CABINET 20th FEBRUARY 2023

Subject: COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP – EMERGENCY SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Purpose: To provide the Cabinet with the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To consider the findings of the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group established to develop an Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy and to recommend its adoption to Cabinet and Council as an interim measure pending the completion of a review of the Social Housing Allocations Policy i.e

- 1. To recommend the Emergency Interim Housing Allocation Policy be approved by Council;
- 2. To recommend that Council approve that the current Choice Based Lettings Policy be suspended for approximately one year, and the Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocations Policy be implemented;
- 3. To recommend that the Scrutiny Committee receive updates at every meeting from officers on the effectiveness of the change;
- **4.** To recommend that the content of the update reports include data for the previous period referring to:
 - Proportion of properties directly matched and those advertised
 - Banding of Clients directly matched
 - Number of properties directly matched and advertised by each community connection area, type of property and landlord
 - Proportion of direct matches that were successful
 - Number of direct matches where the client requests a review of the allocation, and the outcome of those reviews
 - Number of direct matches where the client refuses the allocation but doesn't request a review

Reasons:

The adoption of the Emergency Social Housing Allocation Policy is required to address the unprecedented demand being experienced for Social Housing at the present time.

Cabinet Decision Required YES – 20th February 2023

Council Decision Required No

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Linda Evans – Homes and Deputy Leader



Directorate:	Designations:	Tel:
Name of Head of Service:		Email addresses:
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CABINET 20th FEBRUARY 2023

SUBJECT

COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATIONS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PRE- SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP – EMERGENCY SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

At its meeting held on the 29th September 2022 the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Pre-Scrutiny Task & Finish Group to develop an Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy for Carmarthenshire to address the unprecedented situation where the Council, as with all Welsh Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords, was facing increased demand for social housing that was exceeding the level of supply, with the position having significantly worsened over recent weeks due to a number of external factors.

In selecting this topic for review the committee identified:

- A severe shortage of affordable housing across the county both in Social Housing and the Private Rented Sector
- The Authority had a duty to house persons who were presenting as homeless or facing homelessness
- With more and more applicants for social housing in severe need, the current letting policy
 was not fit for purpose and the Council needed to create an interim fairer, more transparent
 housing register better suited to the current situation in the county

Main Scope and Aims of the Group

The main Scope and Aims of the group were agreed as follows:

- To agree a simplified Interim Social Housing Allocations Policy based on data and evidence
- To create a transparent process for allocating homes during the current emergency period
- To align the development of a policy with the current review of the Social Housing Allocations Policy and the development of the Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan in line with Welsh Government Policy to make homelessness rare, brief and unrepeated
- To develop an Emergency Interim Housing Allocations Policy and make recommendations to the Cabinet and Council for approval

The attached report details the Task and Finish Group's findings and recommendation to the Cabinet / Council for approval

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

1 Task and Finish Report
2. Draft Emergency Social Housing Allocations
Policy

Cyngor Sir Gâr

Carmarthenshire

County Council

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Linda Rees Jones Head of Administration and Law

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

A thorough Equality Impact Assessment is being carried out and will be made available once completed

Legal

Advice from Counsel has been received to ensure that the policy complies with all current legislation

Finance

As outlined in the 2023/24 Draft budget published on 13 December 2022, additional funding has been allocated to the Homelessness Prevention Budget line. This funding is to support local authorities to continue our 'no-one left out' approach and support ongoing homelessness prevention and relief interventions across Wales.

'No one left out' funding

Of this funding, WG are allocating £15m in 2023/24 to support the continuation of the 'no-one left out' approach. The purpose of the funding will be in line with the funding WG allocated in 2022/23. The 2023/24 allocation formula is 85% based on demand (in terms of average numbers in TA, TA costs and statutory demand for services).

The indicative allocation of 'No one left out' funding for Carmarthenshire for 2023/24 is £622,348.

Risk Management Issues

Failure to introduce the interim policy will risk people being homeless for longer than they need be and also an increase in people in temporary accommodation and people in TA for too long.



CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below Signed: Linda Rees Jones **Head of Administration and Law** (Please specify the outcomes of consultations undertaken where they arise against the following headings) 1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination NO – this is a report produced by the Scrutiny Committee **Scrutiny Committee** Date the report was considered:-**Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-**2.Local Member(s) Not applicable 3. Community / Town Council Not applicable 4. Relevant Partners Registered Social Landlords who are part of the Common Allocations Policy 5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations Not applicable

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED

YES

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

