



Hincley & Bosworth Borough Council

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND DECISION MAKING

Executive 18 October 2017

WARDS AFFECTED: Hincley Castle

LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY

Report of Director (Community Services)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of the acquisition of 6 new apartments at Ferry Pickering Close Hincley and completion of 30 new council dwellings at Southfield Road Hincley, and to request a local lettings policy be introduced for allocation of these properties.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Executive approves:
- the adoption of a local lettings policy for both schemes in order to encourage a balanced and sustainable community
 - that the local lettings policy for Ferry Pickering Close is reviewed on an annual basis
 - that the local lettings policy for Southfield Road is used for the first lettings of the properties only.

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, 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. Where new developments come forward, and a number of new properties become available to let within a short space of time, a local lettings policy can be useful:
- to help create stable communities by balancing the number of residents with high level and complex needs with lower need households.
 - by giving opportunities to home seekers on lower priority bands on the housing register to bid for housing
 - in creating a sustainable scheme thereby reducing the turnover of stock, which in itself can cause management problems and a negative perception of the scheme.
- 3.4 The intention for both of the local lettings policies attached in the appendices, is to reserve some of the available properties to people across all needs bands on the Housing Register. Within these categories, housing eligibility will comply with the conditions set out in the Housing Allocations Policy.
- 3.5 Ferry Pickering Close, Hinckley
This scheme is developed on the old Jarvis Porter site off Coventry Road, Hinckley. The developer was unable to engage a Registered Provider to buy the affordable housing on site and so the Council has taken possession of 6 x 1 bedroomed flats in a single self contained block. The local lettings policy will reserve 2 apartments for priority needs, 2 for high needs, one for medium needs and 1 for a low need household. The policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.
- 3.6 Southfields Road Hinckley
This is a development of 68 properties on the Richard Roberts factory site next to the railway station in Hinckley. All 68 properties are for affordable housing, 38 to be owned by Nottingham Community Housing Association and 30 will be affordable rented homes owned by the council. The council properties consist of:
- 12 x 1 bed flats
 - 7 x 2 bed houses
 - 8 x 3 bed houses
 - 3 x 2 bed bungalows
- The properties owned by Nottingham Community Housing Association consist of 21 properties for rent and 17 houses for shared ownership. All of the rented housing on site should be completed by January 2018.
- 3.7 As the scheme at Southfield Road consists of a number of property types including family housing, the local lettings policy will apply to the first allocation of the council housing only. Subsequent lettings will comply with the Housing Allocations Policy and the vacancies will go to the bidder with the highest priority.
- 3.8 The local lettings policy for Southfield Road allocates across the priority, high, medium and low needs bands for each property type. Overall, of the 30 properties, 10 will be allocated to priority needs applicants, 10 to high priority needs applicants. 4 to medium needs, 1 to medium or low needs and 5 to low needs applicants. This ensures that households with the highest needs will still receive the majority of the lettings on the site. Allocation of the different needs categories will be pepperpotted to achieve a mix of needs bands across the site.

- 3.9 There are currently 1276 households on the waiting list. The table below shows the bedroom size they are eligible for, and the number of people in each needs band.

Property size	Priority band	High band	Medium band	Low band	Total
1 bedroom	20	62	329	266	677
2 bedrooms	15	31	138	261	445
3 bedrooms	3	7	31	92	133
4 or more bedrooms	2	2	3	14	21
Total	40	102	501	633	1276

4. EXEMPTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES

- 4.1 This report will be taken in public session.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [TF]

- 5.1 The new properties will be included in the rent setting process for 2018/19. The income from properties will be in the of £136,000 per annum.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [AR]

- 6.1 The Council needs to ensure that the Local Lettings 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.

7. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The delivery of new council housing supports the following aims of the Corporate Plan 2017 – 2020:
- Places: 4) Improve the quality of existing homes and enable the delivery of affordable housing

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Elected Members for Hinckley Castle Ward have been consulted.

9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
A local lettings policy may exclude people in need from accessing accommodation	Some properties will still be reserved for priority cases. The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.	Director (Community Services)

10. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The schemes are both in the urban area of the Borough and therefore do not impact on rural services. Affordable housing is provided to meet the needs of vulnerable people who cannot afford to meet their needs through the open market.

11. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 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: Appendix 1: Local Lettings Policy Ferry Pickering Close
 Appendix 2: Local Lettings Policy Southfield Road

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