

Council



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16 May 2017

The Annual Council meeting of the **North Norfolk District Council** will be held in the **Council Chamber** at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer on **Wednesday 24th May at 6.00 p.m.**

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: All Members of the Council
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

Corporate Directors: Nick Baker and Steve Blatch
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A G E N D A

1. PRAYERS

Led by the Reverend James Porter, Cromer Parish Church with St Martins

2. PRESENTATION OF AWARD TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

The National Association of Civic Officers (NACO) to present the award to Democratic Services for 2nd place in the NACO 'Civic Team of the Year' awards

3. PRESENTATION TO THE CHAIRMAN'S CHARITIES

To present cheques to the Chairman's nominated charities for funds raised throughout the civic year.

4. OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive the outgoing Chairman's communications, if any.

5. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

To elect a Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

6. INCOMING CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive the incoming Chairman's communications, if any.

7. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

To appoint a Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

8. TO RECEIVE DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

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.

9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence, if any.

10. MINUTES

(page 6)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 March 2017.

11. 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.

12. PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS

To consider any questions or statements received from members of the public.

13. REPORT ON THE CABINET

The Leader will report to the Council on any appointments and changes to the Membership and portfolio responsibilities of the Cabinet

14. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, CHAIRMEN AND VICE CHAIRMEN AND SUBSTITUTES

AGENDA NOTE:

If the Council is to approve alternative arrangements for appointments to a Committee other than those required by law on political balance, it must be without any member voting against them.

Council will recall that there is no substitution permitted on Cabinet. Members are also reminded of the need for Committee Members or Substitutes on the Development and Licensing Committees to have undertaken the necessary training.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will normally be drawn from the main opposition group and the Vice – Chairman from the ruling group. Cabinet Members and the Chairman of the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee cannot sit or substitute on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Decision: To recommend Council appoints Committees, Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Substitute Members for 2017/18 (Appendix A – to follow)

15. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS ON WORKING PARTIES, FORUMS, AND PANELS

Decision: To recommend Council appoints North Norfolk District Council Members on Working Parties, Forums and Panels for 2017/18 as outlined In Appendix B (to follow)

16. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

(page 13)
(Appendix C – to follow)
(Appendix D – electronic only)

Summary: This report requires Members to make nominations and appointments to the Council's schedule of approved Outside Bodies for the 2017/18 civic year.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the Outside Bodies list be amended in accordance with section 2, 3 and 4 of the report**
- 2. That the Council appoints Members to the schedule of approved Outside Bodies for the 2017/18 civic year as detailed in Appendix C**

Cabinet member(s): All
Wards affected All
Contact Officer, Emma Denny, Democratic Services Manager
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and e-mail: emma.denny@north-norfolk.gov.uk

17. PIER MANAGEMENT CONTRACT - MEMBER PANEL

(page 15)

Summary: This report seeks to update members on the ongoing procurement of the new Pier Management contract and provides for the establishment of a Member Panel to provide challenge around the procurement negotiations.

Options considered: Either to have or not to have a Member Panel.

Conclusions: The procurement is progressing well and is on track

A member Panel is needed to provide challenge to the procurement negotiations, whilst keeping members at arms' length from those discussions with bidders.

Recommendations: **That a politically balanced Member Panel is established for the Pier Management Contract.**

Note: At the time of writing this would be 3 Conservatives and one Liberal Democrat member.

Reasons for Recommendations: To provide an appropriate level of member oversight and challenge to the procurement process for this contract.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr. Judy Oliver – Assets and procurement Cllr Maggie Prior – Leisure Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Nick Baker 01263 516221 nick.baker@north-norfolk.gov.uk	Ward(s) affected Cromer and wider
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18. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET 08 MAY 2017

a) AGENDA ITEM 10: HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME

(attached – p.18)

(Appendix A – p.26) (EIA Record Form – p. 54)

The following recommendations were made to Council:

1. That Council adopts the new Housing Allocations Scheme.
2. 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.

RECOMMENDATION FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Cabinet recommendation at their meeting on 12 April 2017. There were no formal recommendations but as a result of the discussions 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.

19. FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To consider any further recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 May 2017.

Please note this meeting was held after the Council agenda was published. The Chairman of the Committee will provide an oral update at the Council meeting.

20. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE UNDERMENTIONED COMMITTEES

To note the approved minutes of the undermentioned committees:

- a) Cabinet – 06 March 2017
- b) Cabinet – 03 April 2017
- c) Development Committee – 16 February 2017
- d) Development Committee – 16 March 2017
- e) Governance, Risk & Audit Committee – 06 December 2017
- f) Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 16 March 2016

21. QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS

None received

22. OPPOSITION BUSINESS

None received

23. NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

None received

24. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To pass the following resolution – if necessary:

“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) _ of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

25. PRIVATE BUSINESS

Circulation:

All Members of the Council.

Members of the Management Team and other appropriate Officers.

Press and Public

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of North Norfolk District Council held on 22 March 2017 at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer at 6.00 pm.

Members Present:

Mrs S Arnold	Mr S Hester	Mrs M Prior
Mr P Butikofer	Mr P W High	Mr J Rest
Mrs S Butikofer	Mr M Knowles	Mr R Reynolds
Mrs A Claussen-Reynolds	Mr J Lee	Mr E Seward
Mr N Coppack	Mrs B McGoun	Mr R Shepherd
Mrs H Cox	Mrs M Millership	Mr B Smith
Mr N Dixon	Mrs A Moore	Mr R Stevens
Mrs A Fitch-Tillett	Mr P Moore	Mrs L Walker
Mr T FitzPatrick	Mr W J Northam	Mr G Williams
Mr V FitzPatrick	Mrs J Oliver	Mr A Yiasimi
Ms V R Gay	Miss B Palmer	
Mrs P Grove-Jones	Mr N Pearce	
Mr B Hannah	Mrs G Perry-Warnes	
	Mr R Price	

Officers in Attendance: The Corporate Directors, the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Finance & Assets, the Media & Campaigns Officer and the Democratic Services Manager

Press: Present

79. PRAYERS

The Chairman invited Father James Walsh, Church of the Sacred Heart, North Walsham to lead prayers.

80. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman spoke about the very successful church service held recently to recognise the work of volunteers. Over 200 people had attended and many of the volunteers had thanked him for hosting it and said that they would like it to become an annual event.

He then said that he would be hosting one final event to raise funds for his charities. This would be on Sunday 7th May and there would be a charity football match between NNDC and the parents of Cromer Youth FC, followed by a barbecue and then a race night. The Chairman encouraged as many Members as possible to attend.

The Chairman spoke about Cllr Philip High's decision to stand down from the Council on 24th March. He said that he was extremely sad to see such a highly regarded member leaving the Council. A tribute was read out from a former Chairman of the Council, Mr T Ivory which highlighted Mr High's commitment to the Council and the excellent work that he had done in support of Holt. Mr High thanked the Chairman and members for their kind words.

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None

82. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs J English, Mrs A Green, Mr N Lloyd, Mr J Punchard, Mr P Rice, Mr S Shaw, Mr D Smith, Mrs N Smith, Mrs V Uprichard and Mrs K Ward.

83. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

84. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

85. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Two members of the public were in attendance. Both wished to speak about the proposed wind turbines at Bodham and Selbrigg. The Chairman invited Amelia Courtauld to speak first.

Ms Courtauld began by saying that it was vital that the Council appealed the Planning Inspector's decision to grant permission for the wind turbines. She made reference to Government guidance which contradicted the decision and the continued strong opposition from the local community. She said that the Council's commitment to offshore wind turbines and the onshore cabling that this required clearly demonstrated that NNDC was supportive of renewable energy but the fact that any onshore cabling was buried indicated the importance of preserving the natural landscape.

Ms Courtauld concluded by thanking the Council for their commitment so far and urged NNDC to appeal the Planning Inspector's decision.

The Chairman then invited Mr Ian Shepherd to speak. Mr Shepherd said that he was speaking on behalf of the Campaign for Rural England (CPRE) Norfolk and as a local resident. He began by making reference to key paragraphs in the Planning Inspector's decision, stating that they were seriously flawed. He referred to the large number of offshore wind turbines already in place and the likely impact of the proposed onshore turbines on wildlife and ecology. Mr Shepherd concluded by saying that the number of households that would be serviced by these two turbines was very small compared to the reach of offshore wind turbines. He urged the Council to appeal the Planning Inspector's decision.

The Chairman invited the Leader, Mr T FitzPatrick to respond. Mr FitzPatrick began by thanking both speakers for their comments. He said that many Members had been contacted by local residents expressing concern about the Inspector's decision. He said that he agreed with the public speakers' comments regarding offshore turbines and he also agreed with the majority of local residents that the proposed turbines would detract from the unique landscape and destroy its tranquillity. Mr FitzPatrick said that he had discussed options with his Cabinet colleagues and senior staff and he wished to advise Members that the Council intended to apply to the High Court to overturn the decision. A press release stating this would be released after the meeting.

86. APPOINTMENTS

None

87. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET 06 MARCH 2017

AGENDA ITEM 12: EGMERE AND SCOTTOW ENTERPRISE ZONES

Mr N Dixon, Portfolio Holder for Business and Economic Development, introduced this item. Mr Dixon explained that Enterprise Zones were at the heart of the government's long term economic plan, supporting businesses to sustainably grow. Enterprise Zones were geographically defined areas, hosted by Local Enterprise Partnerships, in which commercial and industrial businesses can receive incentives to set up or expand. Egmere and Scottow were two of ten new sites throughout Norfolk and Suffolk.

Mr P W Moore, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee said that the Committee had supported the Cabinet recommendation.

RESOLVED

That the capital budget for the phase 1 works (detailed in paragraph 3.6) is increased to £1.9M, with the additional £450,000 being financed from the capital receipts budget.

88. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 15 MARCH 2017

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Mr P W Moore informed members that there were no recommendations to Council from the meeting held on 15 March.

89. PAY REPORT COVERING THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2017/18

The Leader, Mr T FitzPatrick, introduced this item. He explained that Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 required the Council to produce an annual pay policy statement for the start of each financial year which set out the current remuneration arrangements for officers. He informed members that the Living Wage supplement paid to employees on spinal column points (SCP) 9 -12 had been reviewed and adjusted to bring it in line with the national rate. The Council's Travel Policy had also been reviewed and updated.

It was proposed by Mr T FitzPatrick, seconded by Mrs S Arnold and

RESOLVED

To adopt the attached Pay Policy Statement and to publish the statement for 2017/18 on the Council's website.

90. UPDATE FROM MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Ms B Palmer, Chairman of the Member Development Group informed Council that the Group had been looking into organising some media training for Members to help them respond effectively to any media requests that they may receive. It was agreed that it would be best to provide this in-house and the Council's Media & Communications Officer, who is also a qualified trainer, has offered to run the session. It was hoped that this session would be followed by another on social media skills. The Council's Media & Campaigns Officer will run this and it was intended to offer two courses – one for beginners and then one for more advanced users.

Mrs A Claussen-Reynolds, Vice-Chairman of the Member Development Group then spoke about two other courses that the Group was hoping to offer; 'Thinking on the Spot' and 'Handling Difficult People and Conflict'. She explained that one of the biggest challenges for Members was responding to those times when they were put on the spot – whether it was in a challenging meeting, on the doorstep, or just out and about and it was with this in mind that session was being offered to all Members on how to deal with this. To build on this, the second session would focus on how to deal with difficult people more effectively, enabling Members to cope with challenging situations. Mrs Claussen-Reynolds explained that it was hoped that as many Members as possible would attend both sessions.

Mrs B McGoun spoke as a member of the Member Development Group. She said that the Group worked hard to organise interesting and effective training but that it needed to be better supported. She reminded members that training attendance was recorded on their individual profiles on the Council's website and that Members owed it to the Council and their constituents to attend.

91. TO RECEIVE THE APPROVED MINUTES OF THE UNDERMENTIONED COMMITTEES

The minutes of the meetings below were noted as a correct record;

Cabinet – 06 February 2017

Development Committee – 19 January 2017

Overview & Scrutiny – 18 January 2017

Overview & Scrutiny – 15 February 2017

92. REPORTS FROM THE CABINET OR MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Chairman invited Members to put forward any questions to the Cabinet in relation to their portfolios. Mrs L Walker referred to the Bacton / Walcott coastal management scheme and asked whether there was an update on the financial shortfall. The Portfolio Holder for the Coast, Mrs A Fitch-Tillett replied that a report was due from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in April and that work was underway on preparing a legal agreement with the terminal operators.

Mrs S Arnold said that she wished to add an update to her written report. She reminded all Members that they were welcome to attend meetings of the Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working Party. The Sculthorpe Public Inquiry was scheduled to start on 25 April at the Council offices and she encouraged as many Members as possible to attend. Finally, she reminded Members that the Planning Legal Manager, Roger Howe, was due to retire on 31st March.

Mr E Seward said that he wished to ask Ms Prior, Portfolio Holder for Health, whether there were any further updates on the future of Benjamin Court and Cranmer House. Ms Prior replied that there were no updates at the present time but that meetings were planned for the near future. She added that the issue had also been raised at the recent meeting of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Regarding Benjamin Court, a public meeting was planned for 4 April at Cromer Parish church and anyone was welcome to attend.

Ms V Gay asked Mr N Dixon, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Business, if he was able to share details of the site options for the proposed STEM enterprise centre. Mr Dixon replied that work was being undertaken by Norfolk and Waveney Enterprise Services and this was currently commercially sensitive, however, he said that he could share it with Members if they were interested. Ms Gay said that she would like to have sight of this information.

93. NOTICE OF MOTION

The Leader of the Opposition, Mrs S Butikofer, introduced the following motion:

This council notes:

1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any given year.
The World Health Organisation predicts that depression will be the second most common health condition worldwide by 2020.
Mental ill health costs some £105 billion each year in England alone.
People with a severe mental illness die up to 20 years younger than their peers in the UK.
There is often a circular relationship between mental health and issues such as housing, employment, family problems or debt.

This council believes:

As a local authority we have a crucial role to play in improving the mental health of everyone in our community and tackling some of the widest and most entrenched inequalities in health. Mental health should be a priority across all the local authority's areas of responsibility, including housing, community safety and planning.
All councillors, whether members of the Executive or Scrutiny and in our community and casework roles, can play a positive role in championing mental health on an individual and strategic basis.

This council resolves:

To sign the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge run by Centre for Mental Health, Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health Providers Forum, Mind, Rethink Mental Illness, Royal College of Psychiatrists and YoungMinds.
We commit to appoint an elected member as 'mental health champion' across the council.
We will seek to identify a member of staff within the council to act as 'lead officer' for mental health.

The council will also:

Support positive mental health in our community, including in local schools, neighbourhoods and workplaces.
Work to reduce inequalities in mental health in our community.
Work with local partners to offer effective support for people with mental health needs.
Tackle discrimination on the grounds of mental health in our community.
Proactively listen to people of all ages and backgrounds about what they need for better mental health.
Sign up to the [Time to Change pledge](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/get-involved/get-your-workplace-involved/employer-pledge)

More information about this initiative is available here - <http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/get-involved/get-your-workplace-involved/employer-pledge>.

Mrs Butikofer said that the Motion was self-explanatory but that she wished to add only a quarter of people suffering with mental health conditions would receive treatment and that 9 out of 10 prisoners suffered mental health problems. She added that there was often a link between mental health and poor housing and debt problems.

The Chairman invited the Leader, Mr T FitzPatrick, to respond. Mr FitzPatrick said that it was a wide-ranging and serious issue and that at NNDC there was no lead officer on mental health but that it was led from the top by the Heads of Paid Service. He referred to the existing services based at the Council offices such as the Early Help Hub and reminded Members that NNDC was a 'dementia friendly council'. He said that he believed that the Council was already tackling this issue very effectively and that a standard motion such as this did not take into account the amount of work already undertaken by the Council, including the excellent work being done by staff and councillors to support people with mental health issues.

Mr FitzPatrick said that he would like to propose an amendment: 'This Council resolves to ask our staff to consider whether there are further steps that we should take to build on our achievements to date and to make any recommendations in a report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee'. Mr N Dixon seconded the amendment.

Mrs Butikofer acknowledged that the Council already did a great deal in support of mental health but she said that the public had very little awareness of what the Council did. By supporting the Motion, Members would be able to highlight the Council's support amongst their local communities. She added that Norfolk County Council and Norwich City Council had already signed up to the Time to Change pledge.

Mr FitzPatrick said that such an important issue required more than simply signing up and that was why he had suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered it. By taking this approach, the Council would be able to take the work that it already did into consideration.

The Chairman invited Members to comment:

- i. Mr N Dixon said that he supported the amendment. He said that he understood the sentiments behind bringing the motion forward but that the Council had already overtaken much of the content and it should be reworded to acknowledge this. He said that it was important to demonstrate the Council's commitment rather than simply signing up. It would be helpful for members to hear the views of officers as to whether there was more that could be done to improve the Councils support of mental health issues. He concluded by saying that the Council needed to look to the future now.
- ii. Mr R Reynolds said that he had personally suffered with mental health problems and he was very supportive of the amendment. He said that it was right that the Council should be looking to the future whilst recognising all of the good work already being undertaken.
- iii. Ms M Prior, Portfolio Holder for Health said that seven members of staff had recently undertaken training to become 'mental health first aiders' and that as Portfolio Holder she attended CCG meetings and the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- iv. Mrs B McGoun said that she was not clear of the purpose of the amendment. If it was simply to highlight what the Council already did then that would not raise awareness. She said that if a straw poll was taken about the Council's support of mental health issues then it was very likely that most constituents would have no idea. She concluded by saying that the best approach would be to support the motion and also look to building on it for the future.
- v. Mr S Hester said that he had suffered with depression in the past and he agreed that people needed more education on the subject. He suggested that mental health professionals could be invited to come and talk to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a revised motion could be brought back to Council at a future date.
- vi. Mr V FitzPatrick said that it was a 'one-size' motion but that it didn't fit all. He said that it didn't recognise the existing interactions that councilors had with their local communities – such as dementia friendly initiatives and how these were being incorporated into the Council's policy and approach going forward.

Mrs Butikofer thanked Members for the debate. She said that it was clear that it was an important issue and she would withdraw the Motion as it stood and refer the matter to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration as suggested.

Mr FitzPatrick thanked Mrs Butikofer and said that he applauded the sentiments in bringing the Motion to Council. He said that Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be able to give it the attention that it deserved and that it was too important an issue to simply sign up to a standard motion.

The amendment was put the vote and it was

RESOLVED that

This Council resolves to ask our staff to consider whether there are further steps that we should take to build on our achievements to date and to make any recommendations in a report to the Scrutiny Committee.

94. PRIVATE BUSINESS

None

Before closing the meeting, the Leader said that there was a waiting list for attendance at the Big Society Fund awards on 23rd March and he asked any members that could no longer attend to notify the Communities team as soon as possible.

The meeting concluded at 6.56 pm.

Chairman

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Summary: This report requires Members to make nominations and appointments to the Council's schedule of approved Outside Bodies for the 2017/18 civic year.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the Outside Bodies list be amended in accordance with section 2, 3 and 4 of the report**
- 2. That the Council appoints Members to the schedule of approved Outside Bodies for the 2017/18 civic year as detailed in Appendix C (to follow)**

Cabinet member(s):	All
Wards affected	All
Contact Officer,	Emma Denny, Democratic Services Team Leader
telephone number	01263 516010,
and e-mail:	emma.denny@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Introduction

To evaluate the status of the bodies on the list, Democratic Services sends an annual questionnaire to Members asking for their input on the following points:

- a) Confirmation that they were invited to meetings.
- b) The number of meetings convened and the number attended.
- c) The value contributed by the organisation to the quality of life in North Norfolk and to the Council's priorities.
- d) The best method for reporting on the work of the organisation.
- e) The reason for representing the Council on the organisation, that is, specific interest/knowledge or relevance to Ward.

A separate questionnaire is sent to the outside bodies requesting information on contact details, the role of the appointed representative, terms of reference and expected number of meetings.

All of the above information is collated and analysed and an assessment is made as to whether appointments should continue or whether a body should be removed from the list (Appendix D – electronic only)

2. Evaluation of results

A good response has been received. Members and officers have confirmed that the following organisations are no longer active. They have been removed from the list for 2017/18

- Former RAF Coltishall Community Liaison Reference Group– no longer operating (short-term project)
- Youth Advisory Board – currently being reviewed – removed from the list for the foreseeable future

The majority of Members considered that reporting on the work of outside bodies should be through the Members' Bulletin or to Council if the remit of the body was District-wide. Democratic Services will actively encourage members to report back on the meetings they have attended during 2016/17.

3. Additions to the list

Representation on the following organisations has been approved by Council in 2016 – 2017:

- A47 Alliance
- Bittern Line Project Group
- Dudgeon Community Fund (currently under review – removed from list until further notice)

4. Bodies under review / change of status

The following Bodies are currently under review, have merged with another Body or changed their operation. It is recommended that an appointment(s) is made whilst Democratic Services awaits confirmation of their status:

- a) Citizens Advice Bureau Stakeholder Forum
- b) Visit North Norfolk – no core funding from NNDC but representation will continue as per the Terms of Reference

5. Clarification

Democratic Services will continue to undertake work to clarify the following:

- The remit of each outside body
- The role of the appointed representative(s)
- Whether a Portfolio Holder appointment is required
- Whether District Council funding is provided to the Outside Body

PIER MANAGEMENT CONTRACT – MEMBER PANEL

Summary:	This report seeks to update members on the ongoing procurement of the new Pier Management contract and provides for the establishment of a Member Panel to provide challenge around the procurement negotiations.
Options considered:	Either to have or not to have a Member Panel.
Conclusions:	The procurement is progressing well and is on track A member Panel is needed to provide challenge to the procurement negotiations, whilst keeping members at arms' length from those discussions with bidders.
Recommendations:	That a politically balanced Member Panel is established for the Pier Management Contract. Note: At the time of writing this would be 3 Conservatives and one Liberal Democrat member.
Reasons for Recommendations:	To provide an appropriate level of member oversight and challenge to the procurement process for this contract.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr. Judy Oliver – Assets and procurement Cllr Maggie Prior - Leisure	Ward(s) affected Cromer and wider
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Nick Baker 01263 516221 nick.baker@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

1. Introduction

The Pier Management contract ends in late 2017 and procurement of a new contract is progressing.

The contract covers management of all topside commercial activities on the pier such as the theatre and bar, and the restaurant

The procurement route is not simple, as the range of activities open to new bidders is very wide, and the Council is seeking to reduce the current subsidy significantly. As such it is important that members have some oversight and input to the process

2. Current Position

The current Pier Management contract is provided by Openwide Ltd, who run the operation at a cost of £82,000 pa to the Council.

The contract expires at the end of 2017 and, in order to ensure continuity of operation, and a period during which capital works can be carried out, members approved a procurement which will complete in autumn this year.

Members have asked that officers seek to achieve a zero subsidy from the Council in the future running of the Pier and that the Pier is better branded as a North Norfolk DC asset in the next contractual period.

In order to make the contract more attractive, and flexible, a much less prescriptive specification has been written to allow bidders more opportunity to run the Pier with no subsidy, or even with a profit share.

However, this makes evaluation of the bids received more difficult, as the offers received are likely to be wide ranging in terms of their technical offers.

The contract will be procured via a negotiated procedure, which is broadly structured as follows:

- Specification written and contract advertised
- Bidders' day to introduce bidders to the premises and Council
- Bidders return initial offers
- Initial Evaluation of bids
- Discussion/challenge and negotiation to obtain clear understanding of bids and to potentially short list bidders
- Further negotiated discussion to finalise bid
- Recommendation to Cabinet
- Award of contract

3. Member Panel

We are now at the stage where bidders have started to prepare their initial bid for submission. In recent discussions, it has become clear that members will need to be engaged in the discussions, albeit, at arm's length from the bidders ie without direct Member/bidder contact.

It is proposed that a Member Panel should be established to provide a sounding board and appropriate challenge around the various bids received.

This would need to be politically balanced and a Panel of three Conservative Members and 1 Liberal Democrat is therefore proposed.

In reaching a view on membership of the Panel, members should be aware the necessary work will take place across June, July and early August 2017.

4. Conclusion

The procurement process for the new Pier Management Contract is progressing well and now requires a Member Panel to be set up to provide specific input to the process

5. Implications and Risks

There is a risk of members not “owning” the new contract if they have had no input to the procurement process. This proposal should overcome such a concern.

6. Financial Implications and Risks

There are no financial implications or risks arising from the proposal but the addition of a Members Panel will give greater understanding of such risks to members.

7. Sustainability

There are no sustainability issues arising from the report

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.

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:

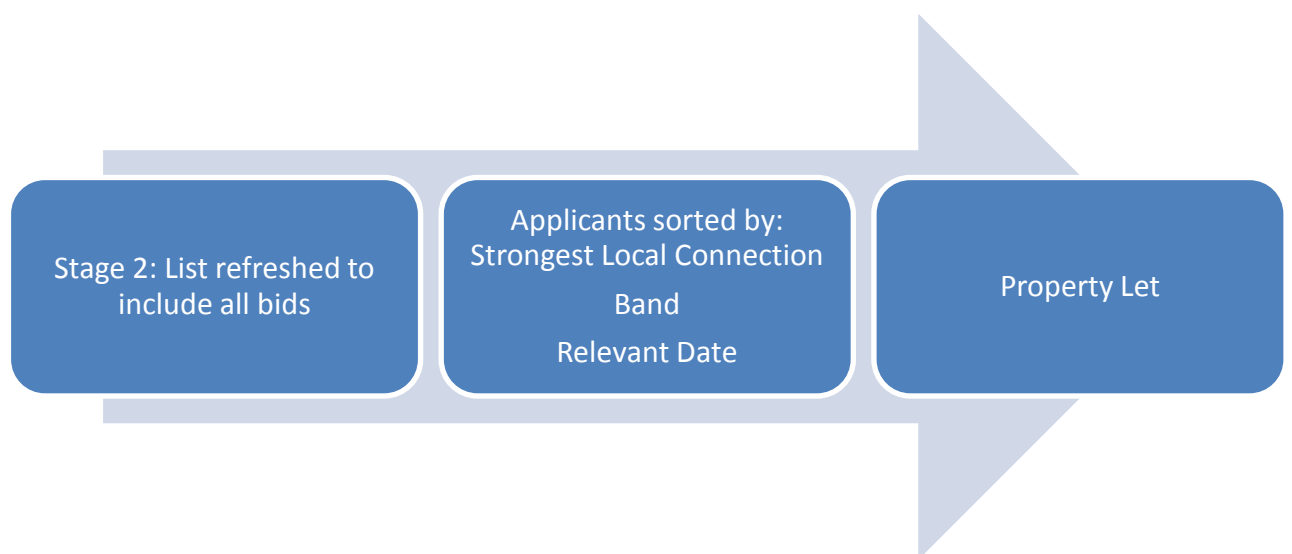
Two Stage Allocation Process

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.

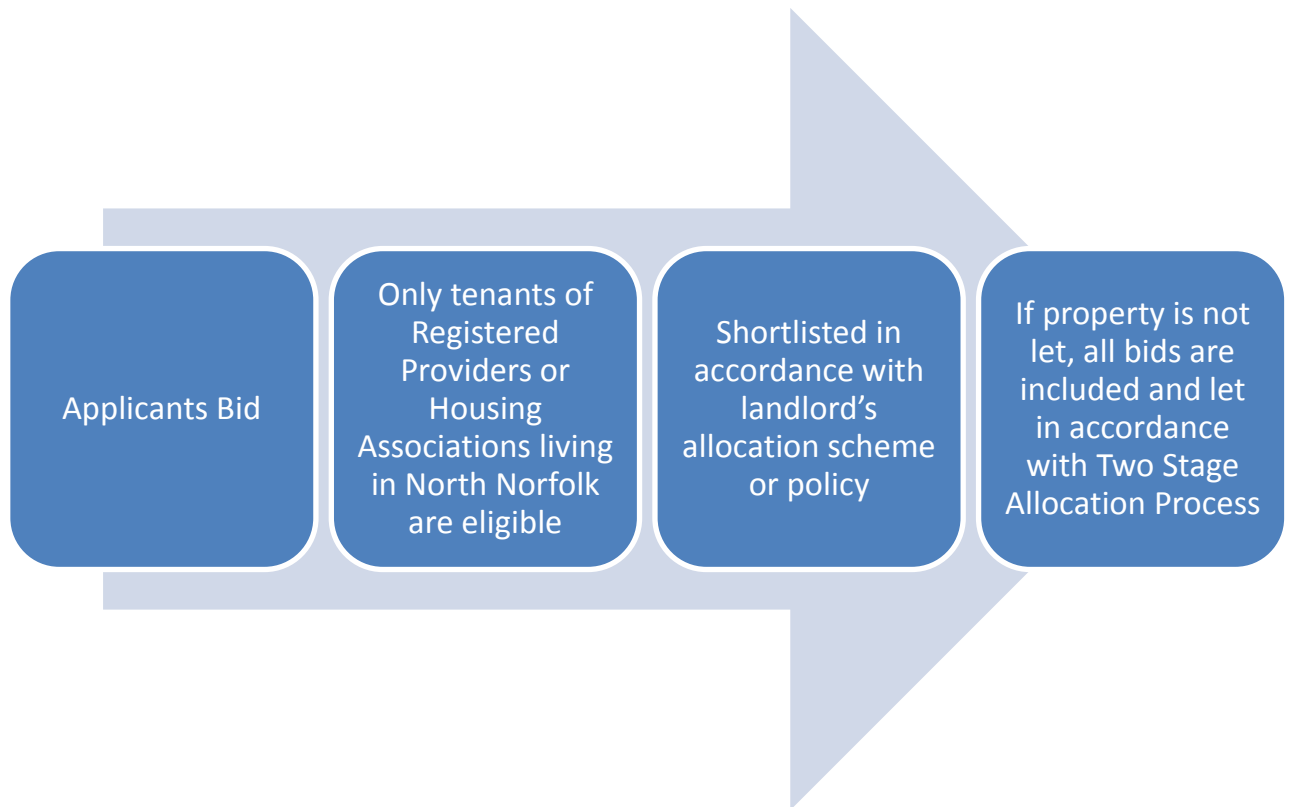
Stage 1



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. 		

anticipated from the policy being in place?	<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. 			
5. Identify and select your assessment team.	Name	Role	Responsibilities	
	Nicola Turner	Housing Strategy and Community Development Manager	Housing Allocation Scheme	
6. What data have you gathered for this assessment? How have you analysed this data?	Source and Age of Data	Owner	Findings	Data Gaps
	<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.</p> <p>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	Staff / Members	Partners
	Applicants on the Housing List North Norfolk residents Town and Parish Councils	North Norfolk District Council members Housing Strategy and Community Development Team and Customer Services – Housing Team	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	What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?	
		<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>
12.Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to religion/belief?	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 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>
13.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 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?</p> <p>Or any other reason?</p> <p>Can the impact be mitigated by existing means?</p> <p>If yes, what actions will you undertake to mitigate these impacts and revise the policy?</p>	No	<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
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In partnership with
North Norfolk District Council
May 2008