

DISCRETIONARY ALLOCATIONS POLICY REVIEW

Report of the Director of Housing and Customer Service

1. SUMMARY

In March 2010, the Board agreed a schedule of key policies with a recommended timetable for their review. The Discretionary Allocations Policy is one of the policies to be reviewed at least every three years.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Board is requested to approve the updated policy.

3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 The review highlighted a need to update some terms and job titles within the policy but the content of the policy is still considered to be adequate controls.

3.2 The policy has been jointly reviewed by Derby Homes and Derby City Council Housing Options Centre.

4. POLICY REVIEW IMPLICATIONS

This is a key policy of Derby Homes and is included in the Key Policy Review Schedule. In accordance with minute 10/51 this policy will be reviewed no later than 3 years from the date of this meeting.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report

- Legal and Confidentiality
- Personnel
- Environmental
- Equalities Impact Assessment
- Health & Safety
- Risk

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or the Chief Executive, phil.davies@derbyhomes.org - Tel 01332 888520

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Background Information: None

Supporting Information: None

Discretionary allocations and allocations to staff and board members and councillors or their relatives

The definition of discretionary allocations is ...

when a property is excluded from the Homefinder process, is not advertised, and is offered out of turn to an applicant on the housing waiting list.

Such discretionary allocations can occur in situations where the interests of good housing management of the council housing stock and estates, or the urgency of the applicant's situation, overrides the need to be fair to all applicants registered on the waiting list. The numbers of such discretionary allocations will be minimised. They will usually be on a like for like basis, where there are sound housing management reasons for such a move, or an urgent need for them to move.

Discretionary allocations

Where a discretionary allocation has been agreed between Derby Homes and Housing Options Centre (HOC) the Customer Service Manager has the authority to agree discretionary allocations in the best interest of housing management and the sustainability of the estate or blocks of flats. A discretionary allocation will be where applicants that are eligible are bypassed in favour of a lower placed applicant. The views of HOC should be sought in such cases but this is a decision that is the Customer Service Manager's to make. Notification of this decision must be sent within 5 working days to HOC for monitoring purposes

Allocations outside of Local Lettings Plans

Outside of Local Lettings Plans (LLPs) staff are instructed NOT to make any discretionary allocations, unless first approved by Housing Advice Manager (Register) or another officer nominated by HOC. Approval must be given prior to the applicant being advised of the potential offer.

HOC must consider the case promptly. If there is a disputed decision then the case should be referred to HOC Manager and Director of Housing and Customer Service to resolve.

If there is an urgent or emergency situation which requires such a discretionary allocation to be agreed immediately and none of the above can be contacted, contact either the Housing Operations Manager or a Director of Derby Homes who will consider and authorise the move in discussion with the Housing Options Centre Manager

These rules will also apply in reverse to any discretionary allocation initiated by the HOC.

Allocations to Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Properties.

Where Derby Homes manages properties for RSL's the allocation of these properties is covered within the management agreements. Allocations to properties owned by RSL's will be made in accordance with the RSL's housing allocation policy and local sustainability plan as outlined in the LLP. Any discretionary offers to such properties will be handled as for Derby City Council properties within LLP or Hot Spot areas.

Allocations through Homefinder

This instruction does not alter the processes to be followed in cases where a property has been advertised on Homefinder. However you are reminded that once a property has been advertised it should be allocated using the Homefinder process and not be used for a discretionary allocation. If there is any reason why this should need to happen, approval should be obtained from the HOC.

Allocations to members of staff and Board members and Councillors

Allocations to a member of staff of Derby Homes or the Policy Directorate of Derby City Council, a board member, a councillor, or a relative of a member of staff or a board member or a councillor, anywhere in the City must be agreed by HOC Manager before making the offer. The Chief Executive of Derby Homes must be informed of all such cases as well, after agreement by HOC.