

Bromsgrove Home Choice Housing Allocations Policy

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sue Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director Housing and Community Services
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Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Not applicable
Relevant Council Priority	
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE:-

That the final Bromsgrove Home Choice Housing Allocations Policy be approved.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 On the 19th November 2025 Cabinet resolved:-

- To consult on the draft Housing Allocations Policy for a period of six weeks commencing 27th November 2025;
- That the Council's Housing Register be referred to as 'Bromsgrove Home Choice'.
- That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Community and Housing Services and the Assistant Director for Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services to agree final changes and make any future amendments to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy that are deemed to be necessary to comply with Government guidance and which do not trigger the statutory obligation to consult the persons affected by the changes pursuant to section 168(3) of the Housing Act 1996.

2.2 Further, the report advised that:

'Legal advice will be obtained from a legal specialist to ensure that the policy meets all statutory requirements.'

- 2.3 Following the six week public consultation period the draft Bromsgrove Home Choice Affordable Housing Allocations Policy was reviewed and legal advice was sought on compliance.
- 2.4 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA 2017) enhanced the Council's duties for applicants who were facing homelessness by preventing or relieving homelessness at an earlier stage. The Allocations Policy supports the Council in these duties by prioritising homeless households in line with the policy and providing accommodation through the housing allocations available through the system.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 All current housing applicants will need to apply to the new system as it will not be possible to transfer the information over given the changes to both the bandings and the policy. They will be able to retain their current effective date if they apply within three months of the new system going live.
- 3.2 It is proposed that subject to approval of the policy this will start 1st October 2026.
- 3.3 The changes proposed were supported by consultees. The only changes made to the policy were those recommended by legal experts and relate to clarifications regarding making sure the housing register is accessible to all equalities groups and assistance is available where required. In addition, it is considered to be best practice for members to have sight of the Equalities Impact Assessment and that monitoring is put in place to ensure that there is no adverse impact on equalities groups in particular those with disabilities.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The new system to support this new Allocations Policy is being developed and additional resources to facilitate housing applicant re-registration have previously been approved.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Under Section 166A of the Housing Act 1996 the authority is required to have an allocation scheme for determining priorities and for defining the procedures to be followed in allocating social housing accommodation and must allocate in accordance with that scheme.
- 5.2 Legal advice has been obtained from a legal specialist to ensure that the policy meets all statutory requirements and the recommendations have been actioned.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The new unitary authority/authorities will be required, as a local housing authority, to have an allocations scheme for determining priorities and for defining the procedures to be followed in allocating social housing accommodation and must allocate in accordance with that scheme. Any new scheme will require consultation with relevant stakeholders and those on the Housing Register.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The Council's Allocations Policy supports the Council's Priority:
- Housing

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no climate change implications.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 The Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) demonstrates that the Allocations Policy generally has a positive equality impact, particularly for vulnerable households. However, it identifies risks around local connection, digital access, and financial thresholds, which are mitigated through exemptions, support mechanisms, and ongoing monitoring.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Expert legal advice was sought to ensure compliance and this should help to mitigate against any risks.

- 7.2 The Equalities Impact assessment has provided a monitoring framework to review and mitigate any adverse impacts on specific groups.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Bromsgrove Home Choice Housing Allocations Policy
Appendix 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix 3 – Consultation Table

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sue Baxter, Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing	23.6.26
Lead Director / Head of Service	Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	19.6.26
Financial Services	Deb Goodall, Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services	23.6.26
Legal Services and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	24/06/26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Emily Payne, Engagement and Equalities Officer	23.6.26