

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

19 September 2023

Housing Allocation Policy Task Group

Background

1. In January 2023, the council commenced a review of its allocation policy. The policy confirms the way in which social housing across Wiltshire are let, to ensure that people have homes that meet their needs, giving priority to those in greatest need and making best use of limited social housing stock. Following a formal three-month consultation in the autumn the council will implement the new policy during 2024, following full council approval.
2. The select committee agreed to set up a Housing Allocations Policy task group following the report presented to the committee at its meeting on 14 March 2023.

Membership

Cllr Ian McLennan
Cllr Iain Wallis
Cllr Bob Jones
Cllr Jerry Kunkler
Cllr Jonathon Seed (Chairman)
Cllr Mike Sankey

Terms of reference

- a) To review how well the current Housing Allocations policy is working.
- b) To support the development of a Housing Allocations policy which aims to house those in greatest need, create realistic expectations about being housed for those on the register and makes the best use of the councils limited housing stock.
- c) To consider the following areas and to make recommendations on whether:
 - To retain local connection as a priority for re housing and the impact of this policy.
 - To retain, increase or develop the four bands.
 - To increase the financial affordability threshold.
 - To introduce a time limit for those awarded the highest band.
 - Sharing facilities is a housing need.

- Individuals who are homeless have choice or should the council be placing bids for them when in temporary accommodation to facilitate a rapid move.
- d) To make recommendations to the Environment Select Committee by 7 November 2023.

The task group's last update to the Select Committee was on [25 July 2023](#)

Recent activity

Meeting – local connection and banding (31 August 2023)

3. At the beginning of the meeting the task group heard from John Walker, Service Manager - Housing Solutions who raised an issue on behalf of Cllr Jane Davies (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, SEND and Inclusion) regarding people with learning disabilities on the housing register who want to share tenancies.
4. The main part of the meeting looked at the current local connect and banding criteria.
5. The task group agreed that the council should retain a local connection policy. However, it considered how the residency and employment criteria could be re-thought and whether the number of criteria exclusions could be reconsidered.
6. The task group also considered the banding criteria and whether the number of bands could be reduced.
7. The task group have put a number of questions to housing officers to clarify the impact of any potential changes in order to inform further deliberations.

Meeting dates and work programme

8. On **28 September**, the task group will consider the following areas and make recommendations on:
 - the financial affordability threshold.
 - time limits for those awarded the highest band.
 - sharing facilities.
 - homeless people having bids placed for them when in temporary accommodation.
9. On **18 October**, the task will review and agree its draft final report.

Climate Emergency Task Group

Background

10. The Climate Emergency Task Group (CETG) is a standing task group reporting to the Environment Select Committee. The task group's initial terms of

reference were endorsed by the Select Committee on 3 September 2019 and were revised on 9 November 2021.

11. The task group has produced two reports with recommendations:
 - Energy and Transport & Air quality (29 September 2020)
 - Planning (13 January 2021)
12. At its meeting on 6 June 2023 the Select Committee approved the continuation of the task group 2023/24.
13. The task group's last update to the Select Committee was on [25 July 2023](#)

Membership

14. The membership of the task group is as follows:

Cllr Clare Cape
Cllr Sarah Gibson
Cllr Tony Jackson
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Brian Mathew
Cllr Nick Murry
Cllr David Vigar
Cllr Ian Wallis
Cllr Graham Wright (Chairman)

Terms of Reference:

15. The task group's revised terms of reference were endorsed by the Environment Select Committee on the 9 November 2021. These are:
 - a) To help shape and influence the development of Wiltshire Council's programme (in all relevant areas) for meeting its objective of making Wiltshire Council carbon neutral and seeking to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030 (excluding the geographical area administered by Swindon Borough Council).
 - b) To scrutinise the delivery of this objective through the Climate Strategy (2022-2027) and its delivery plans, as well as key plans, policies, and programmes, such as the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan and Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. Including the way in which the Council is measuring progress and how it is performing and reporting against baselines.
 - c) To provide recommendations on other aspects of decarbonising the county including partnership working and community-led approaches as well as acting as a national role model.

Recent Activity

The task group has not meet since the last meeting of the select committee.

Forward work plan

1. The Climate Emergency Task Group forward plan is attached at Appendix 1.

Proposals

That the select committee:

1. **Notes the update on the Task Group activity provided above.**

Cllr Jonathon Seed, Chairman Housing Allocations Policy Task Group
Cllr Graham Wright, Chairman Climate Emergency Task Group

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APPENDIX 1

Climate Emergency Task Group – Forward Work Plan

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|-------------------|--|
| Oct 2023 | Update on council's response to climate emergency To receive the update report going to Cabinet (Oct 2023) |
| Spring 2024 (tbc) | Climate Change Adaptation Plan To review the council's draft plan. |
| tbc | Local Transport Plan To understand the future strategy in particular active travel, electric vehicles charging. |
| tbc | Update British Army Sustainability To update task group following briefing on 6 May 2022. |
| tbc | Natural England Funded Pilot Meeting to consider the pilot projects looking at rolling out local nature recovery planning, bio-diversity net gain and the environmental toolkit. |
| tbc | Biogas To explore the potential for biogas as a replacement for natural gas and use in vehicles. |