

Cabinet



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27th April 2017

A meeting of the **Cabinet** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer on **Monday 08 May 2017 at 10.00am**

At the discretion of the Chairman, a short break will be taken after the meeting has been running for approximately one and a half hours

Members of the public who wish to ask a question or speak on an agenda item are requested to arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. It will not always be possible to accommodate requests after that time. This is to allow time for the Committee Chair to rearrange the order of items on the agenda for the convenience of members of the public. Further information on the procedure for public speaking can be obtained from Democratic Services, Tel: 01263 516010, Email: democraticservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Anyone attending this meeting may take photographs, film or audio-record the proceedings and report on the meeting. Anyone wishing to do so should inform the Chairman. If you are a member of the public and you wish to speak on an item on the agenda, please be aware that you may be filmed or photographed.

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: Mrs S Arnold, Mr N Dixon, Mr T FitzPatrick, Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, Mrs J Oliver, Mr W Northam, Miss B Palmer, Mr R Price, Ms M Prior

All other Members of the Council for information.
Members of the Management Team, appropriate Officers, Press and Public.



If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance
If you would like any document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us

Heads of Paid Service: Nick Baker & Steve Blatch
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A G E N D A

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES

(page 7)

To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 03 April 2017.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To receive questions from the public, if any.

4. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To determine any other items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The Code of Conduct for Members requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest.

6. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

To receive oral questions from Members, if any.

7. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OR COUNCIL FOR RECONSIDERATION

To consider matters referred to the Cabinet (whether by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or by the Council) for reconsideration by the Cabinet in accordance with the provisions within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules or the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

8. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the Housing Allocations report at their meeting held on 12th April 2017. As a result of the discussions at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee a change has been made to the scheme to clarify when an applicant will be demoted from Band 1 to Band 2 as a result of rent arrears (section 4 of the report).

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PLANNING POLICY & BUILT HERITAGE WORKING PARTY

At the meeting of the Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party meeting held on 24th April 2017, the following recommendations were made:

1. **To recommend that Cabinet accepts and publishes the Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study as a source of evidence to support the emerging Local Plan for North Norfolk to cover the period 2016-2036.**

2. To recommend that Cabinet:

- a) Accepts and publishes part one the HELAA to support the emerging Local Plan for North Norfolk to cover the period 2016-2036.
- b) That delegated authority is given to Planning Policy Manager to undertake minor amendments to the report and associated mapping in order to publish.

10. HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME

(page 12)

(Appendix A– p.20) (Appendix B – p.48)

Summary:

**Council
Decision**

The current Housing Allocations Scheme was approved by Full Council in December 2012 and went live on 18 October 2013. Following adoption of the Housing Allocations Scheme further statutory guidance and statutory regulations have been issued and whilst reviews of the scheme have shown that it is operating effectively, a number of operational changes are now required. On this basis a review of the current Housing Allocations Scheme was undertaken and a new Housing Allocations Scheme has been written which reflects statutory guidance and regulations and which addresses the operational changes required to ensure the scheme operates efficiently and effectively. The proposed new Housing Allocations Scheme has been subject to consultation with Registered Providers, local Housing Associations, Norfolk County Council and providers of supported housing in North Norfolk and was subject to pre-Scrutiny on 12 April 2017. This report recommends that Full Council adopt the new Housing Allocations Scheme.

Options considered:

1: Do nothing. This option was not considered appropriate as statutory guidance and regulations had been issued since the current Housing Allocations Scheme was approved and a number of changes are required to ensure that the scheme continues to operate effectively for the Council and Partner Registered Providers.

2: Review the Housing Allocations Scheme. This option was adopted as it will ensure that the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme remains fit for purpose, reflects recent statutory guidance and regulations and meets the needs of both the Council and our Partner Registered Providers.

Conclusions:

The current Housing Allocations Scheme has been in use since 18 October 2013 and reviews have shown that the scheme is operating well and meeting the Council's requirements for the scheme. However there is now a need to review the scheme as some operational changes are needed, to reflect statutory guidance and regulations which have been issued since the 2012 scheme was adopted and in addition to ensure the scheme addresses the requirements of the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Act. As a result of the review a new Housing Allocations Scheme has been produced which retains the fundamental provisions of the current scheme but which contains a number of changes which will ensure the scheme continues to operate effectively, is lawful and meets the needs

of the Council and Registered Providers. Once adopted there will be a period of implementation before the scheme can go live reflecting the fact the need for IT changes and for applicants to re-apply.

- Recommendations:**
- 1. Cabinet recommends that Full Council adopts the new Housing Allocations Scheme.**
 - 2. Cabinet recommends to Full Council that up to £20,000 is made available through the capital programme towards the cost of the required IT changes for the implementation of the Housing Allocations Scheme to be funded from capital receipts.**

Reason for Recommendations:

To support the Council's Corporate Plan priority to:

To address housing and infrastructure for local people whilst meeting the market demand for housing by ensuring that the Housing Allocations Scheme continues to ensure the effective use of the affordable housing supply across North Norfolk.

Cabinet member(s): Cllr R Price
Ward member(s): All
Contact Officer: Nicola Turner
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and e-mail: nicola.turner@north-norfolk.gov.uk

11. BIG SOCIETY FUND ANNUAL REPORT

(page 61)

Summary: This report provides an update on the operation of the Big Society Fund during the last financial year.

Conclusions:

Cabinet Decision

The North Norfolk Big Society Fund has successfully achieved its expected outcomes following its fifth year of operation. The current management arrangements, administrative and decision making process are considered effective. The Fund has enabled a wide variety of projects to be implemented for the benefit of communities across North Norfolk.

Recommendations: **Cabinet is requested to note the success of the Big Society Fund and to recommend to Council:**

That the Big Society Fund grant scheme should continue at its current level of funding (£225,000) for another year.

Reasons for Recommendations:

To ensure Cabinet is informed about the Big Society Fund during its fifth year of operation.

To enable the continuation of the Big Society Fund during 2017/ 18.

Cabinet member(s): Cllr R Price
Ward member(s): All
Contact Officer: Nicola Turner
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12. PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL GRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) RESOURCES

(page 69)

Summary:

**Cabinet
Decision**

The Digital Transformation Programme is generating a significant increase in the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to support business processes and improve the reporting and presentation of information to the public, members and officers.

In order to deliver this work-stream this report requests the release of previously identified funding to fund a fixed term (two years) post with the IT team to support the increased use of GIS within the Council.

Options considered:

Outsourcing of data management and GIS systems activities have been assessed and discounted on practicability and value for money grounds.

Increased use of Service based staff is not feasible because of other work demands and coordination and control issues.

Fixed term additional resource with the appropriate skills and experience. This is identified as the most appropriate solution to validating the business case for a possible future permanent resource.

Conclusions:

The provision of funding for an additional post (fixed term) will allow the immediate requirements to be met whilst assessing the long term demand and resource requirement to provide adequate support for service business processes that will be enhanced by the use of GIS systems and data.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet approves the release of £57,000 (previously identified Digital Transformation funding) to allow the establishment of a two year fixed term post within the GIS team of the IT section.

Reasons for
Recommendations:

The recruitment of an additional post with appropriate GIS skills and experience will ensure that the Council has the capacity to deploy GIS tools and data in accordance with Council and Service priorities.

Making the post fixed term will allow validation of the business case for establishing a sustainable resource commensurate with the needs of the Council.

Cabinet member(s):
Ward member(s)
Contact Officer
telephone
and e-mail:

Cllr T FitzPatrick
All
Sean Kelly
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13. MEASURED TERM CONTRACT FOR SMALL SCALE COASTAL WORKS (page 72)

Summary: This report sets out the need for renewing the proven and effective Coastal Measured Term Contract (MTC). It sets out why the MTC is being tendered and the need to progress appointment in order to ensure continued and uninterrupted access for reactive and emergency works. Cabinet resolution is sought that following a tender process, authority is delegated to appoint the contract with subsequent notification to members. This will facilitate a seamless transition.

Options considered:

- Do nothing – not renew the Measured Term Contract
- Incorporate into a wider Coastal Partnership East approach
- Tender for renewed NNDC Measured Term Contract **without** Cabinet resolutions sought through this report
- Tender for renewed NNDC Measured Term Contract **with** Cabinet resolutions sought through this report

Conclusions: Over the past five years the Coastal Measured Term Contract has proven to have been effective at delivering small scale coastal works efficiently whilst providing good value for money.

**Cabinet
Decision**

The current contract has run its full contract term and terminates on 31 May 2017. It is desirable to ensure arrangements are in place for a new MTC so that there is no gap in provision.

It is recommended that appointment of the MTC contract is delegated to Corporate Director with consultation with the Portfolio Holder and that this is subsequently reported to members.

Recommendations: That Cabinet resolves:

- (a) to delegate authority to the Corporate Director (SB) in consultation with Cabinet Member for Coastal Management to appoint to the Coastal Measured Term Contract.**
- (b) that following appointment members are subsequently notified.**

Reasons for Recommendations: To ensure continuity of delivery of emergency and small scale coastal works.

Cabinet member(s): Cllr A Fitch-Tillett
Ward member(s): Coastal wards
Contact Officer: Rob Goodliffe
telephone: 01263 516321
and e-mail: rob.goodliffe@north-norfolk.gov.uk

14. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To pass the following resolution:

“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs _ of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

15. PRIVATE BUSINESS

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday 03 April 2017 at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer at 10.00am

Members Present: Mrs S Arnold Mrs J Oliver
Mr N Dixon Mr R Price
Mrs A Fitch-Tillett Ms M Prior
Mr T FitzPatrick (Chairman)
Mr W Northam

Also attending:

Mrs S Butikofer Mr R Shepherd
Mr N Pearce Mr B Smith
Mr J Rest Mrs K Ward
Mr R Reynolds Mr D Young

Officers in Attendance:

The Corporate Directors, the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Finance and Asset Management, the Democratic Services Team Leader and the Democratic Services Officer.

116. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Miss B Palmer

117. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 06 March 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

118. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None

119. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

120. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

121. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

The Leader confirmed that Members could ask questions as each item arose.

122. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OR COUNCIL FOR RECONSIDERATION

None

123. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

None

124. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PLANNING POLICY & BUILT HERITAGE WORKING PARTY

This item was introduced and proposed by Mrs S Arnold, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Planning Policy and the Chairman of the Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working Party.

1. Custom and Self Build Housebuilding Register

It was proposed to apply a “local connection” test to the register, splitting it in to two parts for ease of operation and checking.

It was also proposed to introduce administration fees to reflect the ongoing administration that would be required to ensure the register was correct and up-to-date.

2. Revised Housing Incentive Scheme

The scheme had been very successful, mostly in the East of the District. Until the Local Plan allocated new sites it was unlikely that larger sites would be promoted for development in the west. It was therefore recommended that a revised scheme be introduced.

Given the general improvement in market conditions and the inclusion of Starter Homes within the planning definition of affordable homes it was considered that the proportion of affordable homes on Incentive Scheme proposals should be slightly increased from the current 20% to 25% inclusive of the new Starter Homes category.

3. Recreation Impacts Study - Visitor Surveys at European Protected Sites

This document was required to support the emerging Local Plan for North Norfolk.

4. Ryburgh Proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation

An application for the designation of a proposed Neighbourhood Planning Application covering the parish of Ryburgh had been submitted by the parish chair following an advisory meeting with officers on the 16 February 2017. A planning authority must designate a neighbourhood area if it received a valid application, some or all of the area has not yet been designated and none of that area extended outside the parish council.

All four recommendations were seconded by Ms M Prior and taken en bloc.

RESOLVED

1. Custom and Self Build Housebuilding Register

To accept the recommendation of the Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working Party regarding the proposed charges for entry on the self-build register and splitting the register in to two parts.

2. Revised Housing Incentive Scheme

To accept the recommendation of the Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working that a revised scheme as outlined in Section 4 of the report is introduced.

3. Recreation Impacts Study - Visitor Surveys at European Protected Sites

To accept the recommendation of the Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working to accept and publish the Recreation Impact Study as a source of evidence to support the emerging Local Plan for North Norfolk to cover the period 2016-2036.

4. Ryburgh Proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation

To accept the following recommendation of the Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working Party:

1) The designation of the proposed Neighbourhood Planning Area covering Ryburgh Parish.

2) That delegated powers are given to the Planning Portfolio holder in conjunction with the Planning Policy Manager to designate Neighbourhood Planning Areas where applications relate to whole parish areas following consultation with the local Member(s).

125. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS

This item was introduced and proposed by Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, Portfolio Holder for Coastal Management and Environmental Services. She explained that the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 had come into force in October 2014 giving the Council new powers to implement Public Space Protection Orders to deal with a nuisance or an anti-social behaviour issue detrimental to the local community's life by imposing conditions on the use of a specific area of land.

The Council currently had 27 Dog Control Orders and 4 Designated Public Place Orders in force. Dog fouling was one of the anti-social behaviours which attracted the most complaints. However, public safety was also an issue. Designated Public Place Orders had ensured that towns had been safer on Friday and Saturday nights because of bans on alcohol in public spaces.

In January 2015 a report had come to Cabinet highlighting the changes in the legislation. Since then officers had assessed all the existing Orders to establish if they were still relevant, enforceable and necessary. This had taken time because of the diverse areas of the District involved. There had also been consultation with the public, the police, Town and Parish Councils, NNDC Members and local public groups. The consultation had been successful with over 100 comments received. Further research would be carried out on the recommendations from Natural England (Appendix 2).

It was seconded by Mrs S Arnold and

RESOLVED

That Cabinet, where no objections were received through the consultation, approve all Public Space Protection Orders as per officer recommendations contained within Appendix 1.

That Cabinet consider the comments received during the consultation process, as set out within Appendix 2, and approve the Public Space Protection Orders based on the officer recommendation also contained in Appendix 2.

126. DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY

This item was presented and proposed by Mr W Northam, the Portfolio Holder for Financial Services, Revenues and Benefits.

The report advised Members of the new schemes of discretionary rate reliefs announced by the government to assist and encourage the development and occupation of business premises. Councils had the power to apply Discretionary Rate Relief and NNDC's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy had been revised to reflect these changes.

In the 2016 Budget the Government had confirmed that the doubling of the Small Business Rate Relief from 50% to 100% would be made permanent from 1 April 2017. This encouraged jobs and businesses in rural areas where they could be a lifeline to the elderly and those in isolated communities. Rural Rate Relief applied to certain types of property in rural settlements with a population below 3,000. To qualify, the property should be the only general store, post office or food shop and have a rateable value of less than £8,500 or the only public house or petrol station and have a rateable value of less than £12,500. The property must be occupied. The Rate Relief would be fully funded by the Government.

Other categories of Rate relief included:

- a) Charitable rate relief: property wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes, occupied by a registered charity, e.g. charity shop. Occasionally applications would be refused if a charity had sufficient means to pay.
- b) Property, all or part of which was occupied for the purposes of a non-profit making organisation or club.
- c) Enterprise Zone Discount: 2 enterprise zones had been agreed within North Norfolk - Egmere Business Zone and Scottow Enterprise Park. Up to 100% business rate discount worth up to £55,000 a year for a 5 year period could be awarded to businesses starting up or relocating to these zones. This would be funded by the Government and would be a good incentive for businesses to come.
- d) Relief for local newspapers: this was government funded and would provide a rates discount for office space occupied by local newspapers worth up to £1,500 a year for 2 years from 1 April 2017.
- e) Hardship relief: ratepayers must satisfy the Council that they would be in hardship if relief was not applied and that their business benefits local people.

NNDC achieved a high proportion of business rates collection and compared favourably with other authorities.

In seconding the proposal Mr N Dixon explained that although Business Rates was a national scheme, as set by central government, the Council's policy was applying all the rate relief available and covered all the categories.

RESOLVED

To note this report and agree that the Rate Relief Policy is revised as indicated in Appendix A.

The meeting ended at 10.18 am

Chairman

Housing Allocations Scheme

Summary: The current Housing Allocations Scheme was approved by Full Council in December 2012 and went live on 18 October 2013. Following adoption of the Housing Allocations Scheme further statutory guidance and statutory regulations have been issued and whilst reviews of the scheme have shown that it is operating effectively, a number of operational changes are now required. On this basis a review of the current Housing Allocations Scheme was undertaken and a new Housing Allocations Scheme has been written which reflects statutory guidance and regulations and which addresses the operational changes required to ensure the scheme operates efficiently and effectively. The proposed new Housing Allocations Scheme has been subject to consultation with Registered Providers, local Housing Associations, Norfolk County Council and providers of supported housing in North Norfolk and was subject to pre-Scrutiny on 12 April 2017. This report recommends that Full Council adopt the new Housing Allocations Scheme.

Options considered:

1: Do nothing. This option was not considered appropriate as statutory guidance and regulations had been issued since the current Housing Allocations Scheme was approved and a number of changes are required to ensure that the scheme continues to operate effectively for the Council and Partner Registered Providers.

2: Review the Housing Allocations Scheme. This option was adopted as will ensure that the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme remains fit for purpose, reflects recent statutory guidance and regulations and meets the needs of both the Council and our Partner Registered Providers.

Conclusions: The current Housing Allocations Scheme has been in use since 18 October 2013 and reviews have shown that the scheme is operating well and meeting the Council's requirements for the scheme. However there is now a need to review the scheme as some operational changes are needed, to reflect statutory guidance and

regulations which have been issued since the 2012 scheme was adopted and in addition to ensure the scheme addresses the requirements of the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Act. As a result of the review a new Housing Allocations Scheme has been produced which retains the fundamental provisions of the current scheme but which contains a number of changes which will ensure the scheme continues to operate effectively, is lawful and meets the needs of the Council and Registered Providers. Once adopted there will be a period of implementation before the scheme can go live reflecting the fact the need for IT changes and for applicants to re-apply.

Recommendations:

1. **Cabinet recommends that Full Council adopts the new Housing Allocations Scheme.**
2. **Cabinet recommends to Full Council that up to £20,000 is made available through the capital programme towards the cost of the required IT changes for the implementation of the Housing Allocations Scheme to be funded from capital receipts.**

Reason for Recommendations:

- To support the Council's Corporate Plan priority to:
- To address housing and infrastructure for local people whilst meeting the market demand for housing by ensuring that the Housing Allocations Scheme continues to ensure the effective use of the affordable housing supply across North Norfolk.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report and which do not contain exempt information)

<i>Housing Allocations Scheme and Equality Impact Assessment</i>
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Cabinet Member(s) Cllr R Price	Ward(s) affected All
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Nicola Turner, 01263 516222, nicola.turner@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

1. Background

- 1.1 In December 2012, Full Council approved the adoption of a new Housing Allocations Scheme for the Council. The Housing

Allocations Scheme is used for the allocation of all properties advertised through the Council's choice based lettings scheme Your Choice Your Home. This scheme is a partnership with 8 Registered Provider Partners and the vast majority of all affordable properties in North Norfolk are allocated through the scheme.

- 1.2 The 2012 Housing Allocations Scheme introduced three housing registers within an overall Housing List. The Housing Register contains the households with the highest housing needs, these are households which the Council must give a reasonable preference to over those that do not have this preference. The Transfer Register contains all existing tenants of affordable housing in North Norfolk who are not eligible for the Housing Register. The Housing Options Register contains all applicants who are not eligible for the Housing or Transfer Registers.
- 1.3 The Housing Allocations Scheme was designed to maximise the number of properties which are allocated to households who have local connections to the area in which the available property is located whilst also meeting the requirement that households with a reasonable preference are given the required reasonable preference. The scheme therefore has a two stage allocation process, where all general need properties under Stage One are prioritised initially for applicants on the Housing Register, but if the property remains unlet, it is let through Stage Two to someone on the Housing Options Register or Transfer Register with priority given through the Local Allocations Agreement to households with a local connection to the parish in which the property is located or the adjoining parishes. Properties on Exception Housing Schemes are however, only let through Stage Two. In addition the scheme allows for up to 20% of all properties advertised to be let with priority for existing Housing Association tenants in North Norfolk, if there is no suitable tenant, the property is then let in accordance with the two stage process.
- 1.4 The current Housing Allocations Scheme went live on 18 October 2013 following a period for the necessary IT changes to be made and to allow for existing applicants to re-apply and provide the additional information required to assess their housing need. An initial review of whether the new Housing Allocations Scheme was delivering its key outcomes in terms of maximising the number of properties which are allocated to households with strong connections to towns and villages in North Norfolk was carried out after 6 and 12 months of operation of the Housing Allocation Scheme and the results reported to the July and December meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2014. A further review was carried out and reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 July 2016. The conclusions from these reviews was that the Housing Allocations Scheme was operating well, it was meeting statutory requirements and had increased the number of properties let using the Local Allocations Agreement so that households with local connections were prioritised for the property.
- 1.5 Despite the reviews showing that the scheme is operating as intended it has become increasingly clear that some changes are now needed to fully meet the operational requirements of the scheme and whilst

some of these changes can and are being made, others can only be made by amending the Housing Allocation Scheme. In addition it has become apparent that the changing welfare regime has led to changes in how Registered Providers operate and these changes need to be reflected in the Housing Allocation Scheme. Amending the scheme also allows for statutory guidance and regulations issued following the adoption of the current scheme to be taken into account and also provides an opportunity to reflect the provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Bill which is now awaiting Royal Assent which will impose an enhanced homelessness prevention role on the Council. A review of the current Housing Allocation Scheme was therefore undertaken to produce a new Housing Allocations Scheme, a copy of which is attached at Appendix A.

2 The new Housing Allocations Scheme

2.1 The new Housing Allocations Scheme builds upon and retains the fundamental elements of the current scheme of:

- Encouraging self-service and self help
- Providing choice by advertising vacancies for applicants to bid for
- Use of the two stage allocation process
- Three registers as transfer requests are managed through the scheme (Transfer Register and quota)
- Use of and wording of the Local Lettings Agreement.

2.2 The most significant changes made in the new Housing Allocation Scheme are:

- Tightening of the additional preference criteria for the Housing Register so that applicants who are entitled to this additional preference must have two years continuous residence OR one year's employment OR a family connection through residence of at least five years (residence of the applicant's parent, adult child or adult sibling). There are a number of exemptions to this.
- Applicants not entitled to additional preference on the grounds of a connection to North Norfolk will be considered after all applicants on the Housing Register who are entitled to the additional preference.

A number of other changes have been made which include:

- Providing additional preference for homeless full duty applicants by backdating their relevant date.
- Inclusion of the Right to Move provisions.
- Refining and adding to disqualification criteria for the Housing List and Housing Register.
- Inclusion of reduced priority provisions for the Housing Register.
- Changes to reflect the Homelessness Reduction Bill which is awaiting Royal Assent.
- Restricting applicant's choice in some limited circumstances.

- Requiring applicants on the top of at least one shortlist to identify which property they want to be considered for.
- Information on how decisions to award a Priority Band or agree a Direct Let are made.

There are a number of other changes which ensure that applicants are provided with information on how the scheme operates and their legal rights in relation to an allocation scheme and a number of clarifications as to the priority that different applicants will receive. Overall the changes are designed to ensure that the scheme continues to meet the Council's and Registered Providers needs and is lawful and reasonable. The transitional arrangements which apply for implementation of the new Housing Allocations Scheme are set out in the proposed scheme.

A change will be made to the Local Allocations Agreement which is not detailed in the Housing Allocations Scheme, as the status of Hoveton will be changed so that it is classed as a town and so will no longer be an adjoining parish of Ashmanhaugh, Horning, Neatishead and Tunstead.

- 2.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the new Housing Allocations Scheme with particular attention paid to the impact of the amended additional preference criteria as this is the most significant change which has been made. The assessment showed that generally there is no negative impact on applicants with a protected characteristic, however in relation to age there is a minor impact of the amended additional preference criteria for the Housing Register but this is not considered to be material and the change is therefore considered to be proportionate. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix B .

3 Consultation

- 3.1 The Housing Act 1996 requires that where a Council is proposing to amend its allocations scheme it must consult on the changes with all Registered Providers with whom it has nomination agreements for the allocation of housing. The proposed Housing Allocations Scheme has been subject to consultation with:
- All Registered Providers with homes in North Norfolk
 - Housing Associations in North Norfolk
 - Norfolk County Council
 - Supporting housing providers which operate in North Norfolk.
- The consultation period ran from 10 February 2017 to 27 March 2017.
- 3.2 Whilst only a limited number of responses were received in relation to the consultation on the new Housing Allocations Scheme a number of minor changes have been made to the scheme as a result of the comments received. Not all requests for changes have been accommodated due to the impact the requested changes would have had on the scheme. Parish and Town Councils were not consulted as the changes are predominately operational and the two stage allocation process remains.

4 Pre-Scrutiny

- 4.1 The new Housing Allocations Scheme was considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 April 2017. Following a thorough debate on the proposed scheme, the committee acknowledged the importance of the Housing Allocations Scheme and resolved to commend it to Cabinet and Full Council. As a result of the discussions at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee a change has been made to the scheme to clarify when an applicant will be demoted from Band 1 to Band 2 as a result of rent arrears.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 Following adoption of the Housing Allocation Scheme by Full Council, there will be a period of implementation whilst the necessary IT changes are made and to allow for applicants to re-apply ensuring that accurate and up to date information is available to assess their housing need in accordance with the new Housing Allocations Scheme.

6 Options Considered

- 6.1 Option 1: Do nothing. This option was not considered appropriate as statutory guidance and regulations had been issued since the current Housing Allocations Scheme was approved and a number of changes are required to ensure that the scheme continues to operate effectively for the Council and Partner Registered Providers.
- 6.2 Option 2: Review the Housing Allocations Scheme. This option was adopted as will ensure that the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme remains fit for purpose, reflects recent statutory guidance and regulations and meets the needs of both the Council and our Partner Registered Providers.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The current Housing Allocations Scheme has been in use since 18 October 2013 and reviews have shown that the scheme is operating well and meeting the Council's requirements for the scheme. However there is now a need to review the scheme as some operational changes are needed, to reflect statutory guidance and regulations which have been issued since the 2012 scheme was adopted and in addition to ensure the scheme addresses the requirements of the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Act. As a result of the review a new Housing Allocations Scheme has been produced which retains the fundamental provisions of the current scheme but which contains a number of changes which will ensure the scheme continues to operate effectively, is lawful and meets the needs of the Council and Registered Providers. Once adopted there will be a period of implementation before the scheme can go live reflecting the fact the need for IT changes and for applicants to re-apply.

8 Implications and Risks

- 8.1 The review of the Housing Allocations Scheme to produce a new Housing Allocations Scheme for adoption will ensure that the scheme continues to meet the needs of the Council and the Partner Registered Providers, is lawful and ensures the effective use of affordable housing across the district. If the Housing Allocations Scheme was not updated there is a risk that the scheme will overtime become ineffective, inflexible and will not allow the Council to respond to the new responsibilities which will be imposed through the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Act.

9 Financial Implications and Risks

- 9.1 There are no specific financial implications related to the adoption of a new Housing Allocations Scheme. There will be a cost to change the IT system for the Housing List and choice based lettings scheme to ensure that it operates in accordance with the new Housing Allocations Scheme. Through the Your Choice Your Home scheme it is expected that up to 40% of this cost could be recovered from the scheme Registered Providers Partners. On this basis and reflecting the existing funding available, it is expected that up to £20,000 will be required from the capital programme to meet the costs of the IT changes needed to implement the new scheme. This cost can be funded from capital receipts and it is recommended that the capital programme is updated accordingly.

10 Sustainability

- 10.1 There are no specific sustainability implications in relation to the Housing Allocations Scheme.

11 Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken which includes an assessment of the operation of the current Housing Allocations Scheme and the impact of the most significant change, the introduction of a tighter additional preference criteria of a connection to North Norfolk for applicants on the Housing Register. This showed that overall there is no negative impact on applicants with a protected characteristic although in relation to age there is some impact of this change on younger people. Overall however, the change is considered to be proportionate in light of the need to ensure that the scarce affordable housing resource is prioritized for applicants with connections to North Norfolk. It should be noted that there are a number of exemptions whereby this additional preference can be awarded to applicants who do not meet the criteria which will include some applicants with protected characteristics.

12 Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

- 12.1 There are no section 17 implications in relation to the Housing Allocations Scheme, however, the scheme does allow for applicants

who have been responsible for or have failed to prevent behaviour which means they are not suitable to be a tenant, including anti-social behaviour to be disqualified from joining the Housing List.

North Norfolk Housing Allocations Scheme

Introduction

The North Norfolk Housing Allocations scheme has been developed in accordance with the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Localism Act 2011, relevant statutory regulations and regard has been made to the Codes of Guidance and the Council's Homelessness Strategy, Tenancy Strategy and the public sector equality duty. In developing the Housing Allocations Scheme the provisions in the Homelessness Reduction Bill have also been considered. An Equality Impact Assessment of the Housing Allocations Scheme has undertaken and is available on request.

The North Norfolk Housing Allocations Scheme has been designed to be used by North Norfolk District Council and the Registered Providers and Housing Associations who participate in the North Norfolk Your Choice Your Home Scheme. Appendix 1 shows the Housing Associations and Registered Providers which take part in the Your Choice Your Home scheme.

Your Choice Your Home is a choice based lettings scheme where affordable homes for rent or sale as well as private rented homes are advertised and applicants "bid" for properties they are eligible for. The scheme will also apply to all affordable homes which are not advertised, for example Direct Lets or where the Council provides a nomination and sends the details of a potential tenant or tenants direct to a landlord. However, it is expected that the vast majority of all properties will be advertised through the Your Choice Your Home scheme.

All applicants applying to the Council to join the Housing List will be assessed in accordance with the Housing Allocations Scheme and placed within one of the three Housing Registers which make up the Housing List:

Housing Register – this register contains those qualifying applicants who have the most urgent housing needs.

Transfer Register – this register contains those qualifying applicants who are an existing tenant of a Housing Association or Registered Provider and live in the North Norfolk District Council area and do not qualify for the Housing Register as they do not have an urgent housing need.

Housing Options Register – this register contains those qualifying applicants who do not meet the qualification criteria for the Housing Register or Transfer Register.

Who is not eligible to join the Housing List?

Anyone who is deemed by primary legislation or statutory instruments not to be eligible. Currently this includes someone who is subject to immigration control, or is not habitually

resident in the Common Travel Area (CTA) or only has limited rights of residence in the CTA and does not meet one of the identified exceptions.

Eligibility and qualification may be assessed at the point when an application to join the Housing List is made and /or prior to an offer of a tenancy being made. In determining eligibility and qualification for the Housing List and the three registers, each application will be assessed on its individual merits, taking the needs of the applicant and any members of their household as a whole into account.

Housing List Disqualification Criteria

Applicants who meet the following Disqualification criteria will not be able to join the Housing List:

- Applicants who do not return application reviews within the required timescale or do not make any bids or have any contact with the scheme in a twelve month period.
- Applicants who are not able to verify their eligibility.
- Applicants who do not provide proof of identification and three months bank statements within two weeks of this being requested.
- Applicants who were rehoused through the Housing Allocations Scheme in the last twelve months where there has not been a change in their circumstances such that the property is no longer suitable for their needs.
- Applicants who fail to provide income information and details of any employment when they apply.
- Anyone under the age of 18, unless they are a Care Leaver, are leaving supported housing or have been assessed by Children Services as being ready for independent living.
- Applicants who are unsuitable to be a tenant as they or a member of their household have been responsible for (or failed to prevent) behaviour which means they are not suitable to be a tenant. This can include anti-social behaviour or eviction as a result of significant rent arrears or damage to a property, or intimidating any other applicant to influence their decision making on whether they bid for a property through the scheme.
- Applicants who have significant rent arrears (of eight weeks or more) where there is no agreed repayment plan in place.
- Providing false or misleading information or failing to mention information relevant to the application for housing and in particular where information is material to a decision as to whether the applicant is eligible and meets qualification or disqualification criteria for the Housing List, Housing Register, Transfer Register or Housing Options Register and whether additional or reduced preference should apply.
- Applicants who have sufficient financial resources to meet their housing need by buying an open market property which meets their housing needs. The test for

the Housing Register will be more stringent and will also consider the ability to rent a privately rented property to meet their housing needs. The Council will disregard any lump sum paid as a result of injury or disability to a current or former member of the regular or reserve services. In considering what financial resources the applicant has available, current or previous home ownership will be taken into account.

- An applicant who has deliberately worsened their housing circumstances in order to qualify for the Housing Register.
- An applicant who requires support or care to live independently and/or sustain a tenancy and there is no evidence that the required support and/or care package has been approved or is in place.

The above disqualification criteria will be applied when an application to join the Housing List is made or at any subsequent time when the application is reviewed (which may or may not be as result of addition information being received) which shows that a disqualification criteria applies.

Additional preference within the Housing List

For all adapted properties or properties specifically designed and built to be suitable for a wheelchair user, additional preference will be provided to those applicants that need the adaptations provided or who need to use a wheelchair inside their home. The advert for the property will state that priority will be given to applicants who need the adaptation(s) available or who need a wheelchair standard property. The additional preference will not enable an applicant on the Transfer Register or Housing Options Register to be considered above an applicant on the Housing Register who requires an adapted or wheelchair accessible property. Additional preference will be granted at the shortlisting stage for those applicants who have a housing need report which is not older than twelve months or which has been refreshed in the last twelve months. Where there is no suitable applicant who requires the adapted or wheelchair standard property the property shall be shortlisted in accordance with this Housing Allocations Scheme.

Additional preference will not be provided where the applicant bids for a property type or size which would not be suitable for their needs as demonstrated by the housing needs report and all such bids will be disregarded. For example, an applicant who requires a ground floor property as they cannot use stairs or safely use a stair lift will be disregarded for all bids for houses or upper floor flats.

Housing Register Qualification and Disqualification Criteria

To qualify for the Housing Register an applicant must fall into one of the reasonable preference criteria below:

- Applicants who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996

- Applicants who are owed a duty by any local housing authority in England under section 190(2), 193(2), 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996 or who occupy accommodation provided under section 192(3) of the Housing Act 1996
- Applicants who are occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
- Applicants who need to move on medical or welfare grounds including grounds relating to disability
- Applicants who need to move to a particular locality where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or others

OR meet one of the following criteria:

- Be a tenant of a Local Authority or Housing Association and need to move to North Norfolk to be nearer to work or to take up employment, where that employment is not short term or marginal, ancillary to work in another area or voluntary work (Right to Move).
- Be a tied tenant of a property rented in conjunction with agricultural employment and where the employer requires the accommodation in accordance with the provisions of the Rent Agricultural Act 1976.
- Are a tenant of a Housing Association on a fixed term tenancy and have been served notice that they no longer require the size or type of affordable property they occupy and cannot meet their needs in the market (where they do not meet another qualification criteria for the Housing Register).

The following Disqualification criteria will apply to the Housing Register:

- Applicants in supported housing who have not resided for at least six weeks in the accommodation.
- Applicants in supported housing who have not completed a tenancy sustainment course or where the support provider has not provided written confirmation that the applicant with immediate effect no longer requires supported housing.
- Those applicants who have not provided proof of identification, three months bank statements and for applicants in rented accommodation a copy of a current rent statement.
- Applicants who have deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate with the plan agreed between them and the Council as they were homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- Applicants who have not provided supporting information or evidence of their housing need which has been requested by the Council within the required timescale (including any agreed extension of time).
- Applicants who have significant rent arrears (of eight weeks or more) where an agreed repayment plan is in place and where payments of at least two months in accordance with the plan have been made (such applicants will be demoted from the Housing Register to the Transfer Register or Housing Options Register as applicable with their relevant date the date of application).

- Applicants who have not made any bids on suitable properties in six months (such applicants will be demoted from the Housing Register to the Housing Options Register or Transfer Register with their date of application as their new relevant date).
- Applicants owed the full homeless duty who have refused an offer of suitable accommodation (such applicants will be demoted from the Housing Register to the Housing Options Register with their date of application as their new relevant date).
- Applicants only interested in affordable housing to buy products.
- Applicants who are deemed to have worsened their housing circumstances.

Transfer Register Qualification and Disqualification Criteria

To qualify for the Transfer Register an applicant must meet the following qualification criteria:

- Be a tenant of a Housing Association or Registered Provider living in a property within the North Norfolk District Council area.

The following Disqualification Criteria shall apply:

- Those applicants who meet the qualification criteria for the Housing Register or Housing Options Register.
- Applicants only interested in affordable housing to buy products.

Housing Options Register Disqualification Criteria

The following Disqualification Criteria shall apply:

- Those applicants who meet the qualification criteria for the Housing Register or Transfer Register.

Housing Register

The Housing Register is divided into three bands to reflect the additional preference given to some applicants to reflect more urgent housing needs. The three bands in descending order of priority are:

- Priority Band
- Band 1
- Band 2

In order to determine whether an applicant qualifies for the Housing Register and which band is appropriate the Council will request that the applicant provides additional information. Where qualification for the Housing Register is on the basis of medical or welfare need, hardship or the Right to Move, the Council will require appropriate supporting evidence to be provided by the applicant of the need to move. Further guidance on the

evidence required will be provided at the point of application. Pending this information the applicant may be placed on the Housing Options Register or Transfer Register as appropriate.

Priority Band

To qualify for the Priority Band, an applicant must have an immediate, emergency or critical housing need. Qualification will be determined by the Virtual Review Group. Appendix 2 details the process for awarding a Priority Band and examples of when a Priority Band may be agreed. The Priority Band will last for three months. Extensions for further periods of six weeks may only be agreed by the Virtual Review Group if there have been no vacancies of suitable properties for which the applicant is eligible or the applicant has not been successful with their bids in the previous period.

Band 1

Band 1 will contain:

- Applicants who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (owed the full homeless duty by the Council).
- Applicants who are threatened with homelessness within twelve weeks and deemed likely to have a priority need, have a local connection (section 199 of the Housing Act 1996) and who are not likely to be homeless intentionally.
- Applicants who are occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions and have an urgent housing need.
- Applicants who have an urgent need to move on medical or welfare grounds including grounds relating to disability.
- Applicants who have an urgent need to move to a particular locality where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or others.
- Applicants who are a tenant of a Local Authority or Housing Association and have a need to move to North Norfolk to be nearer to work or take up employment, where that employment is not short term or marginal, ancillary to work in another area or voluntary work (Right to Move).

Band 2

Band 2 will contain:

- Applicants who are owed a duty by any local housing authority in England under section 190(2), 193(2), 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996 or who occupy accommodation provided under section 192(3) of the Housing Act 1996.
- Applicants who are homeless and do not have a priority need or are intentionally homeless.
- Applicants who are threatened with homelessness within 56 days and who are deemed not likely to have a priority need or are likely to be intentionally homeless.

- Applicants who are occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
- Applicants who need to move on medical or welfare grounds including grounds relating to disability.
- Applicants who need to move to a particular locality where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or others.
- Applicants who are a tied tenant of a property rented in conjunction with agricultural employment and where the employer requires the accommodation in accordance with the provisions of the Rent Agricultural Act 1976.
- Are a tenant of a Housing Association on a fixed term tenancy and have been served notice that they no longer require the size or type of affordable property they occupy and cannot meet their needs in the market (where they do not meet another qualification criteria for the Housing Register).
- Are a tenant of a Housing Association or Registered Provider of a property which is leased from another person and the lease has expired or where planning permission has been granted to redevelop the property as part of a comprehensive scheme to provide affordable housing.

In considering whether an applicant resides in insanitary housing conditions and how urgent the need to move is to move the following will be considered:

- Whether a Housing Health and Safety Rating System inspection of the property has determined that the property has at least one Category One hazard and it is not possible or practical to reduce this to a Category Two Hazard.
- Whether enforcement action has been/will be taken to address the condition of the property.
- Whether the need to move is temporary or permanent.

In considering whether an applicant resides in unsatisfactory housing conditions and how urgent the need is to move the following will be considered:

- Whether a Housing Health and Safety Rating System inspection of the property has determined that the property has at least one Category One hazard and it is not possible or practical to reduce this to a Category Two Hazard and whether the need to move is temporary or permanent.
- Whether the applicant is prevented from residing in their home due to a Prohibition Order or Emergency Prohibition Order served in accordance with the Housing Act 2004.
- In cases of overcrowding, where an applicant is one bedroom short they will be placed in Band 2 and where they are two or more bedrooms short they will be placed in Band 1. In considering whether a property is overcrowded and whether the applicant has worsened their housing circumstances, the Council will consider who resides in the property and how and when new household members moved into the current property. The number of bedrooms an applicant needs for their household will be assessed using the Bedroom Standard (Housing Act 1985).

Where the applicant owns their home, their capacity (including the financial resources available) to remedy the issues with the property or alternatively sell the property and purchase or rent another which meets their needs will be considered in determining qualification for the Housing Register.

In considering whether an applicant needs to move on the grounds of hardship the following will be considered:

- Whether an applicant is now unable to afford to occupy their current home in terms of meeting housing costs and/or heating costs.
- Whether an applicant needs to move to access specialised medical care which is only available in a specific location and the impact on the applicant (including financial) if they do not move near that care.
- Whether an applicant needs to move to access training or employment and the costs and the impact on the applicant (including financial) if they do not move near to the training or employment.

In considering whether an applicant needs to move on the grounds of medical or welfare reasons the following will be considered:

- Whether an applicant has a housing needs report prepared by an appropriate professional setting out their requirements for an adapted property or the adaptations needed for them to live independently.
- Whether an applicant needs to move to give or receive support. This includes foster carers or those approved to adopt as well as Special Guardians, holders of a Residence Order and family/friends who have care of a child as the parent(s) are no longer able to provide care. In all cases written confirmation of status and support for a move from Children Services will be required.
- Whether an applicant is a Care Leaver and requires settled accommodation.

For a band 1 to be awarded in relation to the Right to Move, confirmation of the current or new employment will need to be provided along with evidence which supports the need to move to be nearer/take up that employment.

Additional preference within the Housing Register

Additional Preference will be provided to applicants on the Housing Register in the following circumstances:

- Applicants who are current members of the regular forces who suffer from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to that service or who are a former member of the regular forces or who is the spouse or civil partner of a deceased member of the regular forces, where their death was attributable to that service or is a current or former members of the reserve forces who suffers from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to that service AND they meet one or

more of the reasonable preference criteria and have urgent housing needs will be given additional preference by backdating their relevant date by three months.

- Applicants who the Council owes a full homeless duty to (Band 1) and who are in temporary accommodation secured by the Council will receive additional preference by backdating their relevant date by six months.
- Applicants who the Council owes a full homeless duty to (Band 1) and who are not yet homeless or are not in temporary accommodation secured by the Council will receive additional preference by backdating their relevant date by three months.

Additional preference will be provided to all applicants who have a connection to North Norfolk as set out below:

- Applicants who currently live and have lived in the district of North Norfolk for a continuous period of two years OR
- Applicants who currently work in and have worked in the district of North Norfolk for a continuous period of one year OR
- Have a family member (parent, adult child or adult sibling) who lives in and has lived in North Norfolk for a continuous period of at least five years.

The following applicants will be awarded additional preference based on a connection to North Norfolk as exemptions to the above:

- An applicant to whom the Council owes the full homeless duty
- A Council or Housing Association tenant who needs to move to North Norfolk in accordance with the provisions of the Right to Move
- Applicants who need to move to North Norfolk through the National Witness Mobility Scheme
- Former care leavers who have a connection as defined through the Homelessness Reduction Bill (Act)
- Current or former members (within five years of discharge) of the regular forces
- The spouse or civil partner of a deceased member of the regular forces where their death was attributable to that service
- Current or former members of the reserve forces who suffer from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable to that service.

Evidence of a connection to North Norfolk may be required to be provided. Where a connection to North Norfolk is through work (and in relation to the exemption for applicants through the Right to Move) employment must be physically located in the district, not be short term or marginal or ancillary to work in another area or voluntary. Evidence of current employment or the offer of employment will be required.

Reduced preference within the Housing Register

Reduced Preference will be provided to applicants on the Housing Register in the following circumstances:

- Applicants in the Priority Band who have not made any bids on suitable properties in the last three months will be demoted to Band 1 and will revert to their original relevant date on the Housing Register or date of application if they were not previously on the Housing Register.
- Applicants in the Priority Band who refuse a suitable property will be demoted to Band 1 and will revert to the original relevant date on the Housing Register or date of application if they were not previously on the Housing Register.
- Applicants eligible for a Band 1 who have significant rent arrears (eight weeks or more) where an agreed repayment plan is in place and where payments for at least four months in accordance with the repayment plan have been made shall be demoted to Band 2 until the rent arrears are repaid.

How applicants will be prioritised for properties

In order to ensure that as many affordable properties as possible are let to applicants who have local connections to the towns and villages in which an available property is located, whilst also meeting the statutory requirements for an allocation scheme, the Council has adopted a Two Stage Allocation Process as described below and shown at Appendix 3.

After the advert deadline has closed, all applicants who bid (or for whom a bid was made) for the property are placed on a shortlist. The shortlist will be sorted in accordance with the Two Stage Allocation Process as follows:

Stage 1 - Applicants on the Housing Register are prioritised for the property and placed at the top of the shortlist in the following order:

- Band
- Relevant Date

Applicants on the Housing Register who are not eligible for additional preference as they do not have a connection to North Norfolk will be shortlisted after all applicants entitled to this additional preference, in band and relevant date order. Therefore an applicant with a Priority Band not entitled to additional preference on the basis of a connection to North Norfolk will be shortlisted after all Priority Band, Band 1 and Band 2 applicants with a connection to North Norfolk.

If there is no suitable applicant for the property, Stage 2 will then apply:

Stage 2 - applicants on the Transfer Register and Housing Options Register will be eligible and will be prioritised based on their local connection to the parish in which the property is located and the adjoining parishes as determined by the Local Allocations Agreement (see Appendix 4).

In the following circumstances the Two Stage Allocation Process will not apply:

- **Transfer quota.** Through the quota, up to 20% of all properties advertised through the Your Choice Your Home scheme will be prioritised for applicants who are

Housing Association or Registered Provider tenants who live in North Norfolk (on the Housing Register or Transfer Register). Initially only tenants on the Housing Register or Transfer Register will be eligible and the property will be shortlisted in accordance with the landlord's Allocation Scheme or Policy for transfers. If there is no suitable tenant, the list of eligible applicants will be recast to include all applicants who bid for/requested the property on all three registers and the property will be prioritised in accordance with the Two Stage Allocation Process.

- **Exception Housing Schemes.** Properties on Exception Housing Schemes were specifically provided to meet local housing need and will be allocated in accordance with Stage 2 only, where applicants on all three registers will be eligible and sorted in accordance with the Local Allocations Agreement.
- **Local Lettings Schemes.** These are special local letting plans which have been put in place for a certain number of properties for a limited time in order to address a specific issue in the local area. Such schemes will be published separately on the Your Choice Your Home website setting out how the properties will be prioritised.
- **Housing with Care Schemes.** Properties on a Housing with Care scheme are only suitable for applicants aged 55 or over and/or who require personal care. Properties on such schemes will be prioritised based on the housing and care need of the applicant and the level of care able to be provided by the scheme when the vacancy occurs.

For most affordable properties the Housing Association which owns the affordable property for rent or sale will shortlist the property in accordance with the above processes to produce a list which places all the applicants in priority order. For private rented properties, properties on Exception Housing Schemes and where nominations are being provided, the Council will shortlist the property in accordance with the above processes.

Those applicants who are provided with additional preference due to their military service (regular or reserve services) who do not as a result of that service have a local connection to a town or village in North Norfolk, will for the purpose of Stage 2 allocations in accordance with the Local Allocations Agreement be able to identify one parish when their application is made live to which they will receive priority equivalent to an A connection.

The scheme does not include a quota of properties which will be made available to those tenants who meet the Right to Move criteria. The rural nature of the district and limited supply of affordable homes means that any quota would not release a property of the required size, type and location in a timely way. Tenants eligible for Band 1 under the Right to Move will therefore be able to bid for any property for which they are eligible for in the required area(s).

Offer process

As part of the shortlisting process, the landlord will consider whether the applicant or applicants at the top of the shortlist meet their organisation's Allocation Policy or Scheme in the order that the applicants appear on the shortlist. Copies of the published Allocation

Policy or Scheme for each Housing Association or Registered Provider which is a partner in the Your Choice Your Home scheme can be found on the Council's website. Any applicant who does not meet the Housing Association's Allocation Policy or Scheme will not be eligible for the property, an applicant who is rejected on this basis can appeal the decision directly with the landlord.

A pre-tenancy qualification questionnaire or affordability/eligibility assessment may be required to be completed by the applicant prior to a decision being made on whether the applicant is eligible for and able to afford the property. Eligible applicants will be invited to view the property.

Up to five applicants will be invited to view the property, where there are multiple viewings the applicants will be advised if they are first, second, third, fourth or fifth on the shortlist.

Applicants who are at the top of one shortlist will be required to state their preferred property (including all properties which are still open for bids) and will only be considered for that property until they refuse it or the landlord decides they are not eligible or suitable. Once an applicant has been offered a property all other bids are invalid unless the offer is withdrawn. Applicants who require an adapted property or property designed for a wheelchair or have some other specific requirement for housing will not be required to provide a preference and will remain eligible for all shortlists.

Once an offer of a property has been made, unless the property will need to be adapted to meet the needs of the applicant or there is some other special requirement for rehousing, the applicant will be expected to make a decision within 48 hours as to whether they will accept the property even if they are on multiple shortlists. Where an applicant requires that a property is adapted to meet their needs or has some other specific requirement for rehousing, the applicant shall have a reasonable timescale for making a decision as to whether they will accept the property. The amount of time which is reasonable to make a decision in such cases will reflect whether there is a need for a support worker, Occupational Therapist or other professional to visit the property to inform the decision as to whether the property is suitable. In these cases, once the relevant professional has confirmed that the property is suitable for the applicant, the applicant will be expected to make a decision within 48 hours as to whether they accept the property.

A Housing Options Officer shall decide whether an applicant has a specific requirement for rehousing and should then be given more time for deciding whether to accept the offer of a property.

For all private rented properties any applicant for whom it is deemed that the rent would be unaffordable taking into account their income and level of likely assistance with the rent which will be available will not be offered a property.

For all affordable homes to buy (for example shared ownership or shared equity) any applicant for whom it is deemed that they would be unable to afford to purchase the share or value of the property being sold will be disregarded. Affordable homes to buy which are

subject to Section 106 Agreements will be shortlisted in accordance with any specific requirements in terms of income and local connection.

All properties advertised through the scheme which have not been offered to an applicant following the expiry of two calendar months from the closing date of bids will be re-advertised.

Direct Lets and other lets outside of the scheme

In some limited cases, properties will not be advertised through the Your Choice Your Home scheme and instead will be let directly to an applicant. Such lets are called Direct Lets and must be agreed by the Virtual Review Group – see appendix 2 for further information. Where a Direct Let is made, the applicant will be contacted directly to be made an offer of the property and maybe required to confirm eligibility or qualification prior to a formal tenancy offer being made.

In the following circumstances the letting of an affordable home will not be subject to this Housing Allocations Scheme but will instead be subject to the landlord's Allocations Scheme or Policy:

- The succession to a tenancy following the death of the tenant in accordance with the right of succession
- Assignments of the tenancy by way of mutual exchange
- Transfer of a tenancy by court order
- Acceptance of a surrender of tenancy by a joint tenant and issue of tenancy in sole name of other joint tenant
- Assignment of tenancy to a person who is qualified to succeed on the event of the tenant's death
- Issuing of a Fixed Term Tenancy following the ending of a Starter Tenancy
- Issuing of a new Fixed Term Tenancy on expiry of initial fixed term tenancy where review identifies a further fixed term tenancy of the same property should be issued
- Conversion of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy granted as the tenancy is short term temporary accommodation provided under part VI of the Housing Act 1996 into a Starter Tenancy, Fixed Term Tenancy, Assured Shorthold Tenancy or Assured Tenancy.

Relevant Dates

All applicants who are eligible and qualify to join the Housing List will be advised of their relevant date which will be the date their application was received. Where an applicant moves from one register to another or from one band to another band in the Housing Register, their relevant date will change to reflect the date they were placed on the new register or band. There are some exceptions to this where the applicant is demoted or where additional preference means the relevant date is backdated.

Policy on choice

As part of the application process, applicants will be required to identify the types and sizes of properties they want to be considered for (please see property eligibility section below) and the parishes in which they want to be rehoused. This information is required for the assessment of housing need.

Applicants will not be restricted to bidding for properties of the size and type and in the locations they have stated as part of their housing application. There is no restriction on the number of properties which can be bid for, an applicant can bid for as many properties as they are eligible for. However, applicants are recommended to consider carefully which properties they bid for, as once they appear at the top of one shortlist they will be required to identify their preferred property and will only be considered for that property. There are some exceptions to this which are set out in the section on the Offer Process.

Information on the locations of affordable homes can be found on the Council's website along with details of the number of lets of properties by parish by year for at least the last five years.

Council bids and restrictions on choice

Any applicant to whom the Council owes the full homeless duty will have full choice on which properties they choose to bid for, for six weeks. If no bids on suitable properties in the applicant's areas of choice have been made after six weeks, the Council will submit bids for the applicant on any suitable property within a widened geographically area.

In some cases, where the Council deems there is a risk to the safety of the applicant or where applicable a member of their family or there is a risk to the safety of other people, the Council will restrict the choice of areas for which the applicant can bid and reserves the right to make bids for the applicant and withdraw any bids the applicant makes in unsuitable areas.

Support with bidding

For applicants who need support to bid and where the Council has confirmed that bids will be made by the Council on behalf of the applicant, bids will only be submitted on those properties for which they are eligible for which match the size, type and location of properties they have stated they will consider on their application form or on their Auto Bidding Declaration form. These requirements can be updated by contacting the Housing Options Team. Where an applicant does not meet specific requirements of a property in terms of an age or other specified restriction a bid will not be made.

Property eligibility

Applicants will be advised of the size and types of property which they can bid for. The Council will publish a summary of the types and sizes of property each household is eligible

for on the Council and Your Choice Your Home scheme websites. This property eligibility information will be updated as and when required.

The property eligibility for the Your Choice Your Scheme reflects which properties applicants will be eligible to bid for. However, an offer of a property will be subject to an affordability check to ensure that the property is affordable to the applicant and their household (if any). Where a property is considered to be unaffordable the applicant will be disregarded. Landlords may also reject any applicant where offering a tenancy would result in the applicant and their household being overcrowded.

In assessing the size of property that an applicant requires the following will be taken into account:

- Whether there is a need for an additional bedroom for welfare or medical reasons including the need for a bedroom for an overnight carer.
- Whether the bedroom eligibility should be increased to reflect access to children in which cases the frequency of overnight access and ages and sexes of the children will be taken into account.
- Whether the bedroom eligibility should be increased to include foster children.

In the above cases, the decision to increase the number of bedrooms the applicant is eligible for is subject to satisfactory information being provided on the need for additional bedroom(s) and remains at the Council's discretion on a case by case basis.

Affordable homes to buy may have different property eligibility which allow under-occupation.

Single people will be eligible to bid for self-contained properties and also a room in a shared property.

Right to information

All applicants have a right to information on the decisions made in relation to their application to join the Housing List. All applicants will be notified in writing if they are not eligible for or do not qualify to join the Housing List. Applicants have the right to request information on any decision which has been made or is likely to be made when considering whether an offer of accommodation can be made.

Applicants also have the right to request general information to allow them to access how their application for housing is likely to be considered and whether an offer of accommodation is likely to be made and if so, how long it is likely to be before an offer of accommodation becomes available. In accordance with this right, the Council will publish on its website a copy of the Housing Allocations Scheme and details of the availability of affordable housing by property size and type and location.

All applicants can request a copy of their housing application form and other information held by the Council as part of their housing application.

Right to a review

Applicants have the right to a review of decisions as to whether they are eligible for or qualify for the Housing List and any other decision made or likely to be made in considering whether an offer of accommodation can be made.

All requests for review must be made in writing (including email) to the Housing Team Leader – Customer Services within 21 days of being notified of the decision which is being appealed. In exceptional cases, the Housing Team Leader – Customer Services can extend the timescale for requesting a review. The request can be made by the applicant's representative where the applicant has explicitly confirmed in writing that they authorise the representative to act on their behalf. At the discretion of the Housing Team Leader – Customer Services information in support of the review can be made as verbal representations either recorded by the applicant or at an agreed meeting where the Council will take notes to capture the applicant's representations. Unless it is agreed that verbal representations can be provided the request for review should include:

- Details of what decision is being appealed
- An explanation of why the Council's decision is wrong
- Details of any changes in their circumstances which are material to the original decision
- Additional information which was not originally provided in the housing application which is relevant.
- Any letters of support (if applicable).

The review will be carried out by the Housing Team Leader- Customer Services for all cases where they had not been involved in the original decision, in all other cases the review will be carried out by another senior officer with relevant knowledge as long as they have had no prior involvement in the decision.

As part of the review, the reviewing officer shall consider the information in the applicant's original application, the information provided in the review request, the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme and any relevant legislation or legal requirements. The reviewing officer may seek additional information or clarification of a particular point from the applicant to inform their review, such requests will be made in writing (including email). The review will be completed within eight weeks, unless the applicant has previously been advised that an extension is required and the reasons for such an extension.

The applicant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review and the reasons for the decision being made. If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the review they may make a complaint through the Council's corporate complaints scheme or where appropriate seek a judicial review of the decision.

Exceptional Cases

The Council reserves the right in exceptional cases to provide additional preference on the basis that they have a connection to North Norfolk to an applicant who would not otherwise be eligible for that additional preference. In considering whether a case is exceptional, the definition of local connection under s199 of the Housing Act 1996 will be considered along with relevant statutory guidance in relation to allocation schemes and homelessness.

Exceptional circumstances will also be taken into account when considering qualification, disqualification, decisions to provide additional or reduced preference (including demotion) and where bids are made on behalf of applicants under the restricted choice arrangements.

Such decisions will be made by the Housing Options Officers.

Procedural Matters

Up to date contact details

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that up to date and correct contact information is provided to include a phone number and where possible an email address. Failure to keep contact information up to date will result in that applicant missing out on a potential offer of a property if the Council or Housing Association is unable to contact them within a reasonable timescale to make arrangements to confirm qualification or discuss the possible offer of a property.

Applicant reviews

It is important that applicants notify the Council of any changes in their circumstances which may affect their qualification for the Housing List or one of the registers or the priority they receive. This should include details of any changes in the household, income, health or address. If an applicant is at the top of a shortlist for a property and it is identified that the applicant's circumstances have changed, their application will be suspended until a review has been completed. To prevent a change of circumstances meaning an offer of accommodation is withheld, all changes should be reported as soon as possible and where necessary a new application completed.

To ensure that accurate information is held on the housing need of applicants, all applicants will be required to complete an application review. For applicants on the Housing Register a review will be undertaken every six months. For applicants on the Transfer Register and Housing Options Register a review will be taken every year.

Checking eligibility and qualification

No applicant will be able to join the Housing List if they are not eligible. For applicants on the Housing Register proof of qualification will be required to be provided prior to being placed on the Housing Register and may also be required to reconfirm qualification prior to an offer of a property being made. Applicants on the Transfer Register or Housing Option

Register will be required to provide proof of qualification prior to the offer of a property being made.

The Council will advise all applicants of the outcome of their application to join the Housing List within 10 working days of the receipt of the application and all relevant information requested from the applicant. All applicants will receive a written response advising on whether they are eligible and whether or not they meet the qualification and disqualification criteria of the Housing List. All applicants who are eligible and meet the qualification criteria of the Housing List will be advised which housing register they qualify for and whether additional or reduced preference applies to their application. The Housing Team Leader-Customer Services shall also have discretion based on the circumstances of the case to dis-apply qualification or disqualification criteria or additional preference and reduced preference criteria (including demotion) in exceptional cases. In all such cases a note of the decision and reason shall be recorded.

Applicants who are related to a Council officer or member or are currently employed by the Council

As part of the application process, applicants will be required to state whether they are related to a Council officer or member or currently employed by the Council. No officer who is related to an applicant directly or through their relationship with another person or who has a business or financial relationship with an applicant will be able to make any decision in relation to the applicant's housing application and will not view or update the housing application.

Support for applicants

The Council recognises that some applicants need additional support to apply or engage with the application process. Whilst all applicants will be expected to apply online to join the Housing List, for applicants for which there is a special need for support the Council may assist the applicant to apply, provide information in different formats and bid on behalf of the applicant for suitable properties.

Confidentiality

All applications to the Housing List will be treated as confidential. Unless the applicant provides specific consent through their application for housing or in writing, the Council will not discuss the application with a third party who states they are acting on behalf of the applicant or as their representative.

Information held on each applicant will not be shared or disclosed to a third party, except in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation. As part of the application to join the Housing List, all applicants are required to provide their consent for information to be shared with Registered Providers and Housing Associations and other statutory agencies where that information is necessary to assess the application and for an allocation of housing to be made.

Equality and Diversity

The Council is committed to equality and the promotion of diversity and seeks to ensure that all applicants are not directly or indirectly discriminated against on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation. An Equality Impact Assessment of the Housing Allocations Scheme has been undertaken and ongoing monitoring of the impact of the scheme will be undertaken.

Monitoring and Review

The operation of the scheme will be monitored to ensure that it delivers the objectives of the scheme whilst meeting statutory requirements. The Council reserves the right to make operational changes which ensure the Housing Allocations Scheme operates effectively and efficiently, such changes, where they affect applicants will be notified to applicants through the Your Choice Your Home scheme or directly by phone, letter or email as applicable.

The Housing Allocations Scheme will be reviewed when necessary to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, case law and to ensure the effective operation of the scheme reflecting pressures on affordable housing supply and the need for such housing. Such reviews will be carried out in accordance to the requirements of legislation and guidance, ensuring Housing Associations and Registered Providers and where appropriate relevant stakeholders are consulted on changes and all applicants are notified of the changes made to the scheme in advance of an amended/replacement Housing Allocations Scheme going live.

Transitional arrangements

Prior to this Housing Allocations Scheme going live all current applicants on the Housing List will be required to re-apply in order to allow a review of eligibility and qualification. For all applicants who reapply who meet the eligibility and qualification criteria of this Housing Allocations Scheme the following arrangements will apply:

- Any applicant who re-applies by completing a new application form within one calendar month of the notification that they need to reapply will keep their existing relevant date. Where on review it is determined that the applicant now qualifies for the Housing Register or another band in the Housing Register their date of re-application will be used as the relevant date unless this Housing Allocation Scheme shows a previous relevant date would apply.
- Any applicant who re-applies following the expiry of one calendar month will not have their original relevant date honoured as it will be treated as a new application. In these cases the date of submission of the completed application form shall be their relevant date.

If there is an exceptional reason why the applicant cannot reapply within one calendar month, on a case by case basis, a Housing Options Officer will have discretion to honour the original relevant date.

Appendix 1: Housing Associations and Registered Providers with homes in North Norfolk

The following Registered Providers are partners in the Your Choice Your Home scheme and advertise all their available homes in North Norfolk through the scheme:

- Broadland Housing Association
- Clarion Housing Group (formerly known as Circle Housing and Wherry Housing Association)
- Cotman Housing Association (including Places for People homes)
- Flagship Housing Group
- Hastoe Housing Association
- Orbit East
- Saffron Housing Trust
- Victory Housing Trust

The following Registered Providers let some of their affordable housing in North Norfolk through the Your Choice Your Home scheme.

- Habinteg Housing Association
- Housing 21
- Riverside Housing
- Suffolk Housing Society

The following Housing Associations and Registered Providers have affordable homes in North Norfolk but do not operate through the Your Choice Your Home scheme and applicants should apply to the association direct to join the association's waiting list:

- Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society
- Holt and Neighbourhood Housing Society
- Homes for Wells
- Places for People – Seaside and Countryside Homes

Appendix 2: Process for awarding of Priority Band and agreement for a Direct Let.

Only the Virtual Review Group can agree to an applicant being awarded a Priority Band and agree on review to extend the period for which a Priority Band is available. In addition the Virtual Review Group must agree all requests for a Direct Let.

What is the Virtual Review Group?

The Virtual Review Group consists of representatives of Registered Providers with affordable housing stock in North Norfolk, the Council and Together (a charity which supports mental health and wellbeing). The Virtual Review Group receives an email which sets out the request for a Priority Band or Direct Let along with all supporting information.

How are decisions made?

The Virtual Review Group have one calendar week to consider the request and respond by email to advise whether they support the request or not along with their reasons copying all members of the Virtual Review Group into their response. Decisions are made on a majority basis of those responding in the time allowed subject to a minimum of five responses being received. Where less than five responses are received by the deadline, a reminder email will be sent providing a further 3 working days to respond. If at the end of this period less than five responses have been received the request is automatically refused.

Each organisation on the Virtual Review Group is allowed to make one response only and cannot respond if the request was made by their organisation. Any member of the Virtual Review Group may request further information or clarification from the submitting organisation, with the request and answer copied to all members of the group. Decisions are made purely on the facts of the case as identified from the information in the request and the applicant's application for housing.

Criteria for awarding a Priority Band

An applicant must meet the qualification criteria for the Housing Register and have an immediate, emergency or critical housing need. Requests for a Priority Band must be accompanied by supporting evidence of this need provided by suitable qualified medical and other professionals. All requests should explain why the need for a move is immediate, an emergency or critical. In such circumstances there should be a current risk to the applicant or ongoing impact if the applicant is not rehoused as soon as possible.

The following examples represent some of the circumstances where a Priority Band is likely to be awarded:

- The applicant is unable to return home from hospital as the property is not suitable for their occupation and could not be adapted to meet their medical and other needs.

- The applicant currently lives in accommodation which is not suitable for their needs so that they have limited or no safe access to some or all required facilities, the current property cannot be adapted to meet their needs and for which there is a lack of available suitable properties which can meet their needs.
- The applicant is the subject of severe harassment (including domestic abuse) and there is an immediate and clear risk of harm for which no appropriate enforcement action can be/is appropriate to be taken.
- The applicant is part of the National Witness Mobility Scheme.

Criteria for agreeing a Direct Let

An applicant must meet the qualification criteria for the Housing Register. A Direct Let will only be used where there is a proven need to house an applicant quickly and they have a particular requirement for a property which is in limited supply in the affordable housing stock. All requests should provide details of the property which is being requested to be let as a Direct Let and the details of the prospective tenant. Requests for a Direct Let can include multiple properties and prospective tenants where any existing tenant(s) is required to move to release a property which meets the particular needs of an applicant. The request must make clear why a Direct Let is the only option to meet the identified needs.

The following examples represent some of the circumstances where a Direct Let is likely to be awarded:

- Where a vacancy suitable for an applicant on the Housing Register in the Priority Band or Band 1 is created by moving an existing Housing Association or Registered Provider tenant on the Housing List to a property which meets their needs.
- Where a Housing Association or Registered Provider tenant in North Norfolk needs to move to allow urgent works repair works to be carried out to their home and it is not appropriate for them to return as the current home is not suitable or where the current home is programmed to be demolished or redeveloped within three months.
- Where a Housing Association or Registered Provider needs to rehouse a tenant to meet operational requirements and there is a proven urgency for the move or specific requirement for accommodation which is rarely available and limited in supply.

Direct Let requests which solely relate to a Housing Association or Registered Provider tenant will be counted as part of the Transfer Quota.

The examples provided above for a Priority Band and Direct Let are examples only and not a list of all circumstances when a Priority Band or Direct Let will be agreed and exceptional circumstances will be taken into account in the decision making of the Virtual Review Group.

If a request to the Virtual Review Group is refused, the applicant or submitting organisation may appeal the decision within 21 days of being notified of the decision of the Virtual Review Group setting out their appeal reasons and providing if wanted additional supporting information. The appeal will be determined by the Virtual Review Group in

accordance with the above process. Where the appeal is made by the applicant they will be notified of the outcome of the appeal within three working days.

Appendix 3:

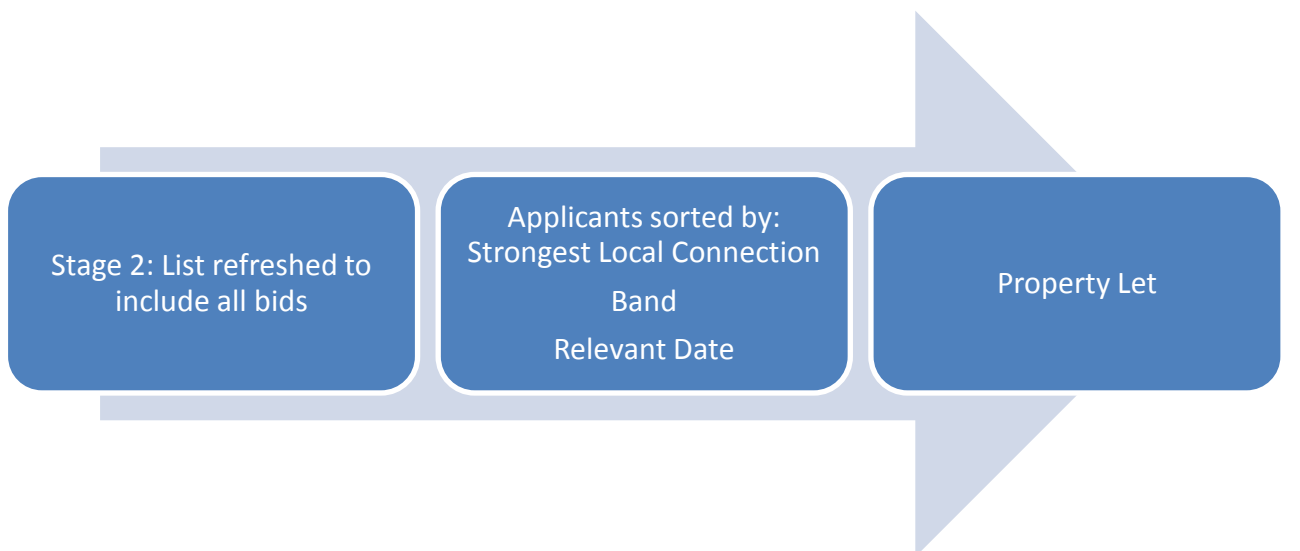
Two Stage Allocation Process

The diagrams below show how the Two Stage Allocation Process works. Note properties on Exception Housing Schemes are only let in accordance with Stage 2.

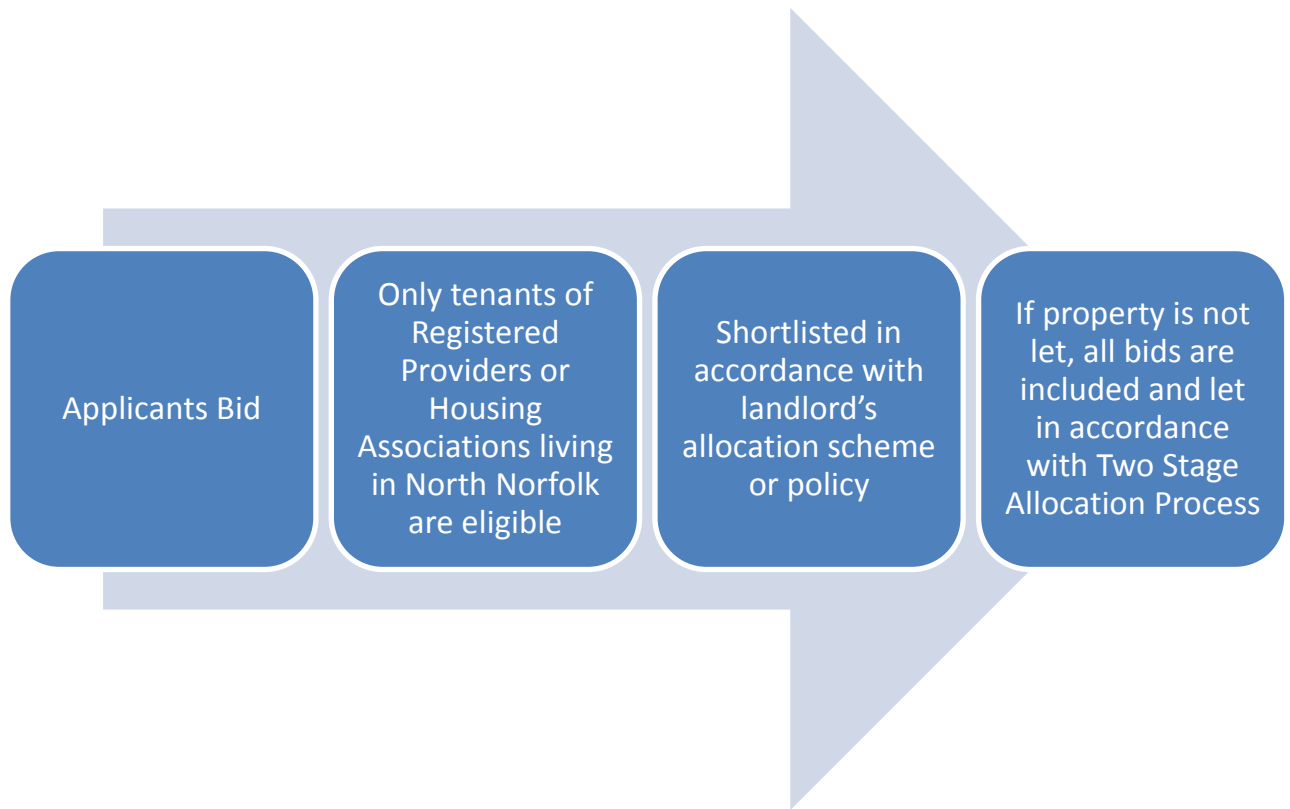
Stage 1



Stage 2



Transfer Quota



Appendix 4: Local Allocations Agreement

The Local Allocations Agreement will be used to allocate all properties on Exception Housing Schemes and all other properties which are allocated through Stage 2 of the 2 Stage Approach (see Appendix 3).

The Local Allocations Agreement includes 7 criteria which provide a basis for determining priority between applicants for affordable housing including low cost home ownership products based on their local connection to the parish in which a property is located and the adjoining parishes. Priority is provided through local connections of residence, employment and family residence to the villages and towns in North Norfolk. In the event that there are no applicants with these connections, the property can be allocated to an applicant who has a wish to live in a particular town or village but who does not have a connection. This is to ensure that a property can be rented or sold to ensure that any financial loss to the landlord is minimised and to ensure that properties are not left empty for longer than necessary. The Council may request that a property is re-advertised to seek an applicant with a local connection rather than an allocation being made to an applicant without a local connection.

The Local Allocations Agreement gives preference to applicants with strong local connections to the parish in which the property being allocated is located and the adjoining parishes equally. This is because there will be some towns or villages which have very little affordable housing stock and some towns and villages where it will not be possible to develop new affordable housing because of constraints including sensitive local environments, coastal erosion, flooding and lack of available land. It is essential that applicants with strong local connections to such towns and villages are not disadvantaged as a result.

Properties on Exception Housing Schemes will be advertised through the Your Choice Your Home scheme with the LC symbol and the parishes for which applicants with a local connection to will be prioritised will be clearly listed. Any applicant on one of the three registers can apply and shortlisting will be undertaken based on the strength of local connection in conjunction with the level of housing need where applicable and relevant date.

The Agreement refers to parish which is applicable to both towns and villages in the area, although where a town is an adjacent parish to a parish with a vacant property the town is not treated as an adjoining parish. Hoveton for the purposes of the Local Allocations Agreement is treated as a town.

The criteria form a cascade with the strongest local connection being an A connection and a G connection representing someone with no connection to North Norfolk as shown below:

A - An applicant meeting this criterion will have lived in the parish or adjoining parishes for at least 3 consecutive years at the point of allocation AND meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Lived for at least 5 years at any time in the parish or adjoining parishes OR
- Are employed in the parish or adjoining parish (permanent employment of at least 12 months and 16 hours per week) OR
- Have a family member who has lived for at least 5 consecutive years in the parish or adjoining parish at the point of allocation

B - An applicant meeting this criterion will have lived in the parish or adjoining parishes for at least 3 consecutive years at the point of allocation AND meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Are employed in the parish or adjoining parish (permanent employment of less than 12 months and 16 hours per week) OR
- Have a family member who has lived for at least 3 consecutive years in the parish or adjoining parish at the point of allocation

C - An applicant meeting this criterion will meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Lived for at least 5 years at any time in the parish or adjoining parishes OR
- Are employed in the parish or adjoining parish (permanent employment of at least 12 months and 16 hours per week) OR
- Have a family member who has lived for at least 5 consecutive years in the parish or adjoining parish at the point of allocation

D - An applicant meeting this criterion will meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Lived for at least 3 years at any time in the parish or adjoining parishes OR
- Are employed in the parish or adjoining parish (permanent employment of less than 12 months and 16 hours per week) OR
- Have a family member who has lived for at least 3 consecutive years in the parish or adjoining parish at the point of allocation

E - An applicant meeting this criterion will meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Lived for at least 12 months at any time in the parish or the adjoining parishes OR
- Are employed in the parish or adjoining parish (temporary employment or permanent employment of less than 16 hours per week) OR

- Have a family member who has lived for at least 12 consecutive months in the parish or adjoining parish at the point of allocation
- F -** An applicant meeting this criterion wants to live in the parish and has a connection to North Norfolk as defined by the Housing Act 1996, Part VII.
- G -** An applicant meeting this criterion wants to live in the parish but does not have a connection to North Norfolk as defined by the Housing Act 1996, Part VII.

The criteria above reflects the need to give priority by current residence, former residence, employment and family connections. Family connections relate to a family member who is the parent, adult child or adult sibling only of the applicant or joint applicant. In other cases, the Housing Team Leader – Customer Services shall have discretion to provide for local connection to another family member where there is evidence of a significant connection to that family member to include cases where the applicant lived with the family member for a significant period or where there is a need to provide support to or from that family member.

The Council in some exceptional cases will consider whether an applicant's local connection to a town or village should be increased, such cases will be considered on their merits at the discretion of the Housing Team Leader-Customer Services.



Equality Impact Assessment Record Form

A practical step-by-step approach
to conducting
Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments

Directorate	Service	Person responsible for the assessment	Date assessment completed
	Economic and Community Development & Customer Services	Housing Strategy and Community Development Manager	31 March 2017
Title of the policy being assessed	Housing Allocations Scheme (new proposed scheme)		
The status of the policy	The current approved Housing Allocations Scheme is under review, with the review taking account of statutory guidance issued in 2013 and 2015 and regulations issued in 2012 and 2015 and the need for operational changes to ensure the scheme continues to operate effectively in the allocation of a scarce resource – affordable housing.		
1. What are the aims, objectives and purposes of the policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair, transparent and lawful allocation of affordable housing in North Norfolk. • Making the best use of the affordable housing stock by effective allocations. • The overall objective of the scheme is to maximise the number of properties which are allocated to households who have local connections to the location in which the available property is located whilst also meeting the requirement that households with a reasonable preference are given the required reasonable preference. 		
2. Does the policy support other objectives of the council?	Housing and Infrastructure (Corporate Plan)		
3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy, and in what way?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants including existing affordable housing tenants seeking rehousing in affordable housing (including affordable homeownership properties) in North Norfolk. • Registered Providers who use the Your Choice Your Home scheme to let their homes and other Registered Providers with whom the Council has nomination agreements for affordable housing in the district. 		
4. What outcomes are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scheme provides a fair and transparent process for the allocation of affordable housing. 		

<p>anticipated from the policy being in place?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objective of the Housing Allocations Scheme is achieved. • The scheme remains compliant with the statutory requirements for an allocation scheme. • The scheme is lawful and reasonable and does not unlawfully directly or indirectly discriminate against any person with a protected characteristic. 			
<p>5. Identify and select your assessment team.</p>	<p>Name</p>	<p>Role</p>	<p>Responsibilities</p>	
	<p>Nicola Turner</p>	<p>Housing Strategy and Community Development Manager</p>	<p>Housing Allocation Scheme</p>	
<p>6. What data have you gathered for this assessment? How have you analysed this data?</p>	<p>Source and Age of Data</p>	<p>Owner</p>	<p>Findings</p>	<p>Data Gaps</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing List data at 21 November 2016 and 17 February 2017 • Quarterly monitoring statistics for 2015/16 and first three quarters of 2016/17 • Lets analysis for 2015/16 • Lets analysis 1 April 2016 to 20 February 2017. • Census 2011 	<p>NNDC for Housing List, quarterly monitoring and lets analysis.</p> <p>ONS for Census 2011 data</p>	<p>270 or 76.27% of all lets in 2016/17 (to 20 February 17) were to applicants on the Housing Register and therefore with a Reasonable preference, a further 35 were transfers of existing affordable tenants (who do not have a Reasonable Preference) and 49 lets were to applicants on the Housing Options Register. On this basis the Housing Allocations Scheme is meeting its objective.</p> <p>Following the analysis of the data it was concluded that overall the current Housing Allocation Scheme List is operating effectively and is not discriminating against households with protected characteristics, in many areas the Housing List shows a more diverse profile than the 2011 Census profile of North Norfolk, although it should be noted that the Housing List is open and so includes households out of area but most applicants (as demonstrated by previous analyses of the Housing List) have local</p>	<p>NNDC does not record marriage or civil partnership status or information on gender reassignment as part of housing applications, however the applicants stated gender is recorded and was used in the analysis. Census information on gender (only male/female) and sexual orientation is not available for comparison.</p>

			<p>connections to North Norfolk.</p> <p>The new Housing Allocations Scheme will introduce a tighter additional preference criteria in relation to the Housing Register than the current additional preference criteria which reflects the definition used in relation to s199 of the Housing Act 1996. However, the tighter additional preference is consistent with statutory guidance whilst continuing to allow connections to be established by employment or family. A number of exemptions apply which allow additional preference to be provided even though the applicant does not meet the additional preference criteria. Analysis has shown that 91% of all applicants on the Housing Register meet the new additional criteria preference criteria as only 22 of the 245 applicants on the Housing Register are not eligible for additional preference. The introduction of the amended additional preference criteria has been evaluated to assess the impact of this change on those with protected characteristics. It has been concluded that it is proportionate to make this change reflecting the scarcity of supply of affordable housing across North Norfolk as the only protected characteristic where there is a material difference in those applicants who are entitled to the additional preference and those who are not is in relation to the age of applicants as younger people (29 years or younger) are not as likely to have a connection to North Norfolk than older households. However, overall young people on the Housing Register (and Housing List) are overrepresented when compared to the age profile in the 2011 Census.</p>	
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7. Who are the main stakeholders of this policy?	Community Applicants on the Housing List North Norfolk residents Town and Parish Councils	Staff/Members North Norfolk District Council members Housing Strategy and Community Development Team and Customer Services – Housing Team	Partners Registered Providers Housing Associations Norfolk County Council Supported housing providers
8. Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to race and ethnicity?	No	<p>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?</p> <p>Analysis of the Housing List (as at November 2016 and February 2017) and lets between 1 April 2015 and 20 February 2017 has shown that the current Housing Allocations Scheme does not have a negative impact in relation to race and ethnicity.</p> <p>The change to the additional preference criteria for the Housing Register will not have a negative impact in regard to race and ethnicity as demonstrated by the analysis of the Housing List (17 February 2017).</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Scheme meets statutory requirements by giving priority for an allocation of affordable housing to households with reasonable preference.</p> <p>The Local Allocations Agreement positively discriminates against those with strong local connections to parishes in North Norfolk. It is possible therefore that some households will be adversely affected and that some of these will have protected characteristics. The benefits of using the Local Allocations Agreement for Stage 2 lets are considered to outweigh any potential adverse impact and are considered to be proportionate.</p> <p>The use of the Local Allocations Agreement will only be extended to general need properties (i.e. those which are not on Exception Housing Schemes) after households with a reasonable preference have had an opportunity to be considered for advertised vacancies.</p> <p>No account is taken of the race and ethnicity of the applicant when assessing housing need or in the allocation of affordable housing other than in compliance with statutory requirements in relation to eligibility to join the Housing List.</p>	
9. Are there any concerns	No	What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?	

<p>that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to gender including gender reassignment?</p>		<p>Analysis of the Housing List (as at November 2016 and February 2017) and lets between 1 April 2015 and 20 February 2017 has shown that the current Housing Allocations Scheme does not have a negative impact in relation to gender. The Council does not record where an applicant has undergone or is in the process of gender reassignment.</p> <p>The change to the additional preference criteria for the Housing Register will not have a negative impact in regard to gender or gender reassignment as demonstrated by the analysis of the Housing List (17 February 2017). It should be noted that housing applications are more likely to have a female lead applicant.</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Scheme meets statutory requirements by giving priority for an allocation of affordable housing to households with reasonable preference.</p> <p>No account is taken of the gender of the applicant when assessing housing need or in the allocation of affordable housing.</p>
<p>10. Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to disability?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?</p> <p>Analysis of the Housing List (as at November 2016 and February 2017) and lets between 1 April 2015 and 20 February 2017 has shown that the current Housing Allocations Scheme does not have a negative impact in relation to disability.</p> <p>The change to the additional preference criteria for the Housing Register will not have a negative impact in regard to disability as demonstrated by the analysis of the Housing List (17 February 2017).</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Scheme meets statutory requirements by giving priority for an allocation of affordable housing to households with reasonable preference. There is a specific reasonable preference criterion where there is a need to move on medical or welfare grounds which includes grounds relating to a disability.</p> <p>The Local Allocations Agreement positively discriminates against those with strong local connections to parishes in North Norfolk. It is possible therefore that some households will be adversely affected and that some of these will have protected characteristics. The benefits of using the Local Allocations Agreement for Stage 2 lets are considered to outweigh any potential adverse impact and are considered to be proportionate.</p> <p>The use of the Local Allocations Agreement will only be extended general need properties</p>

		<p>(i.e. those which are not on Exception Housing Schemes) after households with a reasonable preference have had an opportunity to be considered for advertised vacancies.</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Scheme gives additional preference to applicants for adapted properties and properties specifically designed for wheelchair users recognising that there is a limited supply of such properties and the need for positive discrimination to ensure that these properties are prioritised for applicants which require them.</p>
<p>11. Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to age?</p>	<p>Some minor impact</p>	<p>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?</p> <p>Analysis of the Housing List (as at November 2016 and February 2017) and lets between 1 April 2015 and 20 February 2017 has shown that the current Housing Allocations Scheme does not have a negative impact in relation to age, although it should be noted that older people (aged 60+) are less represented on the Housing List and lets than the Census would suggest, but this is likely to reflect the fact that older households are more likely to be homeowners and North Norfolk has a higher average of outright owners than England and Wales.</p> <p>The change to the additional preference criteria for the Housing Register will have some minor impact in regard to age as demonstrated by the analysis of the Housing List (17 February 2017) as younger people represented a higher proportion of applicants not eligible for the additional preference than older people. However, on balance it is considered that this change is proportionate as the number of younger people on the Housing List and Housing Register is still higher than the proportion of younger people (aged 18-29) in the population as demonstrated by the 2011 Census.</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Scheme meets statutory requirements by giving priority for an allocation of affordable housing to households with reasonable preference.</p> <p>The Local Allocations Agreement positively discriminates against those with strong local connections to parishes in North Norfolk. It is possible therefore that some households will be adversely affected and that some of these will have protected characteristics. It should be noted that the criteria within the Local Allocations Agreement were specifically designed to ensure that residence connection criteria did not have a negative impact on younger applicants as the criteria is a threshold rather than a floor. On this basis the benefits of using the Local Allocations Agreement for Stage 2 lets are considered to outweigh any potential adverse impact and are considered to be proportionate.</p> <p>The use of the Local Allocations Agreement will only be extended general need properties (i.e. those which are not on Exception Housing Schemes) after households with a</p>

		<p>reasonable preference have had an opportunity to be considered for advertised vacancies. People below the age of 18 are children and are therefore generally not eligible to join the Housing List, an exception will be made for 16 and 17 year olds who do not have parents or who are estranged from their parents and are being supported by Children’s Services.</p> <p>Some affordable housing is age designated e.g. sheltered housing and housing with care.</p>
<p>12.Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to religion/belief?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?</p> <p>Analysis of the Housing List (as at November 2016 and February 2017) and lets between 1 April 2015 and 20 February 2017 has shown that the current Housing Allocations Scheme does not have a negative impact in relation to religion/belief.</p> <p>The change to the additional preference criteria for the Housing Register will not have a negative impact in regard to religion/belief as demonstrated by the analysis of the Housing List (17 February 2017).</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Scheme meets statutory requirements by giving priority for an allocation of affordable housing to households with reasonable preference.</p> <p>The Local Allocations Agreement positively discriminates against those with strong local connections to parishes in North Norfolk. It is possible therefore that some households will be adversely affected and that some of these will have protected characteristics. The benefits of using the Local Allocations Agreement for Stage 2 lets are considered to outweigh any potential adverse impact and are considered to be proportionate.</p> <p>The use of the Local Allocations Agreement will only be extended general need properties (i.e. those which are not on Exception Housing Schemes) after households with a reasonable preference have had an opportunity to be considered for advertised vacancies.</p> <p>No account is taken of the religion/belief of the applicant when assessing housing need or in the allocation of affordable housing.</p>
<p>13.Are there any concerns</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?</p>

<p>that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to sexual orientation?</p>		<p>Analysis of the Housing List (as at November 2016 and February 2017) and lets between 1 April 2015 and 20 February 2017 has shown that the current Housing Allocations Scheme does not have a negative impact in relation to sexual orientation.</p> <p>The change to the additional preference criteria for the Housing Register will not have a negative impact in regard to sexual orientation as demonstrated by the analysis of the Housing List (17 February 2017).</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Scheme meets statutory requirements by giving priority for an allocation of affordable housing to households with reasonable preference.</p> <p>The Local Allocations Agreement positively discriminates against those with strong local connections to parishes in North Norfolk. It is possible therefore that some households will be adversely affected and that some of these will have protected characteristics. The benefits of using the Local Allocations Agreement for Stage 2 lets are considered to outweigh any potential adverse impact and are considered to be proportionate.</p> <p>The use of the Local Allocations Agreement will only be extended general need properties (i.e. those which are not on Exception Housing Schemes) after households with a reasonable preference have had an opportunity to be considered for advertised vacancies.</p> <p>No account is taken of the sexual orientation of the applicant when assessing housing need or in the allocation of affordable housing.</p>
<p>14. Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to marriage and civil partnership?</p>	<p>No evidence</p>	<p>The marriage and civil partnership status of applicants on the Housing List is not recorded.</p> <p>No account is taken of the marriage and civil partnership status of the applicant when assessing housing need or in the allocation of affordable housing.</p>
<p>15. Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to pregnancy and maternity?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Analysis of the Housing List (as at November 2016 and February 2017) and lets between 1 April 2015 and 20 February 2017 has shown that the current Housing Allocations Scheme does not have a negative impact in relation to pregnancy and maternity. However, analysis of lets since April 2016 has shown that the lack of properties with at least three bedrooms is having an impact on the ability of larger families to be housed, this is not a result of the Housing Allocations Scheme but a supply issue.</p> <p>The change to the additional preference criteria for the Housing Register will not have a negative impact in regard to pregnancy and maternity as demonstrated by the analysis of</p>

		<p>the Housing List (17 February 2017).</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Scheme meets statutory requirements by giving priority for an allocation of affordable housing to households with reasonable preference.</p> <p>The Local Allocations Agreement positively discriminates against those with strong local connections to parishes in North Norfolk. It is possible therefore that some households will be adversely affected and that some of these will have protected characteristics. The benefits of using the Local Allocations Agreement for Stage 2 lets are considered to outweigh any potential adverse impact and are considered to be proportionate.</p> <p>The use of the Local Allocations Agreement will only be extended general need properties (i.e. those which are not on Exception Housing Schemes) after households with a reasonable preference have had an opportunity to be considered for advertised vacancies.</p> <p>Family households are eligible for different sized properties based on the size of the family and the ages and sex of the children. Bedroom eligibility is amended on confirmation of proof of pregnancy being received, all single and couple households are then reclassified as families on this and the number of bedrooms they require updated accordingly.</p>
<p>16. Could the negative impact you have identified in questions 8 - 15 lead to the potential for adverse impact if the policy is implemented?</p> <p>Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason? Can the impact be mitigated by existing means? If yes, what actions will you undertake to mitigate these impacts and revise the policy?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>As discussed above, the current Housing Allocations Scheme is working effectively. The proposed new Housing Allocations Scheme makes a number of minor changes to the current Housing Allocations Scheme whilst retaining the fundamental elements of the scheme. The most significant change being made is the tightening of the criteria for the additional preference criteria for the Housing Register and the fact that applicants who do not meet the additional preference criteria will only be considered after all applicants on the Housing Register who have the additional preference. The assessment of the impact of this change showed that generally there is no negative impact on applicants with a protected characteristic, however in relation to age there is a minor impact but this is not considered to be material and the change is considered to be proportionate. It is not considered that this will be an adverse impact.</p> <p>The amended additional preference criteria used reflects statutory guidance for the period of connection by residence but retained connections of employment and family to reflect the fact that some applicants with a protected characteristic may otherwise be negatively impacted on by the change to the timescale required for a connection by residence. The scheme allows for exceptional circumstances to be taken into account.</p> <p>In preparing the scheme due regard has been made to the public sector equality duty.</p>

17. Describe the arrangements for reporting and publishing this assessment.	Attached as appendix to Cabinet report seeking adoption of new Housing Allocation Scheme and copy can be provided on request.		
Has this assessment been undertaken by a minimum of two staff?	No	Has this assessment been scrutinised by your Directorate Steering Group?	N/A
If the policy is new, or requires a decision by Councillors to revise, has this Equality Impact Assessment been included with the report?			Yes
Have any actions identified in this assessment been included in your service equality and diversity action plan?			N/A but on-going monitoring will be undertaken on operation of new scheme
Completed by:	Nicola Turner Housing Strategy and Community Development Manager	Signed off by:	Full Council

Produced by
David Lloyd associates
In partnership with
North Norfolk District Council
May 2008

North Norfolk Big Society Fund

Summary: This report provides an update on the operation of the Big Society Fund during the last financial year.

Conclusions: The North Norfolk Big Society Fund has successfully achieved its expected outcomes following its fifth year of operation. The current management arrangements, administrative and decision making process are considered effective. The Fund has enabled a wide variety of projects to be implemented for the benefit of communities across North Norfolk.

Recommendations: Cabinet are requested to note the success of the Big Society Fund and to recommend to Council:

That the Big Society Fund grant scheme should continue at its current level of funding (£225,000) for another year.

Reasons for Recommendations: To ensure Cabinet are informed about the Big Society Fund during its fifth year of operation.

To enable the continuation of the Big Society Fund during 2017 / 18.

Cabinet Member(s) Ward(s) affected
Cllr. Tom FitzPatrick All
Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Sonia Shuter 01263 516173, sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1. North Norfolk Big Society Fund

A district with vibrant communities and where healthy lifestyles are accessible to all is identified as a key priority in North Norfolk District Council's Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019. The Corporate Plan confirms our commitment to support local residents and their communities by continuing to operate the Big Society Fund to meet local needs and aspirations

The North Norfolk Big Society Fund was established in 2012 to help build strong communities in North Norfolk. Its aim is to help communities to develop new and innovative projects which will improve their social and economic wellbeing.

A review of the fourth year of operation of the North Norfolk Big Society Fund was presented to Cabinet in April 2016. It concluded that the Fund was achieving its purpose and continues to provide grants which have enabled a wide variety of

valuable community projects to be implemented, helping to establish and nurture the ethos of 'the Big Society' in North Norfolk.

It was recommended and agreed by Cabinet to continue the Big Society Fund grant scheme at the current level of funding (£225,000) for another year.

The purpose of this annual report is to provide an overview of how the grant fund has been used in 2016 / 17 and to review its effectiveness.

1.1 North Norfolk Big Society Fund Grant Scheme

The grant scheme is financed from a percentage of the second homes council tax return from Norfolk County Council.

Virtually every parish in North Norfolk has a number of second homes therefore the Big Society Fund is open to all Towns and Parish Councils, charities, not for profit organisations or community groups based or providing a service in North Norfolk.

The aim of the fund is to support and help organisations to meet local needs. The fund has particularly benefitted smaller parishes that may be less likely to receive funding for services and facilities from other sources e.g. as a result of new housing. Helping to improve, enhance, sustain existing or provide new local community facilities and services is the biggest need identified by communities.

Grants from the fund have also been used as a contribution to a much larger project requiring significant funding such as those undertaken by Sheringham Museum and the Hawk and Owl Trust at Sculthorpe. Grants offered by the Big Society Fund can be crucial in securing additional funding from organisations such as the Heritage Lottery or Sport England. These larger projects offer benefits to the local and wider community as well as to the local economy.

Whilst most projects take place in one geographical location in North Norfolk, grants have also been awarded to projects which take place in or benefit several parishes.

The majority of grants are awarded for capital projects which make a visible difference to communities across North Norfolk through the provision of e.g. new play equipment, sports facilities or improvements to a village hall.

What is not always visible but is captured through regular communication with project leads and the End of Grant reports is the difference the project makes within a community. Grants have funded projects which have increased volunteering opportunities, reduced social isolation, increased opportunities for people of all ages to participate in sports and activities thereby improving their physical, mental and social wellbeing and projects which have created sense of pride and cohesion within a community.

The Fund is managed and administered internally. This includes:

- Publicity and promotion of the Big Society Fund
- Advising and supporting organisations throughout the application process
- Effective communication with Members at all stages of the grant process

- Preparing and presenting reports to the Big Society Fund Grant Panel
- Managing on going PR and media interest, supporting projects with publicity and promotion, arranging Member representation at opening events.
- Monitoring applications awarded funding to ensure projects are completed in accordance with Fund Terms and Conditions
- Ensuring the submission of End of Grant Reports with supporting financial information to demonstrate the benefit of the project and to provide financial evidence that the grant has been used in accordance with the grant Terms and Conditions.

The continued internal management and administration of the fund has enabled the Council to:

- Proactively promote the Big Society Fund (BSF) as a Council initiative
- Significantly increase the Council's engagement with Town and Parish Councils, as well as voluntary and community groups, throughout the whole of the grant process from pre-application to project implementation and completion
- Provide officers with a greater understanding of the need for projects, the challenges encountered by applicants and offer appropriate advice and support
- Increase local Member's opportunities for engagement in community initiatives operating in their wards
- Maintain effective and regular contact with community organisations awarded a grant, ensuring their projects progress in accordance with grant Terms and Conditions
- Increase the Council's role in publicising community projects supported by the Fund – helping to raise the profile of the community organisation and the grant-funded project. This helps reinforce the Council's role as a community leader and is a highly effective way of promoting the grant scheme to attract appropriate future applications.

1.2 Overview of proposals submitted / approved 2016/17

The politically balanced Panel that considers the BSF grant applications is appointed annually by Full Council and is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for the Big Society. Four Panel meetings were held in the last financial year (in June 2016, September 2016, November 2016 and March 2017). Fifty three organisations submitted grant applications requesting funding totalling £492,632.99 which was over 100% more than the allocated budget of £225,000.

Eight applications were not presented to the Panel as they were either incomplete, withdrawn by the applicant or alternative funding secured. Five applications were not awarded a grant. Three applications were deferred pending further information and thirty seven were approved. The thirty seven grants awarded equates to £273,817.65.

The BSF awarded all of its 2016 / 17 budget as well as an additional £48,000 from reserves accrued from previous years when the entire allocated grant fund was not used. The BSF currently has reserves of £64,814.

In comparison, during 2015 / 16, thirty five organisations made BSF grant applications, three applications were ineligible to be presented to the Panel, three applications were not awarded a grant, two applications were deferred and twenty seven were approved totalling £154,438.42

The number of applications to the Big Society Fund increased by 51% in the last year. Likely reasons for this include the increased community need, reduction in the availability of other grants and funding, proactive promotion of the Big Society Fund, publicity regarding grant awards and media publicity in relation to completed projects.

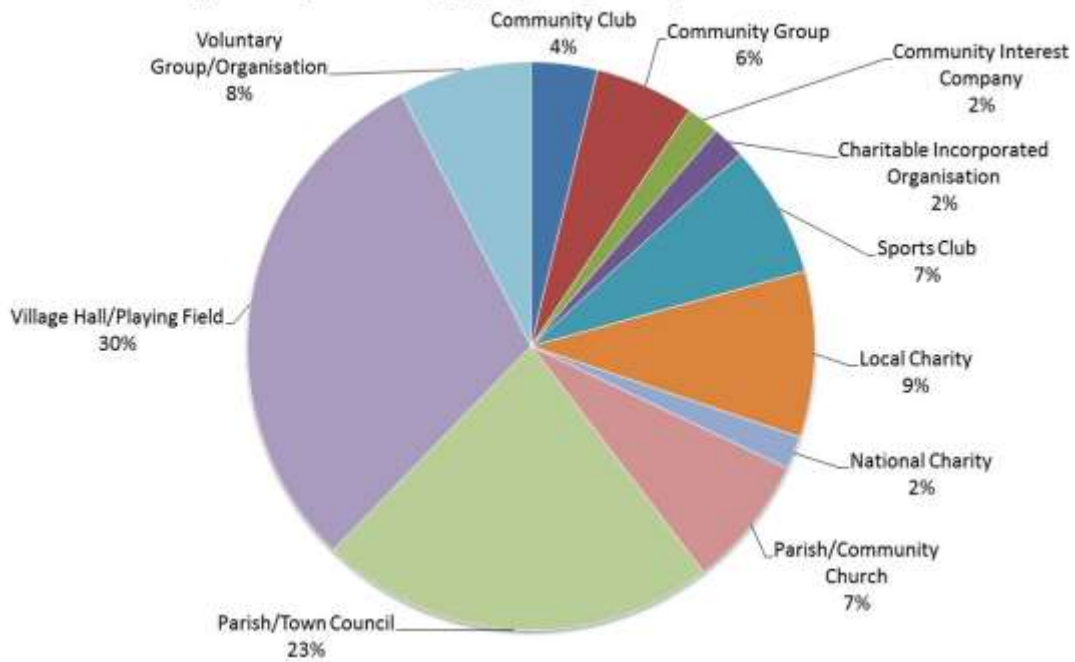
Organisations are encouraged to contact the Council to discuss their potential project prior to submitting an application. Whilst not all potential applicants do this the majority do which has reduced the time processing ineligible applications. In 2015 / 16, 8% of applications submitted were ineligible to be presented to the Panel. In 2016/17 all applications met the grant criteria. Similarly the support and advice given to eligible applications prior to submission has reduced the number of unsuccessful applications. In 2014 / 15 only 59% of applications were successful. In 2015 / 16 this increased to 77%. In 2016 / 17, 82% of applications considered by the Panel were awarded a grant.

Since the Fund started in 2012, one hundred and eighty three grant awards totalling approximately £1,400,000 have been made to 150 organisations for a range of community projects that are meeting local need and making a real difference to communities across North Norfolk. Proactive work has continued in the last year to encourage applications from parishes that have not previously applied for a BSF grant. As a result during 2016/17 ten additional parishes who had not previously received funding made a successful grant application. In total, seventy seven parishes in North Norfolk have received at least one BSF grant. This equates to 63% of parishes in North Norfolk.

Eighty one organisations have completed their projects and submitted all necessary monitoring information. Ongoing monitoring and engagement continues with over 100 projects that have been awarded a grant but where work hasn't started yet or is in progress.

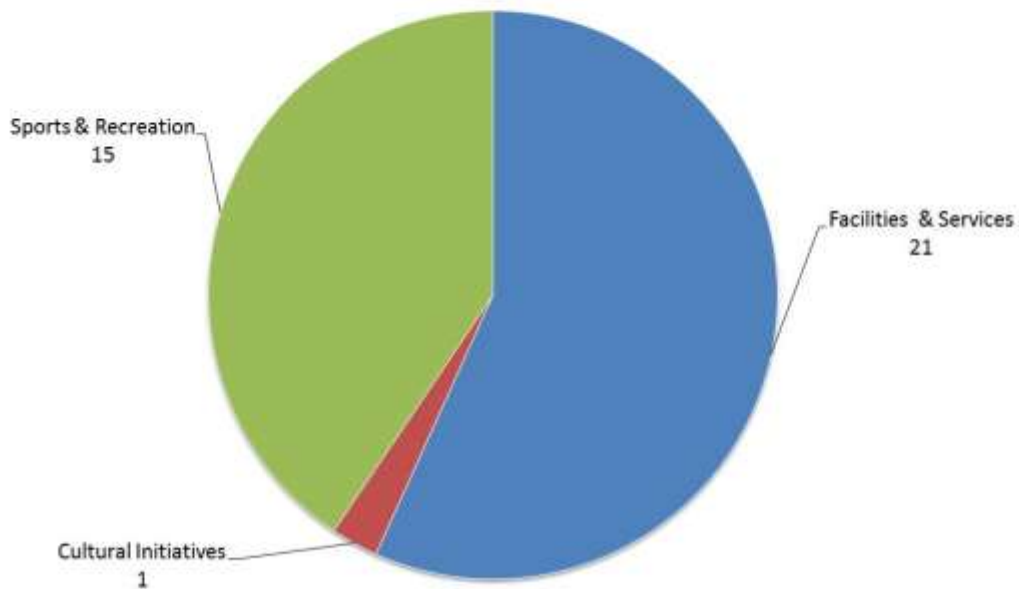
During 2017 /18 there will be a greater focus on working with organisations to help reduce the time from grant award to project completion.

Type of Organisation Applying to Big Society Fund 2016-2017



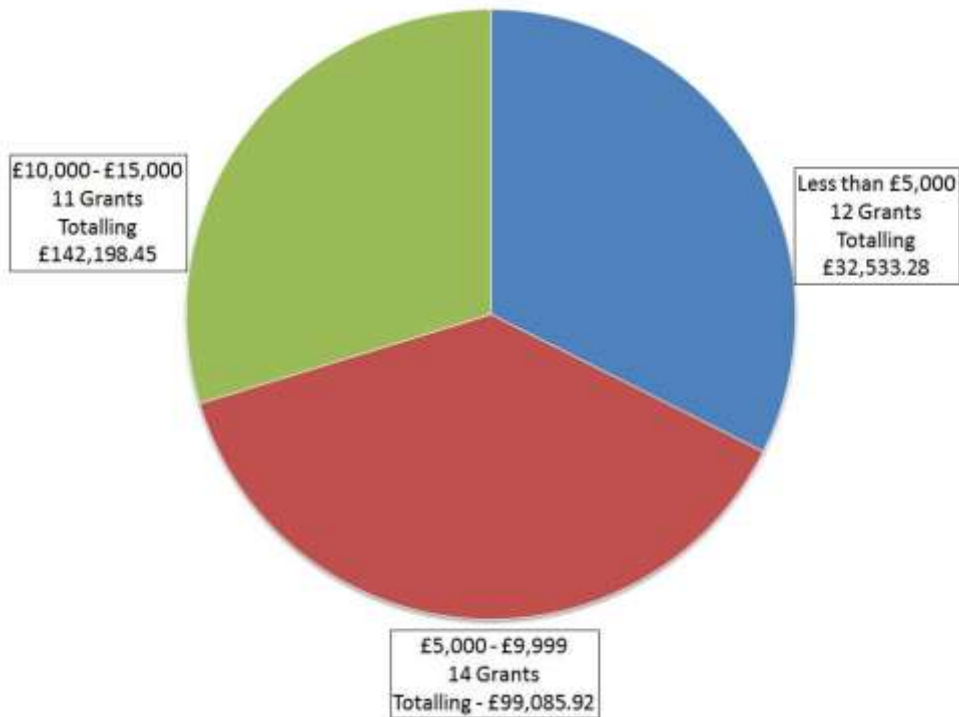
The number of village hall / playing field associations applying for a grant has increased from 8% in 2015 / 16 to 30% in 2016 / 17.

Number of Successful Applications (by Theme) Supported by the Big Society Grant Fund 2016-2017



The vast majority of applications continue to relate to projects aimed at improving village halls and other community buildings, provision of play equipment or sport and recreational facilities.

Value of Grants Awarded 2016-2017



The amount of funding awarded to individual projects has increased in the last year. In 2016 /17 fourteen projects were awarded grants of less than £5,000 compared to twelve in 2015 / 16. The number of projects awarded a grant of between £5,000 and £9,999 doubled to fourteen in 2016 / 17 compared to seven in 2015 / 16. The biggest increase was the number of projects awarded grants of between £10,000 and £15,000. In 2016/17 there were eleven compared to just six in 2015 / 16. These changes are likely to be due to the increased cost of equipment and materials for projects and the fact that the Big Society Fund is one of the few generic funds available to organisations in North Norfolk offering grants over £5,000.

1.3 Application process and procedures

With the agreement of the Chairman of the Big Society Fund, minor amendments have been made to the Prospectus to reduce applications being submitted for projects whose overall aims meet the criteria of the BSF but where the grant would be used for a purpose which is not supported by the fund e.g. staff salaries, core revenue costs, routine maintenance.

A review of the application process and documentation was undertaken to ensure it is appropriate and equitable for all potential applicants, including smaller organisations and parishes. It was felt that no changes were required. Help and support with the application process is currently available and offered to all potential applicants to the Fund. This offer will be reinforced in verbal and written communication to parishes and other organisations.

At each BSF panel a monitoring report on the progress of all BSF projects and information from the End of Grant reports submitted by completed projects is considered. It is clear from the comments received in these reports that the BSF

grant process is straightforward and the support available throughout the process is valued by organisations.

1.4 Big Society Fund Tour and North Norfolk Big Society Awards evening

A tour was arranged in September 2016 offering Panel members and key officers the opportunity to visit nine projects which had received a grant from the Big Society Fund. The organisations involved in the various projects, particularly those that had not held an opening event, were very proud of their achievements and pleased to have the opportunity to explain the benefits the projects had made to the organisation, local and wider community.

The second North Norfolk Big Society Awards event was held at Sheringham Little Theatre in March 2017. Members of the public as well as a range of organisations were able to nominate people, community projects and organisations for awards. Over 150 people attended the successful event. Awards were made in the following categories:

- Outstanding Contribution by a Young Person to their community
- Voluntary Services to Young People
- Voluntary Services Award to Sport
- Community Project Award
- Voluntary Services to a Neighbourhood
- Outstanding Contribution to a Big Society Funded Project
- Act of Heroism Award

A special thank you was also given to organisations and individuals for their help and support during the tidal surge in January 2017.

1.5 Summary

The Big Society Fund is widely promoted across North Norfolk through a variety of media and continues to achieve its aim of helping build strong communities in North Norfolk, supporting NNDC's priority in the Corporate Plan of a district with vibrant communities and where healthy lifestyles are accessible to all.

Feedback from Members who attend project opening events, as well as the End of Grant reports submitted when a project has been completed, clearly demonstrate the value and benefit of the BSF and the difference it is making to local communities.

The importance of the BSF is highlighted by many organisations who continue to report that access to grant funding has reduced both locally and nationally. As an example the Norfolk Community Foundation manages thirty four generic or thematic grants applicable to the North Norfolk area but currently only eleven are open for applications. Therefore the BSF which offers grants of up to £15,000 continues to be the most significant year round generic fund available within North Norfolk.

2. Financial Implications and Risks

Funding to implement the recommendation set out in this report is already accounted for in the Budget for 2017/18.

3. Sustainability

The provisions set out in this report take account of sustainability and are aimed around supporting the overall sustainability of local communities.

4. Equality and Diversity

There are no equality or diversity implications.

5. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

There are no crime and disorder implications

Provision of Additional Graphical Information Systems (GIS) resources

Summary: The Digital Transformation Programme is generating a significant increase in the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to support business processes and improve the reporting and presentation of information to the public, members and officers.

In order to deliver this work-stream this report requests the release of previously identified funding to fund a fixed term (two years) post with the IT team to support the increased use of GIS within the Council.

Options considered: Outsourcing of data management and GIS systems activities have been assessed and discounted on practicability and value for money grounds.

Increased use of Service based staff is not feasible because of other work demands and coordination and control issues.

Fixed term additional resource with the appropriate skills and experience. This is identified as the most appropriate solution to validating the business case for a possible future permanent resource.

Conclusions: The provision of funding for an additional post (fixed term) will allow the immediate requirements to be met whilst assessing the long term demand and resource requirement to provide adequate support for service business processes that will be enhanced by the use of GIS systems and data.

Recommendations **That Cabinet approves the release of £57,000 previously identified Digital Transformation funding to allow the establishment of a two year fixed term post within the GIS team of the IT section.**

Reasons for Recommendations: The recruitment of an additional post with appropriate GIS skills and experience will ensure that the Council has the capacity to deploy GIS tools and data in accordance with Council and Service priorities.

Making the post fixed term will allow validation of the business case for establishing a sustainable resource commensurate with the needs of the Council.

Cabinet Member(s) Ward(s) affected
Tom FitzPatrick All
Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Sean Kelly, Head of Digital Transformation & IT, 01263 516276, sean.kelly@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Members will recall that the Digital Transformation Programme (DTP) which Cabinet approved in 2013, it was identified that further reports would be brought to Cabinet as the work-streams within the programme were developed.
- 1.2 One of the key elements of the DTP is the establishment of a Council wide Graphical Information Systems (GIS) to support Service business processes to be based upon accurate spatial information.
- 1.3 The existing GIS resource is a single post based within IT supplemented by a number of service based personnel who use GIS systems and data on an ad-hoc or infrequent basis.
- 1.4 The use of GIS data is increasing in scale and complexity with Services becoming increasingly reliant on up to date and accurate GIS systems and data.
- 1.5 As GIS complexity increases it is difficult to develop and maintain relevant skills in staff who only use GIS occasionally.
- 1.6 Many data sets are utilised in more than one Service. These data sets require to be managed centrally to ensure data quality and consistency.

2. Approach

- 2.1 A job description will be created for a post to assist with the development and maintenance of GIS data and systems in conjunction with the current GIS coordinator.
- 2.2 If approved, the funding will allow the establishment of a two year fixed term post within the IT section.
- 2.3 The post will be filled using standard Council recruitment processes and policies.
- 2.4 The post will be reviewed after 18 months to validate the business case for establishing a sustainable approach to the provision of ongoing GIS data and systems management.
- 2.5 A further report will be submitted to cabinet with the outcomes of this review.

5 Financial Implications and Risks

5.1 Financial Implications

The costs associated with establishing a two year fixed term post with the appropriate skills and experience is approximately £57,000 inclusive of on-costs.

These sums are within the initial estimates for the Business Transformation Programme approved by Cabinet in November 2013.

5.2 Risks

Issues are already being reported arising from outdated and incomplete data which have resulted in reputational damage and inefficiencies. Without this resource it is likely this situation will worsen.

The lack of appropriately managed GIS data and systems will inhibit the improvement in Service business processes and efficiency.

6 Conclusion

The provision of a fixed term post will allow for immediate issues to be addressed whilst allowing for a considered assessment of the best long term approach to the management of GIS systems and data.

7 Sustainability

The provision of an effective GIS system with accurate and up to date information will allow for ongoing service improvements and efficiencies.

It will also facilitate efficient electronic service processes which will result in reduced environmental impact from service delivery related travel.

8. Equality and Diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications directly resulting from the recommendations or options considered in this report.

9. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

There are no Crime and Disorder implications directly resulting from the recommendations or options considered in this report.

Measured Term Contract for Small Scale Coastal Works

Summary:	<p>This report sets out the need for renewing the proven and effective Coastal Measured Term Contract (MTC). It sets out why the MTC is being tendered and the need to progress appointment in order to ensure continued and uninterrupted access for reactive and emergency works. Cabinet resolution is sought that following a tender process, authority is delegated to appoint the contract with subsequent notification to members. This will facilitate a seamless transition.</p>
Options considered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do nothing – not renew the Measured Term Contract• Incorporate into a wider Coastal Partnership East approach• Tender for renewed NNDC Measured Term Contract without Cabinet resolutions sought through this report• Tender for renewed NNDC Measured Term Contract with Cabinet resolutions sought through this report
Conclusions:	<p>Over the past five years the Coastal Measured Term Contract has proven to have been effective at delivering small scale coastal works efficiently whilst providing good value for money.</p> <p>The current contract has run its full contract term and terminates on 31 May 2017. It is desirable to ensure arrangements are in place for a new MTC so that there is no gap in provision.</p> <p>It is recommended that appointment of the MTC contract is delegated to Corporate Director with consultation with the Portfolio Holder and that this is subsequently reported to members.</p>
Recommendations:	<p>Cabinet resolves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) to delegate authority to Corporate Director in consultation with Cabinet Member for Coastal Management to appoint to the Coastal Measured Term Contract.(b) that following appointment members are subsequently notified.
Reasons for Recommendations:	<p>To ensure continuity of delivery of emergency and small scale coastal works.</p>

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr. Angie Fitch-Tillett	Ward(s) affected All coastal wards
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Rob Goodliffe, Coastal Manager, 01263 516321, Rob.Goodliffe@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 North Norfolk District Council Coastal Management Team has over the last five years utilised a Measured Term Contract (MTC) for the delivery of small scale coastal defence works. The contract has provided an efficient method of completing small scale works to a high standard and has time and again proved its value, most notably following storm events such as that of December 2013.
- 1.2 The current contract comes to an end on 31 May 2017 (following two agreed one year extensions) and therefore a tender process has commenced for the appointment of a new contract.
- 1.3 The tender includes a MTC for small scale coast defence works up to £10,000 per order to an approximate (but not bound to) £100,000 per annum. This is funded from the Coast Protection Revenue Budget.
- 1.4 The contract is being extended to cover other coastal zone minor work such as small scale promenade and cliff top path repairs. These additional tasks are not included in the £100,000 and will be funded via the appropriate budgets (e.g. Property Services).
- 1.5 Due to the limited timeframe in which the current contract expires, this report seeks delegation to Corporate Director to approve the appointment of the contract with Portfolio holder consultation and subsequent notification to members.

2. Existing Coastal Measured Term Contract

- 2.1 Over the past 5 years the Council has been operating a MTC undertaking minor repair and maintenance of its coast protection structures on an on-going basis. The contract has efficiently delivered small scale tasks on a routine and reactive basis, saving NNDC time in seeking quotations for minor work, ensuring tasks are completed within 4 hours where required, all with highly competitive rates.
- 2.2 The current contract has a maximum individual order value of £7,500 unless a Change or Variation Instruction is issued and an exemption sought.
- 2.3 The existing contract has performed in respect of Health and Safety, Key Performance Indicators and has proved invaluable during significant event such as the December 2013 and January 2017 Storm Surges.
- 2.4 The current contract was procured in 2012 for 3 +1 + 1 years. We are now approaching the end of this contract on 31 May 2017 and therefore the Coastal Management Team are tendering to renew the Measured Term Contract.

3. Options Considered

- 3.1 A - Do nothing – not renew the Measured Term Contract – Not retendering and reappointing would revert small scale coastal works to the general standing orders of the Council. This would involve seeking quotations for a large proportion of the work currently included in the MTC. This would create unnecessary time delays in completing work, increases in officer time in

preparing for works, wasted contactor time in preparing quotations and would not take advantage of the efficiencies and benefits the existing contract has demonstrated.

- 3.2 *B - Incorporate into a wider Coastal Partnership East approach* - In preparation for tendering opportunities to incorporate the NNDC Measured Term Contract into a wider Coastal Partnership East (CPE – the shared coastal management team over North Norfolk, Waveney, Suffolk Coastal District Councils and Great Yarmouth Borough Council) approach to small scale coastal works was considered. Following investigation, it was agreed that due to the timescales required for the NNDC MTC renewal, the successful implementation of the existing NNDC contract and there being no need to re tender similar contracts elsewhere on the CPE frontage there was no benefit to NNDC in pursuing this further at this time.
- 3.3 *C - Tender for renewed NNDC Measured Term Contract **without** Cabinet resolutions sought through this report* – This option enables NNDC to continue to benefit from an efficient and effective coastal small works methodology which offers good value for money. It also enables the learning over 5 years to adjust the operational model to enhance delivery. This option would require a specific Cabinet resolution following the selection of a preferred contractor but prior to appointment. Therefore, it does not enable a new MTC contract to begin without a gap in provision following the termination of the existing contract. As such the Council could either seek to negotiate a temporary extension of the existing contract or would be without a contract for a period of time.
- 3.4 *D - Tender for renewed NNDC Measured Term Contract **with** Cabinet resolutions sought through this report* – RECOMMENDED - This option enables NNDC to continue to benefit from an efficient and effective coastal small works methodology which offers good value for money. It also enables the learning over 5 years to adjust the operational model to enhance delivery. It would enable a new contract to be prepared ready for the termination of the previous MTC contract and time for the new contractor and NNDC to initiate the works methodology for the 1 June 2017.

4. 2017 Coastal Measured Term Contract – Outline Scope

- 4.1 North Norfolk District Council leases from The Crown Estate and other private owner's beaches (intertidal zone between mean high and low water springs) between Cley Eye and Horsey (with the exception of the intertidal zone directly adjacent to Bacton Gas Terminal). The Council also manages other assets above mean high water in the coastal zone such as beach access steps, cliff top paths and promenades.
- 4.2 The Council is the Coast Protection Authority for the coastline between Kelling Hard and Cart Gap, Happisburgh. Under the Coast Protection Act 1949 North Norfolk District Council has permissive powers to undertake coast protection works on its frontage and as such manages and maintains approximately 34km of defended and undefended coast. Examples of coastal management work fulfilled by the MTC include repairs to sea walls, timber groynes and revetments, beach access ramps, promenade railings, storm gates and response to storm events.
- 4.3 Following the successful implementation of the current MTC and the wider needs of the Council in the coastal zone, the 2017 MTC has also included the opportunity for works outside of the Coastal Management Team remit but within the coastal zone. This will enable the contract to also provide

assistance when required for wider coastal zone maintenance and assistance with specific incidents such as beach stranding's.

- 4.4 Therefore, the geographical extent of the 2017 MTC is the whole coastal frontage of the district but with a focus on the coast protection frontage between Kelling Hard and Cart Gap, Happisburgh.
- 4.5 The 2017 MTC will be for a contract period of 3 years with two one year options to extend.
- 4.6 Individual MTC orders will be increased from a maximum of £7,500, as per the current contract, to £10,000 unless a Change or Variation Instruction (CVI) and exemption is issued for reasons such as efficiency/emergencies. This increase is required due to the increases in plant, materials and labour costs over the intervening 5 years and a desire to have the option to capture additional small scale works to maximise on efficiencies the contract offers for the Council.
- 4.7 The estimated value of the contract over the full term is £500,000, however, the contract is not bound to this figure (but within budgetary limitations and Contract Regulations).

5. Finance

- 5.1 The NNDC Coastal Management the revenue budget for works is currently £270,000 per annum. Approximately £100,000 of this budget is spent on small scale and reactive repair works although this is not set.
- 5.2 The MTC also includes the opportunity for reactive work prior to and during the recovery of storm events. Additional budget can be identified and allocated as appropriate and is in addition to the estimated £100,000k budget.
- 5.3 Additional works in the coastal zone but outside of the Coastal Management Budget will require the allocation of existing funds from the relevant Service Areas. Such works will be treated in addition to the estimated £100,000 budget. It should be noted that this contract is not intended to replace the wider need for similar Council building and asset maintenance arrangements.

6. Tender Process

- 6.1 Following the successful implementation of the 2012 contract the earlier tender documents were revisited and updated to form the basis of the 2017 tender.
- 6.2 Following agreement with East Law and the Head of Finance it was agreed that an Expression of Interest/PQQ process was not required. As such the opportunity has been advertised on the Government Contracts Finder and the North Norfolk District Council website.
- 6.3 The tender has been managed through the new electronic Delta e-procure system recently purchased by the Council.
- 6.4 Stage One of the tender opened on 24 March and closed on 18 April. Seventeen contractors registered on the Delta E-procure system to access tender documents, the tender had not closed prior to submission of this report, however, 5 contractors had at that time submitted tenders. Each tender was assessed and scored on price, experience, methodology, quality and health and safety. Four contractors have been selected to progress to stage two of the tender.
- 6.5 Stage Two requires each contractor, using the rates and information submitted in their stage one submission, to price and provide a methodology

as to how they would complete four MTC task scenarios provided by NNDC. These scenarios seek to test cost/value, Health and Safety, awareness of operating in a coastal environment, efficiency of working practices and coastal maintenance experience. The contractors are also required to attend an interview and provide a presentation on their submissions.

- 6.6 Stage Two contractors will be assessed with detailed cost comparison of the priced scenarios in relation to tendered rates and assessment of experience, methodology, quality and health and safety. Following assessment, a preferred contractor will be selected for appointment.

7. Tender/Award Timeframe

- 7.1 The table below outlines the target tender and award timeframe.

	Task	Target date
1	Contracts Finder Advert	20 March
2	Tender Live	24 March
3	Tender Close	18 April
4	Stage One tender assessment	18 – 21 April
5	Invitation to Stage Two	24 April
6	Feedback to unsuccessful stage one tenderers	Post 24 April
7	Submission of Work Model Scenarios	28 April
8	Cabinet consider delegated approval	8 May
9	Stage Two Interviews	9 May
10	Stage Two Assessment	9 – 12 May
11	Appoint contract	15 May
12	Feedback to tenderers	Post 15 May
13	Finalise and sign/seal contract	16 – 19 May
14	Contract initiation meeting	w/c 22 May
15	Contract commences	1 June

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 Over the past five years the coastal Measured Term Contract has been effective at delivering small scale coastal works efficient whilst providing good value for money.
- 8.2 The current contract has run its full term and is due for renewal.
- 8.3 The current contract terminates on 31 May 2017 and it is desirable to ensure arrangements are in place so that there is no gap in provision.

- 8.4 It is recommended that appointment of the MTC contract is delegated to Corporate Director with consultation with the Portfolio Holder and that this is subsequently reported to members.

9. Implications and Risks

- 9.1 Should the Council not appoint to the Coastal Measured Term contract there will be negative implications in the ability for the Council to react in a timely way to emergency situations in the coastal zone. This could impact on public safety, increase the risk of claims (following an incident though inability to act) and have negative reputational consequences.
- 9.2 There is a risk that the contractor fails to perform against the contract. As mitigation the contract includes annual performance reviews which will include KPIs for standards of work, response times, health and safety performance, contractor diligence and value for money. There is a clause in the contract for either side to terminate the contract with a 13 week notice period.
- 9.3 There is a risk that the award of the contract is challenged by an unsuccessful tenderer. This will be mitigated and managed through the deployment of a previously agreed tender scoring methodology, recording of tender scoring and clear feedback to unsuccessful contractors.
- 9.4 Should the annually agreed Coastal Management revenue budget be amended causing an impact of the delivery of coast protection maintenance, the proposed contract, this report and tender process allows for scope in increasing (within Contract Regulations) spend though the Measured Term Contract or reducing the spend.
- 9.5 Failure to appoint would reduce efficiency, increase costs and increase officer time required to manage small scale works, ultimately leading to less coast protection maintenance being completed.

10. Financial Implications and Risks

- 10.1 The Council has the opportunity to terminate the contract with 13 weeks' notification should it be required.
- 10.2 The contract does not commit to any level of expenditure to the successful contractor.

11. Sustainability

- 11.1 All operations under the contract will be completed in accordance with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2010, specifically works below mean high water springs will be completed within the exemption for maintenance of coastal protection works or with appropriate licensing.
- 11.2 All works will be completed under the approved Health and Safety arrangements as identified by the contract.

12. Equality and Diversity

- 12.1 No equality or diversity issues have been identified.

13. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

- 13.1 The contract will enable the Council to respond to any damage occurring on the coastal zone and therefore discourage further potential acts of crime and disorder. The MTC contract can therefore contribute to NNDC responsibilities Section 17 responsibilities.