

Committee:	Cabinet	Date:	4 April 2017
Title:	Amendments to Housing Allocations Policy and Homelessness Strategy		
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr J Redfern, Cabinet Member for Housing		
Report Author:	Judith Snares, Housing Strategy and Operations Manager, 01799 510671	Key decision:	Yes

Summary

1. The Allocation Policy and Homelessness Strategy have been reviewed and amended to take account of the changes in legislation brought about by the Government's introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The Act comes into force on 3rd April 2018.

Recommendations

2. That the Cabinet approves the adoption of the amended versions of the council's Allocations Policy and Homelessness Strategy for adoption from 3rd April 2018.

Financial Implications

3. From existing resources.

Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report:
 - a. Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
 - b. New Homelessness Code of Guidance

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Consultation has taken place with Members, Tenants Forum, the public and partners
Community Safety	n/a
Equalities	The Equality Impact Assessments for both documents have been reviewed

Health and Safety	n/a
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The council's homelessness service must comply with the new Act and Code of Guidance to avoid legal challenges to the service
Sustainability	n/a
Ward-specific impacts	All wards
Workforce/Workplace	Housing Options Team

Situation

6. The council implemented the current version of the Allocations Policy in January 2015 and the Homelessness Strategy in April 2016.
7. These documents have both been reviewed and amended to take account of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 that comes into force on 3rd April 2018.
8. The new Act requires a greater emphasis on homelessness prevention. The council will have new duties to prevent homelessness when someone is threatened with homelessness within 56 days, then if they are unable to do this there will be a duty to relieve homelessness. It is only after this stage that someone may be owed the full homelessness duty that requires the council to find them suitable longer term housing.
9. The Allocation Policy has been amended to take these new duties into account and the priority on the housing register that people who are owed the prevention and relief duties will receive. It also amends the way a final offer of accommodation will be made to those owed the full housing duty.
10. The Homelessness Strategy has also been amended accordingly and the action plan reviewed and updated.

Risk Analysis

11.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The council fails to act in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and Homelessness	1 Little or no risk as policy and strategy have been amended in light of the new legislation	1 Little or no impact providing amendments are in place for 3 rd April 2018	Documents have been consulted on and brought before Cabinet so that the council is ready for the implementation date of the Homelessness Reduction Act

Code of Guidance			
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- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.