

| ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL | |
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| Report to: | Executive |
| Date: | 29 November, 2022 |
| Subject: | Common Allocations Policy for Social Housing |
| Portfolio Holder(s): | Cllr Alun Mummery |
| Head of Service: | Ned Michael |
| Report Author: Tel: E-mail: | Elliw Llŷr, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning Manager, Housing Services 01248 752137 |
| Local Members: | N/A |

| A –Recommendation/s and reason/s |
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| <p>It is recommended that the Executive approves :-</p> <p>R1 A temporary partial change to the Common Allocations Policy for housing in response to the increase in the number of individuals who present as homeless, who have been placed or at risk of being placed in emergency / temporary accommodation.</p> <p>R2 that Allocations made during this period for Homeless Households is approved by the Housing Options Team Manager as these allocations would not adhere to the Common Allocations Policy.</p> <p>Background</p> <p>In accordance with the Common Allocations Policy for social housing an allocation would be made in accordance with the band that has been awarded to that application for social housing and the date order for that application within the banding.</p> <p>In an attempt to have churn within emergency accommodation and to reduce the demand on the need for emergency accommodation we propose to adapt our process to allocate one of every four properties to individuals who are within emergency accommodation or at risk of becoming homeless and not follow the Common Allocations Policy for each allocation.</p> <p>Since 1 April, 2022 Housing Services have let 145 Council houses this can be used as an indicator that will become vacant over the next few months. On this premise there would have been 36 allocations made to persons who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.</p> |

Demands on the service

We have seen an increase in the number who require of support due to a combination of factors, such as an increase that receive a notice to leave their property by a private landlord, more families needed support to prevent homelessness and number of families and individuals coming to live on the Island via the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

During the last week in October there were 42 households within emergency / temporary accommodation, with 12 of these family households. We have also seen a number of arrangements via Homes for Ukraine failing with families and households moving into emergency or supported accommodation.

There has been 87 instances, since April 2022, whereby the landlord has asked the tenant to leave (s21). These instances are a mixture of single people, couples and families and not centralized within any one area or landlord. This is an unprecedented time for Housing Services, we have not experience such a high volume of notices by landlords for tenants to leave their homes. There are larger families which have been asked to leave with finding alternative accommodation being a challenge.

Historically, we have not noted the reason for the notice (section 21 or 8), as we report on the WG template and the reason for person becoming homeless. But can demonstrate that the number of households at risk of losing their home from the private sector in 2021-22 was 130 compared to 121 cases between April - October 2022.

Officers continue to have a higher case load due to the increase in presentations and the lack of opportunity to move into settled accommodation.

The rent levels for private sector housing has increased substantially on the Island since lockdown with no increase in the Local housing Allowance rate. This means, for tenants who receive some housing benefit towards their rent in the private sector the housing benefit has not increased which means a higher contribution towards rent which makes the home unaffordable and causes rent arrears.

Availability within the private sector is scarce, with an increase in the cost of renting or lack of flats / houses being available. A recent report by Propertymark states that there is an increase in the number of landlords which are selling, an increase in the number which are looking for a property as well as an increase in the rent.

By approving the above recommendations, the method of direct allocations will be implemented for 1 in every 4 according to the property type which becomes available. The number of such allocations will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

It is important to state that it is not possible to determine/ place all homeless households within the social rented properties 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 1 on every 4 allocations according to property type it will ensure that those with the most housing need would be considered sooner and offered suitable housing.

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 as the allocations made would not be in accordance with the Common Allocations Policy.

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 provided to maintain the tenancy.

Consultation

The RSL Partners, North Wales Housing, Grwp Cynefin and Clwyd Alyn have been consulted on this amendment.

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 are 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.

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

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

| E – Who did you consult? | | What did they say? |
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| 1 | Chief Executive / Senior Leadership Team (SLT) (mandatory) | Supportive of the intention. |
| 2 | Finance / Section 151 (mandatory) | Supportive of the intention. |
| 3 | Legal / Monitoring Officer (mandatory) | Supportive of the intention. |
| 5 | Human Resources (HR) | n/a |
| 5 | Property | n/a |

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| 6 | Information Communication Technology (ICT) | n/a |
| 7 | Procurement | n/a |
| 8 | Scrutiny | |
| 9 | Local Members | |
| 10 | Any external bodies / other/s | |

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

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