

NOTICE OF DECISION OF CABINET MEMBER

Pursuant Section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended by section 63 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the senior executive member may discharge any of the functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet or may arrange for them to be discharged by another member of the Cabinet or Officer. On 1st December 2010, the Council adopted the Strong Leader Model for Corporate Governance 2011 as required under Part 3 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The 2007 Act).

In accordance with the authority delegated to me by the Leader, I have made the following decision:

Subject	Decision	Reason for decision	Date for Decision to be taken
Shared Housingt Local Letting Plan (LLP)	To agree the LLP for Shared Housing with Community Housing Group and any other Registered Provider wishing to participate in the scheme.	This decision allows the Registered Provider (RP) to let the new dwellings in line with the LLP rather than the allocations policy and will allow for the creation of a balanced, sustainable community whilst assisting those in acute housing need..	asap

I confirm that the appropriate statutory officer consultation has taken place with regard to this decision.

Dated: 03/07/2017
 Signed: 
 Councillor: CHARLES RODGERS
 Cabinet Member

NOTICE OF DELEGATION OF DECISION TO CABINET MEMBER BY STRONG LEADER

Section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, the senior executive member may discharge any of the functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet or may arrange for them to be discharged by another member of the Cabinet or Officer. On 1st December 2010, the Council adopted the Strong Leader Model for Corporate Governance 2011 as required under Part 3 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The 2007 Act).

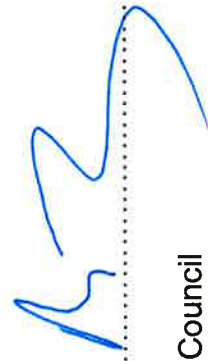
I, Marcus Hart, as Strong Leader, delegate the decision to agree the Local Letting Plan for Shared Housing properties within Wyre Forest to the Cabinet Member detailed below:

Cabinet Member- Councillor Chris Rogers

30th June, 2017

Dated:

Signed:


.....

Leader of the Council

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Strong Leader Report

Local Letting Plans; Berrington Court and Shared Housing properties

OPEN	
DIRECTOR:	Mike Parker
CONTACT OFFICER:	Kate Bailey
APPENDICES:	1. Shared Housing Local Letting Plan 2. Berrington Court Local Letting Plan

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide details of the proposed Local Letting Plans and to seek approval for the same. Shared Housing projects owned by Community Housing and Berrington Court Extra Care scheme will not be allocated in accordance with the Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy and therefore we require Local Lettings Plans (LLP).

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Leader is asked to approve for adoption the Local Letting Plans for Berrington Court and Shared Housing properties owned by Wyre Forest Community Housing.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 All nominations and allocations to properties owned by Registered Providers in Wyre Forest must be let in accordance with the Allocations Policy unless a Local Lettings Plan is in place. The LLP will outline alternative criteria for letting properties.
- 3.2 Shared Housing Properties: Wyre Forest Community Housing has a number of properties which could be converted into shared units of housing. These properties mainly consist of two bedroom flats in high rise blocks, the Walshes etc that have higher service charges than the average and will become harder to let from 2019 when people aged under 35 in receipt of housing benefits in social housing will no longer qualify for the one bedroom rate. Instead they will receive the lower shared room rate making these units of accommodation unaffordable.
- 3.3 Berrington Court: Wyre Forest Community Housing have developed an Extra Care housing facility that opened in October 2016 and has previously been subject to a LLP. WCC Adult Social Services provide a revenue contribution towards the project and have requested that a change be made to the local connection criteria in exceptional circumstances. The amendment to the LLP proposes a waiver of the local connection criteria but only on a short term basis where a unit of accommodation is required in exceptional circumstances for less than 6 months.
- 3.4 The Council has an Extra Care Strategy based on housing accommodation and support needs and therefore delivery of schemes such as Berrington Court help to meet the council's overall strategic housing aims and required numbers.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Berrington Court: Residents residing in the facility will have access to care and support above the provision found in sheltered housing and should enable people to remain living independently but in a safe environment. These types of schemes are typically let by way of an allocations panel made up of the District Council, landlord and Adult Social Care (County Council) and this stock is let in the same way.
- 4.2 Berrington Court will still be allocated to people in housing need and who have a connection to the district but there may be an exceptional case over a short timescale who has very high needs but no local connection to the area. It must be proven that their needs can only be met by this type of housing and that a space isn't available in the area where they do have a connection.
- 4.3 Shared Housing properties: The Council was successful in getting grant from the dCLG to fund a shared housing officer to develop model shared housing projects across the county. They are currently working with CHG but will work with a number of landlords interested in the project. From April 2019 people aged under 35 will no longer be entitled to the one bedroom housing benefit rate in social housing. The shared room rate, they will be able to claim, is considerably less than the rent and they will therefore be unable to afford social housing. This will have a potential impact on the Council's ability to discharge its homeless duty for single vulnerable people who Registered Providers are likely to refuse on affordability grounds.
- 4.4 CHG is now looking to pilot a small number of properties (between 5 and 10) in the first year that are let to two individual tenants for them to share. This equates to between 5 and 7.5% of lettings of this type per annum.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The development of Local Lettings Plans is permissible within the overall Allocations Policy and the policy will be made publically available through the Home Choice Plus website.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 EIA screening complete. No negative implications.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 None

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The use of a Local Lettings Plan for Berrington Court will enable the council to ensure accommodation goes to those primarily with a local connection and housing need as well as those with higher level care and support needs and will support the County Council in their responsibilities.

9.2 A Local Lettings Plan for shared housing properties will ensure CHG are able to continue to let stock that would otherwise be unaffordable and the Council can continue to discharge its rehousing functions.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 None.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.

Local Lettings Plan

Scheme Name:	Shared housing projects
Landlord:	Wyre Forest Community Housing
Does a S.106 agreement apply to this scheme?	No
Full Address (as advertised) Please include all property numbers	This scheme will apply to flats above the ground floor in various locations throughout the district including; Including (but not limited to) Baxter Gardens, Dunclent Crescent, Borrington Road, the Walshes, the High Rise in Hurcott We will do between 5 and 10 properties p.a. This equates to 5-7.5% of this type of housing stock that becomes available each year
Number, Size, Type and Tenure of units	2 bedroom flats let on a social / affordable housing rent.
Reasons for developing a LLP (including evidence where relevant)	To meet the demands of single under 35 year olds who are unable to afford self contained accommodation. In 2019 rents in the social housing sector will be treated like rents in the private rented sector and therefore people aged under 35 will only be able to claim the shared room rate and not the one bedroom rate, putting social housing rents out of their reach. This plan will also aim to tackle low demand properties / areas
Aims and Objectives of LLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To rehouse single people under 35 who will be affected by the changes to Housing Benefit in 2019. • To provide a range of housing options for people in housing need. • To assist the Council in meeting its statutory obligations for homeless households. • To assist the Registered Provider in letting housing stock above the Local Housing Allowance rate.
Are any allocation restrictions proposed in terms of Home Choice Plus bandings?	No
Are any allocation restrictions proposed in terms of numbers of household members to be allocated to family sized properties? (i.e. different to Home Choice Plus bedroom standard)	Yes This scheme will only apply to single people.

Are any allocation restrictions proposed in terms of ages of children?	Not applicable
Is it proposed to advertise any properties for priority to Transfer applicants?	Yes Any tenants affected by welfare reform affected by changes to the Local Housing Allowance.
Are any other restrictions outside of the Home Choice Plus allocations policy proposed?	Yes There will be an allocations panel set up to ensure a successful match between the single people – this may mean there is a mix of ages / banding etc being rehoused together to create successful house shares.
Date of LLP	10 July 2017
Date of review against objectives	July 2018