



Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED**  
All wards

**FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:**

<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT AGENDA MEETING</b>	<b>17TH FEBRUARY 2011</b>
<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD</b>	<b>3RD MARCH 2011</b>
<b>CABINET</b>	<b>7TH MARCH 2011</b>

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**REVIEW OF THE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

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**Report of the Director of Housing Strategy and Options**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to recommend changes to the Housing Allocations Policy, in light of new statutory guidance issued by The Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG), to improve transparency and to simplify the Council's Policy.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Council introduces a banding scheme (Appendix 1), and makes other changes to the policy as set out in paragraph 6.2 of this report, for the allocation of social rented housing in Leicester

**3. Summary**

- 3.1 Leicester City Council's current housing allocations scheme is a points based scheme and has remained fundamentally unchanged for many years, although, there have been minor changes over the years to deal with new policy initiatives and operational issues as they arose, such as fluctuations in supply and demand and the desire to change levels of priority for certain service users.
- 3.2 These changes have added to the complexity of the policy and many applicants say they do not understand how the policy works and this can lead to frustration and in some cases doubt about the transparency and fairness of the allocations system.
- 3.3 Taking into account the feedback from a 12 week public consultation, this report recommends that the Council simplify the existing Housing Allocations Policy by replacing the current points based scheme with a banding scheme. This system is now used by most housing authorities.
- 3.4 A banding scheme will complement the introduction of Leicester HomeChoice, building on a more customer focused approach to allocating both Council and Housing Association

empty homes. Banding will help applicants to better understand their priority and how it has been decided. This should improve customer service and satisfaction and result in a reduction in queries and complaints from applicants. It will also introduce, except in severe cases, more emphasis on the time an applicant has waited rather than their relative housing need.

3.5 It is expected that the new scheme will be implemented in August 2011.

#### **4. Background**

4.1 Leicester City Council's current housing allocations scheme is a points based scheme and has remained fundamentally unchanged for many years except for many minor changes over the years mainly to deal with policy initiatives and operational issues as they arose, such as fluctuations in supply and demand and the desire to change levels of priority for certain service users.

4.2 The Policy is used to both allocate the Council's own dwellings and to make nominations to housing associations.

4.3 The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has issued new guidance on social housing allocations called 'Fair and Flexible'. This updates, but does not completely replace, previous guidance issued in 2002 and 2008.

4.4 The updated guidance also provides clarification of how DCLG expects local authorities to respond to a High Court ruling in 2009 (Ahmad v. Newham LBC). In addition, DCLG has taken the opportunity to emphasise a number of key messages.

4.5 All households who wish to be offered Council or housing association homes are listed on the Housing Register except where legislation or policy prohibit. (e.g. certain persons from abroad and in cases where there is poor previous behaviour of some sort.)

4.6 As at 31st December 2010, there were 8915 households on Leicester's Housing Register. During the period April 2009 to end of March 2010 there were 1450 lets to council housing and 444 lets to housing associations from the housing register. It is estimated that there will be many more housing association lets through the Register in the current year, as associations now use Leicester HomeChoice to advertise most of their properties.

4.7 The Localism Bill as yet not published will make further proposals which may result in further changes to the scheme.

#### **5 Banding v Points Based Approaches**

##### **5.1 The Code of Guidance (CLG) dated December 2009 states:**

1. An appropriate method of applicant prioritisation could be a system that groups applicants into a number of 'bands' that reflect different levels of housing need or relative priorities within a housing authority's allocation scheme. Such systems are commonly referred to as 'banding schemes'.

2. The House of Lords in *Ahmad* recognised that simple banding schemes could have a number of advantages over more nuanced systems. They are clear, relatively simple to administer and highly transparent, whereas banding schemes which involve a large number of bands based on degrees of housing need are likely to be more expensive and time consuming to operate, more based on value judgement, more open to argument, and more opaque. The House of Lords also considered that more complex banding systems may need to be monitored more closely to take account of the fact that applicants' circumstances are liable to change over time.
3. In addition to the benefits identified in *Ahmad*, simpler banding schemes may also make it easier for authorities to work together to put in place sub-regional and regional choice based lettings schemes.
4. Authorities should bear in mind that a banding scheme must be consistent with and give effect to the principles in the authority's allocation scheme for determining priorities for an allocation. The greater the number and complexity of these principles, the more complex the banding scheme will normally need to be.

## **6. Recommended Area of Change: Adopting a Banding Scheme**

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Council adopts the proposed banding scheme outlined in Appendix 1 and described below.

### **6.2 Placing households in Bands**

It is proposed that the relative priority of most applicants should be broadly the same as in the current system. The major difference is that for the majority of applicants their priority will be determined by how long they have been on the Register. People understand the concept of a waiting list and often ask about their situation in terms of 'how long will I wait?'. Legislation and practical considerations mean that the system cannot be entirely date based. (e.g. there are some people we need to house quickly and there are some we would see as very low priority however long they have waited, particularly in a time of shortage of social rented housing).

The changes to priority that are recommended are:

- Give a higher priority to families or expectant singles/couple where they are overcrowded and living in one bedroom accommodation. (proposed Band 2)
- Give more priority to severely overcrowded families (proposed Band 2). Severe overcrowding has a number of health impacts and is linked to infant mortality. Tackling severe overcrowding is one of the actions in the Health Inequalities Plan.
- Give more priority to those leaving residential care or likely to need residential care to support the Adult Social Care transformation programme. (proposed Band 2)
- There will be no additional recognition of multiple needs within a household.

### **6.3 Making offers of the accommodation displayed on Leicester HomeChoice**

The proposed rule is that an applicant from a higher Band who expresses an interest on Leicester HomeChoice will always take priority over an applicant from a lower Band, e.g. a Band 1 applicant takes priority over a Band 2 applicant.

Within a Band, priority will be determined by the date the application was placed in that Band, with the person who has been waiting the longest within that Band having the highest priority.

1. If circumstances change which results in an applicant moving to a higher priority band, the Band date applies from the date the application is given the higher priority, not the original date of the application.
2. If circumstances change which results in an applicant moving to a lower priority Band, the date for the lower Band will be treated as either: the date the application first went into that Band, or the date the application first went to a higher Band whichever is earlier.

A household will be placed in the highest band that any member of that household qualifies for. There will be no additional recognition of multiple needs within a household, a change from the existing policy.

Applicants who have rent arrears as defined in the rent arrears policy will be placed in their highest assessed band. However if they express an interest under Leicester HomeChoice they will not be made an offer if they do not meet the criteria set out in the rent arrears policy.

## **7. Impact of Changes on Customers**

- 7.1 The likely impact to customers can be seen in Appendices 3 and 4 which shows the number of likely lets for each band and the likelihood of getting an offer within each band broken down between single and family size (2 and 3 bed) accommodation within one year. Those in lower bands will get offers if those in higher bands are not bidding for particular properties.
- 7.2 The results of which band the homes were allocated to and the date in that band will appear on Leicester HomeChoice website, as points do now. This information will help people to see how long they may wait and could be used if the Council wishes to review the policy in the future.

### Result of consultation

Officers asked for views on the proposed changes to the Allocation Policy from all Housing Associations in the city, over 30 separate organisations identified as our stakeholders and from the public via the Council website. The feedback received following consultation is outlined in Appendix 2.

## **8. Implementation**

- 8.1 The introduction of a banding scheme will mean that changes to the allocations IT system are required and to the Leicester HomeChoice website.

- 8.2 The cost of introducing the proposed scheme includes activating a software module within existing software, notifying applicants and training staff is approximately £30k. Costs can be contained within existing budgets. Once the scheme is established small staff savings may arise from the reduction in some areas of assessment, and less customer enquiries about points levels and when they are likely to be made offers.
- 8.3 We will write to everyone on the Housing Register to tell them which band they will be placed in and any time in need accrued under the current points scheme will be reflected under the new scheme.

## 9. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 9.1 The Council has a duty to ensure that allocation policies and procedures do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, on grounds of race, ethnicity, sex or disability. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken to ensure that the changes proposed do not impact on particular groups.

### 9.2 Key Findings

From the EIA it has been concluded that there are likely to be a number of impacts from the proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Policy.

Evidence from the Housing Register suggests that BME households are over represented amongst households from all backgrounds that are severely overcrowded. BME households account for 52% of all households who are severely overcrowded whilst they only account for 39% of all households on the Housing Register. It is envisaged that BME households who are severely overcrowded are likely to have a better chance of rehousing as the new banding scheme gives them a higher priority.

From the work carried out within Adults and Social Care, it has been identified that Leicester has one of the highest rates of vulnerable adults (learning disabilities and mental health) in residential care who are ready for independent living with relevant support. The new banding proposal is likely to have a positive impact on such groups as they have been placed in a higher banding than under the current points scheme.

Evidence from the Housing Register shows there is a high proportion of overcrowded households with children living in one bedroom accommodation headed by a single parent. Further evidence shows that the majority of single parents are women. The banding scheme will mean they are likely to have a better chance of rehousing as they will have a higher priority than the current points scheme.

It is predicted that no impact will be apparent in the equality streams of faith, race or sexual orientation.

Overall the policy will provide a fair and transparent system for the allocation of social housing in the city. Recent assessment of the LeicesterHomeChoice system found that no groups were experiencing disadvantage in accessing the Housing register or using the Homechoice system. However we will continue to review and monitor the impact of these changes six months after implementation.

## **10. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **10.1 Financial Implications – Rod Pearson (Head of Finance)**

'There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.'

### **10.2 Legal Implications - Carolyn Howard (Legal Services)**

The proposed changes must be consistent with the requirements of existing housing legislation, statutory guidance issued in December 2009, and the House of Lords decision in *R (on application of Ahmad) v Newham LBC*. The Council must also comply with its duty to consult in accord with the requirements of the Local Government act 1999 (as amended by the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007).

The Council should ensure that the proposed allocations policy gives reasonable preference to applicants falling within the current statutory reasonable preference categories, as set out in section 167(2) of the Housing Act 1996 (and subsequently amended), but does not necessarily need to ensure that equal weight must be given to all the reasonable preference categories.

### **10.3 Climate Change Implications**

None

### **10.4 Other Implications**

<b>OTHER IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>YES/ NO</b>	<b>Paragraph/References Within the Report</b>
Equal Opportunities	YES	9.
Policy	YES	6.
Sustainable and Environmental	NO	
Crime and Disorder	YES	4.5
Human Rights Act	NO	
Elderly/People on Low Income	YES	6.2
Corporate Parenting	YES	Appendix 1
Health Inequalities Impact	YES	6.2 / Appendix 1

## **11. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972**

### **11.1 Leicester City Council Housing Allocations Policy**

### **11.2 The Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.**

11.3 Fair and Flexible: Statutory Guidance on Social Housing Allocations for Local Authorities in England, December 2009, ODPM.

**12. Consultation**

12.1 Consultation to the proposed changes was carried out with all Housing Associations within the city and with over 30 separate organisations identified as our stakeholders and with the general public.

**13. Report Author**

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**Recommended Banding Allocation Scheme**

**APPENDIX 1**

	Household Circumstances	Existing Points Category	Comments
<p><b>BAND ONE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People in need of urgent re-housing and referred by Adult Social Care or Children’s Services.</li> <li>• People in need of urgent re-housing whose properties are directly affected by public redevelopment programmes.</li> <li>• Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a large property (four bedroom or more) and who wish to move to a property with fewer bedrooms (three bedrooms or less).</li> <li>• Council and housing association tenants occupying a purpose built wheelchair adapted property who no longer require it.</li> <li>• People suffering from any form of harassment.</li> <li>• People who are statutory homeless and are owed the full housing duty under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996.</li> <li>• Council tenants who need to move for management reasons - see the current allocation policy, section 3.6 (available at leicester.gov.uk/allocations).</li> <li>• People whose current housing conditions are having a seriously adverse affect on the physical or mental health of either the applicant or a member of their household.</li> <li>• Children leaving the care of Leicester City Council’s Children and Young People’s Service (CYPS).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Referred Case points</li> <li>- Compulsory Homeless points</li> <li>- Tenants Incentive Scheme (EasyMove)</li> <li>Harassment points</li> <li>- Statutory homeless points</li> <li>- Management Case points</li> <li>- Access, Health, Care and Support points (high level)</li> </ul>	<p><b>There are currently 170 households on the Register that would fall into Band One</b></p> <p>Including under-occupiers of very large properties will continue the level of priority that we have been giving under the Overcrowding pilot. It has been very helpful in releasing large family homes for overcrowded families.</p> <p>It will also be helpful to release purpose built wheelchair adapted property. In both cases a move will be voluntary.</p>



## BAND TWO

- People whose homes are deemed to be severely overcrowded (two bedrooms or more short of their assessed need).
- Families living in designated temporary accommodation in the city.
- Families who are overcrowded and living in one bedroom accommodation.
- People identified as needing urgent re-housing to prevent homelessness.
- Single people living in designated temporary or supported accommodation.
- People ready to leave residential care supported by Leicester City Council and/or NHS.
- People with a care package where Adult Social Care (LCC) assess that a move will assist independent living.
- People whose current housing conditions are having a negative affect on the physical or mental health of the applicant or a member of their household.
- People leaving the armed forces who previously lived in Leicester but do not have a home to return to and do not qualify as statutory homeless.

- Overcrowding points (lacking 2 or more bedrooms)  
 - Temporary Accommodation points  
 - Insecure Accommodation points  
 - Access, Health, Care and Support points (medium/low level)

**There are currently circa 1100 households on the housing register which would fall into Band Two**

This band deals with the prevention of homelessness. Strict assessments are done before awarding these points.

This will give more priority to those who are severely overcrowded and overcrowded expectant singles/ couples living in one bedroom accommodation. It is a corporate plan target to tackle severe overcrowding.

The proposal is to give more priority to social care clients who are ready to leave residential care.

Although this gives severely overcrowded families a high priority many of the cases will find that they will still wait a long time for a suitable property to bid for.

It is estimated that 80% of 2 and 3 bedroom lets will go to families in Band Two.

<p><b>BAND THREE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People identified by Adult Social Care as ready to leave the care of family or carer.</li> <li>• Single people who have no settled accommodation and are of 'no fixed abode'.</li> <li>• Families needing to move to a particular area of Leicester where hardship would be caused if they do not move.</li> <li>• Families who are living in overcrowded conditions under Leicester City Council's overcrowding standard (one bedroom short of their assessed need).</li> <li>• Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a two or three bedroom property (bungalow, house, maisonette) and who wish to move to a property with fewer bedrooms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Temporary Accommodation points</li> <li>- Overcrowding and sharing points</li> <li>- Access, Health, Care and Support points (care and support element)</li> <li>- Overcrowding points (lacking 1 bedroom)</li> <li>- Underoccupation points</li> </ul>	<p><b>There are currently circa 3650 households on the housing register which would fall into Band Three</b></p> <p>It is people in Band Three that will notice the most difference from the old system. The time people have been waiting will be more important than it was under the old scheme. The offer will be made to the household who has been in Band Three the longest.</p> <p>It is estimated that 80% of one bedroom lets will go to single people in Band Three.</p>
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<p><b>BAND FOUR</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who share facilities with other households but have their own bedroom.</li> <li>• People who need to move to, or remain in, a particular area of Leicester to give or receive emotional support from family, friends or others in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sharing points</li> <li>- Care &amp; Support</li> <li>Emotional points</li> </ul>	<p><b>There are currently circa 1100 households on the housing register which would fall into Band Four</b></p>
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<p><b>BAND FIVE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who do not have any of the housing circumstances listed in bands 1, 2, 3 and 4.</li> <li>• People who do not meet the Leicester City Requirement.</li> </ul>	<p>- People with no points</p>	<p><b>There are currently circa 2900 households on the housing register which would fall into Band Five</b></p> <p>Currently people with no points are not made offers. It is proposed that in future they can bid on Leicester HomeChoice. They will only get an offer if no-one else bids from a higher band.</p>
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<p><b>NO OFFERS</b></p>	<p>Offers of accommodation will NOT be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who do not meet the Leicester City Requirement.</li> <li>• Council tenants who have failed a property inspection.</li> <li>• Anyone who has provided false or misleading information.</li> <li>• Anyone who has refused three suitable offers.</li> <li>• People with rent arrears.</li> </ul>
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Note: People who are excluded from the Housing Register (which can be due to their immigration status or because they have had legal proceedings against them for anti social behaviour) will not be placed in any band.

**Do you think we should change from a points system to a banding scheme?**

**Number of Responses Received**

	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
Stakeholders	4	-	-	4
General Public	41	10	15	66
<b>Total</b>	<b>45 (64%)</b>	<b>10 (14%)</b>	<b>15 (21%)</b>	<b>70</b>

**Feedback**

Leicester Housing Association - ASRA

1. *'Yes, it is much easier for applicants to understand, much easier for them to believe it is transparent, and they are less likely to successfully "chase" bands than they are points'.*

Riverside Housing Association

2. *'Yes, a banding scheme gives preference to those families who have been waiting the longest and means that other families with similar needs will not leap frog over them'.*

Spirita Housing Association

3. *'Yes, easier for applicants to understand and for landlords to advise on'.*

Independent Tenant Representative

4. *'Yes, if the banding scheme ensures that people who have been on that band the longest are put forward for a tenancy first then it's better for them'.*

General Public (Representative Sample)

5. *'Yes, it gives people who have been on the list the longest a better chance to be re-housed'.*
6. *'Yes, so that people that have been waiting for a long time also benefit from housing not just those that are in emergency need of accommodation as some people know how to take advantage of the current system'.*
7. *'Yes, it would be a fairer system as people who have been on the list the longest will have more priority'.*
8. *'Yes, I feel this banding scheme should have started years ago as it allow people who have been on the waiting list the longest to be a priority'.*
9. *'Yes, It will be much easier to understand and more fairer'.*
10. *'Yes, I think this new banding scheme will be great news to people like me who have been on the list for over 5 years'.*

11. *'Yes, it sounds as though a banding scheme will take into consideration the length of time someone has been waiting to be housed, whereas the current system does not. To me the banding scheme would be more fair'.*
12. *'No, the present system takes into account more than just time on list e.g. health problems'.*
13. *'No, everyone's situation is different and that needs to be taken into account. Houses and flats should be given to those in need not just who has waited the longest. That is not a fair system'.*
14. *'No, the band system seems to be more complicated, thus making it pointless to change to a band system'.*
15. *'No, because it gives more relevance to those who are in urgent need of housing'.*

#### Director of Housing and Strategy Response

Comments noted.

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## Do you think we have included all types of housing circumstances in the new banding scheme?

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### Feedback

#### Leicester Housing Association - ASRA

1. *'What about people leaving the armed forces to return?'*
2. *Also what band are people who are homeless but not owed a full duty? It's unclear where these categories sit in the banding scheme.*
3. *Also in Band 1 - you mention council tenants who need to move for management reasons. This needs to be extended to Housing Association tenants as well; all partners' tenants should be treated the same in this respect and not any differently just because they are not council tenants - Housing Associations should not be forced to use their "10%" quota unless its absolutely a necessity. If all applicants were treated the same regardless of which social landlord they had, you might find that the "10%" figure is not even utilised by the Housing Associations'.*

#### Independent Tenant Representative

4. *'If the banding scheme ensures that people who have been on that band the longest are put forwards for a tenancy 1st then its better for them'.*

#### General Public

5. *'Ex forces, those leaving military housing, families of marriage breakdown within the forces, soldiers on the streets'.*

#### Director of Housing and Strategy Response

1. Under the Housing Allocations Policy, people leaving the armed forces who have previously lived in Leicester are registered taking into account the accommodation history of the applicant prior to them entering the armed forces (for clarification see Band 2).
2. People who are homeless but are not owed a full housing duty under the Housing Act 1996 will be placed in the appropriate bands according to their circumstances.
3. Where Housing Associations are committed to providing all or most of their vacancies through Leicester HomeChoice, their tenants will also be considered for priority where they need to move for management reasons in the same way as Council tenants.

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## Do you think any of the types of housing circumstances should be in a lower band?

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### Feedback

#### Leicester Housing Association - ASRA

1. *'In Band 2 you have placed people who are deemed severely overcrowded by 2 bedrooms or more. However also in Band 2 you have stated that families who are overcrowded and living in 1 bed accommodation should also be placed in Band 2. Therefore this family could just be 1 bedroom short and in the same band! It's not very transparent and doesn't seem very fair'.*

#### Riverside Housing Association

2. *'Council Tenants who need to move for management reasons, would have felt that they should be in Band 2. If it is remaining in Band 1 why only council tenants?'*

#### Spirita Housing Association

3. *'Band 1  
Under-occupation should be split. Band 1 could be tenants giving up 2 bedrooms and Band 2 tenants giving up 1 bedroom.*
4. *Harassment needs to be defined by different levels. Any harassment is too broad. Critical levels would be covered by Management recommendations.*
5. *Band 2  
Lower level of harassment should be in this band. Policy needs to be clear on levels and what constitutes harassment.*
6. *People ready to leave hospital should be in Band 1 as they are a higher priority than those whose housing is having a negative effect on them'.*

#### Independent Tenant Representative

7. *'16 - 21 year old single parents who seem to think, 'I'll have a child & I'll get council accommodation'.*

#### General Public (Representative Sample)

8. *'Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a large property (four bedroom or more) and who wish to move to a property with fewer bedrooms (three bedrooms or less)'.*
9. *'Those that render themselves homeless for want of better housing, those who simply wish to leave a home that's adequate'.*
10. *'People who already have a house say a 2 bed who want a 3 bed should be in lower band as they are in a house and have a garden etc'.*

11. *'Those who are recent arrivals to Leicester City and those who opt to become pregnant so they become eligible to be housed!'*
12. *'Council & Housing Assoc. tenants who are currently under-occupying a large property and Council tenants who need to move for management reasons'.*

Director of Housing and Strategy Response

2. Where Housing Associations are committed to providing all or most of their vacancies through Leicester HomeChoice, their tenants will also be considered for priority where they need to move for management reasons in the same way as Council tenants.



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## Do you think any of the types of housing circumstances should be in a higher band?

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### Feedback

#### Leicester Housing Association - ASRA

1. *'Further to comments in previous question - in Band 3 you have placed people who are 1 bedroom short. In some other schemes they have debated this argument and in the end, regardless of the property type currently being lived in, families who are 1 bed short get placed in Band 3, and families who are 2+ beds short, are placed in band 2. This is much easier and more clear-cut to justify to an applicant than trying to explain the "rationale" behind giving Band 2 to a family in 1 bed accommodation and how this is any different from other applicants in Band 3 who are only 1 bed short'.*

#### Spirita Housing Association

2. *'Single people who have no settled accommodation and no fixed abode should be in band 2 if not statutory homeless unless you are looking at putting prevention measures in place'.*
3. *'People willing to give up 1 bedroom should be in Band 2 unless you leave this one as band 3 and move giving up 2 beds to band 2'.*

#### Independent Tenant Representative

4. *'Carers of older or disabled people who need close contact with their carer as a lot of carers do not have transport'.*

#### General Public (Representative Sample)

5. *'Homeless, health issues, overcrowding and abuse'.*
6. *'Overcrowding, where children of certain ages are forced to share a room'.*
7. *'Mental health problems should be given higher priority as not knowing can be highly distressing and make mental illness worse'.*
8. *'Ex forces, single mums/dads, elderly/disabled'.*
9. *'Everyone will think that the band that they are in should be in higher band'.*
10. *'People who through no fault of there own are having to live with there elderly parents and are out of work because of illness'.*
11. *'People who have lived in Leicester their whole life'.*
12. *'People who are on the housing register for a long time'.*

Director of Housing and Strategy Response

Comments noted.

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## Do you have any other comments to make?

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### Feedback

#### Leicester Housing Association - ASRA

1. *'In the "no offers" section you have stated that people who refuse 3 suitable offers will not be made further offers. In our experience with numerous other CBL schemes, it is better to let the bid ceiling of 3 bids per cycle do this job. People in the lower bands may not place any bids on properties they're not sure about for fear of this repercussion. This will make it very hard to let properties in areas or schemes where there is lower demand - often its people in the lower bands that choose to risk a bid on a viewing of one of these properties and penalising with this "no offer" means that they just won't bid on them. The whole point of CBL is to assist in better managing an applicant's expectations and thus, people in lower bands having an incentive to bid on lower demand areas or properties to outweigh the amount of time they would otherwise have to wait to realistically be rehoused. Regularly reviewing the applicant register on a rolling annual basis will prevent applicants from stagnating or time-wasting, whilst continuing to allow the CBL scheme to incentivise applicants and create demand for lower-demand properties'.*

#### Spirita Housing Association

2. *'Temporary accommodation criteria in Band 2 should be for all household types - no need to split in to separate lines for families/singles'.*
3. *'The policy needs to reflect the demand you have for the accommodation in the area and as long as the banding has been put together based on this, then it should work to alleviate the pressures on housing applicants. I believe that family housing is scare in Leicester so prioritising on releasing under occupied properties makes perfect sense'.*

#### Independent Tenant Representative

4. *'Yes, if the banding scheme ensures that people who have been on that band the longest are put forwards for a tenancy 1st then its better for them'.*

#### General Public (Representative Sample)

5. *'These changes will benefit the real people in need of housing rather than those making choices of their living yet they have shelter. I also think this programme must include people from the community to make a final discussion. Also there ought to be an element of consultations between the council, housing applicants and those already rehoused to find areas of attention'.*
6. *'If an applicant has been on the list for many years they may still only be in band 3 and still make take a few years before they are allocated a property just because they do not have a specific criteria to move to the next band. I do not feel the banding or points system accustom those who are actively applying for properties every week who are in Band 3 or even lower bands for the property to go to an applicant in band 2 or 1 even though they may not have been on the list as long as those in band 3 or lower bands and may not be applying for property as regularly than those in Band 3 or lower*

*bands. I do not feel that a person should be penalised for not getting a property due to their circumstances when they have been on the housing list for years!*

7. *'I hope once the change to the Housing Policy is adopted, the proposed scheme will be equally applicable to existing tenants and their current circumstances and eligibility for the council housing will be re assessed. This will be fair and intelligent management of available housing stock in order to reduce waiting lists and give support to those who in need indeed.'*
8. *'I am happy that you are planning to consider the band scheme as it will also give chance of re-housing to people who have been on the housing register for long. Thanks.'*
9. *'We are likely to see a rise in persons leaving the forces, these people have paid rent, and given their service and have a right to be housed in social housing, I've been in this situation and its very difficult to be housed on leaving.'*
10. *'All circumstances should be treated individually, I think that the points system has to be reconsidered too, before choosing to change the whole system, I feel that the housing is not giving enough points to people.'*
11. *'I think Leicester home choice is a good idea in terms you can bid for the property you want but your situation is not looked at and that isn't fair. Someone who is in a better situation than me could bid for the same house as me and because they have 1 more point than me they would get the property even though my situation is worst. People in my situation living in upper floor flat with a baby should be top of the list as it is such a struggle.'*
12. *'There is a need to be fair the present systems have failed many.'*
13. *'The proposed policy is the fairest way of allocating and is long overdue.'*

#### Director of Housing and Strategy Response

1. Some people bid and persistently refuse offers. The 3 offer policy is designed to deter persistent refusal of suitable offers and encourage people to only bid for properties they are genuinely interested in. Persistent refusal of suitable offers has cost implications in void and staff times. An appeal process is in place and the reasons for multiple refusals will be taken into account.

**Number of 1 Bed Lettings likely to be available during 2010/11 for Singles/Childless Couples**

	<b>Number of Households likely to be Rehoused to 1 Bed Accommodation Per Year</b>	<b>Likelihood of people receiving offers per year if they bid</b>
<b>BAND ONE</b>	50	Good
<b>BAND TWO</b>	130	Good
<b>BAND THREE</b>	875	Reasonable
<b>BAND FOUR</b>	15	Low
<b>BAND FIVE</b>	15	Low
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED LETS 2010-2011</b>	1085	

This table does not apply to those needing specialist accommodation which is in short supply e.g. wheelchair adapted.

**Number of 2 and 3 Bed Lettings likely to be available during 2010/11 for Families**

**APPENDIX 4**

	<b>Number of Households Likely to be Rehoused to 2 Bed Accommodation Per Year</b>	<b>Likelihood of people receiving offers per year if they bid</b>	<b>Number of Households Likely to be Rehoused to 3 Bed Accommodation Per Year</b>	<b>Likelihood of people receiving offers per year if they bid</b>
<b>BAND ONE</b>	70	Good	65	Good
<b>BAND TWO</b>	500	Good	385	Reasonable
<b>BAND THREE</b>	80	Possible	5	low
<b>BAND FOUR</b>	5	Low	5	low
<b>BAND FIVE</b>	-	unlikely	-	unlikely
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED LETS 2010-2011</b>	655		460	

This table does not apply to those needing specialist accommodation which is in short supply e.g. wheelchair adapted.