

Homes and Neighbourhoods 222 Upper Street N1 1XR

Report of: Cllr O'Halloran Executive Member for Homes and Communities

Meeting of: Executive

Date: 20th July 2023

Ward(s): This report impacts all electoral wards in Islington

Subject: Housing Allocations scheme

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report describes the Council's review of the Housing Allocations Scheme and recommends changes to enable Islington Council to best meet housing need within a backdrop of reduced turnover of stock.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To comment on the report and endorse the recommendations as detailed below.
- 2.2. To note the statutory and online consultation responses received.
- 2.3. To approve the changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme (the Scheme) recommended within this report.
- 2.4. To delegate to the Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods, following consultation with the Executive Member for Homes & Communities, the completion of the final version of the Scheme.
- 2.5. To note that the Equalities Impact Assessment shows no unintended or disproportionate effects are likely to arise for applicants with protected characteristics.
- 2.6. That, subject to approval of the proposed changes, to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods, following consultation with the Executive Member of Homes and Communities, approval to draft the final and lawful version of the Allocations Scheme based on the recommended changes within this report.

3. Background

4. At the time of writing over 15,500 households are waiting for a secure and affordable home on Islington Council's Housing Register, following a sharp rise in applications during the Covid-19 pandemic and now the Cost of Living crisis. Behind these figures are stories of individuals and families living in overcrowded homes, delaying key life decisions due to extortionate housing costs, health and wellbeing problems linked to housing, children's educational attainment and younger people's ability to invest in themselves and their futures thwarted.
5. With growing rent arrears, mortgage interest payments increasing from below 2% to above 5%, inflation now above 10% for the first time in over 40 years, and continuing uncertainty around the Government's post-Pandemic, Brexit and Cost of Living Crisis, the rising pressure on our council housing register makes the need to refine the criteria around how we prioritise access as immediate as it has ever been.
6. The following table explains the demand and supply of council and housing association rented accommodation in Islington over the last 12 months:

Type of accommodation	Number of households on the register	Supply	% housed
Studio and 1 bedroom	6,370	486	8%
2 – bedroom	2,593	34	13%
3 – bedroom	1,479	124	8%
4 – bedroom	507	22	4%
5 – bedroom	181	7	4%
6 – bedroom or larger	79	1	1%

7. There has been a general increase in the demand for council and housing association rented accommodation over the last three years, due to COVID 19, the financial fallout of Brexit, the cost of living crisis, increased Domestic Abuse, and increased homelessness etc. but at the same time there has been a reduction in the supply of council and housing association rented accommodation. As of the 1st July 2023, there are 1,058 homeless households living in temporary accommodation (bed and breakfast accommodation, hostel's, private rented temporary accommodation mainly outside of Islington). This type of accommodation is not suitable or affordable for Islington's residents. Therefore, urgent action is required to address these trends.
8. The table below shows the total points currently required to secure council and housing association rented accommodation and the % of households on the housing register who have currently been awarded these points.

Type of accommodation	Points required	% Of households on the register with these points
Studio/1 bedroom	200	9%
2 bedrooms	238	15%
3 bedrooms	277	8%
4 bedroom or larger	343	7%

9. We last changed the scheme in 2017. Then we had almost double the number of homes becoming available for rented accommodation than we do today. We want to create a simpler and more transparent housing register suitable for the situation in Islington today. There have also
10. Among the changes the council is proposing to increase the priority given to victims of domestic abuse, as well as making proposals to help homeless households find new ways of settling down, addressing the households who are living in properties suffering from damp and mould, ensuring local people are prioritised for our accommodation, additional priority for households with medical needs and the production of an annual lettings plan to make the housing allocations scheme more transparent.
11. The council proposes to ensure people who are the perpetrator of domestic abuse, violent, coercive, or controlling behaviour towards a resident of the borough will not be permitted to join the housing register. This confirms the council's commitment towards people fleeing Domestic Abuse and ensuring the council is on the side of victims of Domestic Abuse and our commitment to end all forms of Domestic Abuse in Islington.
12. People are not eligible to join the housing register for being convicted of a Anti-Social Behaviour offence, in or in the vicinity of your home.
13. The proposed changes will promote Islington Council's commitment towards working together for a fairer Islington and ensuring the future is more equal for our residents.
14. We are also introducing a greater degree of flexibility to reflect local circumstances on our local letting's schemes on new build council homes to strengthen the local community benefit as well as to maximize the wider chain of benefit from new homes.
15. Alongside this new scheme, we are also jumpstarting several initiatives to help enable more lettings through the system, as well as promote awareness of the widest range of housing options and to make the system more user-friendly.

16. The production of the new Housing Allocations scheme and the recommendations contained above attempt to address the housing needs of residents who live in Islington, meet the legal requirements contained within the 1996 Housing Act, the Homelessness Reduction Act, and the Domestic Abuse Act. The Housing Allocations scheme also attempts to address the severe outcomes of the Welfare Reforms and the impacts of the Government's austerity measures. The new Housing Allocations scheme also follows national best practice examples and provides a sensible response to the continuing demand for housing in Islington today and in the future.
17. The council will introduce a localised 'right-sizing' initiative to better facilitate mutual exchange, rehousing opportunities between under occupying and overcrowded households. This will be promoted on a regular basis through information available through the Choice Based Lettings web site, through the production of leaflets, information displayed on Estate Notice Boards, through TRA meetings, organising specific estate based drop in sessions.
18. The stark situation we find ourselves in with the growing housing need in Islington only underscores the critical importance of the council and other builders to bring forward new, high quality, secure, social rent homes, and wherever possible to convert other tenures towards affordability, all while the Government chronically underfunds the most fundamental thing our residents need – a safe and secure home. The entire Islington community – landlords, developers, community groups, housing associations and residents in all tenures – all need to work together to tackle the housing crisis that keeps too many of our residents from living the fullest lives they can.
19. Islington Council's current Housing Allocations Scheme was introduced in 2018. There have been some minor amendments since, but the Scheme has remained fundamentally the same for the last 5 years. These amendments were approved by the Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Executive Member responsible for housing at the time.
20. Although the Council and its Registered Provider (RP) partners are embarking on an ambitious programme of new build development through the Housing Strategy to increase supply, fundamental Scheme changes are required to improve how we meet needs with the resources that we have available.
21. This report provides the context and evidence as to why the Allocations Scheme needs to be reviewed, looking at how the turnover of social housing has reduced within a backdrop of increasing demand. It describes the process of engagement with stakeholders to develop a range of Scheme solutions ensuring that the proposals do not have a disproportionate effect on applicants within protected characteristic groups. It also describes how the proposals were consulted upon with both statutory organisations, partners, council tenants, households on the housing register and the wider public with the outcome being a well-considered set of recommendations.
22. Because of the strategic importance of council housing and housing association accommodation in Islington, and its links to other council priorities such as economic

wellbeing, improved education attainment the Fairer Together principles and improving the health of the borough, it is of the greatest importance for the housing allocations scheme to be a cross cutting strategic policy document which promotes the best solutions for Islington's residents.

- 23. Households will continue to receive a customised handholding approach to navigate through the Choice Based Lettings scheme and the completion of housing applications when this is required. In addition to this the new housing allocations scheme will design a framework which enables the council to look at the housing needs of households through the lens of treating every household as if they are an important member of our own families.
- 24. It is believed the new housing allocations scheme meets the principles of the CARE values and principles, provides a clear, honest, and fair process, which promotes the best use of all available council and housing association accommodation.
- 25. Subject to approval by Executive there is a summary of the next steps and an outline timetable for the introduction of a new Housing Allocations Scheme.

Context & Background

- 26. Islington Council's housing situation has changed significantly since 2018. There has been a significant rise in homelessness and the associated cost of the rising number of households in temporary and supported accommodation is unsustainable. Welfare reforms and rising private sector rents are huge challenges for people seeking new homes, we have lived through a COVID Pandemic and now living through a cost of living crisis.
- 27. Turnover and availability of social homes has significantly reduced the total number of households on the housing register has risen by 5% over the last 4 years, whilst we have seen a 7.5% decrease over the same time in the number of homes that have become available for letting. At the same time the stronger and more integrated partnership working that has developed has led to a greater understanding of complex housing needs.

This table shows the increase in demand and reduction in lettings over the last 6 years:

Total on the housing register	Total number of lettings	% of housing register rehoused
2018 - 14,469	1017	7%
2019 - 14,567	1105	7%
2020 - 14,164	1186	8%

2021 - 14,530	1089	7%
2022 - 15,402	1022	6%

Legal Context

28. Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 requires local authorities to have an Allocations Scheme that describes how social homes should be allocated in the authority's area and to give "reasonable preference" to certain groups of applicants:

- People who need to move on welfare or medical grounds,
- People who need to move to a particular area of the borough to avoid hardship,
- People living in overcrowded, insanitary, or otherwise unsatisfactory housing, and
- People who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996

29. Priority can be given, and allocations can be made to, categories of applicants who do not fall within the reasonable preference groups (for example current tenants who are under-occupying their current homes), however, we must ensure that the reasonable preference requirement is met and we must ensure that any locally-determined priority categories do not dominate the Scheme such that the statutory reasonable preference categories have relatively little chance of being rehoused.

30. The Islington Council Housing Allocations Scheme sets out the principles and rules by which people apply for social housing, including who qualifies to join Islington Council housing register and how the Council prioritises who gets a home. In simple terms, Islington's current Allocations Scheme operates a priority points based allocations scheme with those in the greatest housing need awarded the highest level of priority points.

31. Across Islington, an increasing number of individuals and families are becoming homeless and are at greater risk of homelessness. The main reason for statutory homelessness is the loss of a tenancy in the private rented sector, being evicted by family and friends and Domestic Abuse.

32. Government welfare changes, which include capping personal benefits and limiting the amount payable in rent via the Local Housing Allowance, have had a major impact in contributing to the loss of tenancies and the growth in numbers on the housing register.

33. The Council currently has 1,058 homeless households living in temporary accommodation.

34. Although the existing Scheme was set up with the best intentions, the Scheme has now developed unintended consequences and instead of helping people most in need the

Scheme is now causing a barrier in accessing homes for vulnerable households. As we can see by the numbers of households within temporary accommodation, they are increasingly waiting for long periods to access social housing, causing a lack of throughput and rising costs.

35. The average waiting time for a family household to move out of temporary accommodation can be between 24-36 months.
36. The data from the Islington Council Housing Register and lettings statistics from the year 2022/2023 and gives a real sense of how demand is outstripping the number of available properties. This is a summary of the key facts:
- The total number of live applications on the Islington Council Housing Register continues to increase.
 - The number of applications in reasonable preference is continuing to increase - over 8800 and far outstrips supply, estimated to be 1,000 lettings in 2022/2023.
 - The turnover of stock (this equates to lettings) has reduced each year for the last 4 years.
 - The vast majority of lettings are to applicants in reasonable preference (over 92% of all lettings)
 - The availability of larger family homes means that most applicants for 4+ bedroom homes will not be rehoused through the register for a considerable length of time, if at all.
 - Increase in numbers of people living in insecure temporary accommodation
 - Right to Buy contributing to the reduction in numbers of social housing stock.
 - The increasing number on the register and reduced turnover means that even those applicants in need (reasonable preference) cannot be assured of being rehoused. Some applicants in housing need will remain on the register for years and might never be rehoused.

Engagement and Consultation

37. Over the last year a dedicated project team led by the Director of Housing Operations and made up of Council and Registered Provider (RP) officers and all partners has reviewed the current Housing Allocations Scheme.

38. One of the first tasks for the team was to establish Scheme objectives so that it could effectively deliver a Scheme that is legal, reflects the current housing position and assists with meeting corporate priorities.

39. These objectives were that the Scheme:

- Continues to accord with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Provides the means of managing the allocation of a scarce resource (social housing) in a fair and equitable manner assisting those in most need.

- Is transparent and easy to understand.
 - Considers the need to manage neighbourhoods.
 - Considers the Homelessness Reduction Act, welfare reforms and the Homelessness Strategy.
 - Continues to comply with local authority equality duties.
 - That there is no unintended adverse impact on other housing practice.
40. By analysing data and information from both qualitative and quantitative sources, the team have been able to use this information to facilitate a series of discussions at the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping forum with all partners and also at the Housing Association liaison meetings. This helped everyone to understand how the current Scheme impacts on access to social housing for various need groups that make up the housing register, highlighting specific issues and unintended consequences.
41. Discussions throughout the process have been challenging. Everyone taking part recognised that any proposal to increase the priority of any particular group of applicants could have an adverse effect on another group of applicants, hence carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) to mitigate any potential adverse consequences. Nevertheless, discussions always focussed on the objectives of helping those in greatest need. After months of very careful and well-informed deliberation Members, Council officers and Registered Provider partners agreed to put forward a series of Scheme changes for statutory and public consultation through an 8 week consultation process.

Scheme development and engagement timeline

42. This is a summary of the work and meetings that have been carried out to get to the current position to date.
- June 2021 to August 2022: Workstream meetings were held to discuss how the current Scheme impacts on access to social housing for various need groups that make up the housing register. Discussions went on to identify possible options that could offer solutions to a revised Scheme.
 - September 2022: Progress and options were presented to meetings of the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Forum and the Housing Association Liaison meetings.
 - September 2022 to December 2022: These options were more fully developed by officers and taken back to partners via the Homelessness Preventions and Rough Sleeping Forum and the Housing Association liaison meetings to ensure the work stream in order that partners' views, preferences and positions can be understood.
 - December 2022: Scheme proposals agreed
 - January 2023 to March 2023 8 week statutory and wider online consultation concluded.
 - March 2023 and April 2023: Local meetings held with Housing Associations and ward members to discuss any specific localised issues and finer Scheme details.
 - April and May 2023: Final meetings held with Housing Associations and partners to discuss consultation feedback and agree to final recommendations.

Proposed changes percentage resident feedback and the rational relating to the recommendations made

43. While undertaking the review the challenge has been to differentiate between different high priority (reasonable preference) groups of applicants, giving some a higher priority in a new Allocations Policy.

44. The main proposed changes fall into the following categories

45. This table shows a summary of the 950 responses received from residents. Please also note 81 partner organisations also responded with Only 10% of partners not supporting the proposed changes.

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>Applicants who cannot join the housing register – Non-Residence</p> <p>People who are not resident in the borough on the date of application, and people who have lived in Islington for less than three out of the previous five years from the date they apply for housing, cannot join the housing register</p>	<p>Applicants who cannot join the housing register-Non-Residence</p> <p>People who are not resident in the borough on the date of application and have not continuously lived in Islington for at least five years from the date they apply for housing cannot join the housing register</p>
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>71% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>20% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>9% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 71% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>Applicants who cannot join the housing register - Unacceptable behaviour Being the perpetrator of violent, coercive, or controlling behaviour towards a resident of the borough</p>	<p>Applicants who cannot join the housing register - Unacceptable behaviour (page 17)</p> <p>wording changed to expand scope Being the perpetrator of domestic abuse, violent, coercive, or controlling behaviour towards a resident of the borough.</p>

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>79% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>10% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>11% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 79% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>Non- residence exception</p> <p>Households who have sufficient financial resources to own or rent accommodation.</p>	<p>Non- residence exception (page 18) -item7</p> <p>wording changed regarding income.</p> <p>a) Applicants who have total savings, investments and/or assets of £16,000 or more</p> <p>b) Applicants whose household’s total gross income from all sources exceeds an annual income of £90,000</p>
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>50% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>34% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>16 % of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as only 34% of residents do not support this approach</p>
<p>Residence Points</p> <p>Applicants must be resident in the borough for at least three out of the last five years from the date of application</p>	<p>Residence Points</p> <p>100 points are awarded to everyone who has been resident in the borough continuously for the last five years at the date of application</p>
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>71% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>20% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>9% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 71% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>Waiting time points</p>	<p>Waiting time points</p>

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>Points are calculated at 5% per year of housing needs points (except residence points)</p>	<p>This points allocation will not be removed:</p> <p>Reason:</p> <p>The majority of people who responded to the consultation did not support this proposal.</p>
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>34% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>46% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>20% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation not to proceed with this change as only 34% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>Splitting households</p> <p>With the household's agreement consideration may be made to offering two separate properties to a large household. The council will consider the types of properties required and ensure that there is an adult as part of each tenancy.</p>	<p>Splitting households (Page 21)</p> <p>Dividing Households</p> <p>A council tenant may request one or more separate properties for their authorised household members. The council will only agree to this request where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the tenant and the authorised household members move to one- bedroom properties; • the number of one-bedroom properties required does not exceed the number of bedrooms in the original larger home; • the tenant and household member are rehoused simultaneously <p>Shared residency of children</p> <p>Where children are subject to a shared residency arrangement the children are only considered to need one home of adequate size. Where either parent has a home of adequate size the remaining parent will be assessed as having overnight access only and no additional bedrooms will be agreed for the children.</p> <p>Households occupying more than one tenancy</p> <p>Where a family unit is not currently residing together the assessment will be based on the part of the household that occupies accommodation that provides them with the most suitable housing providing there is a reasonable expectation that they should reside together. The</p>

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
	residency qualification will be based on that part of the household with the longest residency in the borough
Responses to the resident consultations	57% of residents supported this approach 18% of residents do not support this approach 25% of respondents did not express an opinion Recommendation to proceed with this change as 57% of residents support this approach
Medical points Previous medical points Cat A 150 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life limiting or progressive condition • serving members of the regular forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability • where two household members have Cat B Cat B 80 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the applicants current housing conditions is having a major effect on their health condition • Cat C 40 	Medical points- (page 22) Medical points Cat A 200 (change to points award) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life-limiting, life threatening or progressive condition • serving members of the armed force with a disability • Hospital discharge Cat B 80 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant at risk and housebound • Applicant health is severely affected by their current accommodation Cat C 40 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change
Responses to the resident consultations	59% of residents supported this approach 21% of residents do not support this approach 20% of respondents did not express an opinion Recommendation to proceed with this change as 59% of residents support this approach
Welfare points Welfare A	Welfare Points (page 25) No change to point's award. Some clarification on examples

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>Where the accommodation is required to meet the assessed needs of relevant children and other care leavers under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000.</p> <p>Welfare B</p> <p>Where an applicant or a member of their household has to move in order to be near a person to whom they give or receive care and support</p>	<p>Welfare A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a property is declared unfit for habitation or has a category 1 hazard due to damp and mould, as confirmed by the Public Protection team, or Islington Diagnostic Surveyors and which has a severe impact on the household • Where the accommodation is required to meet the needs of a child who has been assessed as in severe harm or fatality due to their accommodation as assessed by Children’s Services. • Where there is a risk of a child within the applicant’s household coming into Local Authority care or residential care due to their housing situation • Where it is necessary to move because of the threat of violence, abuse, or harassment, including domestic and sexual violence except for council tenants who have been awarded 150 management transfer points <p>Welfare B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the accommodation is required to meet the needs of a child who has been assessed as in urgent risk of harm due to their accommodation as assessed by Children’s Services. • Where an applicant is experiencing a threat of violence, abuse or harassment that is impacting their living conditions • Where accommodation is required to meet the needs of a child as assessed in a Child in Need (CIN) plan • The applicant is living in such insanitary conditions that their welfare is prejudiced, and there are no remedies available to improve the conditions including where there is damp and mould <p>Welfare C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant is living in such conditions that their welfare is prejudiced for example, where there is mould and condensation and limited remedies are available, to resolve the issue.

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>69% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>10% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>17% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 69% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>Management transfers</p> <p>Points may be agreed by the council and Partners for Improvement in Islington where it is necessary to move a tenant on management grounds. In most cases, 60 management points will be awarded.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances, 120 points may be awarded. These points will be reviewed every six months.</p>	<p>Management Transfers (page 27)</p> <p>These points are only awarded to council tenants where a move is necessary on management grounds. Points may be awarded as follows:</p> <p>150 points may be awarded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there is evidence to indicate that the tenant is currently at risk of serious harm from a third party perpetrator(s). For example, risk of possible homicide, serious injury, assault or abuse including domestic or sexual violence • where it can be evidenced that the risks can only be managed effectively by moving the tenant elsewhere • where there is a corresponding safety plan in place setting out how the new address will be kept confidential, minimising the risks of the perpetrator (s) finding the victim/survivor <p>These points will be reviewed every six months.</p> <p>120 points may be awarded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there is no current risk from a third-party perpetrator, but where there are other risks serious enough to jeopardise the sustenance of the tenancy. Examples include (this is not an exhaustive list and each case should be considered on its own merit / evidence): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tenant has a history of being subjected to abuse, neglect or other serious harm at the tenancy. Whilst this is now historic (i.e. there is no current risk from a third party perpetrator) the tenant is experiencing serious and ongoing post-traumatic stress to the extent that the tenancy is in jeopardy • A tenant has severe and enduring mental health issues and has developed paranoid / delusional

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
	<p>thoughts about the property or neighbours, to the extent that living there is having a serious impact on their ability to manage the tenancy or stay well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long running neighbour disputes where both parties are equally hostile to each other, where there is a clearly evidenced high level of distress but where the issues are not serious enough on either side to warrant strong enforcement action being taken and where officers can evidence that a move will resolve the issues. • to applicants who release an adapted property where such an applicant no longer requires their current home and will therefore be releasing an adapted property by moving and are in unsatisfactory housing within 166A(3)(c) <p>60 points may be awarded for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there other, less serious risks or concerns that jeopardise the sustainability of the tenancy and where officers can evidence that a move will resolve the issues (all cases will be considered on their individual merits)
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>69% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>10% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>21% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 69% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>Points awarded from previous Allocation Scheme (Retention Points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants retain these points under previous Allocation schemes (2010 and 2013) 	<p>Points awarded from previous Allocation Scheme (Retention Points)</p> <p>This section has been removed:</p> <p>Reason:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All applications to be re-assessed and therefore these points will no longer be applicable

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>37% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>33% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>30% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as only 33% of residents do not support this approach</p>
<p>Relationship breakdown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a relationship has occurred between couples and one or both partners are an Islington council tenant. 	<p>Relationship breakdown</p> <p>This section has been removed:</p> <p>Reason:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a growing increase in high needs single vulnerable applicants who require housing. This should be removed due to the severe shortage of social housing
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>40% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>41% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>19% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as only 41% of residents do not support this approach</p>
<p>New generation scheme:</p> <p>Applicants must be living continuously as an agreed member of the household of an Islington resident for at least three out of the last five years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> applicants must be living as an agreed member of the household of an Islington resident applicants must have lived continuously as an agreed member of the household of an Islington resident for the three 	<p>New generation scheme (page 28)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> applicants must have lived continuously as an agreed member of the household of an Islington resident for the five years prior to the date of application applicants must not have been previously housed by the council proof of residence will be required

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>years prior to the date of application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> proof of residence will be required 	
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>74% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>13% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>13% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 74% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>No previous wording</p>	<p>Domestic Abuse (page 28)</p> <p>New points allocation</p> <p>Applicants fleeing domestic violence and abuse that have been assessed by MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference). These applicants will be awarded 30 additional priority points</p>
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>81% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>8% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>11% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 81% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>No previous wording</p>	<p>Prevention of homelessness (page 30)</p> <p>New points allocation</p> <p>Applicants who were owed under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 a prevention duty (section 195(2)) or relief duty (section 189B (2)) who have accepted a private sector tenancy solution will be awarded 30 points.</p> <p>Applicants who would normally be offered a section 193 (2) main housing duty and who have accepted a private sector tenancy solution will be awarded 70 points.</p>

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>66% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>13% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>21% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 66% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>Applicants not bidding</p> <p>The council will review all applications where no bid has been placed on a regular basis. Applicants will be contacted to make sure that they understand how to bid and to ensure that they will be able to make future bids.</p> <p>Applicants who persistently bid and do not attend viewings and applicants who consistently accept and later refuse properties may be suspended from the list for 6 months.</p>	<p>Applicants not bidding (page 36)</p> <p>The council will review all applications where no bid has been placed on a regular basis. Applicants will be contacted to make sure that they understand how to bid and to ensure that they will be able to make future bids.</p> <p>Applicants who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> persistently bid and do not attend viewings applicants who consistently accept and later refuse properties <p>or applicants who fail to bid for more than twelve months may be removed from the Housing Register.</p> <p>These applicants will be required to reapply if they consider they still have a housing need. Any decision to remove an applicant from the housing register is subject to review</p>
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>72% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>16% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>12% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 66% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>Supported choice</p> <p>Applicants agreed two offers of housing</p>	<p>Supported Choice (page 36)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where supported choice lettings are made an applicant will be given access to the choice based lettings system for a minimum of four weeks. If they are not successful within this time, they will be made an offer of a suitable property based on their assessed need for accommodation.

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>64% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>10% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>26% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 64% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>No previous wording</p>	<p>Annual Lettings Plan (page 39)</p> <p>The council will produce and publish an Annual Lettings Plan; this will set annual targets for property types across priority points. The Head of Housing Needs will draw up the Annual Lettings Plan every January. The Annual Lettings Plan will be published on the council's website. The Head of Housing Needs is responsible for monitoring the Annual Lettings Plan. If monitoring shows that outcomes are not as per the Annual Lettings Plan the council reserves the right to implement a quota system and adjust the / Annual Lettings Plan to ensure that it meets its strategic and or statutory obligations. This power is reserved to the Executive Member for Housing and Development in consultation with the Director of Housing Needs and Strategy to approve.</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Scheme is also monitored to make sure that allocations made reflect the housing need and meet with the requirements of legislation. This scheme will be reviewed internally periodically to ensure that its aims and objectives are met.</p>
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>66% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>7% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>27% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 66% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>New homes Local Lettings Council Estate:</p>	<p>New homes Local Lettings (page 40)</p> <p>New homes on council estates</p>

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
<p>Priority is given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure council tenants • Household members of a secure council tenants • Secure council tenants requesting a like for like transfer • Remaining properties will be let to residents of the borough <p>Ward Priority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure social housing tenants • Household members of secure social housing tenants • Remaining properties will be let to residents of the borough 	<p>The council is committed to ensuring that its new homes are meeting the needs of the local community by prioritising existing secure council tenants currently living on the estate on which they are being built. Where we construct new homes on existing estates, the local lettings of these new homes will be in accordance with the lettings plan for the individual scheme for up to 100% of the allocations.</p> <p>Where lettings plans are drawn up the following will apply to the local lettings allocations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must be secure council tenants living on the estate who meet the bidding threshold • Applicants must fulfil the size and property requirements for the new homes, but under-occupiers will be able to bid for a property with an extra bedroom • Applicants with the same number of points will be prioritised based on the length of time on the housing register • Wheelchair adapted properties will be restricted to applicants who require such properties. • Ground floor properties will be restricted to applicants with an assessed need for ground floor accommodation. • Properties built to ‘lifetime homes’ standard which is a property that can be easily adapted for wheelchair use will be allocated to applicants assessed as needing this type of accommodation <p>Remaining properties subject to local lettings will be allocated to assured/secure social housing tenants with an assessed housing need living in the local ward. After local lettings on the estate and ward, remaining properties will be let according to the council’s general Housing Allocation Scheme.</p> <p>The Service Director of Housing Needs and Strategy can exercise discretion to include more than one estate and ward in the local lettings allocation.</p> <p>Other new social housing</p> <p>Islington Council also wants to make sure local people benefit from other, new social housing. Where new homes are built for social rent the local lettings of these</p>

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
	<p>new homes will be in accordance with the Lettings Plan for the individual scheme for up to 100% of the allocations.</p> <p>Where lettings plans are drawn up the following will apply to the local lettings allocations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must be assured/secure council tenants living in the ward who meet the bidding threshold • Applicants must fulfil the size and property requirements for the new homes • Applicants with the same number of points will be prioritised based on the length of time on the housing register • Wheelchair adapted properties will be restricted to applicants who require such properties. • Ground floor properties will be restricted to applicants with an assessed need for ground floor accommodation. • Properties built to 'lifetime homes' standard which is a property that can be easily adapted for wheelchair use will be allocated to applicants assessed as needing this type of accommodation <p>After local lettings in the ward, remaining properties will be let according to the council's general Housing Allocation Scheme.</p> <p>The Service Director of Housing Needs and Strategy can exercise discretion to include more than one ward in the local lettings allocation.</p>
<p>Responses to the resident consultations</p>	<p>73% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>9% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>18% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 73% of residents support this approach</p>
<p>Intra Estate Transfer</p> <p>20% of available voids on estates are prioritise to tenants who live on the estate</p>	<p>Intra Estate Transfer</p> <p>This section has been removed:</p> <p>Reason:</p>

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the severe shortage of housing and the increased demand in high needs cases.
Responses to the resident consultations	<p>47% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>19% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>34% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 19% of residents do not support this approach</p>
Keyworker housing Islington keyworkers (Social Workers, Teachers, Metropolitan police nurses working in Islington are awarded housing points to bid for a bedsitter or 1 bedroom accommodation on a non secure let	Keyworker housing This section has been removed: Reason: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a growing increase in high-needs, single, vulnerable applicants who require housing. This should be removed due to the severe shortage of social housing accommodation.
Responses to the resident consultations	<p>50% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>29% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>21% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 29% of residents do not support this approach</p>
No previous wording	<p>Supported housing move on new points allocation (page 29)</p> <p>Supported Housing Move On</p> <p>100 points may be awarded to applicants in supported housing where it is in the council's wider strategic interest for these applicants to move on from supported housing</p> <p>Examples where this may occur include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant is in supported accommodation that they no longer need and that the council urgently requires that accommodation for other applicants The supported accommodation scheme is closing down or changing use

Current wording	Proposed new wording/changes/additions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has multiple complex needs and has a demonstrable need for settled accommodation in borough which they cannot reasonably be expected to find for themselves in the near future
Responses to the resident consultations	<p>64% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>10% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>26% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 64% of residents support this approach</p>
Armed forces personnel To serving members of the regular forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service	Armed forces personnel (page 22) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To serving members or former members or reserve members of the regular forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service
Responses to the resident consultations	<p>66% of residents supported this approach</p> <p>15% of residents do not support this approach</p> <p>19% of respondents did not express an opinion</p> <p>Recommendation to proceed with this change as 66% of residents support this approach</p>

Statutory and Public Consultation (Feedback Summary)

46. Following the development of the policy options and as required by the Housing Act 1996, the Council set about an 8 -week consultation process with our Housing Association partners, all external and internal partners, all households on the housing register and community based organisations. Under the Act there is no requirement to consult with the wider public, however we chose an “Our Islington Council inclusive” approach. We really wanted to know what the wider public, specifically current applicants, thought of the proposals. We gave the public the chance to comment on the fundamental changes on the Council’s website through the “have your say” consultation. Please note the 1,031 responses received is significantly greater in number compared to the 2017 consultation framework when 20 responses were received.

47. Islington Council sent out mail shots to all applicants on the current register and the Council wrote to all commissioned services and the voluntary sector. The consultation was also publicised both locally and regionally in the press, posters distributed across Islington and information placed onto the Estate Notice Boards.

48. The statutory consultation with Housing Association was substantial and included releasing a first draft of a revised Policy (as per guidelines). The public consultation was concise and succinct, and the online survey included possible fundamental changes that would have the most impact.

49. The online response rate was excellent with 950 respondents, made up from applicants, residents and 81 partner organisations provided responses. Therefore, in total 1,031 responses have been received from the eight week consultation period.

50. Generally, the response to the changes has been extremely positive and in favour of the proposed changes. The only proposed change where there was a mixed response related to the following areas:

- Waiting time points 46% of residents stated they did not support this proposal. Due to the scale of the opposition to this proposal this proposal will not be implemented.
- Relationship breakdown 41% of residents stated they did not support this proposal.

51. Following the end of the consultation, meetings have been held with Housing Association partners to discuss and analyse all feedback which has enabled the project group to identify any areas of the draft Policy that may need amending.

52. There will be a review of the new policy at 12, 24 and 36 months following the implementation of the policy, these reviews will identify if any of the changes have created any unintended consequences, if any are identified further solutions will be sought to mitigate these.

53. Only 10% of partners do not support all of the proposed changes.

Partner agencies and resident detailed consultation responses

Key consultation feedback themes	Response to the feedback and rationale for the recommendation to proceed with the proposal
Removal of key worker housing prioritisation	A number of responses from Childrens Services cited concerns about the proposed removal of key worker housing prioritisation and the impacts of the proposal on the council's ability to recruit Childrens Services Social Workers. Though acknowledged as having potential impacts on recruitment/rentention, the benefits of the proposal outweigh the likley impacts when the breadth of the housing crisis in Islington is factored in. Moreover, the council is able to advise and assist key workers to secure

Key consultation feedback themes	Response to the feedback and rationale for the recommendation to proceed with the proposal
	<p>more affordable accommodation in private rented sector if assistance is sought.</p> <p>As of March 2023, there are just over 1000 households in temporary accommodation. The numbers of residents in temporary accommodation has been increasing over the last two years due to an increase in homelessness. When this statistic is coupled with the overall reduction in the availability of social housing properties from 2021/22 to 2022/23, the 14 priority groups for rehousing the removal is considered on balance to be a reasonable and fair approach to managing diminishing social housing resources.</p> <p>The recommendation is therefore to proceed with this change as only 29% of respondents to the consultation do not support this approach.</p>
Removal of relationship breakdown points	<p>This was raised as an area of concern in its potential for inadvertently increasing the likelihood of domestic abuse if a couple were unable to separate amicably and for one party to secure alternative social housing.</p> <p>In considering this feedback, it was noted that joint tenants have equal rights to a property and in the event of a relationship breakdown, irrespective of the reason, both parties would be encouraged to seek independent legal advice as to their specific tenancy rights.</p> <p>In the case of joint tenants, housing officers will ensure a nuanced and case specific approach is adopted in assisting the resident who has been asked to leave the property. Officers will ensure that risks are minimised particularly in cases if one partner is also a perpetrator of domestic abuse. Additionally, if domestic abuse were a factor in the relationship breakdown, the victim/survivor will be offered with advocacy support via specialist domestic abuse services and support from the Housing Needs service.</p> <p>The recommendation is therefore to proceed with this change as only 41% of respondents to the consultation do not support this approach.</p>
Removal of waiting time points	<p>A number of feedback responses cited concerns about the proposal to remove waiting time points from all current and future applications. Some of these responses appreciated the need to ensure those in housing need were able to secure social housing but also felt that there should be some degree of acknowledgement for those who had been on the council's housing register for several years.</p> <p>The recommendation is therefore not to proceed with this change as only 34% of respondents to the consultation support this approach.</p>

Key consultation feedback themes	Response to the feedback and rationale for the recommendation to proceed with the proposal
<p>Residence in borough requirement-increase from 3 to 5 years</p>	<p>There was some disagreement with the proposal to increase the residency requirements from 3 to 5 years on the basis that residents who may have specific vulnerabilities or have fled domestic abuse either from an Islington address or from another part of the country would be excluded from being able to join the Housing Register.</p> <p>Though the proposal is to increase the years of residence, the service has made exceptions for specific applicants who have fled another area as a result of domestic abuse, threats of violence and members of the Armed Forces. The threshold for the provision of evidence of domestic abuse is also set relatively low as the council adopts a case specific, trauma informed approach that doesn't necessitate the provision of police reports to evidence domestic abuse.</p> <p>This approach ensures the the council's Scheme meets the principles of the Public Sector Equalities duty, Housing Act and Domestic Abuse Act. There also remains an option for the Service Director to decide to exercise their discretion to waive residency requirements for groups of applicants that are not described in the examples above.</p> <p>Conversely, a number of residents suggested that the residence criteria should be a longer period of 10 years or more to join the Housing Register with the exceptions for those seeking to join due to having fled from another area. Consequently, the service view is that a modest increase from 3 to 5 years strikes the right balance of fairness and ensuring those with the greatest need are able to secure social housing.</p> <p>The recommendation is therefore to proceed with this change as 71% of respondents to the consultation support this approach.</p>
<p>Splitting households</p>	<p>In relation to shared residency arrangements, one respondent stated that provision needed to be made for families where a parent and/or child has disabilities that might require that a child has a bedroom in both households so that their care needs could be met and to ensure the rights of those with disabilities.</p> <p>The provision of extra rooms in social housing properties between sets of parents with shared residency arrangements would not be aligned with the responsibility to maximise the utilisation of social housing particularly when there are over 500 severely overcrowded families in borough keen to move to a more suitably sized home.</p> <p>It should be noted that this type of example is relatively uncommon. Where it does arise, the service will ensure a holistic assesment of both parents accommodation and or health needs, the child's disabilities and reach a</p>

Key consultation feedback themes	Response to the feedback and rationale for the recommendation to proceed with the proposal
	<p>decision on whether greater priority should be afforded to the parent in greater housing need.</p> <p>The recommendation is therefore to proceed with this change as 57% of respondents to the consultation support this approach.</p>
<p>Prevention of Homelessness Points- new points allocation</p>	<p>The new proposal to award 30 points to homeless applicants for whom the council had accepted a prevention or relief duty and 70 points to those owed a main housing duty if they were to accept a private sector tenancy solution was of concern to a key partner. The rationale underpinning this proposal is multifaceted. By asking homeless applicants to consider accepting a private rented sector solution, the service aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce multiple moves for applicants between temporary accommodation properties • minimise the need for the individual to remain in temporary accommodation for potentially several years thereby removing the uncertainty that they face whilst in temporary accommodation • reduce the inordinately high numbers of households in temporary accommodation which as of March 2023 is just over 1000 households and most likely will increase further • reduce the resulting costs of temporary accommodation to meet the councils medium and long term savings plans • suppress the London wide demand for temporary accommodation <p>As part of this proposal, the service intends to enhance the offer to the individual by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring the private rented sector (PRS) offer is suitable, affordable and meets the council's expected standards as set out the Private Rented Sector charter • identifying PRS properties as close to Islington as is affordable and possible in line with the council's Temporary Accommodation proposed framework on offers in the PRS • referring them to local support services where this may be requested/required • ensuring that they are informed in writing and by their housing officer that by accepting the offer of a private rented sector property under the stipulations noted above that they will be able join the council's housing register • explain that in addition to the 30 or 70 points they receive, they will also be awarded 100 residency points even though they would be living outside the borough, to enable them to retain a tangible anchor to Islington and bid for properties advertised on the council's Choice Based Lettings Scheme • alerting the individual to the fact that if they present with other housing needs (eg medical/ welfare) or experience a change in circumstance,

Key consultation feedback themes	Response to the feedback and rationale for the recommendation to proceed with the proposal
	<p>a reassessment of their points could be requested as with any other resident in borough.</p> <p>The recommendation is therefore to proceed with this change as 66% of respondents to the consultation support this approach.</p>
Households who have sufficient financial resources to own or rent accommodation.	<p>There was a broad consensus that applicants with a total gross income from all sources exceeding an annual income of £90K would not be eligible to join the register. However, some residents expressed a view that applicants that had £16K or more in savings would not be able to secure a mortgage and that this would penalise those who had savings or were in work.</p> <p>These thresholds have been set to ensure those that are in greatest housing need are able to join the Housing Register. It is noted that £16K mightn't be sufficient to secure a mortgage. However, individuals with savings of £16K or more should be able to rent accommodation in Islington. These thresholds were set after extensive analysis of average earnings in Islington and having factored in the impacts of the costs of living on our residents.</p> <p>By way of assurance to the Executive, these thresholds will be reviewed periodically to ensure they are in line with findings of the Office of National Statistics.</p> <p>The recommendation is therefore to proceed with this change as only 34% of residents do not support this approach.</p>
Succession	<p>Though there weren't any proposed amendments considered in this area within the Housing Allocation Scheme, the service received useful feedback that it has taken onboard. The two suggested amendments which are now proposed are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession rights before and after 1 April 2013 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarification is provided to specify the definition of other family members. 2. An amendment has been made to the length of time a person should have resided with the late successor tenant raising the current timeframe from 12 months to 5 years or the life of the tenancy (whichever is longer). This would mirror the overarching eligibility criteria for any resident to join the Housing Register, to be living in the borough for 5 years at the point of application. 3. An additional statement has been inserted to clarify that the applicant seeking to succeed a tenancy will be barred from a succession if they already own a residential property within the United Kingdom or internationally. This is to ensure fairness and makes best use of the council's limited housing resources.

Key consultation feedback themes	Response to the feedback and rationale for the recommendation to proceed with the proposal	
	Current wording	Change to be made following feedback (in bold)
	<p>Succession rights before and after 1 April 2013</p> <p>In relation to tenancies that started before 1 April 2013, a person can succeed to a council tenancy on the death of a tenant if they are the tenant's spouse, civil partner or other close family member.</p> <p>From 1 April 2013 new tenancies can only be succeeded to by a spouse or partner. Where other family members have been resident in the property for the previous 12 months and the property is suitable according to their housing needs, we will permit a succession to the tenancy.</p> <p>Where there is under-occupation or the property is unsuitable due to an occupancy criteria e.g. an over 55 block we will enable the family member to be offered the tenancy of an alternative, suitably sized property.</p>	<p>Succession rights before and after 1 April 2013</p> <p>In relation to tenancies that started before 1 April 2013, a person can succeed to a council tenancy on the death of a tenant if they are the tenant's spouse, civil partner or other close family member.</p> <p>From 1 April 2013 new tenancies can only be succeeded to by a spouse or partner. Where other family members [as defined by Section 113 of the Housing Act 1985], have been resident in the property with the late successor tenant for the previous 5 years or the life of the tenancy (whichever is longer) and the property is suitable according to their housing needs, we will permit a succession to the tenancy.</p> <p>Where there is under-occupation or the property is unsuitable due to an occupancy criteria e.g. an over 55 block, we will enable the family member to be offered the tenancy of an alternative, suitably sized property.</p>

Key consultation feedback themes	Response to the feedback and rationale for the recommendation to proceed with the proposal	
		<p>Family members applying for a succession will be barred from succeeding a tenancy if they own a residential property anywhere within the United Kingdom or internationally.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary succession <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarification is provided to specify the definition of other family members. 2. An amendment has been made to the length of time a person should have resided with the late successor tenant raising the current timeframe from 12 months to 5 years or the life of the tenancy (whichever is longer) and if the council may owe a housing duty as defined within the section 189 of the Housing Act (1996). This would mirror the overarching eligibility criteria for any resident to join the Housing Register, to be living in the borough for 5 years at the point of application. 3. An additional statement has been inserted to clarify that the applicant seeking to succeed a tenancy will be barred from a succession if they already own a residential property within the United Kingdom or internationally. This is to ensure fairness and makes best use of the council's limited housing resources. 	
	<p>Current wording</p>	<p>Change to be made following feedback (in bold)</p>
	<p>Discretionary succession</p> <p>In certain circumstances the council or Partners for Improvement in Islington may grant the tenancy of a property to people resident in the property who were members of the tenant's family if there had already been a succession. This is known as a discretionary succession.</p> <p>Where a discretionary succession is agreed, consideration will be</p>	<p>Discretionary succession</p> <p>In certain circumstances the council or Partners for Improvement in Islington may grant the tenancy of a property to people resident in the property who were members of the tenant's family [as defined by Section 113 of the Housing Act 1985], if there had already been a succession. This is known as a discretionary succession.</p> <p>Discretionary successions may be approved in cases where the</p>

Key consultation feedback themes	Response to the feedback and rationale for the recommendation to proceed with the proposal	
	<p>given to the suitability of the property being occupied. A tenancy will be granted for the occupied property if it is of the right size and does not have adaptations or features required by disabled people and there are no arrears on the applicant's account. Right size means the household will not under occupy the property according to the council's rehousing standards.</p> <p>Applicants agreed for discretionary successions that are under-occupying or occupying an adapted property may be offered rehousing in another suitable property. These applicants will be given 150 points"</p>	<p>applicant has resided with the late successor tenant for the previous 5 years or the life of the tenancy (whichever is longer) and if the council may owe a housing duty as defined within the section 189 of the Housing Act (1996).</p> <p>Where a discretionary succession is agreed, consideration will be given to the suitability of the property being occupied. A tenancy will be granted for the occupied property if it is of the right size and does not have adaptations or features required by disabled people and there are no arrears on the applicant's account. Right size means the household will not under occupy the property according to the council's rehousing standards.</p> <p>Applicants agreed for discretionary successions that are under-occupying or occupying an adapted property may be offered rehousing in another suitable property. These applicants will be given 150 points.</p> <p>Family members applying for a succession will be barred from succeeding a tenancy if they own a residential property anywhere within the United Kingdom or internationally.</p>

54. Equalities Impact Assessment

55. During and following the development of the recommendations an equalities impact assessment has continuously been carried out attempting to identify any unintended consequences of the proposed Scheme changes.

56. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) considers whether any particular group of people is affected adversely as a result of a Scheme change which, if it does, might result in the Scheme being amended. The EIA categorises each applicant (where we have the information) by

Ethnicity

Religion or belief

Family Type

Pregnant or not

Sexuality

Disability

Age

And gender now compared with birth

57. Below is a summary of the much larger assessment.

58. The possible impact of proposed changes is spread very evenly across the register and applicants with protected characteristics are not disproportionately affected.

59. In some cases, the percentage of applicants, in a specific cohort, affected is reasonably high but the numbers are so small that they are not statistically significant.

60. No protected characteristic group is disproportionately affected.

61. Next Steps

62. Following approval by Executive, the project will move into stage 2 as follows:

63. Full mapping out of the new Scheme will need to take place with the Information Technology system, to make sure the I.T functionality reflects the new Scheme. This part of the project will be undertaken by the IDS team at Islington Council and the IT provider.

64. Communication and Training Plan. As with previous Allocations Scheme reviews the Council will need to deal with a large number of enquiries from applicants whose priority has changed. This will undoubtedly be reflected in Members' case work. To mitigate this, as much as possible, the Council and Housing Association partners will develop and implement

a robust communications and training plan. This will include extensive work to help applicants understand the new Scheme and what it means for their application, offering advice and assistance when needed.

65. Re-housing Applications. Applicants will be given time to review their current application and re-register to make sure their application reflects their needs and so that they can be assessed against the new Scheme and placed in the relevant priority band.

66. Timetable

The proposed implementation timetable is as follows:

- May to September 2023 I.T. changes preparation
- September 2023 – November 2023 Comms and Training Plan
- November 2023 I.T. changes & testing
- November and December 2023 System and housing options training
- January and February 2023 Re-registration of applicants as necessary
- March 2024 “Go live”

67. Review of the Housing Allocations scheme

68. The Housing Allocations scheme will be the subject of an annual review to ensure there are no un-intended consequences following the introduction of the changes contained within this report and the outcome of this review reported publicly.

69. A formal and comprehensive review will be undertaken in 2026 with a new housing allocations scheme proposed towards the end of 2026/2027 financial year.

70. Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

1. No equalities issues – full EIA carried out, when implemented the revised Scheme will be reviewed at 12, 24 and 36th months for any unintended consequences.

(b) Risk Management

2. If a decision is made not to approve the recommended changes it is highly likely given the data analysis over the last four years that the number of applicants on the housing register and in housing need will continue to rise, along with the number of households placed in temporary accommodation.

Implications

71. Financial Implications

72. The package of measures proposed in this consultation are not currently quantifiable. The measures proposed in this package are designed to improve the

efficiency and effectiveness of the Housing service's operations. The measures are not designed as part of any existing or proposed savings.

73. In evaluating the package of measures in the Housing Revenue Account and in the Housing General Fund it is possible that they will reduce spending and total costs. The financial upside from the measures may come from the likely reduction in numbers in TA, time spent in TA, and the level of HRA cases in TA.

74. Measures relating to prioritising Domestic violence cases could have financial upsides. They can be shown to realise significant savings in the HRA. Currently those living in social housing who are victims of domestic violence may be housed in TA pending them being offered alternative accommodation. This leads to often long periods where tenants occupy TA and retain residency rights on their existing vacant property, paid for by the HRA after the first 12 months of occupancy. The current proposal would reduce the time period of those cases in TA, thereby reducing the cost to the HRA. The HRA pays for a significant amount of TA, over the last 3 years the HRA has been charged:

Financial Year	HRA TA Cost (£)
2019-2020	650,645.00
2020-2021	652,555.00
2021-2022	878,767.00

75. Of the HRA cases in TA, based on FY2021/22 figures, 67.25% related to domestic violence. If 50% of these domestic violence cases can be reduced through the measures in the consultation it is possible to realise up to a £295,485 reduction in costs based on FY2021/22 figures.

76. There is the possibility for costs either upfront or on a recurring basis for any adaptations to the working of the IT system to make sure it can provide the necessary functionality for the new allocations scheme. It is not currently possible to quantify this cost.

Legal Implications

77. The revised Housing Allocation Scheme meets the statutory requirements of Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. Furthermore, in drafting the Scheme, consideration has been given to the relevant statutory guidance and the Equalities Impact Statement.

78. The consultation responses have been considered and some amendments are proposed. The amendments relate to succession rights after 1 April 2013 and discretionary successions; the proposed amendments are in accordance with Part 6

of the Housing Act 1996. They will not lead to a major change in policy, are minor in nature and therefore no further consultation is required.

Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

79. There are no known environmental implications associated with this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

80. The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

81. There are no equalities issues – full EIA carried out, when implemented the revised Scheme will be reviewed at 12, 24 and 36th months for any unintended consequences.

Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

82. The implementation of the new housing allocations scheme will make Islington a more equal place to live and also promote the council's CARE values.

Appendices:

- Appendix One The proposed new Housing Allocations scheme.
- Appendix Two The proposed changes to the Housing Allocations scheme
- Appendix Three The Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers:

- None

Final report clearance:

Approved by:

Cllr O'Halloran Executive Member for Homes and Communities

Date: 3rd July 2023

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