

Template Scoping Document

Community Select Committee	
Scrutiny Review Title:	Application of the Housing Allocations Policy (linked to Lettings)
Background issues to review – rationale for scrutinising this issue:	Members raised the issue of reviewing the application of the Council's Allocations Policy when the committee agreed items for the work programme in March 2017. Members were keen to link any work on allocations with allocations into sheltered housing schemes and to see how it is working in practise. Members were also interested with the workings of the flexi care scheme. It was also commented that regarding Lettings, Members could comment on the work of the newly appointed Reconnection Key Worker at the end of the six month pilot.
Is this issue covered by the Future Town Future Council Programme?	(i) Housing Development - Excellent Council Homes for Life - Increase the number of social & affordable homes in Stevenage & (ii) The provision of high quality, efficient and effective Housing services for our tenants and leaseholders (develop a better Housing Service to our older people)
Is this issue one that raises interest with the public via complaints or Members' surgeries or with Officers?:	This issue is of interest to local people who are on the Housing register. This issue is raised by residents in Members' Surgeries.
Focus of the review: (State what the review focus will be)	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. Members have previously identified the first two bullet points and officers have suggested the following possible Options:</i></p> <p><i>Suggested areas to cover:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are allocations into sheltered housing schemes working in practise? • Changes to the local connection rules - People on the allocations lists who currently lose 'local residency' points if they take a Private Rented Sector accommodation let outside of the Borough. Could look at introducing a change like a 'five in seven year rule', so residents who had lived for between 5 out of 7 years would still keep their points if they came back to the area in the allotted time period • Review the criteria on sheltered housing to re-introduce home owners. This could include

	<p>home owners wishing to let their property and be rehoused in, more appropriate for their needs, sheltered accommodation. There could be scope for the Council to manage these arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce priority categories for under-occupiers, together with incentives for tenants to bid through the choice based lettings scheme. • What has been the impact of the newly appointed Reconnection Key Worker at the end of the six month pilot (any links to lettings into sheltered accommodation?) <p><i>Some questions that Members may wish to ask:</i> (This depends on which of the above issues Members wish to include in the agreed scope)</p>
<p><u>Timing issues:</u> Are there any timing constraints to when the review can be carried out?</p>	<p>Officers will advise at the meeting if there are any timing issues to consider. The review will have to fit in with the timing of the other Select Committee review work programme items.</p>
<p>The Committee will meet on (provide <u>dates</u> if known):</p>	<p>Dates: Day/Month/Time/Venue From June 2017 – Discuss scoping with lead officers for Housing Allocations review 13 July 2017 – agree draft scope & receive presentation from officers Interview witnesses - possible dates? (likely to be quarter 2 and quarter 3, July 2017 – Dec 2017)</p> <p>Agree recommendations & final report - Date to be agreed</p>
<p><u>SBC Leads</u> (list the Executive Portfolio Holders and SD's Heads of Service who should appear as witnesses):</p>	<p><i>Officers have suggested the following people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Executive Portfolio Holder(s) for Housing, Health and Older People, Cllr Jeannette Thomas</i> • <i>Strategic Director Community, Matt Partridge</i> • <i>Assistant Director Housing & Investment, Jaine Cresser</i> • <i>(Draw from other Officers as necessary – Housing Operations Manager, Peta Caine, Empty Homes Manager, Walter Oglina, Housing & Homeless Manager, Theo Addae, and officers from Reconnections Key Worker, Sheltered Housing and Flexicare Scheme)</i>
<p>Any <u>other witnesses</u> (external</p>	<p>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. <i>Possible options identified by officers:</i></p>

<p><u>Agreed Milestones and review sign off</u> -To be agreed by Members and officers</p>	<p><i>Formal response from Executive Portfolio Holder (Executives have a Statutory requirement to respond to Scrutiny review recommendations two months after receiving a final report and recommendations of a review: Date Executive Portfolio responses are expected (dependent on the final report & executive portfolio response template publishing date): DD MM YY</i></p> <p>Date for monitoring implementation of recommendations – final sign off (typically one year from completion of the review): DD MM YY (Close to this date the Select Committee will receive a report at a Committee meeting to agree the final sign off of the review recommendations)</p>
--	---