

Report of the Head of Planning and Local Development

HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to propose amendments to Appendix 4 Local Connection in Rural Settlements – Parish Council Areas of the Housing Allocation Policy which was adopted in April 2013 .
- 1.2 This report relates to the achievement of the following PRIDE objectives of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, improving life chances for young people, delivering efficient and responsive services and enhancing the environment.

2 Executive summary

- 2.1 The Housing Allocations Policy was implemented on April 2013 with the ICT changes taking place in June 2013. At Services Committee in September 2014 the Policy was reviewed, to refine the policy after its operation for over 12 months. This review looks specifically at the local connection in rural settlements and parish council areas for housing allocations.

3 Appendices

Appendix One – Housing Allocation Policy amendments

4 Proposed action:

- 4.1 **The Committee RESOLVES to approve the amendments to the Housing Allocations Policy with effect from 8 February 2015.**

5 Background

- 5.1 At Community Committee on 22 October 2012, it was resolved that changes to the Housing Allocations Policy be implemented from 1 April 2013. These changes were undertaken in June 2013 following ICT upgrade.
- 5.2 At Community Committee on 9 December 2013, it was resolved further changes be made to the Allocations Policy to provide some additional detail to certain aspects of the policy in order to be transparent in the way that applications are assessed and these were implemented immediately.
- 5.2 At Services Committee on 15 September 2014 it was resolved amendments be

made to the Allocations Policy to ensure homes are allocated to applicants who are most in need and to ensure best use of social rented stock.

6 Discussion

- 6.1 In the assessment of applications under the revised Allocation Policy, it has become clear that some additional detail is needed in respect of Appendix 4 Local Connection in Rural Settlements – Parish Council Areas in order to ensure that each village has its own Parish Council Area and that these areas reflect villages with adjoining boundary lines.
- 6.2 Parish Council areas were introduced to provide additional certainty in the allocation of houses in the rural areas. To ensure that the needs of the rural areas were being met, an additional level of 'local connection' was introduced beyond the village known as the 'Parish Council Area'. If an applicant wants to be offered affordable housing in a village or parish, they will need to show that they have a local connection with the village or parish where the rural site/house is located, or the Parish Council Area.
- 6.3 Currently not all the villages have their own Parish Council Area, this amendment seeks to rectify that. Each village will then have its own Parish Council Area and the relevant village connections will be clear during the allocation process.

6.2 Changes to Appendix 4 Parish Council Areas

- 6.2.1 Some changes have been made to the Parish Council Areas. These mainly relate to the addition of further Parish Council Areas to ensure that each village has its own area and that each of these wider Parish Council Areas consists of those villages with adjoining boundary to the main village. These are detailed at Appendix 1.

7 Legal powers

Chapters VI and VII of the 1996 Housing Act, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002. Sections 147 (13) of the Localism Act 2011. Sections 148 and 149 of the Localism Act 2011. Allocation of Accommodation: Guidance for Local Housing Authorities in England, June 2012. Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces Personnel) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1869) August 2012.

8 Financial and value for money implications

None

9 Risk analysis

Nature of risk	Consequences if realised	Likelihood of occurrence	Control measures
The Council making an allocation of housing outside the parameters of the Council's Allocation Policy	The Council could be subject to an Ombudsman Enquiry or other legal challenge	Low	Amend the Policy and keep abreast of other changes in legislation.

10 Implications for resources

Resource implications arising from the report are those associated with implementing the changes to the Housing Allocations Policy. Publication and communication changes will be required via the website.

11 Implications for stronger and safer communities

The proposed amendments and clarification to the Housing Allocations Policy and the delivery of social rented homes will assist the Council in the creation and delivery of sustainable communities.

12 Implications for equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment screening was undertaken when the Allocation Policy was introduced. Officers will continue to review the operation of the Housing Register and access to it on a 6 monthly basis or whenever relevant legislation is introduced.

13 Author and contact officer

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14 Consultees

Vicki Jessop, Principal Housing Manager
Julie Thomas, Head of Local Planning and Local Development
Patricia McCourt, Senior Housing Officer
Liz Elliott, Head of Finance
Bridget Lawrence, Head of Resources

15 Background papers

BCW Housing Allocations Policy

<https://www.keyways.org.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/211.aspx>

Appendix 1 - **Local Connection in Rural Settlements – Parish Council Areas**

<p>Sywell Ecton Mears Ashby Hardwick</p>	<p>Mears Ashby Hardwick Sywell Ecton Wilby Earls Barton</p>
<p>Ecton Sywell Mears Ashby Earls Barton</p>	<p>Earls Barton Ecton GrendonMears Ashby Wilby Gt Doddington</p>
<p>Finedon Isham Harrowdens</p>	<p>Isham Finedon Little Harrowden Orlingbury</p>
<p>Harrowdens Finedon Isham Orlingbury Hardwick</p>	<p>Orlingbury Isham Harrowdens Hardwick</p>
<p>Hardwick Harrowdens Sywell Mears Ashby</p>	<p>Bozeat Easton Maudit Strixton Grendon Wollaston</p>
<p>Wollaston Bozeat Grendon Strixton Gt Doddington Irchesters</p>	<p>Great Doddington Earls Barton Wilby Grendon Wollaston Irchesters</p>
<p>Strixton Grendon Wollaston Bozeat</p>	<p>Easton Maudit Grendon Strixton Bozeat</p>
<p>Irchesters Great Doddington Wollaston</p>	<p>Wilby Mears Ashby Earls Barton Great Doddington</p>
<p>Grendon Earls Barton Great Doddington Wollaston Strixton Easton Maudit Bozeat</p>	

