

S13. Allocations Outcome Report 2015/16

The committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided statistical information on housing allocations during 2015/16 and analysis of the allocations outcomes. An updated Allocation Policy had been agreed by the Executive in January 2015. Jennifer Litts provided an overview of the report.

The committee discussed band one priorities and if ground floor properties could be reserved for applicants with medical disabilities. Jennifer Litts advised that the majority of suitable properties were already adapted where appropriate but adapted properties are advertised to everyone. Few properties for the Housing with Care group had become available in the previous year. The end of the right to buy scheme coupled with the Council building new properties was leading to an increase in Council Housing stock which would increase available for the Housing with Care group. However, she noted that there was a lack of adapted properties in high demand areas. There would be an opportunity for members and communities to comment on the Local Housing Strategy and Older People's Housing Plan which were being developed. The Service had carried out an analysis of all properties to identify which would be suitable for adaptation and this information was held in a database as part of the asset management survey.

Further discussion raised points in relation to allowing a tenant to occupy a property and then have adaptations made after entry. Elizabeth Hood stated that there were occasions where further adaptations to properties were made after occupancy but highlighted that not all properties were suitable for adaptation. Further, new build properties were constructed to be as suitable as possible to all groups. Members commented that the waiting time for priority one applicants in the Housing with Care group needed work to be reduced.

In response to a question on allowing tenants to arrange adaptations themselves, Jennifer Litts stated that the Service did not ask people to do their own adaptations and that the aim was to carry out adaptations prior to entry.

Members stated that Home Seekers, who comprised 2.5% of the waiting list were able to bid for 33% of properties while the Home Starters group was significantly larger. Jennifer Litts advised that homeless applicants were the highest priority group under legislation. Under the previous approach they had access to 66% of properties but the ratios between groups were now equal at a third. She stated that only 25% of Home Seekers were obtaining lets and that not all properties were suitable for each applicant's individual needs. The Service also worked with, and referred people to, Registered Social Landlords. Where potential lets were not taken up by Home Seekers the properties were offered to other applicant groups.

Information was sought on how many Home Seekers did not make bids for properties. Jennifer Litts stated that there were none as applicants would lose their priority if they did not bid. Where an applicant is not bidding the case worker intervenes and seeks to match them to a suitable property.

The committee asked about the proposal to change priority for under occupancy. Jennifer Litts stated that the change would only be made if it was approved through consultation.

Members sought information on the allocation of properties to people who also owned private residences. Jennifer Litts advised that the legislation did not allow for differentiation to be made on such grounds. The only requirement was that tenants showed that the Council house was their main residence.

Members discussed the allocations policy in respect of an applicant's income. In response to the discussion, Colin Moodie stated that an uncommenced provision of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 would allow the Service to take ownership into account but not income. Following further discussion, a report to the next committee was requested providing an update relating to tenants who also own private properties or who have a high income.

The committee raised that some applicants felt that priority did not help them secure a let. Elizabeth Hood stated that there were not enough of the most desired properties in terms of area and house type.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the allocation outcomes for 2015/16;**
- (2) noted that further analysis and consultation will be carried out and reported back to a future meeting, and**
- (3) requested a report to committee in November to include statistical information of the number of allocations to property owners or those with high incomes.**