

Housing Scrutiny Commission

10th October 2016

Review of the Housing Register /
Housing Allocations Policy

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Andy Connelly
Lead Director: Chris Burgin



City Mayor

Useful information

■ Ward(s) affected: All

■ Report authors:

Kanwaljit Basra – Housing Register & Allocations Team Leader, Housing Options Service, ext. 37-1745

Caroline Carpendale – Head of Service, ext. 37-1701

Chris Burgin – Director of Housing, ext. 37-5143

1. Summary

- 1.1 Executive seeks the comments of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the proposals to carry out a review of the Housing Register and the Allocations Policy.
- 1.2 This report considers:-
 - 1.2.1 Communities and Local Government issue guidance to housing authorities requiring them to give consideration to reviewing their existing housing allocation policies. The Government has made it clear they expect social homes to go to people who genuinely need and deserve them.
 - 1.2.2 Furthermore the introduction of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 also needs to be considered as it will impact on the Council's Housing Allocations Policy in regards to the mandatory use of fixed term tenancies and 'pay to stay' for higher income local authority tenants.
 - 1.2.3 The Council's Housing Register is a list of qualifying people who have applied for council housing and nominations from the housing associations. A person's priority position on the Housing Register is determined by their housing need.
 - 1.2.4 The Housing Act 1996 section 166A(3) requires that an allocations policy must be framed to give reasonable preference to certain categories of people.
 - 1.2.5 The rules and the procedures that sets out who can apply to join the Housing Register along with their relative priority are governed by the Council's Housing Allocations Policy. The Housing Allocations Policy is subject to change either through the issuing of statutory guidance or by a change in local priorities agreed by elected members. Any changes to the Housing Allocations Policy may mean a person's position on the list can also be affected.
 - 1.2.6 The proposed changes will give greater preference to people with the most housing need who do not have the resources to explore other housing options.
 - 1.2.7 The Housing Options Service have a duty to provide advice and assistance to all citizens of Leicester in relation to the housing options available to them, including advice about the private rented sector.

Recommendations:

1. To consult with stakeholders and seek the views of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the following proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Policy:
2. To look to reduce the numbers on the Housing Register and reconfigure the priority order to ensure that the Register is fit for purpose and primarily addresses those in the most housing need.
3. To reduce the administrative burden of managing a Housing Register of 11149 applicants (as at 01/04/2016) of whom circa 1479 have a realistic chance of achieving an offer of accommodation. This is based on the number of lettings for 2015-2016.
4. We need to ensure we manage customer expectations realistically at the earliest opportunity of them applying for assistance to fully inform them of their housing options.

It is proposed:

- To remove existing households from the Housing Register who have no or little housing need.
 - To remove existing households who own their homes except where there are over-riding circumstances of need.
 - To remove those households who following assessment have the financial resources to secure alternative accommodation.
 - To limit the qualifying income threshold for higher income households.
 - To reconfigure the overcrowding rules.
 - To reconfigure the under-occupation rules.
 - To give priority to people living in insanitary & unsatisfactory housing
 - To reconfigure the bedroom rules to the government bedroom standard.
 - To enable applicants the choice to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom than their normal eligibility.
 - To enable families with 1 child aged 2 years and under the choice to apply for 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation.
5. To report on the results of the consultation to the Executive for a decision on the proposed changes.

2. Current Policy

- 2.1 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 unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant of the authority).

- 2.2 The Policy is used to both allocate the Council's own dwellings and to make nominations to housing associations.
- 2.3 Leicester City Council's current housing allocations scheme is a banding scheme where households are assessed and placed in 1 of 4 bands depending on their current housing circumstances and need (see Appendix 3).
- 2.4 Band 1 is for those households who have been assessed as having the highest priority for an allocation of accommodation, and then on a sliding scale of priority to Band 4 who are, those households who are considered to be in low housing need.
- 2.5 We now have strong links with the private rented sector and many people coming to the Council for advice are helped through the LeicesterLet and Rent deposit schemes.

3. Statistics from the Housing Register

- 3.1 As at 1st April 2016 the number of households on the Housing Register were:

BANDS	Total
BAND 1	722 (7%)
BAND 2	2821 (25%)
BAND 3	2818 (25%)
BAND 4	2191 (20%)
BAND 5*	2597 (23%)
Applications	
Total	11149

*With effect from 1st May 2014 no new applicants are accepted into Band 5

- 3.2 Lettings from the Housing Register 2015 – 2016 (LCC/Housing Association/HomeCome)

BANDS	Total
BAND 1	342 (23%)
BAND 2	874 (59%)
BAND 3	171 (12%)
BAND 4	86 (6%)
BAND 5	6 (<1%)
Total	1479

Appendix 2 sets out the total lettings for the last 10 years and highlights the decrease in the number of lettings which places pressure upon the Housing Register and managing the expectations.

Whilst there was an increase in lettings in 2014-2015, this is regarded as a one off due to the large number of new build accommodation that became available that year.

It is projected that going forward up to 800 properties p.a. may be lost to the to Right to Buy which places further pressure upon the Housing Register and the need to ensure as far as possible that available properties are allocated to those most in need.

4. Proposed Changes to the Housing Allocations Policy

4.1 Appendix 1 lists the proposals along with the rationale for the changes.

5. Options

There are two options available:

5.1 Option 1

To maintain the status quo and make no changes to the published Housing Allocations Policy.

- Guidance states social housing should go to those households in the most need and the Council's Housing Allocations Policy should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that this is achieved. The last full review was in 2010 when the Housing Allocations Policy changed from a points based scheme to a banding scheme.
- Currently the Housing Allocations Policy is considered to be complex and not easy to understand. This is reflected by the high number of enquiries that are received from both elected members and the general public.
- The introduction of significant changes to the policy in May 2014 and August 2015 were not applied retrospectively. This has added to the complexity and different rules for applicants based upon their date of application. This makes the policy harder to understand e.g. existing homeowners are allowed to remain on the Register whereas new applicants who are homeowners are not allowed to join.

or

5.2 Option 2

To consult on some or all of the proposals outlined in the report and subject to the response to consultation, adopt the relevant changes to the published Housing Allocations Policy.

- The review will ensure that the policy addresses those most in need as well as helping the policy be more transparent, simplified and easier to understand by all.

- It will better manage customer expectations.
- It will achieve efficiency savings in the management of the Housing Register.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 As the proposals to change the Housing Allocations Policy are considered to be major changes there is a statutory requirement that we seek the views of Registered Social Housing Providers which have nomination agreements with the authority but it is also good practice that all those who may be affected by, or have an interest in, the way social housing is allocated are also consulted. Therefore we propose to consult with all parties who may be affected by, or have an interest in the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

7. Financial, legal and other implications

7.1 Financial implications – Pete Coles Principal Accountant (Housing)

Indicative savings are likely due to proposed efficiencies in the reduction of the number of applicants on the register, but further work will be needed to quantify how much and this will be done if any proposals are implemented.

7.2 Legal Implications – Jeremy Rainbow, Principal Lawyer (Litigation)

Section 166A(13) of the Housing Act 1996 obliges a local housing authority to consult with every private registered provider of social housing and registered social landlord with which it has nomination arrangements before making an alteration to its allocation scheme that reflects a major change of policy.

In framing its housing allocation policy the Council must secure that reasonable preference is given to:

- People who are homeless;
- People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under homelessness legislation;
- People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing, or living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds;
- People who need to move to a particular locality within the district, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or others; and
- Certain former members of the armed services.

7.3 Equality Impact Assessment – Iren Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead

Our Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to consider the impacts of any proposed changes to our policies or practice to those affected by these changes, the protected characteristics of those affected, and for any adverse impacts, mitigating actions that reduce or remove those impacts.

The proposed changes for the most part maintain the current housing allocation policy's top 3 band prioritisation of housing need, adding a new Band 2 criteria for insanitary or unsatisfactory accommodation and increasing prioritisation of the need for sheltered accommodation (people over the age of 50) from band 4 to band 3.

The proposal suggests deletion of the following criteria regarding housing circumstances:

Band 3 criteria of 'single no fixed abode' - this was a category that was never used as intended as there is also an existing Band 3 'Overcrowding' category for people lacking a bedroom. Singles who are NFA will be allocated this Band 3 category.

Band 4 criteria of sharing facilities but having own bedroom – this group of people (i.e. living with family or friends) are suitably housed in regards to the number of bedrooms they have use of but have to share facilities such as the kitchen or bathroom. If their circumstances change for example they are asked to leave, then an assessment is undertaken to verify their change of circumstances. This may result in them being awarded a higher Band 2 priority as they would be regarded as living in insecure accommodation.

Band 4 criteria of needing to be in a particular area of Leicester for emotional support from family, friends or others – there is already within the policy, a Band 3 category for people who need to move on care and support grounds where hardship would be caused if they did not move. This category has been extended to include those that need to move due to medical or welfare grounds with a slighter higher verification of proof required than that was previously required in Band 4.

Band 5 for those whose housing circumstances are not in any of the bands and are therefore not in need for housing in keeping with the intention of the housing allocations policy.

The proposed deletion of bands 4 and 5 are likely to affect all protected characteristics. Band 4 applicants are considered to have very low housing need and who would not realistically achieve an offer of accommodation. Band 5 applicants have no identified housing needs or are considered to be adequately housed. On this basis, no mitigating actions for band 5 are required.

7.4 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications – Mark Jeffcote, Senior Environmental Consultant

There are no climate change implications associated with this report.

8. Background information and other papers:

- Leicester City Council Housing Allocations Policy
- Allocation of accommodation: Guidance for local housing authorities in England, June 2012

- Providing social housing for local people: Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England, December 2013
- The Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Benchmarking with other local authorities

9. Summary of appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Policy
- Appendix 2 – Lettings from the Housing Register 2006 – 2016
- Appendix 3 – Current banding scheme
- Appendix 4 – Proposed banding scheme
- Appendix 5 – Benchmarking with neighbouring local authorities

10. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

11. Is this a “key decision”?

Yes. This is because these proposals affect all wards of the City

Proposed Changes to the Housing Allocations Policy

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
1.	Removal of existing Band 5 applicants from the Housing Register	<p>Since 1st May 2014, no new applications are accepted from those with no identified housing need or those who are considered to be adequately housed.</p> <p>As at 1st April 2016 there were 2597 households that remain on the Housing Register in Band 5 whose application dates precede 1st May 2014.</p>	<p>To remove all households in Band 5</p> <p>This would not require further external consultation as this was done when the decision was taken to not accept new applicants with no housing need.</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Written notification to all remaining applicants in Band 5 advising of their removal from the Housing Register with a right of appeal.</p>	<p>The change would remove circa 2597 households from the Housing Register. It would also remove the complexity of rules that are different due to the date the applicant applied. This will make the policy more easily understood.</p> <p>This will also make it easier to manage customer expectations as only people with an identified need to move will qualify to appear.</p> <p>Band 5 applicants are increasingly frustrated as there is little chance of them receiving an offer.</p> <p>Maintaining Band 5 applicants places an administrative burden on the service as applications have to be continued to be processed from people who are considered to be suitably housed.</p> <p>Removal of Band 5 applicants will reduce the administrative burden on the service and means resources can be more effectively utilised to assist those with a genuine need to move.</p> <p>There will be some financial savings as these applications will no longer</p>

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
				need to be processed and annual review letters sent.
2.	Removal of Band 4 applicants from the Housing Register	<p>Any applicant who is eligible to join the Housing Register and meets any of the following criteria will be placed in Band 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who share facilities with other households but have their own bedroom • 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 • People over the age of 50 years requesting 1 bedroom sheltered accommodation only <p>As at 1st April 2016 there were 2191 households in Band 4.</p>	<p>To remove all households in Band 4 except those who are requesting sheltered housing as they will be given increased Band 3 priority.</p> <p>This will mean the Housing Register will just have 3 bands with circa 6766 households (see Appendix 4).</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Written notification to all applicants in Band 4 advising of their removal from the Housing Register with a right of appeal.</p> <p>Existing Band 4 applicants (405) requesting 1 bed sheltered housing will be moved to Band 3 as sheltered housing is readily available.</p>	<p>The change would remove circa 1786 households from the Housing Register.</p> <p>Band 4 applicants have very little chance of receiving an offer other than sheltered housing. There were 40 lettings of sheltered housing to Band 4 applicants.</p> <p>Removal of Band 4 applicants will reduce the administrative burden on the service and means resources can be more effectively utilised to assist those with a genuine need to move.</p> <p>There will be some financial savings as these applications will no longer need to be processed and annual review letters sent.</p>
3.	Removal of existing owner occupiers from the Housing Register	<p>Since 10th August 2015 owner occupiers no longer qualify to join the Housing Register unless there are extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>There are currently 287 households that remain on the Housing Register who are owner occupiers whose application date precedes 10th August 2015.</p>	<p>To review all owner occupiers on the Housing Register and remove those who do not have any exceptional circumstances to remain.</p> <p>This would not require further external consultation as this was done when the decision was taken to not accept owner occupiers onto the Housing Register.</p>	<p>The change would remove circa 287 owner-occupiers from the Housing Register.</p> <p>The change would also remove the complexity of rules that are different due to the date the applicant applied. This would make the policy more easily understood.</p> <p>There would also be equality in the transparency of the policy that all</p>

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact														
			<p>How?</p> <p>Written notification to all remaining applicants who are owner occupiers advising of their removal from the Housing Register with a right of appeal.</p>	<p>owner occupiers are treated the same.</p> <p>As at 01/04/2016 the number of owner occupiers on the Housing Register:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BAND 1</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAND 2</td> <td>32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAND 3</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAND 4</td> <td>71</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAND 5</td> <td>145</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grand Total</td> <td>287</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Total	BAND 1	16	BAND 2	32	BAND 3	23	BAND 4	71	BAND 5	145	Grand Total	287
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4.	Removal of applicants with sufficient financial resources to secure alternative accommodation from the Housing Register	Since 10th August 2015 households with a total income of £25k per year (single household) or £40k per year (joint households) or capital assets of over £50k are not allowed to join the Housing Register.	<p>To extend the rules to those with sufficient financial resources whose application date preceded 10th August 2015.</p> <p>This would not require further external consultation as this was done when the decision was taken to not accept people who had the financial resources to secure alternative accommodation onto the Housing Register.</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Written notification to all remaining applicants after review, advising there is now a threshold for earnings and savings and financial checks will</p>	<p>The change would remove the complexity of rules that are different due to the date the applicant applied. This would make the policy more easily understood.</p> <p>There would also be equality in the transparency of the policy that all applicants are treated the same.</p> <p>Removing existing applicants who exceed the financial thresholds may also help to reduce the number of council properties purchased under the Right to Buy scheme.</p> <p>Current rules allow any public sector tenant who has been a tenant for 3 or more years at any point to qualify to buy the home they currently live in</p>														

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
			be undertaken at point of offer.	if it is eligible for Right to Buy. Qualifying tenants can currently get a 35% discount up to a maximum of 70% or £77,900 for a house.
5.	To limit the qualifying income threshold to join the Housing Register to the level set under the 'pay to stay' limit in the Housing and Planning Act 2016	Currently households who have an income of £40k per year or more do not qualify to join the Housing Register.	To reduce the income threshold to join the Housing Register to the level set under the 'pay to stay' limit in the Housing and Planning Act 2016, which is currently £31k per year. Only taxable income (i.e. income received for work or through investments) will count towards the £31k per year threshold and does not include any benefits that applicants may receive. How? Checks will be made at the point of registration to the Housing Register and at the offer stage to ensure households are within the income threshold.	This would mean any household with a taxable income of £31k per year or more will not qualify to join the Housing Register. The income threshold will increase annually in line with Consumer Price Inflation. 'Pay to stay' means higher income households will be required to pay higher local authority rents than lower income families.
6.	Reconfiguration of the overcrowding banding priorities	Currently there are 3 different priorities given to people who are living in overcrowded conditions. 1. Band 2 'Severe Overcrowding' is awarded for those who are lacking 2 or more bedrooms. This also	Band 2 'Severe Overcrowding' is awarded to all tenants who are lacking 2 or more bedrooms or they are assessed as being statutory overcrowded. Band 2 'Families Living in 1 Bed Accommodation' is awarded to	The removal of non-tenants will result in the number of households with Band 2 'Severe Overcrowding' priority reducing from 798 households to 444 households. This better reflects the overcrowding position of tenants in the city.

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
		<p>includes people who are statutory overcrowded.</p> <p>2. Band 2 'Families Living in 1 Bed Accommodation' is awarded to families living in 1 bed accommodation with their children who need an additional bedroom.</p> <p>3. Band 3 'Overcrowding' is awarded to those who are lacking 1 bedroom.</p>	<p>families living in 1 bedroom accommodation with children 3 years and over.</p> <p>Band 3 'Overcrowding' is awarded to tenants who need 1 additional bedroom e.g. a family living in 2 bedroom accommodation needing 3 bedroom accommodation.</p> <p>How? Any household identified on the Housing Register as being overcrowded will be re-assessed under the new rules and where there is any change to their priority they will be notified in writing.</p>	
7.	<p>Addition of a new banding priority to non-tenants who are living with others and do not have sufficient bedrooms for their own use</p>	<p>People who are non-tenants i.e. lodgers or living with friends or family are treated the same as tenants when assessing overcrowding.</p> <p>No checks are undertaken to verify or confirm the position of non-tenants joining the Housing Register and receiving this high priority.</p>	<p>Creation of a new Band 3 priority for people who are non-tenants who are living with others and do not have sufficient bedrooms for their own use.</p> <p>How? Any applicant who is not a tenant and does not have exclusive use of bedrooms for their household will be placed in this band.</p> <p>Existing applicants who are non-tenants will be re-assessed under the new rules and where there is any change to their priority they will be notified in writing.</p>	<p>This would currently impact on 354 households who are non-tenants and awarded Band 2 'Severe Overcrowding' priority. They would be re-assessed to the new Band 3 priority.</p> <p>Non-tenants who have been given notice to leave or assessed as living in insecure accommodation will be considered for Band 2 'Insecure Accommodation' priority.</p> <p>Statutory homeless households will be re-housed in the private sector unless they fall in one of the exceptions in this category.</p>

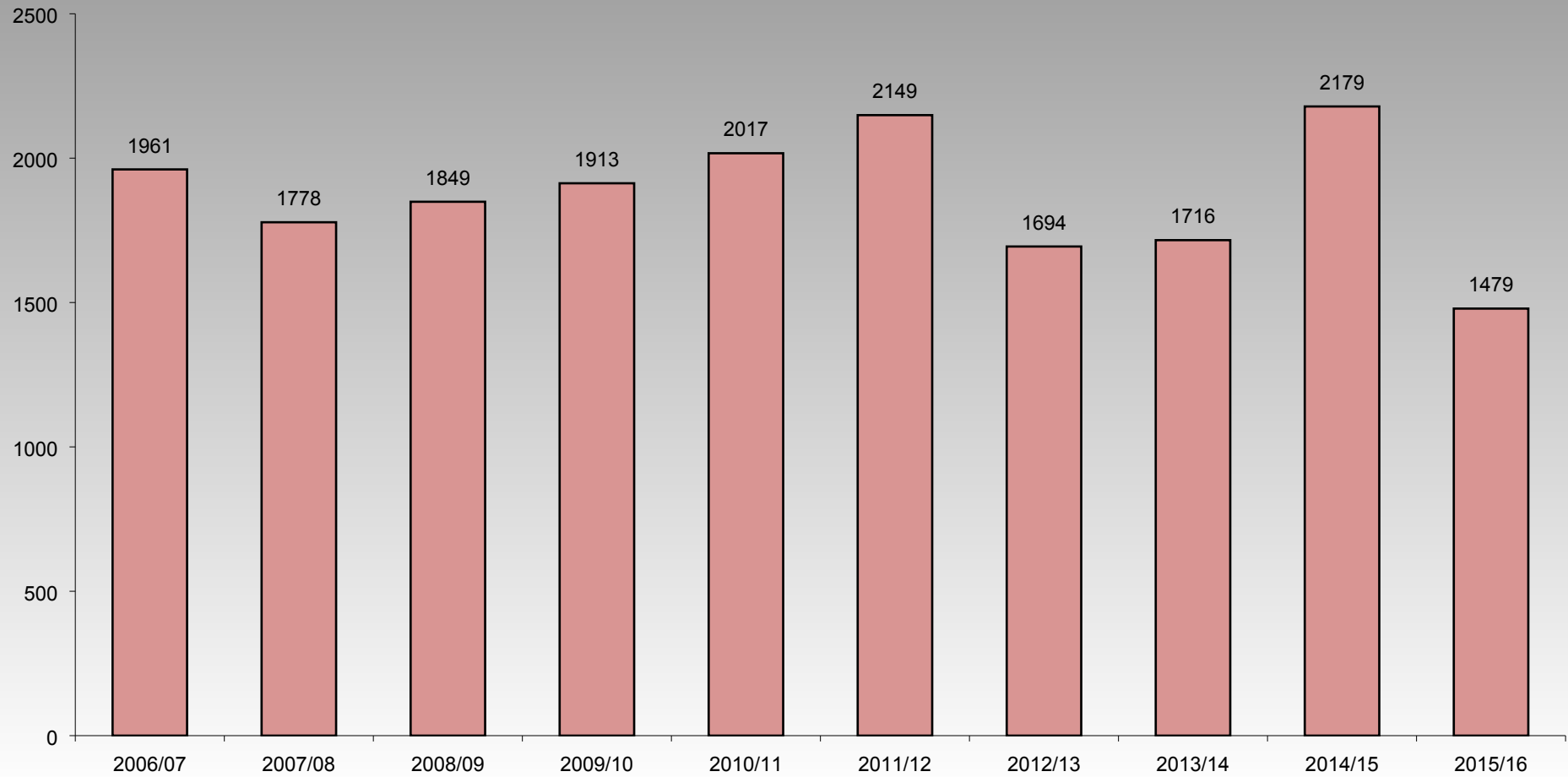
	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
8.	Reconfiguration of the under-occupation banding priorities	<p>Currently there are 3 different priorities given to social tenants who are under-occupying their homes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Band 1 'Priority Under-occupation' is given to those social tenants who are giving up 3 bed accommodation to move to 1 bed accommodation and those giving up 2 bed accommodation to move to 1 bed accommodation. 2. Band 1 'Tenants Incentive Scheme' is given to those social tenants giving up a large home with 4 or more bedrooms and moving to a home with 3 or fewer bedrooms. 3. Band 2 'Under-occupation' is given to those social tenants giving up 3 bed accommodation to move to 2 bed accommodation. 	<p>To only have one Band 1 'Priority Under-occupation' category which is given to under-occupying social tenants who are giving up 2 or more bedrooms, those moving to 1 bed accommodation or any other social tenant who is affected by the bedroom tax following assessment.</p> <p>Band 2 is for under-occupying social tenants who do not meet the qualifying criteria for Band 1 'Priority Under-occupation'.</p> <p>How? Any social tenant identified on the Housing Register as under-occupying will be re-assessed under the new rules and where there is any change to their priority they will be notified in writing.</p>	<p>This will make the policy on under-occupation clearer by only having one Band 1 priority as opposed to two Band 1 priorities.</p>
9.	Addition of a new banding priority to people who are living in insanitary or unsatisfactory housing	<p>Reasonable preference is currently given for this statutory requirement within a number of different priority bandings which includes statutory homelessness, management and access and health priorities.</p>	<p>Creation of a new Band 2 priority for people who are living in insanitary or unreasonable housing for example applicant does not have access to a bathroom or kitchen, or an inside toilet, or access to hot and cold water supplies, electricity, gas or adequate heating as confirmed by</p>	<p>There is a statutory requirement to give reasonable preference within the allocations scheme to people who are living in insanitary or unsatisfactory housing.</p> <p>This will remove incentives to apply as homeless and acknowledge the</p>

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
			<p>Environmental Health Officer.</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Environmental Health Officer will provide a written report to Housing Options Service confirming that a person's current accommodation is considered to be insanitary or unsatisfactory housing.</p>	<p>reasonable preference groups.</p>
10.	<p>To adopt the Government's Bedroom Standard which will mean persons of the same sex sharing a bedroom up to the age of 20 years</p>	<p>Currently the bedroom rules as used by Housing Benefit to determine how many bedrooms a household is eligible for has been adopted.</p> <p>A separate bedroom is allocated to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each married or cohabiting couple or single parent • Any other person aged 16 years or more • Each pair of children of either sex under 10 years • Each pair of people of the same sex aged under 21 years. • Any person who cannot be paired 	<p>We adopt the current Bedroom Standard as set out in the Housing Act 1985. This means two persons of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom up to the age of 20 years.</p> <p>A separate bedroom is allocated to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each married or cohabiting couple or single parent • Any other person aged 21 years or more • Each pair of children of either sex under 10 years • Each pair of people of the same sex aged under 21 years. • Any person who cannot be paired <p>How?</p> <p>Any family identified on the Housing Register with children 16 years and over will have their bedroom eligibility adjusted and notified in</p>	<p>Under the current bedroom eligibility criteria any person aged 16 years or more is allocated a separate bedroom.</p> <p>This has resulted in families with older children eligible for larger size accommodation, for example, a family with 4 children (2 daughters ages 12, 16 and 2 sons ages 14, 18) would currently be eligible for 5 bedroom accommodation.</p> <p>Given the shortage of large properties, families do not always want to be considered for large properties.</p> <p>They often want to be considered for a property with fewer bedrooms than they are eligible for in order to give themselves a better chance of securing an offer of accommodation.</p> <p>Many local authorities (see Appendix</p>

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
			writing.	5) have adopted the Government Bedroom Standard when determining bedroom eligibility. We will continue to allocate additional bedrooms where there is a health need or where there is a fostering arrangement in place by Leicester City Council.
11.	To enable applicants more choice of accommodation options on the Housing Register, households will be able to choose to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom than they are eligible for.	Households are able to apply for accommodation up to two bedrooms less than they are eligible for, providing it does not create statutory overcrowding. Families with children also cannot apply for one bedroom accommodation.	Due to increasing need and managing customer expectations households are able to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom than they are eligible for to prevent severe overcrowding. How? Any household identified on the Housing Register who is able to apply for one less bedroom will have their bedroom eligibility adjusted and notified in writing.	Current and proposed changes to the bedroom rules seek to maximise occupancy. Allowing families the opportunity to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom than they are currently eligible for, gives them a better chance to secure an offer of accommodation The proposed change seeks to minimise overcrowding whilst still giving families an element of choice. There will be however still be occasions where households will not be able to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom, for example, where a family have been awarded overcrowding priority as this would result in moving to like for like accommodation.
12.	To enable applicants more choice of accommodation options on the Housing Register and to reduce the pressure on the demand for 2	Families with children are not able to apply for one bedroom accommodation.	Families with 1 child aged 2 years and under are able to choose to apply for 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation.	It is not unreasonable for families with 1 child under 3 years to resolve their immediate housing predicament to move to 1 bedroom

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
	bedroom accommodation, families with 1 child aged 2 years and under will be able to choose to apply for one bedroom accommodation		<p>How? Any household identified on the Housing Register who is able to downsize will have their bedroom eligibility adjusted and notified in writing.</p>	<p>accommodation to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>This may enable them to secure accommodation quicker as there were 472 lettings of 1 bedroom flats in 2015-16. This accounted for 32% of all lettings.</p> <p>The change would allow circa 928 families with 1 child under 3 years the choice to apply for one bedroom accommodation</p>

Lettings from the Housing Register 2006 - 2016



1991	1778	1849	1913	2017	2149	1694	1716	2179	1479
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Current Banding Table

Band	Summary Descriptions (Reason)	Household Circumstances	Number of Households in Band (as at 01/04/2016)
Band 1	Referred Case	People in need of urgent re-housing and referred by Adult Social Care or Children's Services.	722
	Compulsory Homeless	People in need of urgent re-housing whose properties are directly affected by public redevelopment programmes.	
	Tenant Incentive Scheme	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.	
	Priority Under-occupation	Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a two or three bedroom property and who wish to move to a property with one bedroom.	
	Harassment	People suffering from any form of harassment.	
	Management Case	Council tenants who need to move for management reasons - see the current allocation policy, section 3.6 (available at leicester.gov.uk/allocations).	
	Wheelchair Adapted Housing No Longer Required	Council and housing association tenants occupying a purpose built wheelchair adapted property who no longer require it.	
	High Medical	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.	
	Young Person Leaving Care	Children leaving the care of Leicester City Council's Children and Young People's Service (CYPS).	
Band 2	Statutory Homelessness	People who are statutory homeless and are owed the full housing duty under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996.	2821
	Severe Overcrowding	People whose homes are deemed to be severely overcrowded (two bedrooms or more short of their assessed need).	
	Overcrowded Families in 1 Bed	Families who are overcrowded and living in one bedroom accommodation.	
	Under-occupation	Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a three bedroom property by one bedroom and need two bedrooms.	
	Insecure Accommodation	People identified as needing urgent re-housing to prevent homelessness.	
	Temporary Accommodation (Single)	Single people living in designated temporary or supported accommodation.	
	Temporary Accommodation (Family)	Families living in designated temporary accommodation in the city.	

	Leaving Residential Care	People ready to leave residential care supported by Leicester City Council and/or NHS.	
	Care Package	People with a care package where Adult Social Care (LCC) assess that a move will assist independent living.	
	Medium Medical	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.	
	Leaving Armed Forces	People leaving the armed forces within the last 5 years but do not have a home to return to.	
Band 3	Adult Leaving Care	People identified by Adult Social Care as ready to leave the care of family or carer	2818
	Single NFA	Single people who have no settled accommodation and are of 'no fixed abode'.	
	Care & Support Medical	Families needing to move to a particular area of Leicester where hardship would be caused if they do not move.	
	Overcrowded Household	Families who are living in overcrowded conditions under Leicester City Council's overcrowding standard (one bedroom short of their assessed need).	
	Working Households	Working households or those in local training schemes who need to move closer to their job/training scheme	
Band 4	Sharing Facilities	People who share facilities with other households but have their own bedroom.	2191
	Care & Support Emotional	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.	
	Sheltered Accommodation	People over the age of 50 years requesting 1 bedroom sheltered accommodation only.	
Band 5*	All Other Applicants	People who do not have any of the housing circumstances listed in bands 1, 2, 3 and 4.	2597

* With effect from 1st May 2014 no new applicants are accepted into Band 5

Proposed Banding Table

Band	Summary Descriptions (Reason)	Household Circumstances	Expected Number of Households in Proposed Bands (based on waiting list as at 01/04/2016)
Band 1	Referred Case	People in need of urgent re-housing and referred by Adult Social Care or Children's Services.	722
	Compulsory Homeless	People in need of urgent re-housing whose properties are directly affected by public redevelopment programmes.	
	Priority Under-occupation	Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a two or three bedroom property and who wish to move to a property with one bedroom.	
	Harassment	People suffering from any form of harassment.	
	Management Case	Council tenants who need to move for management reasons.	
	Wheelchair Adapted Housing No Longer Required	Council and housing association tenants occupying a purpose built wheelchair adapted property who no longer require it.	
	High Medical	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.	
	Young Person Leaving Care	Children leaving the care of Leicester City Council's Children and Young People's Service (CYPS).	
Band 2	Statutory Homelessness	People who are statutory homeless and are owed the full housing duty under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996.	2821
	Severe Overcrowding	People whose homes are deemed to be severely overcrowded (two bedrooms or more short of their assessed need).	
	Overcrowded Families in 1 Bed	Families with children 3 years and over who are overcrowded and living in one bedroom accommodation.	
	Under-occupation	Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a three bedroom property by one bedroom and need two bedrooms.	
	Insecure Accommodation	People identified as needing urgent re-housing to prevent homelessness.	
	Temporary Accommodation (Single)	Single people living in designated temporary or supported accommodation.	
	Temporary Accommodation (Family)	Families living in designated temporary accommodation in the city.	
	Insanitary or Unsatisfactory Accommodation	People who have been assessed as living in insanitary or unsatisfactory accommodation.	

	Leaving Residential Care	People ready to leave residential care supported by Leicester City Council and/or NHS.	
	Care Package	People with a care package where Adult Social Care (LCC) assess that a move will assist independent living.	
	Medium Medical	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.	
	Leaving Armed Forces	People leaving the armed forces within the last 5 years but do not have a home to return to.	
Band 3	Adult Leaving Care	People identified by Adult Social Care as ready to leave the care of family or carer.	3223
	Care & Support	People needing to move to a particular area of Leicester where hardship would be caused if they do not move and people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds.	
	Overcrowded Household (tenants)	Tenants who are living in overcrowded conditions under Leicester City Council's overcrowding standard (one bedroom short of their assessed need).	
	Overcrowded Household (non-tenants)	Non-tenants living in overcrowded circumstances	
	Sheltered Accommodation	People over the age of 50 years requesting 1 bedroom sheltered accommodation only.	
	Working Households	Working households or those in local training schemes who need to move closer to their job/training scheme	

Bench Marking with Neighbouring Local Authorities

Local Authority	Number of Bands in Allocations Scheme	Bedroom Rules	Do people with no housing need or low need qualify to go on the Housing Register?
Derby City Council	2	Adult/Children of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom (no upper age limit)	No
Nottingham City Council	5	Adult/Children of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom up to the age of 20 years	No
Northampton Borough Council	3	Adult/Children of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom up to the age of 20 years	No