

<b>ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Report to:</b>	Executive Committee
<b>Date:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> August,2020
<b>Subject:</b>	The Allocations Policy for Social Housing and Covid 19
<b>Portfolio Holder(s):</b>	Cllr Alun Mummery
<b>Head of Service:</b>	Ned Michael
<b>Report Author:</b> Tel: E-mail:	Elliw Llŷr, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning Manager, Housing Services 01248 752137
<b>Local Members:</b>	N/A

<b>A –Recommendation/s and reason/s</b>
<p>It is recommended that the Executive approves :-</p> <p><b>R1</b> A temporary partial change to the Common Allocations Policy for housing in in response to the Covid-19 impact on emergency / temporary accommodation for homeless households for a period of up to 6 months following the Welsh Government recommendation with regards to homelessness.</p> <p><b>R2</b> that Allocations made during this period for Homeless Households is approved by the Housing Options Team Manager.</p> <p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Welsh Government (WG) have confirmed that any households provided with emergency accommodation during the pandemic lockdown will be owed a full duty for permanent re-housing. This is based on the Guidance issued to Local Authorities on 28 April under Section 75- Duty to Secure accommodation for applicants in priority need, whereby all persons will need to be considered as priority need and therefore owed a duty to offer permanent housing. To achieve this, Housing Services will need a flexible approach to being able to move households from emergency or temporary accommodation into settled accommodation.</p> <p>Approving this would be consistent with WG guidance on Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness and Housing Related Support Services’.</p> <p>Part D refers to “Increase the availability of social housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness”. This states that the “allocation of existing accommodation must be aligned with local authority transition planning. It is essential that all social landlords including RSL’s</p>

and LA's play their part in increasing the availability of housing for people accommodated during phase 1 ... this includes reviewing Allocations Policies".

During the Covid lockdown and social distancing requirements Housing Services have seen an increase in the number of people presenting as homeless during 2020-21. This has ranged from 26 households at its lowest to 59 households being placed in emergency accommodation. Compared to 1 household at its lowest to 26 at its highest in 2019-20.

By approving the above recommendation the direct lets approach will be made for up to 50% of the notices received during the next 6 months. As the Executive are aware a recently amended Allocations Policy was adopted in September 2019, which following a review of those on the current Register, has become operational since June, 2020.

Since 1 April, 2020 Housing Services have received 42 notices this can be seen as an indicator on the number of notices we expect to receive during the next few months. It is also important to acknowledge that not all homeless households can be matched to social housing stock on the Island.

Local Lettings Policies as defined within a Section 106 agreement would remain unaffected.

In addition to social housing stock, the Homeless Prevention Team are also actively seeking homes in other sectors such as the private rented sector and within supported housing.

#### **How would this work?**

Currently, within the Common Allocations Policy, 2019 there is an exceptional case caveat whereby circumstances not dealt within the Policy can be addressed. By utilising this approach on 50% of the Allocations it will ensure that those with the most housing need would be considered and offered suitable housing.

The wording within the Policy is as follows and reflects the banding status.

#### **'Exceptional case of housing need where the circumstances are not dealt with elsewhere in this scheme**

An applicant who has been assessed as having an exceptional housing need and where Band x (whichever is most relevant to the banding) status has been approved by the Council's Head of Housing Services.'

It is recommended that delegated power is given to the Housing Options Manager to approve the direct lets approach to Homeless Households during this period.

Targeted intervention can also be utilised where we know which locations are deemed to be the most in demand by Homeless Households matched to the likelihood of suitable

accommodation becoming available.

**Review**

A procedure will be developed to accompany these changes and that any allocations made are continually reviewed to ensure that appropriate support is provide to maintain the tenancy.

**Consultation**

The RSL Partners, North Wales Housing, Grwp Cynefin and Clwyd Alyn have been consulted on this amendment. Grwp Cynefin have confirmed their intention to work with us.

**B – What other options did you consider and why did you reject them and/or opt for this option?**

Considering no change to the Policy would mean that those in Emergency Accommodation would remain without an offer of settled accommodation for an unknown period of time. The availability of the private rented sector is limited and would not provide the capacity for all households who as homeless to be accommodated within this Sector.

**C – Why is this a decision for the Executive?**

Changes to the Common Allocations Policy is a decision for the Executive.

**D – Is this decision consistent with policy approved by the full Council?**

Yes

**DD – Is this decision within the budget approved by the Council?**

Yes

<b>E – Who did you consult?</b>		<b>What did they say?</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Chief Executive / Senior Leadership Team (SLT)</b> (mandatory)	Supportive of the recommendation.
<b>2</b>	<b>Finance / Section 151</b> (mandatory)	Supportive of the recommendation.
<b>3</b>	<b>Legal / Monitoring Officer</b> (mandatory)	As above
<b>5</b>	<b>Human Resources (HR)</b>	n/a
<b>5</b>	<b>Property</b>	n/a
<b>6</b>	<b>Information Communication Technology (ICT)</b>	n/a
<b>7</b>	<b>Procurement</b>	n/a
<b>8</b>	<b>Scrutiny</b>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Local Members</b>	
<b>10</b>	<b>Any external bodies / other/s</b>	

<b>F – Risks and any mitigation (if relevant)</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Economic</b>	none
<b>2</b>	<b>Anti-poverty</b>	none
<b>3</b>	<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	none
<b>4</b>	<b>Environmental</b>	none
<b>5</b>	<b>Equalities</b>	Equalities impact conducted – none identified
<b>6</b>	<b>Outcome Agreements</b>	none
<b>7</b>	<b>Other</b>	

<b>FF - Appendices:</b>

**G - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):**

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