



**Chester-le-Street**  
District Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Council Meeting
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> July 2007
<b>Report from:</b>	Acting Director of Community Services
<b>Title of Report:</b>	Joint Allocations and Lettings Policy
<b>Agenda Item Number:</b>	<b>10</b>

---

**1. Purpose and Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for the Council to consider the Joint Allocations and Lettings Policy between Cestria Community Housing Association, and Chester-le-Street District Council.
- 1.2 The policy which members are being asked to consider is based on the current allocations and lettings policy used by the Council. However in order to comply with the regulatory requirements of the Housing Corporation some changes have been made and these are highlighted in the attached policy. Officers have also taken the opportunity to make other minor changes based on recent challenges to other organisations allocations and lettings policies.
- 1.3 This policy will come into force once the transfer of the Council's properties to Cestria Community Housing Association is completed.
- 1.4 Once approved by Council this policy will need to be approved by the Shadow Board of Cestria Community Housing Association.
- 1.5 Members are recommended to agree to:
  1. Approve the Joint Allocations and Lettings Policy.
  2. Request that the policy is presented to the Shadow Board of Cestria Community Housing Association for approval.

## **2. Consultation**

- 2.1 The Legal team acting on behalf of the Council in the transfer negotiations has been consulted on the content of this joint policy. Also the Head of Regeneration, Housing Strategy Manager, Acting Director of Community Services, Head of Housing, Policy and Performance Officer, Housing Team Leaders and Officers have been engaged in the process of consultation and their combined views have been incorporated in the policy changes.

## **3. Corporate Plan and Priorities**

- 3.1 The joint allocations and lettings policy links closely with Priority 3, Meeting the Decent Homes Standard, as one of its aims is to assist with the creation of sustainable communities where people want to live and work.

## **4. Implications**

### **4.1 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement**

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

### **4.2 Legal**

The existing allocations and lettings policy used by the Council complies with the Homelessness Act 2002. In order for the policy to be used by Housing Associations it must also comply with Schedule 1 of the Housing Act 1996 which refers to the control of payments and benefits to officers and employees of a Housing Association.

### **4.3 Personnel**

There are no direct personnel implications as a result of this report.

### **4.4 Other Services**

There are no implications for other services.

### **4.5 Diversity**

This joint policy complies with the Council's and Cestria Community Housing Association's commitment to equality and diversity in that it does not discriminate from any minority group and allows open access to the Housing Register.

#### 4.6 Risk

The risks associated with not approving this policy are that both the Council and Cestria Community Housing Association will not be able to operate a transparent housing scheme that meets both legal and equitable requirements.

#### 4.7 Crime and Disorder

There are no known implications for Crime and Disorder.

#### 4.8 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate, timely, consistent and comprehensive. The Council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

#### 4.9 Other Implications

There are no other known implications as a result of this report.

### **5. Background, Position Statement and Option Appraisal**

5.1 The current allocations and lettings policy used by the Council was approved by the Executive in October 2005, and Council in December 2005. The policy was reviewed by the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2006.

5.2 The changes to the policy are necessary in order to meet the regulatory framework of the Housing Corporation.

5.3 In order for Cestria Community Housing Association to meet its registration criteria it must have in place an approved joint allocations and lettings policy by September 2007. The Shadow Board of Cestria Community Housing Association will need to approve this policy once it has been approved by Council.

5.4 The table below identifies where the main changes to the policy have been made. The changes have been highlighted in bold font in the attached policy.

<b>Paragraph number</b>	<b>Section of wording</b>
1.2	Joint Housing Register
2.1.6	Choice based and Local Lettings
3.5.6	Starter (Assured Shorthold) Tenancies
3.6.7	Members of the Association's Board
3.8.1	Previous tenancy enforcement action
3.8.2	Current Cestria tenants.....
3.8.3	An individual or family.....
3.8.4	An individual or family.....
3.15	The offer of accommodation.....

## **6. Monitoring**

- 6.1 The monitoring of the attached policy will be done via a Service Level Agreement between Cestria Community Housing Association and the Council which has yet to be agreed.

## **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1 It is recommended that Council:

7.1.1 Approve the Joint Allocations and Lettings Policy.

7.1.2 Request that the Joint Allocations and Lettings Policy be presented to the Shadow Board of Cestria Community Housing Association for approval.

## **8. Background Papers/Documents Referred to:**

Council's Allocations and Lettings Policy.

The Housing Corporation's Regulatory Code and Guidance

**Paul Stephens**  
**Acting Director of Community Services**  
**12<sup>th</sup> July 2007**  
**VERS 1.0**

**(0191) 387 2494**  
**paulstephens@chester-le-street.gov.uk**



This page is intentionally left blank