



1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Executive of the development of new council housing at Martinshaw Lane, Groby and to request a local lettings policy be introduced for allocation of these properties.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Executive approve the adoption of a local lettings policy for the bungalows at Martinshaw Lane, Groby to give applicants with a connection to Groby priority for
- 100% of new build properties
 - 50% of relet properties
- for an initial period of one year.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Housing Act 1996 allows local authorities to introduce local lettings policies in their areas as an important part of Council's ability to respond to local need. It applies to a defined geographical area and is usually applied for a limited time. This gives flexibility within the allocations system to respond to a specific set of circumstances. It is commonly used to address areas suffering from high levels of anti social behaviour but is also an important tool to assist in ensuring developments achieve a balanced community, or to allow local residents to remain within their community as their housing needs change.
- 3.2 However there is an obligation on councils to ensure that overall, preference for allocations should be to people in the reasonable preference categories and that local lettings policies do not discriminate directly or indirectly, on racial or other equality grounds. Therefore they can only be applied to a limited part of the local authority's stock.
- 3.3 A local lettings policy works within the local authority's existing allocations policy, usually by adding an extra requirement to the existing criteria in the policy. In this instance, it is proposed that a local lettings policy will be introduced to include a requirement to allocate 100% of the bungalows at Martinshaw Lane to people with a local connection to Groby for the first lettings and 50% of all subsequent lettings to seek applicants with a local connection. If no qualifying applicants can be found, the properties may then be let to applicants with a connection to the Borough of Hinckley and Bosworth. This policy to be implemented for a period of 1 year and reviewed at the end of that period.

4 Martinshaw Lane, Groby

- 4.1 This site is owned by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and is currently being developed to provide 5 x 1 bedroomed bungalows and 4 x 2 bedroomed bungalows to rent. The properties will become part of the Council's housing stock. Under Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's Allocations Policy, bungalows are normally prioritised for elderly people, or people with a medical or support need.

4.2 On 1 April 2016 the Housing Register had 56 applicants who state they have a local connection to Groby. The Allocations Policy defines a local connection to a village as:

- I have lived in the village for the last 5 years
- I work permanently in the village (at least 15 hours a week)
- I was born in the village or previously lived in the village for 10 years or more
- I have close relatives who have lived in the village for at least five years (Close relatives are parents, siblings, grandparents or grandchildren)
- I need to move to the parish to be close to a relative or other person in order to provide or receive significant amounts of care and support.

The applicants are eligible for the following types of accommodation:

1 bed properties	26
2 bed properties	22
3 bed properties	4
4 bed properties	4
Total	56

Of these applicants, 17 are over 60 and would qualify for properties designated for older people.

A copy of the local lettings policy proposed for Martinshaw Lane is attached as appendix A.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [IB]

- 5.1 Once the properties have been built rent levels will be set based on the social housing rents formula.
- 5.2 The table below shows typical current average rents, for 1 and 2 bedroom HRA properties in the Borough.

Property type	Weekly rent
1 bed bungalow	71.50
2 bed bungalow	80.54

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [AR]

The Council needs to ensure that the local letting policy is introduced in accordance with the requirements of Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 and associated legislation and guidance. The Local Lettings Policy is intended to assist with the allocation of new properties in the borough as above and, as such, needs to be compliant with the relevant statutory provisions.

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The delivery of affordable housing supports the following aims of the Corporate Plan 2013 – 2016:
- Provide decent and affordable homes.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 There is a statutory requirement that prior to adopting an allocation scheme a copy of the draft scheme is sent to every registered provider of social housing and registered social landlords with which the Council has nomination arrangements.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
A local lettings policy may exclude people in housing need who do not have a connection to Groby from being rehoused in the village	A local lettings policy is introduced for a finite period only and is monitored throughout the timeframe. A cascade forms part of the local lettings policy so that if no qualifying people bid for the properties they can be allocated to people on the general housing register.	Sharon Stacey

9. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 This report is concerned with ensuring that a supply of affordable housing is available in the Borough for people in the greatest need. This includes consideration of people from vulnerable groups, and those living in rural areas.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data Protection implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers:

Contact Officer: Valerie Bunting x5612
 Executive Member: Councillor Chris Boothby

LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY – NEW BUILD DEVELOPMENT

Development	Martinshaw Lane Groby
Local Lettings Policy period	1 year
Total number of properties	5 x 1 bedroomed bungalows 2 x 2 bedroomed bungalows 2 x 2 bedroomed bungalows wheelchair adapted.
Number of properties included in the Local Lettings Policy	100% of new build properties 50% of relet properties
Specific criteria	<p>Properties let under the Local Lettings Policy will have priority given to people who meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have lived in the village for the last 5 years • work permanently in the village (at least 15 hours a week) • were born in the village or previously lived in the village for 10 years or more • have close relatives who have lived in the village for at least five years (Close relatives are parents, siblings, grandparents or grandchildren) • need to move to the parish to be close to a relative or other person in order to provide or receive significant amounts of care and support. <p>The properties will be advertised through the Choice Based lettings process giving preference for people who meet the local connection criteria. After the first bidding cycle, successful applicants who meet the qualifying criteria will be considered and allocated the property where they are eligible. If there are no applicants with a qualifying local connection identified in the first bidding cycle the Local Authority will advertise the property again. In total, the Local Authority will advertise through 2 lettings cycles to find a suitable applicant with a qualifying local connection. Where no-one with a local connection can be found, applicants with a borough connection who bid on the first letting cycle will be considered and allocated where they are eligible. If a suitable applicant can still not be found, the Local Authority will advertise again for people with a borough connection until the properties are let.</p>
Reasons for the Local Lettings Policy	To allow local people to remain in or return to their community as their housing needs change due to age or disability.
Date of review	1 year after the first property is let
Eligibility information	In order to be allocated the property applicants need to meet BOTH the local lettings criteria AND the council's criteria for bungalows as set out in the adopted Allocations Policy. This means that people

	<p>with a connection to Groby will also have to meet any age and / or medical criteria applied to bungalows or wheelchair adapted properties set out in the Allocations Policy. If no such suitable applicants are found, applicants with a connection to the Borough who meet the eligibility criteria in the Allocations Policy will be sought.</p>
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