

Consultation on proposed changes to the Council's Allocations Policy Questionnaire Report

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1. Summary

Questionnaire format: Paper questionnaire with online version available
Responses: Total 887 (Paper: 814) (Web: 73)
Date range: 8th August 2018 – 24th September 2018

2. Introduction

Chesterfield Borough Council undertook a consultation about the proposed changes to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy. The consultation pack (which included: a cover letter including background information, questionnaire, and an information sheet summarising the key changes to the policy) was sent to all CBC tenants, and also to all those currently on the housing waiting list. The consultation was also promoted on the Council's website, and four 'roadshow' events were held around the Borough for tenants to drop in during the consultation period.

A total of 887 responses were received, giving a response rate of 9%. 92% of the responses received were in paper form, with the remaining 8% being completed online.

Background information included in the cover letter explained that:

Chesterfield Borough Council is in the process of joining the Home Options Partnership made up of Amber Valley Borough Council, Dales Housing, Derbyshire Dales District Council, East
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Midlands Housing, Erewash Borough Council, Futures Housing Group, High Peak Borough Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and Your Housing Group.

It is proposed that Chesterfield Borough Council adopts the Home Options Allocations Policy. The allocations policy is similar for each partner but allows partners to include their own local differences.

The aim of the policy is to enable the council's Housing Options Team to improve how it allocates council properties to those in need, and to reduce the number of empty properties. Adopting the Home Options Allocation Policy will enable the council and our customers to benefit from:

- An on-line rehousing application
- Introduction of a simplified priority band system
- Ability to assess medical need using category groups
- Revision of residency requirement criteria
- Acceptance of out of borough applicants on to the housing register
- Introduction of an equity assessment
- Introduction of a time restriction on reapplying to the housing register after being rehoused
- Revision of property size (number of bedrooms) eligibility criteria
- Introduction of a pre-allocation financial assessment of affordability
- Revision of the housing register exclusion times and financial levels
- Alignment of the allocations policy with the Adaptations Policy 2017

Questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate the type of impact they anticipated each change to the policy would have in general, and then whether they felt the changes would impact on them personally. Space was made so that respondents could provide further details about their responses. The questionnaire is available at appendix 1.

3. Questionnaire results

Q1. Are you currently on Chesterfield Borough Council's housing register?

Around half of the questionnaire respondents are currently on the Council's housing register, and 227 of these respondents are also existing CBC tenants.

Q1. Are you currently on Chesterfield Borough Council's housing register?		
	Number	Percent
Yes	388	50.1%
No	386	49.9%

Q2. What type of property are you hoping to be allocated?

Only those respondents that answered 'yes' to Q1 responded to this question. A high of 55.8% of respondents indicated 'bungalow', followed by 24.7% of respondents indicating 'house'.

Q2. What type of property are you hoping to be allocated?			
	Number	Percent	Chart
Bedsit	1	0.3%	
Flat	46	12.8%	
Maisonette	6	1.7%	
House	89	24.7%	
Bungalow	201	55.8%	
Sheltered Housing	17	4.7%	

Q3. How many bedrooms are you hoping to be allocated?

Only those respondents that answered 'yes' to Q1 responded to this question. A high majority of the respondents (81.4%) are hoping for either a 1 or 2 bedroomed property.

Q3. How many bedrooms are you hoping to be allocated?			
	Number	Percent	Chart
1 bedroom	120	34.3%	
2 bedrooms	165	47.1%	
3 bedrooms	48	13.7%	
4 bedrooms	17	4.9%	
More than 4 bedrooms	0	0.0%	

Q4. Are you a tenant of Chesterfield Borough Council?

81.1% of respondents are existing CBC tenants.

Q4. Are you a tenant of Chesterfield Borough Council?		
	Number	Percent
Yes	674	81.1%
No	157	18.9%

Q5. Below is a list of the changes explained in the summary sheet. For each one, please indicate the type of impact you think the change will have in general? The results to this question have also been cross-tabulated with the results to Q1 (Are you currently on the CBC housing waiting list?) and Q4 (Are you a tenant of Chesterfield Borough Council?) in the tables on the following pages.

Q5. All respondents								
	Number				Chart (percent)			
	Potentially positive	Neutral	Potentially negative	Don't know	Potentially positive	Neutral	Potentially negative	Don't know
Application form changes	266	260	122	148	33.4%	32.7%	15.3%	18.6%
Priority banding changes	286	231	117	145	36.7%	29.7%	15.0%	18.6%
Homelessness	255	232	137	158	32.6%	29.7%	17.5%	20.2%
Medical priority	504	142	47	102	63.4%	17.9%	5.9%	12.8%
Local residency	404	212	71	94	51.7%	27.1%	9.1%	12.0%
Low demand properties	292	265	76	134	38.1%	34.6%	9.9%	17.5%
Re-registration after rehousing	279	238	120	132	36.3%	30.9%	15.6%	17.2%
Equity	256	242	114	152	33.5%	31.7%	14.9%	19.9%
Owner occupiers	293	235	86	157	38.0%	30.5%	11.2%	20.4%
Financial assessment	315	203	114	137	41.0%	26.4%	14.8%	17.8%
Children in flats	223	242	188	123	28.7%	31.2%	24.2%	15.9%
Pregnant applicants	298	235	95	135	39.1%	30.8%	12.5%	17.7%
Exclusion for unacceptable behaviour	414	131	134	103	52.9%	16.8%	17.1%	13.2%
Amending application date due to change of priority	256	263	96	150	33.5%	34.4%	12.5%	19.6%
Applicants not bidding	254	238	125	152	33.0%	30.9%	16.3%	19.8%
Applicants refusing reasonable offers	273	232	134	136	35.2%	29.9%	17.3%	17.5%
Applicants aged 16 and 17 years	270	182	170	148	35.1%	23.6%	22.1%	19.2%

Q5. Please indicate the type of impact you think each change will have in general?								
(Are you currently on Chesterfield Borough Council's housing register?)								
	Respondents on the housing register				Respondents not on the housing register			
	Potentially positive	Neutral	Potentially negative	Don't know	Potentially positive	Neutral	Potentially negative	Don't know
Application form changes	36.0%	30.3%	11.5%	22.2%	34.3%	33.2%	18.3%	14.2%
Priority banding changes	38.6%	27.0%	12.5%	22.0%	35.8%	31.7%	17.9%	14.6%
Homelessness	32.2%	28.9%	15.4%	23.5%	33.2%	31.3%	18.5%	16.9%
Medical priority	62.7%	15.2%	5.1%	16.0%	64.9%	20.4%	5.7%	9.0%
Local residency	51.2%	25.6%	7.9%	15.3%	53.3%	28.7%	9.4%	8.6%
Low demand properties	36.8%	32.6%	8.7%	21.9%	40.4%	36.2%	10.7%	12.6%
Re-registration after rehousing	33.9%	28.0%	16.7%	21.4%	39.6%	34.3%	13.2%	12.9%
Equity	32.1%	27.6%	15.6%	24.6%	34.9%	36.0%	13.4%	15.6%
Owner occupiers	34.3%	26.2%	13.9%	25.6%	40.4%	34.9%	9.4%	15.2%
Financial assessment	42.8%	21.6%	14.7%	21.0%	40.8%	30.4%	14.2%	14.5%
Children in flats	24.4%	31.3%	23.8%	20.5%	33.1%	32.0%	23.4%	11.4%
Pregnant applicants	34.4%	28.4%	13.6%	23.6%	44.8%	31.7%	11.3%	12.2%
Exclusion for unacceptable behaviour	49.0%	15.7%	17.8%	17.5%	57.4%	18.4%	16.2%	8.0%
Amending application date due to change of priority	33.0%	29.1%	13.0%	24.8%	35.6%	37.8%	11.6%	14.9%
Applicants not bidding	25.6%	26.2%	23.5%	24.7%	39.4%	34.4%	10.8%	15.3%
Applicants refusing reasonable offers	28.0%	28.9%	19.3%	23.8%	41.9%	30.6%	15.8%	11.7%
Applicants aged 16 and 17 years	33.7%	20.4%	21.3%	24.6%	35.6%	27.9%	22.7%	13.8%

Q5. Please indicate the type of impact you think each change will have in general?									
(Are you a tenant of Chesterfield Borough Council?)									
	CBC Tenants				Non-CBC Tenants				
	Potentially positive	Neutral	Potentially negative	Don't know	Potentially positive	Neutral	Potentially negative	Don't know	
Application form changes	33.6%	33.4%	14.4%	18.7%	34.9%	31.5%	16.8%	16.8%	
Priority banding changes	36.3%	30.4%	14.5%	18.7%	43.8%	25.3%	14.4%	16.4%	
Homelessness	33.2%	29.5%	16.7%	20.7%	33.3%	34.0%	15.3%	17.4%	
Medical priority	63.0%		18.7%	4.9%	13.4%	67.3%		16.3%	8.2%
Local residency	52.3%		26.9%	8.4%	12.4%	50.7%		29.7%	10.1%
Low demand properties	39.4%	33.7%	9.2%	17.7%	36.4%	38.5%	9.8%	15.4%	
Re-registration after rehousing	36.1%	31.0%	15.1%	17.8%	38.6%	33.1%	15.2%	13.1%	
Equity	33.8%	33.6%	13.2%	19.4%	33.8%	26.9%	19.3%	20.0%	
Owner occupiers	37.8%	32.5%	9.8%	19.8%	39.7%	24.7%	16.4%	19.2%	
Financial assessment	39.2%	27.8%	14.8%	18.2%	49.7%	21.1%	13.6%	15.6%	
Children in flats	30.0%	31.1%	23.4%	15.5%	24.1%	34.5%	27.6%	13.8%	
Pregnant applicants	40.2%	31.6%	11.5%	16.7%	36.6%	29.0%	14.5%	20.0%	
Exclusion for unacceptable behaviour	54.0%		17.3%	15.4%	13.3%	50.0%		15.8%	22.6%
Amending application date due to change of priority	33.4%	35.8%	12.3%	18.4%	34.7%	29.9%	13.2%	22.2%	
Applicants not bidding	35.7%	32.3%	12.8%	19.3%	24.5%	27.9%	27.9%	19.7%	
Applicants refusing reasonable offers	36.9%	30.0%	16.1%	16.9%	29.5%	30.8%	21.2%	18.5%	
Applicants aged 16 and 17 years	34.7%	24.8%	21.6%	18.9%	39.4%	19.7%	21.1%	19.7%	

Q5a. If you have ticked 'potentially negative' to any of the changes listed, please tell us what you think the impact will be.

The bullet points below summarise the themes of the comments received about potentially negative impacts of the proposed changes.

- *Application form – comments in relation to lack of access to internet*
- *Priority banding – comments in relation to disability and or long term conditions, and that need should be a higher priority than date, some comments in support of existing priority banding*
- *Homelessness – comments about homelessness becoming worse in Chesterfield, concerns about opening up to people outside Chesterfield*
- *Medical priority – comments in relation to mental health, GP workload*
- *Local residency – comments about widening the geographical area*
- *Re-registration after rehousing – comments about two years being a long time to wait*
- *Equity – comments with regard to equity levels*
- *Owner occupiers – comments that owner occupiers may not be able to afford a property to meet their needs*
- *Financial assessment – queries about the details of the financial assessment, concerns about what happens to those that can't 'pass' the financial assessment.*
- *Children in flats – comments about flats not being suitable for children for reasons such as lack of access to outside space for play, stairs, noise etc*
- *Exclusion for unacceptable behaviour – comments in support of existing timescales for exclusion due to unacceptable behaviour, or to lengthen it*
- *Amending application date due to change of circumstances - comments disagreeing*
- *Applicants not bidding – comments about being penalised for not bidding when properties are not considered suitable by applicant*
- *Applicants refusing reasonable offers – comments querying what is considered a reasonable offer*
- *Applicants aged 16 and 17 – concerns about 16 and 17 year olds being able to manage a tenancy*

Q6. Do you think the proposed changes will have an impact on you personally?

34.4% of respondents indicated that they don't think the proposed changes will have an impact on them personally. A further 9.5% of respondents indicated 'yes' the proposed changes will affect them, and 32.7% indicated 'maybe'. 23.4% of respondents were unsure whether or not the proposed changes would affect them.

Q6. Do you think the proposed changes will have an impact on you personally?				
	All respondents		Respondents on housing register	CBC tenants
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	77	9.5%	15.1%	7.3%
Maybe	264	32.7%	39.8%	30.7%
No	278	34.4%	23.0%	37.8%
Don't know	189	23.4%	22.2%	24.2%

Q7. Overall, do you think the proposed changes are positive?

A total of 67% of all respondents indicated that the proposed changes are positive (either fully or partly), with a further 22.3% being unsure and 9.5% indicating that the impact of the changes would be negative.

Q7. Overall, do you think the proposed changes are positive?				
	All respondents		Respondents on housing register	CBC tenants
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	208	26.3%	24.1%	27.2%
Yes, partly	332	41.9%	42.9%	40.7%
No	75	9.5%	8.8%	9.2%
Don't know	177	22.3%	24.1%	22.9%

Q8. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about the proposed changes?

The bullet points below summarise the themes of the other comments received about the proposed changes.

- Alternative / additional suggestions (42 comments) comments indicating preference of the current policy / don't see the need for change (5 comments)
- Comments in support of the changes (32 comments)
- Concerns about the proposed changes (25 comments)
- Neutral or unsure about impact of proposed changes (8 comments)
- Queries / confusion about the proposed changes (7 comments)
- Comments about meaningfulness of consultation (6 comments)
- Comments about specific properties (4 comments)

4. Prize Draw

A total of 335 respondents chose to take part in the prize draw to win £50 of Love to Shop vouchers.

5. Equality monitoring

What is your gender?	
Male	39.9%
Female	60.1%

Is your gender identity the same gender you were assigned at birth?	
Yes	98.3%
No	1.1%
Prefer not to say	0.6%

How old are you?	
Under 18 years	0.0%
18 to 24 years	2.4%
25 to 34 years	9.3%

35 to 44 years	7.6%
45 to 54 years	15.4%
55 to 64 years	18.6%
65 to 74 years	24.4%
75 years and over	21.0%
Prefer not to say	1.3%

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	
No	36.6%
Yes, Mental Health	6.7%
Yes, a learning disability	3.1%
Yes, affecting vision	1.7%
Yes, affecting mobility	12.5%
Yes, affecting hearing	4.6%
Yes, a long standing health condition	30.3%
Prefer not to say	4.6%

What is your ethnicity?	
White British	93.5%
Other White background	2.6%
Black or Black British	1.1%
Asian or Asian British	0.8%
Mixed ethnic group	0.3%
Other ethnic group	0.5%
Prefer not to say	1.3%

Which of the following best describes your religion?	
Buddhist	0.1%
Christian	62.7%

Hindu	0.3%
Jewish	0.3%
Muslim	1.0%
Sikh	0.7%
None	24.0%
Other	5.6%
Prefer not to say	5.4%

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?	
Heterosexual / straight	89.8%
Bisexual	2.2%
Lesbian / gay woman	1.0%
Gay man	0.3%
Prefer not to say	6.7%

Questionnaire on Proposed Changes to Allocations Policy



CHESTERFIELD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The council is proposing to change the Allocations Policy and would like your feedback on these proposals. Please read the letter and summary sheet and then take a few moments to complete this questionnaire. The information will be treated as confidential and will not be shared with third parties.

About the proposed changes

Q1 Are you currently on Chesterfield Borough Council's housing register?

Yes No If no, go to Q4

Q2 What type of property are you hoping to be allocated?

Bedsit Maisonette Bungalow
 Flat House Sheltered housing

Q3 How many bedrooms are you hoping to be allocated?

1 2 3 4 More than 4

Q4 Are you a tenant of Chesterfield Borough Council?

Yes No

Q5 Below is a list of the changes explained in the summary sheet. For each one, please indicate the type of impact you think the change will have in general?

	Potentially Positive	Neutral	Potentially Negative	Don't know
Application form changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Priority banding changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical priority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local residency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low demand properties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Re-registration after rehousing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Owner occupiers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children in flats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnant applicants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exclusion for unacceptable behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amending application date due to change of priority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicants not bidding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicants refusing reasonable offers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicants aged 16 and 17 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q6 If you have ticked 'potentially negative' for any of the changes listed, please tell us what you think the impact will be.

Q7 Do you think the proposed changes will have an impact on you personally?

Yes Maybe No Don't know

Q8 Overall, do you think the proposed changes are positive?

Yes Yes, partly No Don't know

Q9 Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about the proposed changes?

Prize Draw

If you would like to be entered into a draw to win £50 of love to shop vouchers, please fill in your contact details. If you don't want to be included in the prize draw, just leave this section blank.

Name

Telephone number

Address

Email

 ***All information provided will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and will remain confidential. If you would like to read our data protection privacy notice, please visit: <https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/privacy>***