

# LEICESTERSHIRE

## — Choice based lettings —



## Allocations Policy Review

We invited key stakeholders to join members of the Leicestershire cbl Steering Group to discuss the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy and consider the impact of those changes (if any) on specific groups.

We appreciate it is a busy time of year and would like to thank those who took the time to attend on the 13<sup>th</sup> December as we had a very constructive meeting.

In brief the proposed areas for change are:

- Sub regional connection
- District connection
- Exclusions from the register
- Changes to housing need bands
- Number of bids

We are pleased that the feedback you gave us was generally supportive of the policy changes we propose.

We explained the support we provide to vulnerable groups and asked you whether you thought the proposed changes would mean that some groups could be disadvantaged, and whether there would be any significant difference in outcomes between groups. Generally it was felt that there would not be an adverse impact on a particular group.

## Parking Board

We also gave you the opportunity to share any additional comments you had regarding the operation of the scheme, on our 'Parking Board'. Your comments were: *Include bus routes on property adverts -Internal photographs would help accurate bidding - Groups wanting to share in houses (young people and people with learning disabilities).*

We will consider these operational issues in the near future and these will help to shape and improve our service.

## Key policy changes proposed:

- Only accepting applicants on the housing register who have a local connection with one of the Council's in the scheme (unless there are exceptional circumstances)
- Time in High Band -changing from 24 weeks to 16 weeks
- Time in Priority Band - changing from 12 weeks to 8 weeks
- Applicants making up to two bids each advert cycle
- Suspending applicants who have refused three suitable offers of accommodation or failed to attend viewings (without good reason)
- Including transfer applicants who are under-occupying a home and affected by Welfare Reform in High Band
- Including applicants in financial hardship who have difficulty in meeting their housing costs in Medium Band
- Including private tenants, tied tenants, and social tenants who are adequately housed and have no medical or welfare need, in Low Band

We feel that the changes we are proposing will help applicants to be more focused about their choice/bid for properties to meet their housing need and in turn will lead to re-letting properties more quickly and cost effectively

## HOUSING REGISTER/HOUSING OPTIONS

There are now 11748 home seekers on the housing register

- 18% in age group 16-24 years
- 33% in age group 25-39 years
- 27% in age group 39-59 years
- 22% in age group 60+ years

- 1712 home seekers interested in shared ownership
- 1706 home seekers interested in an exchange
- 3649 interested in private rented accommodation

## ADDRESSING HOUSING NEED

Since the start of the scheme we have advertised:

713 General needs properties

63 Wheelchair Accessible properties

415 Supported housing

710 Sheltered housing

**In July 2012 we completed a customer satisfaction survey and this is what they told us**

- 82% said it was easy to understand the information about available properties
- 62% of customers thought cbl increased their housing options
- 60% had no preference to the number of bids per cycle
- 86% thought it was easy to understand the housing need bands
- 79 % of home seekers wanted to move within the same district/borough



## Future Plans

- Updating draft Allocations Policy
- Completing the Equality Impact Assessment
- Consultation with Members
- Statutory consultation
- Cabinet approval

*The Leicestershire cbl Steering Group wish you all a Happy New Year*