

## Housing Tenancy Policy Survey Report, February 2021

## 1. Summary

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Questionnaire format: Paper/Web  
 Responses: Total – 54  
 Date range: January – February 2021

## 2. Introduction

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Tenants, the wider community, and organisations were asked to provide feedback on a number of proposals to change the existing Housing Tenancy Policy for current and prospective tenants of Chesterfield Borough Council. The purpose of the policy update is to bring it in line with current guidance and best practice.

## 3. Questionnaire results

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### Q1. Are you: a tenant, seeking to become a tenant, or a third party/agency?

Are you: a tenant, seeking to become a tenant, or a third party/agency?		
	Number	Percent
A tenant	49	94.2%
Seeking to become a tenant	0	0%
A third party / agency	0	0%
Other:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private owner</li> <li>• Private</li> <li>• Ex-council tenant</li> </ul>	

**Q2. Do you think the proposed policy is easy to understand?**

<b>Do you think the proposed policy is easy to understand?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, fully	19	38%
Yes, partly	24	48%
No	2	4%
Don't know / not sure	5	10%

**Q3. Do you think the proposed policy is informative?**

<b>Do you think the proposed policy is informative?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, fully	2	55.6%
Yes, partly	15	33.3%
No	1	2.2%
Don't know / not sure	4	8.9%

**Q4. Do you think the proposed policy is detailed enough?**

<b>Do you think the proposed policy is detailed enough?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, fully	23	51.1%
Yes, partly	14	31.1%
No	4	8.9%
Don't know / not sure	4	8.9%

**Q5. Do you think the proposed policy is helpful?**

<b>Do you think the proposed policy is helpful?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, fully	17	39.5%
Yes, partly	19	44.2%
No	2	4.7%
Don't know / not sure	5	11.6%

**If you answered no to any of the above, please tell us why:**

- *Many council tenants are pensioners*
- *An audio policy could be considered for those with issues reading*
- *Some of the wording is a little difficult and would need someone with them when reading the document to explain*
- *Perhaps use bullet points or different format*

**Q6. Do you agree with the Council's proposal not to consider the use of fixed term tenancies?**

<b>Do you agree with the Council's proposal not to consider the use of fixed term tenancies?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, fully	30	57.7%
Yes, partly	11	21.2%
No	11	21.2%

**Comments:**

- *Fixed term tenancies should NOT be allowed, tenants must feel secure and free from fear of being evicted/having their tenancy terminated which in-turn would more than likely lead to homelessness/depression and further expenses for the council through having to re-home tenants.*
- *12 months is not long enough in some cases e.g. where a person has previous criminal record*

**Q7. Do you support the council's proposal to only offer introductory and secure tenancies?**

<b>Do you support the council's proposal to only offer introductory and secure tenancies?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, fully	35	68.6%
Yes, partly	12	23.5%
No	4	7.8%

**Comments:**

- *I think the way the council does it at the moment, starting with the introductory leading to a secured tenancy works well, I am unsure what other tenancies are available or could be offered*
- *As above but with the addition of my personal experience at previous address. Probationary tenancy review was missed and tenant became secure despite evidence being provided. Another two years of terrible behaviour before evicted. Expense to council and affected my health*
- *Well explained*

**Q8. Do you think the Council should choose 'Option 1' or 'Option 2' regarding the consideration of sole to joint tenancies?**

<b>Do you think the Council should choose 'Option 1' or 'Option 2' regarding the consideration of sole to joint tenancies?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Option1 - (Will consider sole to joint tenancy if tenant has married or co-habited for 12 months or more. Will also consider this on a case by case basis to protect vulnerable individuals.)	36	73.5%
Option 2 (Will not consider any sole to joint tenancies except those considered on a case by case basis to protect vulnerable individuals)	13	26.5%

**Comments:**

- *It only seems right to offer people who have lived together for a length of time the right to a joint tenancy.*
- *I feel it is fair that people living together for some time should be offered it*
- *Some younger people living with parents all the time would need help when moving on to new property. It is very strange for them and scary so help would be needed*
- *Vulnerable people need to be protected*

**Q9. Do you support the council's proposal for our mutual exchange policy?**

<b>Do you support the council's proposal for our mutual exchange policy?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, fully	36	72%
Yes, partly	11	22%
No	3	6%

**Comments:**

- *If tenants want to exchange homes and all parties are happy, then I see no issues*
- *That the exchange meets a disabled person's needs before permission is granted*
- *I don't think it's fair that incoming tenant pay for repairs to a property that wasn't caused by them. The tenant responsible for the damage should pay and put the property in good order or else not be given permission to exchange*
- *Good proposal*

**Q10. Does the glossary make it easy to understand the terms used in the policy?**

<b>Does the glossary make it easy to understand the terms used in the policy?</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	39	81.3%
No	9	18.8%

**Please write any additional words that you would include in the glossary, or changes you would make here:**

- *Flexible Tenancy*
- *Introductory Tenancy*
- *Notice of Possession Proceedings*
- *Implied Surrender*

All subsequently added to Glossary

**Q11. Do you have any other comments on the proposed Tenancy Policy?**

- *Very easy and clear to understand*
- *A great improvement and a great job of making Tenancy Policy clear*
- *Some comments and additions were sought at a recent TCP meeting which fully explains the policy*
- *It would be helpful to make it clear to those considering a mutual exchange at what point they are legally able to still back out of/legally enforce the exchange and how long after this point before the exchange actually takes place. I'm not sure if this is covered by the housing act.*
- *The terms and conditions on the keeping/breeding of animals should be addressed. Several neighbours keep and breed dogs, keep chickens, and one has over 100 pigeons which attract thousands of flies and cause health issues for those around him*
- *The policy should be discussed with new tenants to ensure it's understood rather than just shoving a copy to them without considering tenants potential level of understanding*
- *It is concerning that a disabled tenant is not able to purchase their home even after living in it for over 30 years. Could this not be revised so that very long-term residents could consider purchasing their council home after so many years of living in it? Will spouses have to leave the home if the disabled person dies?*
- *Full protection must be maintained for remaining partners, adult children, and any long-term household maintaining adult who has given up their own home to care for and maintain home.*
- *Links on draft proposal are dead links and full details cannot be viewed*
- *Previous tenants should leave the property in a good clean manner or risk being charged a fee. Our council house was left in a disgusting state.*
- *I think the joint tenancy blanket policy of one tenant being unable to stay in the property, if it's a house and there are no under 16's, is unfair. Also the termination of the joint tenancy if one person leaves the property leaves the other tenant in a vulnerable position. If a house and not under occupied the tenant should not be forced to move out, other circumstances should be taken into account and where possible this should be*

*done before the tenant is placed in the position of vulnerability. In some cases this will prevent the need for the occupants to take up multiple lets which seems to defeat the object of using housing stock in the best way.*

- *Repair request included*
- *Request not to use demoted tenancy just go to NTQ or possession order*
- *I found it very difficult to move when my mother died and I had to move out as my mum had lived there since they were built and I was born there. I understand it would be better for a family to live there but consideration must be taken with a long-term tenant. I was lucky as your staff were very caring*
- *I don't agree with demoted tenancies as this just allows the anti-social behaviour to continue*
- *I think some points could be put in bullet point format or maybe set out to be more user friendly*