

Proposed Changes to the Allocations Policy

Item no	Topic	Section	Outcome
1.	Refusals	3.8 (f)	<p>Applicants who repeatedly select and/or view properties which they have no intention of taking</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances applicants can be suspended from participating if they repeatedly select and or view properties which they have no intention of accepting.</p>
2.	12 month restriction for customers applying to re-join the register	3.8 (a)	Clarification that applicants who are housed via Gateway to Homechoice or who mutually exchange are suspended from bidding for 12 months
3.	Right to Move	4.8	Existing social housing tenants who need to move due to work are exempt from local connection requirements set out in section 4.4
4.	Effective date	4.10	Clarification of how the effective date is determined when the birth of a baby entitles the family to a larger property
5.	Nominations to move on from supported housing	Chapter 5 Bands A and B	The existing policy awards applicants who are ready to move on from specified supported housing schemes a Band A. It is proposed that the partner organisation has the discretion to award a Band A or B
6.	Reduced preference	Chapter 5 - Band D	Clarification that reduced preference does not apply to existing Council or RP tenants whose financial resources exceed financial thresholds
7.	Reduced preference	Chapter 5 - Band D	Updated wording to show that the behaviour of a tenant or a member of the household could affect their suitability to be a tenant
8.	Reduced preference	Chapter 5 - Band D	Applicants who have been accepted as homeless and who are in temporary accommodation may have their preference reduced and placed in Band D if they are in rent arrears
9.	Welfare Matrix	5.10	New welfare matrix makes clear that no additional priority is awarded where the need to move and degree of vulnerability are considered to be low
10.	Deliberately making housing circumstances worse	5.16	Applicants who have deliberately made their situation worse are assessed on the basis of their previous accommodation. The section has been changed to include people who move to smaller private rented accommodation and introduced a review after 12 months
11.	Owner occupiers	5.17 – 5.21	These sections have been reworded to clarify the position of owner occupiers on the housing register.

Appendix B

12.	Bungalows – no restrictions/age restrictions	7.10 and 7.11	Updated terminology with regard to bungalows. Bungalows are described as either age restricted or general needs
13.	Direct lets	7.12	<p>The circumstances in which a direct let can be made have been amended to include management moves in exceptional circumstances and the Essex-wide agreement for victims of domestic violence</p> <p>Properties which are direct let are not advertised but feedback is given on the Gateway to Homechoice website</p>
14.	Time bidding restrictions	7.17	Some applicants are subject to time limited bidding restrictions. This section sets out what types of applicant this applies to and what sanctions are available if they fail to bid for appropriate properties
15.	Offers of accommodation	8.4	At the point of offering a tenancy the applicant's current circumstances will be checked to ensure they have the same level of housing need and references and rent in advance may be required
16.	Shortlisting	8.15	If a property cannot be let promptly and applicants in Bands A – C have been exhausted the property may be readvertised
17.	How the policy operates	8.14 – 8.15	As a result of an ombudsman judgement relating to an allocations policy in another area of the country this section makes clear that registered providers may have policies which differ from the Gateway to Homechoice policy
18.	Reviews & Appeals	Chapter 9	The wording has been updated so that there is a clear distinction between a review and an appeal.