

OFFICERS DECISION NOTICE (ODN)

Proposed amendments to Property Pool Plus Housing Allocations Policy and Procedure for consultation.

Decision of the Director of Regeneration & Place

Background & Reason(s) for decision

The current Property Pool Plus (PPP) Scheme and Policy has been in operation since 2012 as part of a Liverpool City Region common allocations policy; since this time it has become increasingly apparent that the scheme requires a full review to ensure that the future allocations policy is fit for purpose and supports strategic wide aspirations around access to housing.

Consequently, the purpose of this report is to inform of the decision to commence a public consultation on a new Housing Allocations Policy.

Options Considered

Option 1 - Continue with current Housing Allocations Policy and Procedure, but this would risk legal challenge due to failing to meet current legislative requirements linked to housing allocations. Also, other LA Scheme partners are seeking approval to make changes to the policy and procedure which would leave Wirral outside the partnership. The policy would also fall behind in terms of current best practice and Council priorities in relation to helping those in highest housing need. We would also fail to benefit from potential service delivery improvements as a result of failing to take forward / consider practical service delivery recommendations coming out of the review as described.

Option 2 - Minor amendments could be made to the Housing Allocations Policy and Procedure to bring it in line with current legislative requirements, but this would not necessarily reflect current best practice and Local Authority priorities as described above.

Decision

That the Director of Regeneration & Place agrees to

1. Approve the draft Housing Allocations Procedure as contained in Appendix 2 and to use this as the basis to commence a formal public consultation.
2. Commence detailed further feasibility work arising from the review on consideration of the potential benefits and efficiency of future operating models across the five local authority areas, which will then be subject to a further report to the Housing Committee.
3. Approve the virement of £70,000 from the existing Capital Programme money allocated to Housing Services projects to be used to support the purchase of a new allocations IT system in 2021-22.
4. Approve the establishment of a Property Pool Plus Co-ordinator post to work across the Merseyside sub-region, jointly funded for a fixed term of 2 years between all five local authority areas with a contribution of £15,000 per local authority per annum.

Background Papers: **Appendix 1** – Explanation of proposed changes to PPP Policy

Appendix 2 – PPP Proposed Housing Allocation Policy

Appendix 3 – Proposed Consultation Questions

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