

Draft Meeting Action Minutes

Meeting	Draft Allocations Policy feedback from Area Panel representatives		
Attendees	Ann Ewings-Mount Pleasant, Ann Tizzard-Knoll, Barry Hughes-Sylvan Hall, Carl Boardman-Warwick Mount, Chris El-Shabba – Robert Lodge, Derek Bryant-Coldean, Desmond Jones-Hollingdean, Gary Jones-St Johns Mount, George Coats-Hampshire Court, Jane Thorpe-Highden, Westmount and Crown Hill, Jason Williams-Hereford Court, Mary Whitner–Southawk, Martin Cunningham-Hampshire Court, Muriel Briault, Patricia Weller MB–Knoll, Phil Careless- Philip Court, Ray Goble-Elwyn Jones, Sue Bryant-Coldean, Vic Dodd-Ingram Crescent residents. Tracy John, Sylvia Peckham, James Crane, Becky Purnell (BP), BHCC.		
Apologies	Barbara Castleton-North Moulsecoomb, Gordon Roberts-Pett Close, Heather Hayes-Coldean, Jane Hunter- East Moulsecoomb, John Marchant- East Central Moulsecoomb, Terry Weller-Evelyn Court, Tracy Angus-Downland Court.		
Meeting location	Leach Court Park Street	Produced by	Becky Purnell
Date	21/10/16	Minutes completed on	03/03/16
Time	3pm to 4pm		

1. Draft Allocations Policy	
Agreement/1 Decisions	A letter summarising the key parts of the draft policy had been circulated before the meeting and was discussed.
2	The current number of people on the housing register is 26,000 and the costs of processing it are huge. Currently anyone in the UK can register and there are about 700 homes a year that become available.
3	A key change is to make it a closed register and increase the local connection from two to five years, with some lawful exceptions.
4	There is no change to the current tenant incentive scheme.
5	Viewings are very expensive; residents would be expected to do their research before putting a bid in.
6	The bidding process is not changing, the shortlist is open for a period of time, people are selected on the date they are given priority and their banding, the time when you bid when the shortlist is open doesn't increase your priority.

7	15,000 people have not made a bid for five years. If someone hasn't made a bid within twelve months they will be written to and removed from the register. There are exceptions – if needing a highly adapted home for example.
8	Removing lower end of band C minor medical and sharing facilities with family members.
9	Concern was expressed about anti-social tenants being rehoused. The ASB are has been beefed up with more stringent checks about Notices and rent arrears. The resident fed back that they have been working on this for years.
10	There will be some anti-fraud checks like credit checks giving address where are living.
11	The Allocations Team are not involved in mutual exchanges so don't make checks; Housing has this role and does do checks.
12	The income cap is the household income. The Pay to Stay will bring in a statutory duty.
13	The service will be digital, there will be some support in sheltered and assisted bidding will stay. There will be improved technology with automated bids.
14	The working and positive contribution has been removed due to a recent judicial review, a resident had read about this.
15	The existing policy is very old (ten years) and there are big changes.
16	Priorities for existing tenants remain – major transfers and major works.
17	Feedback that there are a lot of things that should have been done years ago, asking lots of questions as want to be clear about how it will all work.
18	Mental health needs are evaluated the same way that physical health needs are if there is a serious need to move.
19	Mutual exchanges are to be encouraged; people can help themselves to move.
20	The policy is just for Brighton and Hove. Some of the other areas are the same and some are tougher, a ten year local connection is the maximum one found.
21	There are one and a half thousand people in temporary accommodation.
22	Residents fed back that the draft policy is fair enough, good, 100%, a good piece of work.
23	One resident gave feedback from the Housing & New Homes Committee meeting H&NHC regarding removing applicants who have refused one offer.
24	People need educating that if they don't want to live somewhere they shouldn't make a bid, although people can make mistakes.
25	Reps can help let people know about this.
26	The council will continue to support people who need help with

27	<p>bidding. A lot of people now have smart phones – there is an app for mobiles already. There is free Wi-Fi in the libraries and many parts of the town centre. Many people are already accessing the platform digitally. At the same time the Vulnerable People’s Policy is being reviewed.</p> <p>The council should help people to find matches, a nervous neighbour wants to downsize and move near her remaining daughter.</p>		
28	<p>Bidding was bought in to give people choice, although choice is limited even if downsizing.</p>		
29	<p>More being online frees up staff time to support the people who need extra help. There is now three hours more face to face time a day than last year. Home visits are available for people who can’t leave their home.</p>		
30	<p>Adaptations include kitchens, ramps, not just a wet room, often adaptations won’t suit anyone else but enables the resident to stay. We do try and find matches.</p>		
31	<p>The Accessible Housing Officer has been reinstated and they work with the Occupational Therapists to get the best fit. Medical information is regularly updated and checked.</p>		
32	<p>A maximum of three bids can be done at one time; if an offer is made and refused they are off the Housing register. Refusals cost a fortune. The costs of viewings come from everyone’s rent.</p>		
33	<p>A resident fed back that they would go and take a look first and make sure they wanted to move there.</p>		
34	<p>The time it takes to have a successful bid varies a lot due to individual circumstances, although the more things on the wish list the longer it takes.</p>		
35	<p>Tracy explained that the Councillors on the Housing & New Homes Committee had asked Housing to speak to the Area Panel representatives about the policy. She checked whether people felt they had had the opportunity to ask questions. Feedback can also be given after the meeting.</p>		
36	<p>The Draft Policy was put to the vote and there was a 100% show of hands.</p>		
37	<p>Further comments were made, a really good job, on the right track.</p>		
Agreed	The Draft Allocations Policy was agreed.		
Action(s)		By Who	Deadline
	The notes from the meeting will be written up and circulated to the Area Panel reps.	Becky	November

