



Leicester  
City Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Held: THURSDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2005 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Smith- Chair  
Councillor Allen (Conservative Spokesperson)  
Councillor Bhatti (Labour Spokesperson)

Councillor Hall (for Cllr Lloyd Harris)  
Councillor Keeling

Councillor Joshi  
Councillor Tessier

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Mr George Narraway – Leicester Federation of Tenants Association  
Councillor Metcalfe – Cabinet Link Member for Housing

**36. CHOICE BASED LETTINGS**

The Corporate Director of Housing submitted a report that informed members of the Government's agenda to encourage all local housing authorities to operate choice based lettings systems (CBL) by 2010.

Nicola Hobbes, Registration, Support and Development Manager and David Taylor, Landlord Services Manager gave a presentation on the scheme. They defined choice based lettings schemes as a way of allocating social housing through giving tenants a greater say over where they live.

Members generally supported the scheme in principle, as it promotes a greater degree of fairness in the points allocation system. One member asked what measures would be taken to ensure that the needs of certain vulnerable groups would be met. An officer from the housing department explained that there was an IT system in operation that identifies specific categories of people, and could identify groups that had not been picked up by the scheme.

It was also in the view of members that further 'simplification' of the housing points system could make interpretation of it more difficult for members of the public as it had been subject of frequent change. officers maintain that they aim for the system to become simpler and more user-friendly. They added that the points system was being reviewed to enhance the principles of choice based lettings.

The Committee were informed that the scheme would cost £195,000 to install. It was reported that there was no provision for this money in the existing budget and that if the scheme was to go ahead, the costs would be met through cuts within the existing budget, or through a growth in the future year's budget or through a successful bid for funding from the ODPM.

Members commended the Council's record of a low number of void properties, and were keen for this record to be maintained or even improved.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Housing Scrutiny Committee supports the choice based lettings scheme.
- (2) that the committee feel that it is vital to maintain the good work in keeping the number of void properties to a minimum.