Officers did not anticipate that there would be an influx of expressions, however each submission would be considered on its own merits and a contract would be structured accordingly. Again as for the last item the level of involvement would depend on the complexity of the expression, however, the expression would be sent to the Chief Executive and it would be for him to task officers to evaluate it on his behalf. It was felt that initially any Member involvement would be through Cabinet on relevant cases.

Members were concerned that although commercial companies could not submit an expression of interest they would become involved during the procurement exercise and therefore they could win the contract, thereby taking the profits away from the community. Members had concerns that there appeared to be too many loopholes in the guidance and therefore the power could be used inappropriately. It was agreed that this was not taken into account in the guidance and that Members concerns would be reported to Cabinet. It was recognised that the principle of this new power was to keep any money within the community and should be used for the good of the community.

The Head of Corporate Services stated that Members had identified several risks and that these would form the basis of a review which should take place after the first twelve months of operation. Members requested that officers should bring back a report after 12 months, or earlier if necessary, outlining activities in other local authorities as well as within the Borough.

It was AGREED that the procedure for dealing with Community Right to Challenge be recommended to Cabinet for approval, following minor alterations reflect the Group's discussions and expressing the Group's request that it be reviewed after 12 months.

9. Request for Scrutiny – West Bridgford Democracy and Local Engagement

The Deputy Chief Executive (PR) presented a report outlining a request for the democratic and community engagement arrangements for the governance of West Bridgford to be included on the Group's work programme. The request had been submitted by Councillors Bannister and Jones.

In support of the application Councillor Jones stated that there were five points to be considered. He said he had complained to the Evening Post, who had made some inaccurate statements in a recent press article. In his opinion this issue should be about localism and local democracy for the largest town in the Borough. In the paper he had submitted he had pointed out both the pros and cons for the issue and also he had not advocated one particular model. He felt that there should be a democratic body and full consultation which should be considered by a Member Group. He recognised and accepted that the Borough officers were busy and stated that this should be a medium term objective rather than an urgent action. He did not accept that this would cost the tax payer any more as if that was the case then all parish councils should be abolished.

Councillor Jones felt that this issue was connected to the Council's new Corporate Strategy to deliver services through the localism agenda. Whilst the Group had considered the Assets of Community Value and the Community Right to Challenge it was very noticeable that the parishes were involved, however the largest area of the Borough had no voice. The Group would also be considering at its next meeting the relationship between the Borough and the parishes, again relationships with any groups in West Bridgford would not be included.

Councillor Boote, in support of the proposal, stated that the report that was being presented tonight was a very shortened version of the original that had been submitted. It was felt that there was no clear evidence of support from residents, however this topic had been raised over the last eleven years, to his knowledge. It had been pointed out that this would involve a community governance review immediately after a boundary review. It had been noted that elections were expensive without any costing being undertaken. In relation to costs he felt that the cost of holding parish meetings should be identified and again people given accurate information. Also he stated that a petition had been received from Edwalton to form a parish council and as this was part of the unparished West Bridgford the two reviews could be held at the same time.

Councillor Mallender stated that he was the Chairman of the West Bridgford Local Area Forum (LAF), however this body could be discontinued if the County Council decided. He felt that there was a tacit recognition of the LAF by the Borough Council as it appointed representatives. In his opinion there was a democratic deficit in West Bridgford and that the issue should be scrutinised. Following a question he stated that the members of the LAF were divided and that there were mixed feelings from the residents he had spoken to.

Councillor Boughton-Smith stated that he had been surprised that there was not a democratic body for West Bridgford as he felt that parish councillors, who were democratically elected for the local people, added value to the democratic process.

Following a question the Head of Corporate Services stated that a petition to trigger a community governance review would have to have approximately 3,000 signatures which equated to 10% of the population. He informed the Group that without undertaking a community governance review it would be difficult to gauge public opinion.

The Group discussed whether there was a large body of opinion in favour of a town council and how any evidence could be collected. It was felt that the Borough Council should not force a town council onto the residents but that they should show a need for one first.

Upon being put to the vote the Group agreed not to scrutinise this issue at this time. It was felt that all the arguments in favour were both theoretical and philosophical. Also it was felt that without any evidence it would not be prudent, within the present economical restraints, for the Council to allocate any resources to this issue. The Chairman challenged the proposers to obtain

evidence of demand for an alternative form of governance in West Bridgford and that if this could be obtained then a further report could be presented in the future.

10. Work Programme

The Group considered its work programme.

It was AGREED that, as the Housing Allocations Policy would be a major piece of work, the Review of the relationship between the Borough and the parish councils should be considered at the Group's meeting on 5 February 2013.

Members requested that officers should include a review of the Community Right to Challenge, if the procedure was agreed by Cabinet, within the work programme 12 months after it had been initiated.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Action Sheet

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP - TUESDAY 30 OCTOBER 2012

Minute Number	Actions	Officer Responsible
8. Notes of the Previous Meeting	Contact details for Metropolitan Housing Trust for Members' use to be circulated.	Head of Community Shaping
9. Assets of Community Value – Draft Procedure	<p>Officers to amend the procedure to reflect the more detailed guidance with regard to eligible nominations.</p> <p>Officers to identify how the West Bridgford Local Area Forum had been constituted.</p> <p>Officers to identify if the neighbourhood forums were formed under Section 61 and to identify if these would be classed as eligible bodies.</p> <p>Officers to include parish councils to the list of consultees.</p>	Head of Corporate Services
10. Community Right to Challenge – Draft Procedure	Officers to report to Cabinet the Group's concerns regarding the number of loopholes	Head of Corporate Services
12. Work Programme	Officers to amend the work programme as requested.	Head of Community Shaping

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC HOUSING MANAGER

Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek comments from the Community Development Group on the draft housing allocations policy as part of the consultation process. The report sets out the development of the Rushcliffe allocations policy as part of the wider sub-regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL) to ensure full compliance with the latest legislation and guidance governing social housing allocations. The draft policy proposes to change the housing register to clarify who qualifies for housing and restrict access to the register to those who have a reasonable chance of being housed. Additional levels of priority for working households, foster carers and HM forces personnel are also proposed.

Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Members of the Community Development Group consider and comment on the draft housing allocations policy to be reported to Cabinet when it considers the policy at its meeting on 12 February 2013.

Background

1. The Council has a duty to publish an allocations scheme and allocations policy to set out who should get priority for social housing in the Borough. It is also required to review its allocations policy to ensure that it takes into account changes in legislation and best practice.
2. In March 2011 the Council developed a joint CBL scheme and housing allocations policy with Gedling and Broxtowe Borough Councils. The joint allocations policy sets the criteria for who can join the Council's nominations scheme.
3. Since then there have been significant changes in the housing environment. The Localism Act 2011 offers local housing authorities' considerably wider discretion on who qualifies to join the housing register and what relative priority is given to different circumstances.
4. To reflect the changes in legislation and subsequent guidance on allocations Rushcliffe Borough Council has been developing an updated social housing allocations policy (**Appendix B**), which will apply to all properties let in Rushcliffe (but not in Broxtowe or Gedling) through the CBL system. However, the partners will continue to share the Homesearch website and software system to maximise efficiencies.

5. The draft policy takes into account the requirements introduced by the Localism Act and subsequent guidance on allocations, as well as the feedback from the consultation event held on 3 October, when a range of possibilities for allocations were discussed.

Current approach

6. The partnership currently operates an 'open' Housing Register, open to all applicants, whether within the Borough or not as long as they are eligible persons as defined by statute. The Council also has a statutory duty to give 'reasonable preference' to particular groups set out in legislation i.e. people who are homeless, or have an urgent housing need because of medical circumstances.
7. Applicants are placed in 1 of 4 bands on the register according to their assessed level of priority for housing and local connection to the Borough:
 - Band 1 – Urgent housing need
 - Band 2 – High housing need
 - Band 3 – Moderate housing need
 - Band 4 – Low housing need
8. Applicants 'bid' for specific properties on CBL Scheme 'Homesearch'. The properties are provided by the local authority or by Registered Providers. Bids are made using the priority afforded by an applicant's place in the banding system. A higher band will outbid a lower band and within the same band an applicant with an earlier application date will outbid one with a later date.
9. Far fewer properties are available than there are applicants and as a result most bids are unsuccessful (see **Appendix A** for key statistics).
10. A significant proportion of people on the housing register have limited chance of being housed within this system and many stay on the register a long time. The current system could be said to give false hopes and expectations and create perverse incentives to particular categories of applicants.

Consultation

11. Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe Borough Councils are now developing individual allocations policies to reflect local priorities. A key element in the development of the draft policies will be to make sure that a wide range of views have been taken on board from stakeholders.
12. A joint consultation event with Broxtowe and Gedling Borough Councils was held on 3 October 2012. The following views were sought on the proposed changes:
 - 68% agreed the housing register should exclude all applicants with no housing need, except for applicants over 50, those wishing to downsize or who no longer require adapted properties.

- 54% agreed the housing register should exclude all applicants without a local connection. 63% also agree the local connection should be reviewed.
- Only 32% agreed some classes of applicants should be excluded from the housing register, whilst 49% disagreed. Classes of applicants who should be excluded included applicants with anti-social behaviour (ASB), perpetrators of domestic violence, and those with rent arrears without a payment plan.
- 63% agreed other factors in addition to the statutory reasonable preference categories should be considered to meet local needs and priorities, including applicants in employment (47%), foster carer (58%) and those under-occupying. Only a quarter of respondents agreed that applicants in training or those making a positive contribution to the community should be given priority.
- An equal proportion of respondents (44%) both agreed and disagreed that armed forces should be given additional priority on the housing register.
- 50% agreed transfer applicants should be removed from the housing register and let by a separate lettings criteria.
- 83% agreed all social housing tenants wishing to transfer be awarded reasonable preference if they are under-occupying by one bedroom.
- 60% agreed all social housing tenants under occupying and have minor rent arrears should be allowed to move but need to adhere to a payment plan.

New proposals

13. The Government still require local authorities to prioritise households with reasonable preference (people who are recognisably in need of rehousing). Beyond this councils can then select what criteria to apply. They may choose any criteria, so long as they are justifiable, they are not discriminatory, and they do not disqualify groups of people whose members are likely to have reasonable preference.
14. Normally, access will be restricted to applicants who can demonstrate a local connection with the Borough. The current proposal is to increase the length of residency criteria from 6 to 12 months. Other local connection criteria remain the same.
15. The Government has made specific regulations to provide that if residency criteria are adopted, these may not be applied to Members of the Armed Forces or those who have served in the Armed Forces within the last five years. The principle is that these people should not be disadvantaged as a result of military service which may have required them to live away from the area they wish to live in.
16. The reduced numbers on the housing register will be placed in one of 3 Bands:

- Band 1 – Urgent Priority
 - Band 2 – High Priority
 - Band 3 – Moderate Priority
17. The Council must also decide how it will prioritise households in addition to those in reasonable preference. The overall aim of the change will be to offer greater priority to working households, registered foster carers and ex armed and serving members of the armed forces while meeting statutory obligations to offer 'reasonable preference'. These people will be awarded additional waiting time, so that they are placed higher within a single band than they would otherwise be.
 18. Some applicants for housing will see their priority for housing increased, for others it will be reviewed. In some instances, existing applicants will not be eligible to re-apply.
 19. It is estimated that these changes will significantly reduce the housing register. This will allow for a more efficient administration of the register and a higher quality and effective advice and assistance service for those who are vulnerable or in severe housing need and qualify for housing. Those that do not qualify will still be given advice and assistance about their housing options. In reality, this will not represent a material change in their circumstances, since the prospect of receiving an offer of a social housing tenancy is currently either minimal or nil.
 20. Further public consultation is currently being undertaken. Following consultation, any comments or suggestions received will be considered and where necessary any significant amendments made to the policy before a final version is presented to Cabinet for approval. The consultation period ends on 10 December 2012.

Conclusion

21. The revised housing allocations policy has been developed to ensure full compliance with the latest legislation and guidance governing social housing allocations and following extensive consultation with residents, Housing Providers and a wide range of other stakeholders. The policy conforms to current housing legislation The Housing Act 1966 (as amended) and Section 145 to 147 of the Localism Act.
22. The main changes proposed from the current policy are:
 - There was widespread support for the proposal to restrict the housing register to only those people who are in recognised housing need, with those who have only a desire to move not qualifying for the housing register
 - Feedback from providers has been taken into account to ensure enough people are on the housing register to let some hard-to-let properties, which is why older people and those claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) will always still qualify.

- The process of placing adverts, running shortlists and offering properties will not change for housing providers; it is only the number of applicants who will appear on the shortlist that will change.
 - People who do not have a clear need for housing will not qualify, and will not be placed on the housing register (there are some exceptions, such as for people over 50, disabled people and people in a social home that is too big for them). Additional preference will be given to certain groups of people, including former and serving members of the Armed Forces, foster carers and working households. This will be achieved by applying additional waiting time.
 - People who do not have a local connection to Rushcliffe will not qualify, and will not be placed on the housing register (there are some exceptions, such as for people over 50, disabled people and people leaving the Armed Forces).
 - Homeless households will move from Band 2 into Band 1 six weeks after being accepted as homeless, and will have bids placed on their behalf if they do not bid themselves
23. If the Council adopt the proposed amendments to the draft allocations policy, the effect would be that people, who have no recognisable need to move, but want to move, would be unable even to apply for housing. Exceptions include people wishing to downsize and people over 50 years who would not have to demonstrate a housing need to guarantee a ready supply of tenants for less popular, hard-to-let sheltered schemes.
24. The benefits of allowing only those people with a housing need to register for housing would be to give households more realistic expectations, stop 'false hope' and greatly reduce the housing register (and associated administrative burdens). Conversely, it may also increase the number of appeals and the potential for customer dissatisfaction, however, the policy will be reviewed regularly to minimise any unintended consequences to ensure it continues to meet its objectives.

Timetable

- 10 December 2012 public consultation on the draft policy ends.
- 6 December 2012 draft policy considered by Community Development Group
- 12 February 2013- Cabinet decision.

Financial Comments

The current budget includes provision for the ongoing revenue costs of the scheme, including the additional part time post. The budget also assumes that RBC will continue to receive a £12,000 contribution from Metropolitan. Further budget provision of approximately £10,000 will be required to implement these proposals. These costs will relate to amendments to IT systems. It is anticipated that these costs will be met from existing budgets.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act

The Housing Allocations Policy aims to develop an equitable housing allocation process to assist in creating balanced communities and delivering against our Section 17 obligations in the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Diversity

The draft allocations policy has undergone an Equalities Impact Assessment and the outcomes and actions included in the scheme implementation and final policy. Ongoing customer consultation will assist in ensuring the scheme continues to meet the needs of various community individuals and groups.

Background Papers Available for Inspection: Nil

Key Statistics

The Housing Register

- As at 19 November 2012, there were 1,061 households on the Housing Register. Of these, 65% (690) were within the lowest priority band (4) and 92% (976) within the lowest two bands (3 and 4).
- In the 12 months up to 19 November 2012, there were 268 lettings to social housing in Rushcliffe. When transfers from all social housing are excluded, this drops to 193 lettings.
- Of 268 lettings; 46 - Band 1, 73 - Band 2, 85 - Band 3, and 64 - Band 4. Of the Band 4, 26 were 50+ and likely to qualify for Band 3 under the new policy
- Of 193 lettings which were not transfers; 24 – Band 1, 40 – Band 2, 66 – Band 3 and 54 – Band 4.
- 260 active applicants currently live outside the Borough

Choice Based Lettings

- In the 12 months up to 19 November 2012, Rushcliffe applicants placed 12,680 bids for properties.
- In that period, the average number of bids for 2 bed properties was 47, and the average for 3 beds was 42.
- In that period, the record number of bids for one property was 203 (for a 2 bed flat in Edwalton).
- 452 of the households on the Housing Register have never placed a bid for accommodation.
- Of 452, 9 (25%) – Band 1, 10 (19%) – Band 2, 70 (25%) – Band 3, 364 (53%) – Band 4
- 640 of the households on the Housing Register have only ever made 3 bids or fewer, or have never bid.

Choice Based Lettings and Housing Allocations Policy

Rushcliffe Borough Council



Draft for consultation
November 2012

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe Choice Based Lettings Scheme**

Applications for and allocations to social housing in Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe are administered through a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme known as **Homesearch**. The three councils share a website and software system, but they each have their own allocations policy.

This document outlines how the scheme works, sets out how properties are advertised, who can bid, how bids are made and how lettings and offers of accommodation are made.

1.2 **Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe Allocations Policies**

Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe Borough Councils have individual allocations policies, which control the way the scheme operates in their respective areas. It is important that you make sure that you refer to the correct policy for the area in which you live to find out whether or not you qualify to join the scheme.

The Rushcliffe Allocations Policy sets out who can apply for social housing in Rushcliffe and how priority is given to different applicants.

1.3 **Legal Framework**

This policy has been drafted to comply with the requirements of Part VI of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and Localism Act 2011, which states that all councils must have and publish an allocations policy and ensure that properties are let according to that policy.

1.4 Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 covers:

- Allocations of local authority housing to new tenants
- Transfers requested by local authority tenants with reasonable preference
- Transfers requested by current tenants of Registered Providers with reasonable preference; and
- Nominations that the Council makes to Registered Providers

1.5 This policy has regard to the latest guidance on the allocation of housing, published by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in June 2012.¹

1.6 This policy identifies the groups that will be given preference for social housing. The scheme applies to existing tenants wishing to transfer from one tenancy to another and to new applicants, including people who are homeless. When we refer to an “applicant” in this document, it will refer to both new applicants including homeless people and tenants wishing to transfer (unless otherwise stated).

1.7 This policy will be effective from 1st April 2013 and will be kept under regular review to reflect changes in legislation or local housing priorities.

¹ [Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England.](#)

2. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 2.1 The Council will promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices when providing services. Communities thrive and prosper where individuals and groups are treated fairly and with respect, and are given equality of access to services.
- 2.2 The aim of this document is to ensure that applicants for housing are treated fairly. In implementing this policy, people who can join this scheme will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race/ethnicity, age, disability, gender re-assignment, gender, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex or sexual orientation.
- 2.3 The Council has carried out an Equalities Analysis and this will be kept under review.

3. STATEMENT ON OFFERING CHOICE

- 3.1 The Council will offer the greatest choice possible in allocating social housing in the Borough. However, the ability to offer choice has to be balanced against a legal requirement for an allocation scheme to ensure that those in greatest housing need are given priority for social housing.
- 3.2 It must also be recognised that there is very high demand for affordable housing in the Rushcliffe area and that this demand cannot be fully met from the current social housing stock.
- 3.3 When an applicant has been in a high priority band for a long period of time, the Council may limit the applicant's choice by allocating a property directly to them. Details of when this will apply are set out in section 18.2.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 4.1 Details about each applicant, including the fact that they are registered on the scheme, will not be given to any third party without the applicant's consent.
- 4.2 People are asked on the application form to give permission for the Council to share the information provided with other members of the Choice Based Lettings scheme (such as Registered Providers) and other relevant agencies. Information will only be shared if this permission is given.
- 4.3 Sometimes, information must be shared even without the applicant's consent, e. g. to the police to prevent and/or detect crime (Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 17).
- 4.4 Subject to limited exceptions, you have the right to access the personal information we hold about you. This includes information we hold as paper and electronic records. If you would like to access the information we hold about you, please contact the Data Protection Officer at the Council.

5. HOW THE HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME WILL OPERATE

- 5.1 The Council and its partners will offer properties through **Homesearch**, a Choice Based Lettings scheme, which gives people looking for housing more choice in where they live. The scheme is designed to be simple to use and easy to understand:
- Register** –complete an application form (available from the Council) or register online
- Qualify** – the Council will decide whether you qualify for social housing in Rushcliffe (see section 7 for details)
- Bid** – Look at the property adverts or weekly newsletter and tell us about the property you are interested in by phone, post, text, website or in person. This is known as *bidding*.
- 5.2 When you apply to join the scheme, we will process your application and assess whether you *qualify* for social housing. If you do, we will give it a *priority band* (see pages 18-21), which reflects your level of housing need. We will also explain any limitations on the size and type of property you can bid for.
- 5.3 Properties are advertised every week, from Thursday at 00:01 to Tuesday at 23:59. This is known as the “advertising cycle”. The adverts can be found on the website or on free property sheets, which are available at libraries, advice centres and council offices. The adverts give information about each property, such as the number of bedrooms, location, rent, property type, and whether pets are allowed. The adverts also say who is eligible to bid for the property.
- 5.4 Once you have found a property that you are interested in that you are eligible to bid for, you can let us know by phone, via the website, by text or in person. Bidding does not involve any money (except the cost of a phone call, text message or postage). It is an expression of interest, not a financial offer. You can bid for up to three properties every week.
- 5.5 Before you bid for a property, make sure you read any eligibility criteria carefully to make sure that your bid is not wasted. During the bidding cycle, you can check your position in the queue for that property, and move your bids to different properties where you are better placed, to increase your chances of being successful.
- 5.6 Once the advertising cycle closes, all the bids received for each property are drawn together in a shortlist, and the property is normally offered to the person at the top of it (see section 31 for more details.)
- 5.7 The property is offered to the applicant who is in the highest priority band, has been waiting the longest and who meets the criteria of any local lettings policy. If that applicant refuses, the property is offered to the next highest placed applicant and so on, working down the shortlist until the property is let. If the property is subsequently refused and a period of four weeks has passed the property will be re-advertised.
- 5.8 Each week, you can see feedback from properties that have previously been let through Homesearch, including how many people bid for them, which band the successful applicant was in, and how long they had been waiting. This can help you to decide what type of properties to bid for in future, and see how likely you are to be successful.

6. ELIGIBILITY

6.1 To be eligible to join the housing register, you must:

6.1.1 **Be aged 16 or over; AND**

6.1.2 **Live in the Common Travel Area at the time of the application; AND**

(The Common Travel Area is the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland)

6.1.3 **Belong to one of the following groups**

- British and Irish Citizens
- Commonwealth Citizens permitted to stay in the UK
- People from the European Economic Area who have the right to reside in the UK
- Refugees who have been granted leave to remain within the UK.

6.2 There are some other people who are eligible to apply, such as vulnerable British nationals formerly resident in Zimbabwe who are part of the UK Government's Zimbabwe Planned Resettlement Programme; if you think this may apply to you, you should contact your local council's Housing Options Team.

6.3 By regulations² made in November 2012, there are certain further persons who are not eligible to apply for housing. These are:

- Persons who have rights of residence in the UK as a result of regulation 15A(1) and (4A) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations 2012
- Persons who have a right derived from Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in a case where rights of residence arise because a British citizen would otherwise be deprived of the genuine enjoyment of the substance of their rights as a European Union citizen

6.3 If you are not sure whether you are eligible, you should contact the Housing Options Team for advice.

7. QUALIFICATION

7.1 The Localism Act 2011 has given local authorities greater freedom to set their own policies about who can apply for social housing in their area. This means that the Council has more freedom over how it operates its allocations scheme and can now set criteria for who *qualifies* to join the housing register. If an applicant does not qualify, the Council will not register their application

² [Allocation of Housing and Homelessness \(Eligibility\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2012](#)

- 7.2** Rushcliffe Borough Council has consulted partners and examined the housing applications that have been made since 2011. The vast majority of applications fall into the lowest priority band (previously band 4). A large number of these applicants wished to move house but were adequately housed where they were. Very few allocations were made to band 4 applicants, who therefore had a minimal chance of securing social housing.
- 7.3** The Council has therefore decided to restrict applications to people who have a clear need for rehousing, and that people who are adequately housed but have a desire to move will not qualify for social housing. The only exceptions to this are applicants willing to downsize to a smaller social housing property, and older applicants who would be eligible for retirement housing. This is because the supply of retirement housing is closer to the demand for that type of housing, whereas demand for “general needs” social housing greatly outweighs the supply.
- 7.4** All applicants must also have a local connection to Rushcliffe, or must fall into an exemption category (see list 2 below) in order to qualify.
- 7.5** In order to qualify to join the housing register, applicants must meet at least one criterion from list 1, and one criterion from list 2:

LIST 1	Need for housing
1a	The applicant demonstrates the need for rehousing by meeting the criteria set out for Bands 1, 2 or 3 (see section 15 to 17).
1b	The applicant is occupying a social housing property in Rushcliffe and has one or more spare bedrooms, and is willing to move to a smaller area
1c	All people in the applicant’s household are aged 50 or over, and are willing to move into a retirement living property
1d	Households with no children where at least one person in the applicant’s household is receiving the medium or high rate of the care element of Disability Living Allowance ³ , and are willing to move into a retirement living property

LIST 2	Local connection, or exemption
2a	The applicant has lived in Rushcliffe continuously for the last 12 months, or for 3 out of the last 5 years.
2b	The applicant currently works in Rushcliffe for 16 hours per week or more, and has been employed in Rushcliffe for at least 6 months.
2c	The applicant has a parent, sibling or adult child who has lived in Rushcliffe for at least the last five years, and has demonstrated a need to move to Rushcliffe to support them or receive support from them (e. g. confirmation from social services – a GP’s letter is not sufficient to demonstrate this)
2d	The applicant has been accepted by Rushcliffe Borough Council under the homelessness legislation
2e	The applicant has been accepted for priority re-housing as a reciprocal arrangement with another council or Registered Provider (RP)
2f	The applicant was placed in care as a child outside the area, but wishes to return to Rushcliffe (and previously lived in Rushcliffe)
2g	The applicant has been accepted as part of a witness protection

³ This will be reviewed to take into account Personal Independence Payment when it is introduced from June 2013.

	recommendation by the police
2h	The applicant has been living in temporary accommodation provided by a local housing authority outside Rushcliffe, but had a local connection to Rushcliffe (2a, 2b, 2c) before they were placed there.
2i	The applicant is serving in the regular Armed Forces, or has left the regular Armed Forces in the last five years.
2j	All people in the applicant's household are aged 50 or over, and are willing to move into a retirement living property
2k	Households with no children where at least one person in the applicant's household is receiving the medium or high rate of the care element of Disability Living Allowance, and are willing to move into a retirement living property

7.6 People who have committed criminal or anti-social behaviour may not qualify to join the housing register, even if they meet the criteria set out in lists 1 and 2. The Council will assess each case on its own circumstances. Further details are set out in section 9.

7.7 Where an applicant does not qualify to join the scheme, the Council will give them advice about other housing options that may be available to them, such as renting a home in the private sector.

8. WHO CANNOT JOIN THE SCHEME

8.1 People under 16

You must be at least 16 years old or over at the time of applying.

8.2 People living outside the Common Travel Area

You must be resident in the Common Travel Area at the time of applying.

8.3 People who are not 'habitually resident' in the UK

If you have lived outside the Common Travel Area within the last two years, you may not be classified as 'habitually resident', even if you are a UK citizen. People who are not 'habitually resident' are not eligible for re-housing.

8.4 People subject to immigration control

People subject to immigration control, as described by the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, are not eligible for social housing. These groups of people are set out by regulations.⁴

8.5 People who have no housing need (or exception)

People who do not meet the criteria set out in list 1 above.

8.6 People who have no local connection (or exception)

People who do not meet the criteria set out in list 2 above.

8.7 People who have committed criminal or anti-social behaviour

The Council will assess each case on its circumstances as to whether applicants with a history of criminal or anti-social behaviour qualify for the scheme. Details are set out in section 9.

⁴ [Allocation of Housing and Homelessness \(Eligibility\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(as amended\)](#)

8.8 Homeowners

People who own part or all of a home will not be able to join the scheme unless:

- The only property they own is outside the United Kingdom, and it is not reasonable to expect them to occupy it;
- They are an older or disabled owner-occupier living in poor housing conditions or in unsuitable accommodation, although resources available to them would be taken into account (including grants available for repair etc. and the capital value of the property) before a decision is taken about whether they qualify to register on the scheme;
- There are exceptional circumstances, such as where they have a serious medical condition and they are no longer able to remain in the property they own and are unable to afford suitable accommodation in the private market. This is at the Council's discretion.

9. CRIMINAL AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

9.1 Some people's behaviour means that they are unsuitable to become tenants. People who have behaved or are currently behaving anti-socially may not be allowed to join the scheme. People who have or are currently behaving in the following ways may not qualify for the scheme:

- Current or former tenants who are or have been in serious breach of their tenancy conditions due to anti-social behaviour;
- People who have been served with an injunction;
- People who have been or are currently subject to another court order (such as a suspended possession order) on the grounds of anti-social behaviour;
- People who have been evicted by their landlord because of anti-social behaviour;
- Anyone who has caused wilful damage to a council or Registered Provider property. This includes the tenant, a member of the tenant's household or visitors to the property;
- Anyone with a history of, or currently perpetrating, serious anti-social behaviour and/or criminal behaviour.

9.2 Behaviour likely to be considered as serious includes:

- Physical assaults (such as domestic, racial and homophobic violence);
- Severe damage to property (including buildings, cars etc.), for example, arson attacks;
- Threats of violence and/or damage, including threats to kill (this includes perpetrators of domestic violence);
- Persistent and offensive verbal abuse, due to a person's religion, ethnicity, sexuality, disability or other reason;
- The use of dwellings for the cultivation, supply or use of drugs;
- Persistent/widespread criminal activity such as burglaries or vehicle crime;
- Very serious and persistent noise nuisance continuing for long periods of time;
- Anyone who has been violent to or threatened staff of Rushcliffe Borough Council, a Registered Provider, another previous landlord or the police.

- 9.3** All cases will be considered on their individual circumstances before a decision is made that they do not qualify for housing. The Council will take into account the nature and severity of the criminal or anti-social behaviour, and how long ago the incidents occurred, when deciding whether an applicant qualifies and, if not, how long this will apply for.
- 9.4** If at any time a partner in the Homeseach scheme obtains evidence that an applicant already accepted onto the scheme has exhibited unacceptable behaviour as outlined above, then their application may be suspended or cancelled. Applicants will be informed in writing of this, and will have the opportunity to appeal against this decision, in accordance with the appeals procedure.

10. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

10.1 This section contains the requirements applicants will be expected to fulfil.

10.2 Family Applications

Applicants will be considered as a family household where at least one dependent child is living permanently within the household. Dependent children are defined as children aged up to 18 and who must be living with the applicant as their main home. This includes children who are adopted or fostered on a long-term basis. Children aged over 18 but still living at home are regarded as adult members of the household.

10.3 Children who do not live permanently in the applicant's home, or who have their main home elsewhere (for example, due to access arrangements), are not considered as permanent members of the household and will not be counted for bed spaces.

10.4 Joint Applications

Joint applications can be accepted from couples and people who are not couples but have a long term commitment to live together. Both applicants must agree that they are applying together.

Joint applications can include:

- People who want to share a home as partners
- Relatives wishing to live together where there is a long term commitment to a shared home
- Friends wishing to live together where there is a long term commitment to a shared home
- One of the parties is a carer for another

10.5 Applicants no longer wishing to apply jointly

If one or both applicants in a joint application no longer wish to apply jointly, separate applications can be made from the original joint application. When a request to split the joint application is received, each party's circumstances will be reassessed separately and an appropriate band awarded from the original application date. However, if the re-assessment results in a higher band for one of the applicants, their waiting time will only be effective from the date of the re-assessment.

10.6 Single applications

Single applicants can include single people living on their own, single parents with dependent children living with them or people wanting to apply for a tenancy in their own right who may have other people included in their household on their application. If a single applicant is offered and accepts a tenancy, the tenancy will be granted only in their name. A joint tenancy with a person who was not listed on the application will not normally be granted.

10.7 Pregnant Applicants

If you are pregnant you will be accepted as a family applicant, requiring appropriately sized accommodation, as soon as your pregnancy has been confirmed.

10.8 16 and 17 year olds

If you are aged 16 and 17, you can apply to Homesearch, but most landlords will only consider you for housing when you have reached 18. Landlords may consider granting a tenancy to the following 16 and 17 year olds if a suitable support package is in place:

- Young people accepted under homelessness legislation;
- Care leavers (referred by Children's Services);
- People referred and placed in specialist or supported accommodation by the Council who are ready to move on to independent living;
- Exceptional circumstances following an assessment by the Housing Options Team and where a guarantor will be available.

10.9 Members of HM Forces

Former and serving members of the Armed Forces will qualify for housing only if they meet the criteria from list 1 in section 7 (recognised need for housing, or exception). They do not need a local connection to Rushcliffe in order to qualify.

Former and serving members of the Armed Forces do not need a local connection to Rushcliffe in order to qualify (see list 2 in section 7).

However, former and serving members of the Armed Forces who do not have a housing need, or do not meet the criteria set out in list 1 in section 7, do not qualify to join the scheme.

Former and serving members of the Armed Forces who do qualify for housing are given additional preference by the Council, as described in section 17.

We define former and serving members of the Armed Forces as:

- People who left the regular Armed Forces within the last 5 years, except those dishonourably discharged
- Serving members of either the regular or reserve Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
- Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner

10.10 Prisoners

Prisoners serving a custodial sentence will not have their application activated until within 8 weeks of their release date. This is because it would not be fair for a prisoner to apply for the scheme and build up waiting time while they are serving a custodial sentence and thus in no position to move home. The release date must be verified by probation or prison staff. A prisoner's last settled address is used to establish whether they have a local connection.

10.11 Applicants with rent arrears

Applicants with current or former rent arrears from a private, Council or Registered Provider tenancy may join the Scheme, however they will not normally receive an offer of accommodation if they have not made arrangements to pay the arrears and adhered to a re-payment plan for a period of six months.

10.12 Foster Carers

Applicants who have been approved as a foster carer but who need an additional bedroom to commence a placement will be placed in Band 2 when this is confirmed by the local children's services authority.

10.13 Homeless Applicants

Applicants who have been accepted by the Council as homeless, in priority need and not intentionally homeless will be placed in Band 2, where they will have six weeks to choose to bid for the properties that become available.

10.14 Applicants who have not been offered a property six weeks after receiving their homelessness acceptance decision will be placed in Band 1 and placed on *autobid*. This means that the system will place bids without the applicant's direct involvement. In exceptional circumstances, the Council may also look to identify a property which is suitable for their needs, and will *directly match* the household to that property.

10.15 The Council will only offer one suitable property to a homeless applicant who has been placed in Band 1, and this offer will discharge the Council's duties to the applicant in full. If the homeless applicant refuses this offer, they will be moved from Band 1 to Band 3. Applicants can request a review if they do not believe the property to be suitable for their needs. However, they are advised to accept the tenancy while awaiting the outcome of this review as, if it proves unsuccessful, the Council will discharge its homelessness duties and the applicant may be required to leave any temporary accommodation provided.

10.16 Homeless applicants with no fixed abode must provide a 'care of' address where post can be received. This could be a friend, a relative or a support agency's address.

11. INFORMATION YOU NEED TO PROVIDE

11.1 To accompany your application form, you will need to provide some information about you and your household. Your application cannot be registered without this information, so please make sure you have provided the following:

11.2 Identification – Proof of identity for all members of your household is required, such as a passport, driving licence or birth certificate.

- 11.3 Children** – You will need to provide proof for all children who live permanently at your address. This must be a letter confirming Child Benefit or Tax Credits for each child living with you permanently. Please make sure that the letter shows your child/children’s name and date of birth.
- 11.4 Access arrangements** – If you have part-time access to your children, you will need to provide proof such as a copy of the access agreement, court order, and custody or residence order.
- 11.5 Immigration status** – If you are not a UK citizen you will need to provide proof that you are eligible for social housing in the UK, such as Home Office documentation.
- 11.6 Residency Checking** – Your council has to confirm that you are living at the address you state on your application form. The council may use a credit reference agency to do this. If you are not registered for Council Tax or are not on the electoral roll, you will need to provide some other proof that you live at the address on your application form (such as a utility bill in your name, an NHS medical card, bank statements, benefit letters etc.)
- 11.7 Proof of local connection** – If you do not live in the borough at present, you will need to prove another local connection from list 2 in section 7, such as that you work in the borough or have immediate family living in the borough. This could include a family member’s utility bill, driving licence, tenancy agreement, benefits letters, or a letter from your employer confirming your place of work.
- 11.8** Please see the “Supporting Documentation Checklist” in the application form, which will tell you the information required.

12. ASSESSING APPLICATIONS

12.1 Medical Need

If you are applying to move because you have a medical condition, a mobility problem or a permanent physical disability, you will need to provide information about your condition and how your condition is affected by your current housing (e.g. you need to move following a stroke which has affected your mobility to such an extent that you can no longer manage stairs and require ground floor accommodation).

12.2 We may need further information regarding your need to move home. This could be a letter from your GP, social worker, occupational therapist or other health or social care professional who knows about your condition. We may also send out a medical form for you to complete to assist us to decide what level of medical need you have. A home visit by a Housing Options Advisor may also take place.

12.3 Welfare Need

You should provide as much information as possible about why you need to move. Examples of a need to move on welfare grounds could include: because you need to provide essential care to a relative, or because you need to be near essential services that you could not access without moving. You may need to provide proof of your need from your GP, social worker or other health or social care professional.

12.4 Threatened with loss of accommodation

If you have been asked to leave your home, you will need to provide proof, such as a copy of your notice to quit, possession order or letter from your employer (if you live in tied accommodation).

12.5 Deliberate worsening of circumstances

Deliberate worsening of circumstances arises where the council decides that you have given up accommodation that was suitable for your needs where there was no requirement or obligation to do so. To reduce the likelihood of people moving into poorer accommodation in order to qualify for quicker re-housing, if you are found to have deliberately worsened your circumstances, you will not normally qualify for housing based on this situation for 12 months after you deliberately worsened your own circumstances. Examples of deliberate worsening of circumstances might include:

- Selling a or giving up a privately rented property that was affordable and suitable for your household's needs
- Moving from a secure or assured tenancy to insecure or overcrowded accommodation with family or friends, where there is no good reason for this move
- Where there is evidence that it was reasonable that you could have remained in your original accommodation
- Arranging for another person to move into your home, creating an overcrowded situation, where there was no good reason for this move.

12.6 Where you have little or no control over your move to alternative accommodation, this will not normally be considered as a deliberate worsening of circumstances.

13. FALSE STATEMENTS AND WITHHOLDING INFORMATION

13.1 Section 171 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, states:

- (1) A person commits an offence if, in connection with the exercise by a local housing authority of their functions under the Act –
- a) he knowingly or recklessly makes a statement which is false in a material particular, or
 - b) he knowingly withholds information which the authority has reasonably required him/her to give in connection with the exercise of those functions.

13.2 This means that it is an offence for which you may be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court to give false information or knowingly withhold information you have been asked for regarding your housing application.

13.3 If you are found to have given false information, you may be excluded from registering with Homesearch. If you have given false information and have obtained a property through Homesearch, the landlord may bring proceedings for possession of the property.

ALLOCATIONS POLICY AND BANDING SCHEME

14. BAND ONE – URGENT PRIORITY

14.1 Urgent Medical Priority

Applicants who have a permanent (life-long or terminal) or chronic medical condition, illness or disability and as a result of this condition are unable to continue to occupy their current accommodation. An applicant's current home must be assessed by a housing, health or social care professional as no longer being accessible or suitable. Applicants will only be awarded Urgent Medical Priority where rehousing is the only realistic option. Examples include:

- Where the applicant cannot be discharged from hospital to their present home
- Where the applicant is unable to access essential parts of their home e.g. bathroom, kitchen

14.2 Urgent Property Factors

- Tenants of a partner Registered Provider who live in the borough and who are required to leave their home as a result of a regeneration scheme, major repair or demolition/clearance
- Applicants whose home is subject to a demolition order
- Applicants whose home is subject to Environmental Health action, such as statutory overcrowding, or has a Category 1 hazard which cannot be resolved and is likely to lead to homelessness, or which presents an immediate risk to the health and safety of the applicant.
- Emergency fire or flood – applicants who live in the Borough, and who are unable to return to their tenancy due to extensive works required following a fire or flood.

14.3 Statutory Overcrowding

Applicants whose current accommodation has been assessed as being statutorily overcrowded by an Environmental Health Officer. This assessment will take into account the number, ages, and gender of people resident in the property along with the number and sizes of rooms.

A claim of overcrowding is usually only considered where it arises as the product of natural growth (i. e. it occurs when a new child is born, adopted or fostered). Overcrowding caused by people of any age coming (back) to live in the property would not usually be awarded this priority, unless there is proof that the person causing the overcrowding had no other option but to move into the property. In this case, the application will only be placed in this band once the situation has existed for 6 months. The local authority will determine over-crowding after considering the best use of the rooms available to the household.

14.4 Urgent management cases

Tenants of a partner Registered Provider who currently live in the Borough, whose landlord has made a firm recommendation that they should move urgently. An award of Band 1 for a management move will only be awarded following approval by a manager from the registered provider and the relevant local authority.

14.5 Under occupation by two or more bedrooms

Tenants of a partner Registered Provider who live in the borough and whose current home is too big for the needs of their household by **two** or more bedrooms.

Only those tenants willing to move to a one-bedroom home or give up **two** bedrooms will be considered in this category. The property you bid for must have at least two bedrooms fewer than the property you currently live in. For example, if you live in a three bedroom house and apply on this basis, then bid for a two bedroom house, you will not be given Band 1 priority.

15. BAND TWO – HIGH PRIORITY

15.1 Homelessness

Where the Council has accepted a duty to secure that accommodation is available for occupation by the applicant under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (i.e. eligible, homeless, in priority need and not intentionally homeless).

15.2 Homelessness prevention

Where an applicant is threatened with homelessness within 8 weeks and has been assessed by the council as likely to be eligible, homeless, in priority need and not intentionally homeless. This priority will only be awarded following an interview with a Housing Options advisor and does not normally include family/parental exclusions. It may include:

- Private tenants who have been served with a valid notice to quit through no fault of their own and who do not have the available resources to secure further private accommodation;
- Owner-occupiers faced with repossession through no fault of their own, where mortgage rescue or other options are not viable, and who do not have available resources to secure accommodation in the private sector;
- Tenants of tied accommodation (for example, a caretaker in a school) retiring through age or ill health or who are being made redundant, who do not have available resources to secure accommodation in the private sector.

15.3 Personal Protection/Harassment

Applicants who are at risk in their current home in the borough because they are experiencing harassment (including racial and homophobic harassment), domestic violence or other threats of violence, and where all housing options have been explored. You will need to provide evidence from the police, anti-social behaviour unit or other relevant agency and will only be offered accommodation which is considered a safe distance from the threat.

15.4 Succession

Applicants who have succeeded to a property in Rushcliffe owned by one of the partner Registered Providers where the property is unsuitable for the successor, because it is too big, or has special adaptations, and suitable alternative accommodation is being sought.

Applicants who are occupying a property owned in Rushcliffe by one of the partner Registered Providers where the landlord has not agreed to a non-statutory succession has not been agreed.

15.5 16/17 year olds and young people leaving care

Any young person leaving care or aged under 18 will be banded according to the procedures set out within the Nottinghamshire County-Wide Protocol.

15.6 Move-on from specialist and supported accommodation

Applicants who are ready to move on to independent living from supported accommodation. Applicants will be awarded this category following confirmation from the accommodation or support provider that they are ready to move on and have the life skills to maintain an independent tenancy. The referral should also detail any move-on support package in place. This band is available only where the council has referral arrangements with the accommodation provider.

15.7 Severe Overcrowding

Applicants whose household is subject to severe overcrowding, where the household is assessed as being two bedrooms short of the number of bedrooms required or where there is gender overcrowding. Gender overcrowding is defined as:

- Where a child aged 10 or over has to share a bedroom with a child or adult of the opposite sex;
- Where a child aged 10 or over has to share a bedroom with their parent or parents.

Household Member	Bedroom Eligibility
Couple/single parent	1 bedroom
Single adult (age 18+)* (siblings of the same sex over the age of 18 who are part of a family application will be expected to share)	1 bedroom
Person with confirmed medical need for own bedroom	1 bedroom
1 child or 2 children of the same sex	1 bedroom
2 children of different sexes, until the eldest is 10	1 bedroom
2 children of different sexes where one is aged 10+	2 bedrooms

15.8 Under-occupation

Tenants of a partner Registered Provider, who live in the Borough, whose present home is too big for the needs of their household by **one** bedroom, and who wish to move to smaller accommodation.

15.9 High medical priority

Applicants or a member of their household who have a serious medical condition, illness or disability which is made worse by their current accommodation, and as a result of this condition it is not reasonable to continue to occupy their current accommodation on long term basis.

15.10 Foster carers

Applicants who have been approved as a foster carer but who need an additional bedroom to commence a placement (when confirmed in writing by the local children's services authority.)

15.11 Social housing tenants who no longer require adaptations

Tenants of a partner Registered Provider currently living in an adapted property where the adaptation (for example, a stair lift, through floor lift or a level access shower) is no longer required (when confirmed by the landlord).

16. BAND THREE – MODERATE PRIORITY

16.1 **Lodgers with dependent children or who are pregnant**

Applicants with dependent children, or who are pregnant, who share facilities (e.g. kitchen, bathroom) with family, friends, an ex-partner or a landlord who lives in the same property (but not people who are tenants, joint tenants or owners of the property they occupy).

16.2 **Moderate medical priority**

Applicants whose household includes a person whose illness or disability is made worse by their present home, and who need to move to improve their condition, but a move is not essential.

16.3 **Social or financial hardship**

Applicants who experience hardship in their current accommodation and who need to move to improve their situation, but a move is not essential.

This could include:

- People who need to be close to specialist educational facilities;
- People who need to move to take up employment or training for a minimum of 6 months;
- People who cannot afford to live in their current accommodation in the longer term, and have provided financial information to show that this is the case.

16.4 **Homeless but not in priority need**

Applicants who have been assessed by the Council as being homeless or threatened with homelessness, but not in priority need.

16.5 **Intentionally homeless**

Applicants who have been or could be assessed by the Council as being homeless or threatened with homelessness, but who have done or failed to do something as a consequence of which they have lost accommodation that would otherwise be available to them.

16.6 **Discharged homelessness duty**

Applicants who have been accepted as homeless by one of the partner councils, but then refused an offer of suitable accommodation by which the council discharged its homelessness duty (see section on “Homeless Applicants”).

16.7 **General overcrowding**

Applicants whose household is overcrowded by **one** bedroom (although households experiencing gender overcrowding are awarded additional priority in Band 2).

16.8 **Applicants aged 50 or over with no other housing need**

Applicants aged over 50 years of age who require sheltered accommodation but have no other housing need.

16.9 **Applicants with no children under the age of 50 with no other housing need**

Households with no children where at least one of the applicants is receiving the medium or high rate of the care element of Disability Living Allowance, and are willing to move into a retirement living property.

17. ADDITIONAL PREFERENCE GROUPS

17.1 The Council has decided that it wishes to give additional preference to applicants from certain groups. It will achieve this by applying additional waiting time to these applicants, so that they are placed higher within a single band than they would otherwise be.

17.2 Armed Forces applicants

The Council has pledged its support to the Armed Forces Community Covenant, which is a statement of mutual support between the Council and the local Armed Forces community. The aims of the Community Covenant are to:

- encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community in their area and vice versa
- nurture public understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community
- recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces community
- encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces community into local life; and
- encourage the Armed Forces community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement.

17.3 In order to further these aims, applicants who qualify for housing (see section 7) and who are serving members of the regular Armed Forces, or who have left the regular Armed Forces in the five years prior to their application, will be awarded an additional nine months waiting time. This means that their effective date will be treated as being nine months prior to the date they provided all information necessary to assess and activate their application.

17.4 Applicants in paid employment

Applicants who qualify for housing where at least one member of the household is in paid employment will be awarded an additional six months waiting time.

17.5 Definition of Paid Employment

For the purposes of this policy, paid employment is described as having a permanent contract, working as a temporary member of staff or being self-employed. Applicants will only qualify if the worker has been employed for 9 out of the last 12 months. Verification will be sought at point of application as well as the point that a tenancy is offered, under the same terms. Applicants must provide pay slips, P60, bank statements or a verifying letter on their employer's headed paper in order to qualify.

18. REVIEWS

18.1 Priority Reviews

If you are placed in Band 1 or Band 2, this represents an urgent situation, so you are expected to place bids for any properties that match your needs. There is a time limit of 12 weeks for applicants in Bands 1 and 2 (except applicants accepted as Band 2 Homeless, who will be allowed to bid for 6 weeks only), after which your application will be reviewed to check whether your circumstances still warrant that level of priority. This may result in your banding being reduced. This does not apply if you have Band 1 or Band 2 priority because you are under-occupying your current home.

18.2 Annual review

Your application will be reviewed each year, and we will ask you to tell us if your circumstances have changed in any way. It is important to complete and return your review form so that we have up to date information about your need for housing. If you do not return the form or otherwise contact us, we will assume that you no longer need housing and remove you from the housing register.

18.3 Changes in circumstances

You should let us know about any changes in your circumstances immediately. For example, someone moves in or moves out, or there is a change to your income. Changes will mean that we have to review your application and your priority banding may change.

If you are moved to a lower band, because your need for housing has reduced, you will keep the same “effective date” to determine how high up that band you will be. However some changes may mean you no longer qualify to remain on the scheme.

If you are moved to a higher band, because your need for housing has increased, your “effective date” will change to the date your change of circumstances request was agreed. This is so that applicants who have been in this high level of need for a long time will remain above applicants who have recently joined this band.

If you move to a new property, you will need to complete a new form or visit the website to find out if you still qualify to remain on the scheme

If you bid for a property successfully, and it is later found that your housing situation was different from the most recent details you provided, then the offer might be withdrawn or the landlord may take action to recover possession of the property.

19. APPEALS

19.1 Appeals against qualification and banding decisions

If you disagree with the band you have been placed in, or have been advised that you do not qualify to join the scheme, you have the right to ask for your application to be looked at again. You should submit any relevant additional information if you feel will that this will support your application. Your request for an appeal should be sent within 21 days of your original registration or banding notification letter. A senior officer will review your application and write to you to tell you the outcome of the appeal, usually within 10 working days.

If your appeal is accepted, and your application is placed in the higher band, your “effective date” will be backdated to the date the new information was provided, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

19.2 Appeals against non-qualification or anti-social behaviour

If you have been notified that you do not qualify to join the scheme, because of criminal or anti-social behaviour, you have the right to appeal against the decision. All appeals should be made within 21 days of you receiving the letter confirming that you are not able to join the scheme.

If you can provide evidence that your behaviour has improved and you are suitable to become a tenant (perhaps following a successful private tenancy or stay in supported accommodation) you may be allowed to reapply to join the scheme. The time needed to demonstrate a change in behaviour will depend on the circumstances of each case and is at the Council's discretion.

19.3 Appeals against suitability of accommodation as a final offer (accepted homelessness duty only)

If you are offered accommodation in discharge of a council's homelessness duty, you have the right to request a review of the offer if you think the accommodation offered is not suitable⁵. However, if you intend to request a review of this type, we strongly advise to accept the offer pending the outcome of the review so that you will have somewhere to live in the meantime. The request must be made within 21 days of you receiving the offer letter, giving clear reasons for the request.

20. COMPLAINTS

20.1 Complaints

If you are not satisfied with the way we have dealt with your application, or how we have considered your request for a review or appeal, then you can make a complaint to the Council in a number of ways:

- by using the online [Official Complaints Form](#)
- by email to customerfeedback@rushcliffe.gov.uk
- by using our Customer Feedback form (available at the Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre)
- by letter (to Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5FE)
- by telephone on 0115 981 9911
- or in person at the Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre, Rectory Road, West Bridgford NG2 6BN.

20.2 You can also get someone else (for example, your local councillor or Member of Parliament) to send us feedback on your behalf.

If you make a complaint, we follow a two stage process internally:

Stage 1 - Your complaint will be sent to the most appropriate manager. It will be investigated and you will be informed about the outcome within 10 working days. Most problems are resolved at this stage.

Stage 2 - If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the initial investigation you can submit a further complaint which will be dealt with by the Corporate complaints Officer and a Head of Service. It will also be reviewed by a Deputy Chief Executive. These are classified as Official Complaints and, although we hope to deal with these within 10 working days, the response time may be longer than this, depending upon the complexities of the case. We will inform you of this when we acknowledge your complaint

⁵ Section 202 (1A), Housing Act 1996 (as amended).

- 20.3** If you are still dissatisfied, then you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman, who will investigate the complaint on your behalf. You can contact the Local Government Ombudsman at:

PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH

Telephone: 024 7682 1960

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

The Local Government Ombudsman has a leaflet called "Complaint about the Council? How to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman." You can get a copy by telephoning or writing to the address above, or you can download it from the Ombudsman's website.









If you contact the Local Government Ombudsman without giving the Council the opportunity to resolve the issue first, then your complaint will be judged as premature and passed to the Council to resolve.

21. CHOOSING A HOME

- 21.1** Properties are advertised every week. The adverts are available on the website at www.home-search.org.uk. The website can be viewed from any computer that has internet access (such as at the local library or through friends and relatives) and from the computer kiosks provided at Council offices. If you are not sure how to access the website, or don't have access to the internet, there are many other ways you can use the scheme – your local council can give you advice.
- 21.2** The council also provides free property advert sheets, which are available at:
- Council offices and contact points
 - Local libraries
 - Community centres
 - Advice centres
 - Housing support services and charities
 - Hostels and temporary accommodation
- 21.3** If you have no access to the internet, and cannot leave your home or access the adverts in any other way, we can send the free property sheet directly to you every week.

22. CHOOSING THE RIGHT PROPERTY

- 22.1** The adverts contain details of the property type, who the landlord is, where the property is and how much the rent is. The adverts contain a range of symbols which give you more details about the property and help you to bid for the right property for your household.

	How many bedrooms the property has		Wheelchair accessible or adapted for disabled use
	Minimum age for bidders		Maximum age for bidders
	Property has a garden		No pets allowed
	Sheltered accommodation		Off-road parking

22.2 Property Types

The property advert will tell you who is allowed to bid for each property. The table below shows who is eligible for what type and size of property. Here are some general guidelines:

2 Bed Houses – Usually let to families with one or two children.

3 Bed Houses – Usually let to families with two or more children, dependent on the age and sex of the children.

1 bed flats/maisonettes – Let to single people or couples without dependent children.

2+ bed flats/maisonettes – Usually let to families with children.

Parlour houses – These are houses with two living rooms and are usually let to larger families or families who have a medical recommendation for a ground floor bedroom.

1 Bed Bungalows – General Let – Usually let to single people or couples who need single level accommodation.

2 Bed Bungalows – General Let – Usually let to families with one or two children where there is a need for single level accommodation.

1 Bed Bungalow – Sheltered or Retirement Housing – Usually let to single people or couples over 50*, or sometimes younger if they receive Disability Living Allowance, who need sheltered accommodation and where there is a need for single level accommodation.

2 Bed Bungalows – Sheltered or Retirement Housing – Usually let to single people or couples over 50*, or sometimes younger if they receive Disability Living Allowance, who need sheltered accommodation with two bedrooms (for example, where they need for a second bedroom for a carer), and where there is a need for single level accommodation.

Supported accommodation (sheltered or retirement housing) – Usually let to people over 50*. People aged under 50 who receive Disability Living Allowance and who have a need for the services of sheltered or retirement accommodation may also be eligible.

Group/Alarm linked – Usually let to people over 50*, who live independently but need low level support. People aged under 50 who receive Disability Living Allowance and who have a need for the services of sheltered or retirement accommodation may also be eligible.

* Many different housing providers participate in Homesearch, and each may have different age restrictions for their sheltered or retirement accommodation. The advert will state what the minimum age requirement for any property is.

22.2 Local Lettings Policies

In some circumstances the council and the social landlord may agree a local lettings policy to allow some under-occupation, for instance, in order to reduce the number of children on a certain estate. The advert will indicate those properties to which the local letting policy applies. Please refer to the table below, which shows which types of household are eligible to bid for which type of property.

	Single person	Couple	Single pregnant/couple and pregnant	Family with 1 child	Family with 2 children	Family with 3 or more children	Single person over 50	Couple both over 50	Single person with overnight carer
Studio flat	✓								
1 bed flat	✓	✓							
2 bed flat			✓	✓	✓				✓
3 bed flat			✓	✓	✓				
1 bed maisonette	✓	✓							
2 bed maisonette			✓	✓	✓				✓
3 bed maisonette					✓				
1 bed house	✓	✓							
2 bed house			✓	✓	✓				
3 bed house			✓	✓	✓	✓			
4+ bed house						✓			
1 bed bungalow (general)	✓	✓					✓	✓	
2 bed bungalow (general)			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
1 bed bungalow (age restricted)							✓	✓	
2 bed bungalow (age restricted)							✓	✓	✓
Group/ alarm linked or Retirement Living							✓	✓	

23. RESTRICTIONS

23.1 Rural Exception Sites

These are properties that have been built in to meet the local need in rural communities. These properties are restricted to people who have a connection to the parish or village only and cannot be let to people who do not have a connection. The property advert will tell you if this applies. If you

indicate that you have a link to a particular parish in Rushcliffe, you will have to provide evidence of this at the time of your application.

23.2 Age

Some properties are only suitable for people over a particular age (see section 22.2 for details). The property advert will tell you if there is any age restriction.

23.3 Local Lettings Policies

These are policies that have been agreed with the landlord to help create sustainable communities. They are restricted to particular areas or estates and each have different criteria to meet the objectives of each scheme. The property advert will tell you if there is a local lettings policy in place and what the criteria are.

23.4 Sensitive Lets

There will be occasions where certain properties are advertised in Homesearch as “sensitive lets”. These will generally be properties where it has been identified that it is in the best interest of the community for them to be allocated to a particular type of household, for instance, a person of a certain age. Each landlord will have their own procedures for identifying properties that will be subject to “sensitive lets”.

23.5 Direct Lets

A direct let is where a property is let to a registered applicant without it being advertised. All members of the Homesearch partnership have the ability to undertake direct lets under certain circumstances. This may include (but is not limited to):

- Lets to homeless applicants who have not secured a property within a reasonable timescale (See section 10.14 for further information);
- Emergency re-housing when requested by the police or other statutory organisation (only by the agreement of a senior housing manager);
- In other exceptional circumstances (by agreement of a senior housing manager).
- Where a property has previously been advertised on Homesearch but there have been no suitable applicants.

Direct lets are rare and it is the intention of the Homesearch Partnership to let the vast majority of available vacancies via the property adverts.

23.6 Hard to Let Properties

Where no bids have been placed on a property for two consecutive weeks and a direct let is not suitable, the Registered Provider will be able to advertise for a tenant by methods other than Homesearch (for example, in the local press).

24. HOW TO BID (EXPRESSING YOUR INTEREST)

- 24.1** Expressing your interest (also known as bidding) in a property lets the council know which properties you would like to be considered for. Bidding doesn't involve any money (except the cost of postage, a text message or telephone call). If you bid online it's completely free.

24.2 You can bid for up to **THREE** properties in each advertising cycle.

24.3 Bidding for a property is simple. Make a note of the **Property Reference Number** (at the top of each advert) for the properties you are interested in.

Online – Log on to the website at www.home-search.org.uk and follow the “How to Express Your Interest” instructions

By Telephone – call 0300 011 0311 (available 24 hours a day). The automated service will then ask you to key in your application number, your memorable date and the reference number of the property you want to bid for. Calls are charged at no more than the UK national rate, even if calling from a mobile phone. Free minutes as part of a calls package can also be used with this number.

By Text - You need to text your registration number, followed by your memorable date, followed by the property reference number. For example, “73513 29/04/2010 12642”. The number to text is **07537 402595**. You can save this in your phone to make it easier to bid in future. You must send your bid in exactly this format. If you send it differently (e. g. “I want to bid for 100 Main Street – from Joe Bloggs”) the computer system will not recognise it.

By Post – If you wish to bid by post you must write to us by 12pm on Tuesday, providing your name, your reference number and address of the property(ies) you wish to bid for.

In Person – You can bid in person at the Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre.

By Proxy – You can have someone to place bids on your behalf if you wish. This could be a family member, support worker, social worker or someone else. This may be useful if you do not have a computer, or if you will struggle to use the methods above. Please let us know if you want someone to bid on your behalf.

24.4 If you do not express your interest

If you do not bid for suitable properties, especially if you are in Band 1 or 2, we may contact you to see if you require any help. If you are in Bands 1 or 2, and have not been bidding for suitable properties that come up, we may review your priority on the housing register.

24.5 Automatic Bidding

This is where the council makes bids on your behalf. Automatic bids will be placed on accommodation that best suit your situation, based on available properties and the general housing circumstances of the area.

Automatic bidding may be used in circumstances such as:

- Accepted homeless applicants (after a total of 6 weeks after being notified of the decision)
- Band 1 and Band 2 applicants (except homeless applicants) who have not placed a bid in the 12 weeks since they were awarded this band.
- Where vulnerable applicants ask Homeseach to make bids on their behalf

If you think you may need extra help to use Homeseach, or if you need this information in a different format (for example, another language), please contact us.

25. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

25.1 Shortlisting

Once the advertising cycle closes, Homesearch creates a shortlist of applicants who have bid for a property. The shortlist sorts all the bids by:

- Priority band (i. e. Band 1, then Band 2, then Band 3)
- The date you were placed in the band (effective date)

25.3 The landlord will normally offer the property to the applicant from the highest band who has been registered for the longest time. If they refuse the offer, the tenancy will then be offered to the next person on the shortlist, unless a period of 4 weeks has passed in which case the property will be re-advertised or let on a direct let.

25.4 However, there are some exceptions to this general rule, such as where local lettings policies apply, or where the landlord will not allow any under-occupation of the property. In the latter case, the landlord may offer the property to the highest-placed applicant whose household will make the most efficient use of the property within the band they are placed. For instance, this means that on a shortlist for a three bedroom house, a family with one child, or two young children, may be bypassed in favor of a lower-placed but larger family within that band that needs all three bedrooms. This is at the discretion of the landlord. Full details will be advertised with the property.

25.5 Offers

If you have been successful with your bid, the landlord that owns the property will contact you with details of the potential offer. Any offer will be followed up in writing. Each landlord may have a different process that they follow when offering a property.

25.6 All landlords participating in the Homesearch scheme reserve the right to:

- Give preference to applicants who specifically need the services or facilities that are part of the property
- Carry out checks on the information you provided as part of your application
- Withdraw an offer if you have provided inaccurate information
- Withdraw an offer if the property becomes unavailable for letting
- Carry out a property inspection (if you are a current council or RP tenant)

25.7 Viewing

Each landlord may have a different process for viewings, but you should have the opportunity to view the property before deciding whether you wish to accept an offer.

25.8 Refusing Offers

Generally, there is no obligation to accept an offer of accommodation, and refusing an offer will not affect your application. However, if you refuse or do not respond to three offers, we will review your priority and may suspend your Homesearch application pending a review. Different rules apply to applicants who have applied as homeless to the Council and had a main duty accepted. See section 10.14 for more details.

26. GLOSSARY

Adapted properties

Property that has been adapted for an applicant with disabilities: for example a Stair lift, through floor lift or level access shower.

Allocation policy

The document setting out the rules that determine how the Council and Registered Providers allocate social housing properties.

Autobid

A feature in the Homesearch system that checks for any properties an applicant is eligible to bid for and automatically places bids on them just before the letting cycle closes each week.

Bid (also known as expressing an interest).

The way to let us know you are interested in an advertised property, which can be done via the website, by telephone, text message, post or in person.

Band

The category of need an applicant will be placed on, based on their current housing situation.

Category 1 Hazard

The meaning of Category 1 Hazards is set out in section 2 of the Housing Act 2004. Properties are assessed against prescribed hazards and an assessment of the level of risk associated with the hazards found is undertaken. If the risk is serious enough, this would be classed as a Category 1.

Choice Based Lettings

A way of allocating housing through an advertising scheme, rather than by direct nominations.

Direct let

When a property is offered to a household without it having been advertised.

Effective date

The date an application is placed in a priority band, used as the date when shortlisting.

Eligibility

The term used to describe who is able to apply for housing and what type of property they are eligible to bid for.

Expressing an interest (also known as bidding)

The way to let us know you are interested in an advertised property, which can be done via the website, by telephone, text message, post or in person.

Nomination

The term used when a local housing authority provides the name and details of an applicant from its housing register to a landlord for an offer of housing.

Qualification

The Council has to assess who qualifies for social housing in Rushcliffe. If you do not qualify, your application will not be accepted.

Registered Provider of Social Housing (RP)

A housing association or other organisation registered by with the Homes and Communities Agency to provide social housing. Previously known as a Registered Social Landlord or RSL.

Retirement Housing

Retirement housing (also known as sheltered housing) is a group of flats or bungalows where all residents are older people.

ALTERNATIVE FORMAT OR LANGUAGE REQUIRED?

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format such as large print, Braille, audio tape or translated into a different language, please contact us:

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre
Rectory Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 6BN

Tel: 0115 981 9911

Email: customerservices@rushcliffe.gov.uk

www.home-search.org.uk

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY SHAPING

The work programme for the Community Development Group is developed around the corporate priorities that fall within its remit and takes into account the timing of the Group's business in the previous municipal year and any emerging issues and key policy developments that may arise throughout the year. It is anticipated that the work programme for the year will be developed in line with the priorities identified in the 4 year plan for budget savings.

Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Group notes the report.

Date of Meeting	Item
6 December 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme • Review of the Housing Allocations Policy
5 February 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme • Review of the relationship between the Borough and the parish councils
9 April 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Review of Scrutiny • Work Programme
July 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme

Financial Comments

No direct financial implications arise from the proposed work programme

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act

In the delivery of its work programme the Group supports delivery of the Council's Section 17 responsibilities.

Diversity

The policy development role of the Group ensures that its proposed work programme supports delivery of Council's Corporate priority 6 'Meeting the Diverse needs of the Community'.

Background Papers Available for Inspection: Nil