

Delegated Decision

21 March 2024

Consultation on Reforms to social housing allocations



Report of Corporate Management Team

Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

Councillor James Rowlandson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Resources, Investment and Assets and Councillor Alan Shield, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Equality and Inclusion

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is:
 - (a) to provide Cabinet with a first draft of the local authority's response to the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) consultation on reforms to social housing allocations; and
 - (b) to take account of any feedback in advance of the sign off and submission of the consultation by 26 March 2024.

Executive summary

- 2 On 30 January 2024 the Government published a consultation document setting out its plans to reform how social housing is allocated in the future.
- 3 The consultation proposes to make changes to the qualifying criteria for people applying for social housing.
- 4 The proposals included within the consultation will apply to new applicants and those currently registered for social housing
- 5 A detailed overview of the proposals is included within this report. The Government are wanting to introduce a range of tests to determine who is eligible for social housing within England..

- 6 The Government are asking local authorities a range of questions in relation to their current allocation systems and their views on the proposals.
- 7 Appendix 2 includes a first draft of Durham County Council's response to the questions.
- 8 Appendix 3 provides supplementary information for some of the questions along with some overall comments.
- 9 In order to prepare this first draft, meetings have taken place with frontline staff, staff from the humanitarian support team, Durham Key Options Board and a range of regional forums and webinars.

Recommendation(s)

- 10 The recommendation is for the Planning and Housing Management Team to discuss the first draft of the response to the consultation and provide feedback in advance of sign off and submission.

Background

- 11 Local housing authorities set their own allocations policies. These must comply with Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 and associated regulations.
- 12 Local authorities may only allocate social housing to people who are eligible and qualify.
- 13 On 30 January 2024, the DLUHC issued consultation setting out proposed changes on who should qualify for social housing.
- 14 The consultation seeks views on the following issues:
 - (a) the introduction of a United Kingdom (UK) connection test to ensure that it is those with the closest connection to the UK who are eligible for a social home;
 - (b) mandating the following tests:
 - local connection test;
 - income test;
 - false statement test; and
 - tests for anti-social behaviour and terrorism offences; and
 - (c) the introduction of a new ground for eviction for those who are convicted of terrorism offences and the implementation of a 'three strikes and you're out' policy for anti-social behaviour.

Overview of Proposals

- 15 The consultation includes 40 questions regarding the introduction of a range of tests which will apply to people who are registering for social housing. The deadline for responses to the consultation is 26 March 2024.
- 16 The consultation outlines that the Government is investing over £11.5 billion to build more social homes however demand currently outstrips availability. On 31 March 2023 there were 1.29 million households on local housing authority and 267,000 households (almost half a million people).
- 17 The Government state they intend to bring forward a series of reforms to ensure that the scarce resource of social housing is allocated to those with the closest connection to the UK and their local area:
 - (a) to those who have financial need of social housing; and
 - (b) to those who have not undermined their communities with anti-social behaviour or terrorism offences.
- 18 The Government is seeking views on the following proposals:
 - (a) UK connection test: where a person must demonstrate their connection to the UK before they can be allocated social housing, this can be achieved by:
 - being a British citizen;
 - being an Irish citizen;
 - being a Commonwealth citizen with a right of abode;
 - being an EEA or Swiss citizen with equal treatment rights; or
 - by being a lawful resident in the UK for 10 years;
 - (b) local connection test: where a person must demonstrate a connection to a local area for at least two years before they can be allocated social housing, this will ensure greater consistency across the country and ensure more local people can access social housing in the area they call home, supporting people to put down roots and maintain links to family and community;
 - (c) income test: setting thresholds for applicants and those on a waiting list to qualify for social housing, this will have no impact on existing tenants but rather will ensure new tenancies are reserved

for those who, at the point of signing for a new social home, would most struggle to afford private accommodation;

- (d) anti-social behaviour test: people who have unspent convictions for certain criminal anti-social behaviour, as well as certain civil sanctions, will be disqualified from social housing for a defined period;
 - (e) terrorism test: terrorist offenders with unspent convictions will not qualify for social housing unless excluding them would increase the risk to public safety;
 - (f) grounds for eviction (anti-social behaviour and terrorist offences): implementing a 'three strikes and you're out' policy for repeat offenders of anti-social behaviour and creating a new ground for eviction for terrorist offences;
 - (g) fraudulent declaration test: mandating a period of disqualification for those who knowingly or recklessly make false statements when applying for social housing; and
 - (h) applicants on a waiting list: applying the new eligibility and qualification tests not only to new applicants but also to those currently on a social housing waiting list.
- 19 New applicants and those on a waiting list would need to satisfy the new tests, or be part of an exempted group, before they are allocated social housing.
- 20 The consultation proposes to exempt a number of groups from some of the tests, for example:
- (a) care leavers;
 - (b) veterans; and
 - (c) those who arrive as part of a safe and legal resettlement scheme

Conclusion

- 21 As per the recommendation within the report, for the Planning and Housing Management Team to discuss the first draft of the response to the consultation and provide feedback in advance of sign off and submission.

Background papers

- Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities consultation document

- Durham Key Options Lettings Policy

Other useful documents

- None

Author(s)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None.

Finance

None.

Consultation

None.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None.

Climate Change

None.

Human Rights

Text.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

None.

Procurement

None.

Appendix 2: Questions

Open Consultation published 30 January 2024 can be viewed by clicking the link: [Consultation on reforms to social housing allocations](#). The answers are highlighted in yellow as detailed below).

Section 1 - UK Connection Test

Current System

1. What evidence does your local housing authority currently collect as proof of eligibility?
 - a. Passport
 - b. Visa letter
 - c. Proof of access to benefits
 - d. Home Office data on visas
 - e. Other
 - i. Residency permit and right to rent check
 - f. Don't know

Future System

2. Do you agree that an individual should have to demonstrate a connection to the UK for ten years before qualifying for social housing (if they do not meet the test otherwise or are exempt)?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No, please detail length of test
 - i. Not sure on length of test. Please see separate supplementary information for further comments.
 - c. Don't know
3. Do you think there should be any further exemptions to the UK connection test, for example for care leavers?
 - a. Yes
 - Care Leavers
 - Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
 - Asylum Seekers granted status to remain in the UK
 - Hong Kong nationals(also see separate supplementary information)

- b. No
 - i. Free text to explain why
- 4. How long would it take your local housing authority to implement a new UK connection test at eligibility stage?
 - a. Drop down range: less than 1 month, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, more than 6 months, and **more than 12 months**
 - b. Don't know
- 5. Do you foresee any challenges delivering this change to eligibility in your local housing authority's social housing allocation system? Please detail why/why not.
 - a. No
 - i. Free text box
 - b. **Yes**
 - i. **It would be very resource intensive (both for staffing and financially)**
 - c. Don't know
- 6. Please indicate the number of new lettings in your local housing authority area (including households on the waiting list) that you believe would become ineligible by this policy. Please also indicate the size of your waiting list.
 - a. **DCC currently have 313 active applicants listed as 'non-British'. The majority of these will have not lived in the country for 10 years, though some will fall under one of the eligible exemptions the Government has highlighted as part of this consultation. Taking this into account, there would be approximately 200 applicants affected.**
There are currently 11,112 applicants registered for housing with DCC.
138 allocations were to applicants listed as 'non-British' across the last 12 months.
 - b. Don't know
 - c. My local housing authority does not hold a waiting list

Section 2 - Local Connection Test

Current System

- 7. If you currently use a local connection test for social housing, what definition of residence do you currently use as the measure for local connection?

- a. Section 199 of the Housing Act 1996
- b. Proof of residence only
- c. Other, please detail
 - i. DCC comply with Government guidance that aims to ensure people with a long-standing connection to their local community get higher priority for council homes.

The guidance says those with a well-established residency history, relatives or a job in the local area should benefit first when social homes become available.

- d. Not applicable, there is no existing local connection test
8. If you currently use a local connection test for social housing, please indicate any groups that are currently exempted from the test:

- a. Care leavers
- b. Those requiring specialist medical care
- c. UK armed forces and veterans (which now also includes family of)
- d. Domestic abuse victims
- e. Named 'resettlement' or relocation schemes
- f. Other
 - i. Statutorily homeless
- g. Don't know
- h. Not applicable, there is no existing local connection test

Future System

9. Do you agree that an individual should have to demonstrate a local connection with an area for two years before qualifying for social housing (unless exempt)?

- a. Yes
- b. No, please detail length of test
 - i. Please see supplementary information)
- c. Don't know

10. The Government intends to use the same definition of local connection as in section 199 of the Housing Act 1996. This definition would mean that a person has a local connection:

- because they are, or in the past were, normally resident there, and that residence is or was of their own choice
- because they are employed there;
- because of family associations; or
- because of special circumstances.

Do you agree that definition should be used?

- a. Yes
- b. No, please indicate your preference otherwise.
 - i. Residency only
 - ii. Other, please detail
 - i. DCC use the housing act definition for our local connection but would be helpful for all authorities to develop local connection test in line with their own circumstances
- c. Don't know

Exemptions from Test

11. The Government proposes to exempt care leavers from the local connection test for social housing up to the age of 25 to align with broader Corporate Parenting Principles, which sets out the responsibilities of local authorities towards children and young people in care. Do you agree?

- a. Yes (see supplementary information)
- b. No, please detail
 - i. Free text box
- c. Don't know

12. Do you think there should be any further exemptions to the local connection test?

- a. Yes
 - i. Asylum seekers who have been granted status. Unaccompanied asylum -seeking children
- b. No
 - i. Free text to explain why

13. How long would it take your local housing authority to implement a new local connection test?

- a. The test is already in place
- b. Drop down range: less than 1 month, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, more than 6 months, more than 12 months
- c. Don't know

14. Noting the proposed exemptions, please indicate the number of new lettings in the local housing authority area that you believe would become ineligible by this policy.

- a. New lettings affected
 - i. Free text box
- b. Waiting list
 - i. Free text box
- c. Don't know (also see supplementary information)

Section 3 - Income Test

Current System

15. Does your local housing authority currently perform an income check for social housing applicants? If so, please provide more details on the test including: the definition of income; the income threshold for the test; whether capital assets are included in the assessment; the evidence collected to determine household income; income assessment periods; and any exemptions.
- a. Yes
 - i. Free text – the definition of income used
 - ii. Free text – the threshold used for income
 - iii. Free text – what capital assets are used as part of the assessment
 - iv. Free text – the evidence used to determine income
 - v. Free text – what income periods are used (e.g. financial years)
 - vi. Free text – what exemptions are applied
 - b. No (See Supplementary info)
 - c. Don't know

Future System

16. Should the same threshold for the income test apply across England or should it vary?
- a. National threshold
 - b. A threshold for London and another for the rest of the country
 - c. Vary by locality – set by central Government
 - d. Vary by locality – set by local housing authority
 - e. Reflect a different geography
 - i. Free text box
 - f. Don't know
17. Should income data be assessed at household or individual level? If household, whose income data should be assessed?
- a. Whoever is on the tenancy agreement
 - b. Lead tenant on the tenancy agreement
 - c. Household, everyone in the household
 - d. Household, the two highest earners in the household
 - e. Household, the single highest earner in the household
 - f. Household, other
 - i. Main applicant and spouse
 - g. Individual
 - h. Other

- i. Free text box
- i. Don't know

18. Assuming household income is based on the two highest earners working full time, what should the income cap be set at?

- a. Less than £40,000
- b. £40,000 – £49,999
- c. £50,000 – £59,999
- d. £60,000 – £69,999
- e. £70,000 or more
- f. Don't know (See supplementary info)

19. Should capital assets be included in the assessment? If yes, what type of capital assets should be included, and what threshold should be set? Capital assets could include savings in an interest-bearing savings account; savings in a non-interest-bearing current account; bonds, stocks and shares; property that the applicant does not live in; and land.

- a. Yes, please provide more details
 - i. Free text
- b. No
- c. Don't know (see supplementary info)

20. Do you agree that households where an individual is in receipt of Universal Credit, housing benefit or other legacy benefits (which are being replaced by Universal Credit); households who need or live in supported housing; and members and veterans of the UK armed forces should be exempt from an income test?

- a. Yes, all three groups should be exempt
- b. Yes, and there should be exemptions for other groups. Please detail these.
 - i. Those people threatened with homelessness who are struggling financially
- c. No, only some of these groups should be exempt. Please select all those that you think should be exempt.
 - i. Individuals in receipt of Universal Credit, housing benefit or other legacy benefits
 - ii. Households who need or live in supported housing
 - iii. Members or veterans of the UK armed forces
- d. No, only other groups should be exempt. Please detail these.
 - i. Free text box

- e. Don't know
- 21. How long would it take your local housing authority to implement a new income test at qualification stage?
 - a. This test is already in place
 - b. Drop down range: less than 1 month, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, more than 6 months, **more than 12 months**
 - c. Don't know
- 22. Do you think there are any circumstances where a minimum income threshold to determine who should be allocated a social home is appropriate, for example to incentivise being in work? If yes, please detail:
 - a. Yes
 - i. Free text box
 - b. No**
 - i. Free text box
 - c. Don't know

Section 4 - Anti-social Behaviour Test

Existing Systems

- 23. Does your local housing authority undertake any anti-social behaviour or other criminal behaviour tests for social housing applicants? If so, please detail what tests are conducted; what data sources are used to inform these test (e.g. Police National Computer checks or local data sharing); and any groups exempted from the test.
 - a. Yes**
 - i. **Request landlord references for information**
 - ii. Free text box – what data or information sources are used to inform the tests?
 - iii. Free text box – are any groups exempted?
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know

Future system

- 24. Do you agree that a conviction/sanction for anti-social behaviour should result in a disqualification period from accessing social housing? If yes, how long should someone be disqualified for?
 - a. Yes See supplementary info**
 - i. Drop down menu of options one year to five years
 - b. No, please detail
 - i. Free text box
 - c. Don't know

25. Should all members of a household be subject to a check for history of anti-social behaviour, rather than just the lead tenant?
- a. Yes
 - b. No, please detail
 - i. Free text box
 - c. Don't know
26. The Government is considering whether exemptions to the anti-social behaviour test should be made for victims of domestic abuse; or those with a condition or disability that was a relevant contributing factor to the anti-social behaviour. Are there any additional groups that should be considered for an exemption from this test?
- a. Yes, please detail
 - i. Free text box
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know
27. Please indicate the number of new allocations in your local housing authority area that you believe would be affected by the anti-social behaviour test.
- a. Number affected by the anti-social behaviour test
 - i. Around 10% of all registrations (2000) are disqualified per year, and would therefore be subject to the test if introduced.
 - b. Don't know

Section 5 - Terrorism Test

Existing Systems

28. Does your local housing authority test for any terrorist offences for social housing applicants? If so, please detail what tests are conducted; what data sources are used to inform these tests; and any groups exempted from the tests.
- a. Yes
 - i. Free text box – what tests are conducted?
 - ii. Free text box – what data or information sources are used to inform the tests?
 - iii. Free text box – are any groups exempted?
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know

Future System

29. The Government is proposing that an unspent conviction, including under the Terrorism Acts 2000 and 2006 (such as for membership of a proscribed terrorist organisation) should result in a permanent disqualification from accessing social housing, unless doing so would increase public safety risks. Do you agree with this proposal? If no, please explain.

- a. Yes
- b. No
 - i. free text box
- c. Don't know (See supplementary info)

30. Please indicate the number of new allocations in the local housing authority area that you believe would be affected by the terrorism test.

- a. Number affected by the terrorism test
 - i. Unable to answer this question as DCC do not record individual offence types. Any conviction of a *serious* nature is looked at on an individual basis and disqualified as appropriate. This would be looked at as part of the allocation stage by most authorities.
 - b. Don't know

31. Do you have views on how this proposal might be implemented most effectively?

- a. If this proposal is adopted, there would need to be detailed discussions with a wide range of partners including Police, Probation, Prison Service, Housing etc.

Section 6 – Grounds for Eviction (Anti-social Behaviour and Terrorist Offences)

32. The Government has committed to exploring a 'three strikes and you're out' eviction expectation for all social landlords, meaning three proven instances of anti-social behaviour, accompanied by three warnings from a landlord, would result in eviction. How should a 'strike' be defined?

- a. The powers listed in the Home Office's Anti-Social Behaviour powers: Statutory guidance for frontline professionals, which includes criminal behaviour orders, civil injunctions, closure notices/orders, community protection notices, dispersal powers and public space protection orders
- b. It should be left to local housing authorities to decide
- c. Other
 - i. Free text box
- d. Don't know

33. Do you believe that a new ground for eviction should be introduced to ensure that those with unspent convictions for terrorism offences be evicted from social housing, unless doing so would increase public safety risk?
- a. Yes
 - i. DCC have never evicted anyone for a terrorism offence so unsure as to how this would be implemented as it has previously not been an issue. If this proposal is adopted, there would need to be detailed discussions with a wide range of partners including Police, Probation, Prison Service, Housing etc if this is implemented.
 - b. No
 - i. Free text box

Section 7 – Fraudulent Declaration Test

34. Do you agree that those who provide fraudulent information in social housing applications should be prevented from qualifying for a set period, in addition to any disqualification period that would have applied had they not made a false declaration? If yes, how long should this period be?
- a. Yes, they should not qualify England-wide
 - i. How long should the disqualification be: range of one to five years
 - b. Yes, they should not qualify in the area they applied to
 - i. How long should the disqualification be: range of one to five years (See comment in supplementary info)
 - c. No, they should qualify
 - d. Don't know

Section 8 - Applicants on a Waiting List

35. Does your local housing authority re-check applicants at the point of allocation to ensure that the eligibility and qualification tests are still met?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know
36. How often does your local housing authority check whether your waiting list is accurate (e.g. by checking whether those on a waiting list are still in the area and still require social housing)?
- a. Once a year
 - b. Between one and two years
 - c. More than two years
 - d. We do not re-check interest until the point of allocation
 - e. Don't know
 - f. Not applicable (we do not hold a waiting list)

37. Do you check whether applicants to social housing or those on your local housing authority waiting list have (a) applied to another local housing authority, (b) are on a different local housing authority's waiting list, or (c) have been allocated housing by another local housing authority? If yes, please explain what checks are made, how frequently are made and any action that is taken.

a. Yes

i. Free text box

g. No

h. Don't know

38. Should there be a limit on how many local housing authorities an applicant can apply to? If yes, please indicate the limit

a. Yes

i. Range of 1 to 10

b. No

c. Don't know

Section 9 – Public Sector Equality Duty

39. Do you expect that any of the policies affecting social housing applicants would have a particular impact on those with a particular protected characteristic? If so, please give further detail on the relevant policy and its impact.

a. Yes

i. Ethnic minority groups who have not been in the country 10 years and not part of a resettlement scheme would be impacted by these changes.

b. No

c. Don't know

40. Do you expect that any of the policies affecting social housing tenants would have a particular impact on those with a particular protected characteristic? If so, please give further detail on the relevant policy and its impact.

a. Yes

i. Ethnic minority groups who have not been in the country 10 years and not part of a resettlement scheme would be impacted by these changes.

b. No

c. Don't know

Appendix 3: Supplementary Information

Section 1 – UK Connection Test

Question 2: Do you agree that an individual should have to demonstrate a connection to the UK for ten years before qualifying for social housing (if they do not meet the test otherwise or are exempt)?

- Initial thoughts are this is too long and could result in an increase in homelessness which can impact on temporary accommodation and move on.
- The status of individuals within the UK should dictate entitlement and not the length of time they have spent in the country. This suggestion will only create a 2-tier system. If all of the necessary paperwork and eligibility checks have been undertaken, those applicants should be subject to the same rules as British / UK applicants.

Question 3: Do you think there should be any further exemptions to the UK connection test, for example for care leavers?

- What will happen to the 100k+ asylum seekers currently in the country, this will impact on the private rented sector as this will be the only housing option and it will increase the use of temporary accommodation?

Question 6: Please indicate the number of new lettings in your local housing authority area (including households on the waiting list) that you believe would become ineligible by this policy. Please also indicate the size of your waiting list.

- DCC currently have 313 active applicants listed as 'non-British'. The majority of these will not have lived in the country for 10 years, though some will fall under one of the eligible exemptions the Government has highlighted as part of this consultation. Taking this into account, there would be approximately 200 applicants affected.
- There are currently 11,112 applicants registered for housing with DCC.
- 138 allocations were to applicants listed as 'non-British' across the last 12 months.

Section 2 – Local Connection Test

Question 7: If you currently use a local connection test for social housing, what definition of residence do you currently use as the measure for local connection?

- DCC comply with Government guidance that aims to ensure people with a long-standing connection to their local community get higher priority for council homes.
- The guidance says those with a well-established residency history, relatives or a job in the local area should benefit first when social homes become available.

Question 9: Do you agree that an individual should have to demonstrate a local connection with an area for two years before qualifying for social housing (unless exempt)?

- DCC allow all to **apply** but do not **offer** to anyone who does not have a 12-month connection. This includes anyone living in the wider NE authorities too. If this was increased to two years this would mean longer waiting times for applicants and increase the numbers on the register.

Question 11: The Government proposes to exempt care leavers from the local connection test for social housing up to the age of 25 to align with broader Corporate Parenting Principles, which sets out the responsibilities of local authorities towards children and young people in care. Do you agree?

- This should include unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Question 12: Do you think there should be any further exemptions to the local connection test?

- What will happen to the 100k+ asylum seekers, impact on Private Rented Sector and use of Temporary Accommodation

Question 13: How long would it take your local housing authority to implement a new local connection test?

- Bearing in mind Abris is provider for schemes across the country this will result in delays and longer implementation.

Question 14: Noting the proposed exemptions, please indicate the number of new lettings in the local housing authority area that you believe would become ineligible by this policy.

- Unable to provide data around this as our current test is only 12 months.

Section 3 - Income Test

Question 15: Does your local housing authority currently perform an income check for social housing applicants? If so, please provide more details on the test including: the definition of income; the income threshold for the test; whether capital assets are included in the assessment; the evidence collected to determine household income; income assessment periods; and any exemptions.

- DCC's allocation and lettings policy does not apply income tests however these tests can be applied as part as a local letting policy e.g. Hartley Gardens is a recent development where this was applied on 6 new build bungalows.

Question 18: Assuming household income is based on the two highest earners working full time, what should the income cap be set at?

- Income should be looked at as part of an assessment against outgoings to consider the threshold of 'disposable' income available to the household. This would provide a better overview of an individual's financial situation. Simply looking at income alone does not take into account external factors eg debts.
- Out of 3181 lets across County Durham the last 12 months, 26 were to applicants in a 'high income' bracket for Social Housing (£35k - £60k and £60k +). This only includes the income of the main applicant.

Question 19: Should capital assets be included in the assessment? If yes, what type of capital assets should be included, and what threshold should be set? Capital assets could include savings in an interest-bearing savings account; savings in a non-interest-bearing current account; bonds, stocks and shares; property that the applicant does not live in; and land.

- Under our current policy we do not ask for information in relation to capital assets but under local letting policy such as Hartley gardens we do consider equity savings and income.

Section 4 – Antisocial Behaviour Test

Question 24: Do you agree that a conviction/sanction for anti-social behaviour should result in a disqualification period from accessing social housing? If yes, how long should someone be disqualified for?

- This depends on the nature and severity of the anti-social behaviour. DCC's current lettings policy sets out applicants can be excluded for anti-social behaviour and this exclusion remains in place until the applicant can demonstrate a change in behaviour.

Section 5 - Terrorism Test

Question 29: The Government is proposing that an unspent conviction, including under the Terrorism Acts 2000 and 2006 (such as for membership of a proscribed terrorist organisation) should result in a permanent disqualification from accessing social housing, unless doing so would increase public safety risks. Do you agree with this proposal? If no, please explain.

- It is difficult to answer this question as it would depend on the nature of the conviction, what risk are the applicants to the community (high, low, medium) etc therefore we have answered don't know.

Section 7 – Fraudulent Declaration Test

Question 34: Do you agree that those who provide fraudulent information in social housing applications should be prevented from qualifying for a set period, in addition to any disqualification period that would have applied had they not made a false declaration? If yes, how long should this period be?

- It depends on nature of fraud as to whether the exclusion is indefinite or not. DCC's current policy states that anyone knowingly falsifying information as part of their application could be excluded from the housing register.

Overall Summary

- If these changes were introduced, homelessness is likely to increase, and this will place pressure on frontline services and will result in an increased demand for temporary accommodation.
- For this change to occur there would need to be additional private sector housing available to make sure there were enough housing options elsewhere that were safe and affordable for all those affected. In addition, there would need to be further regulations introduced to increase the responsibilities of private landlords.
- Community cohesion could be impacted and could create a 2-tier allocation system.
- Waiting times for social housing have recently increased, so not allowing a person to join for 10 years is, in essence excluding some people from social housing for the life of their children growing up. This will have an impact on both physical and mental health, educational outcomes and poverty levels to name just 3.
- If these changes are introduced DCC would want to see a date in the future set to allow sufficient time to implement these major changes.