



**Agenda Item:**

**Report Title: Consultation to Changes in Allocations Policy**

**Report For: Management Committee**

**Decision: Approval**

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**Date: 23rd April 2019**



## Executive Summary

### Brief Overview

The report will detail the outcome of the consultation to proposed changes to our allocations policy in line with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

### Risks

N/A

### Relevance to Business Plan

N/A

### Financial Implications

N/A

### Equalities

The Association already complies with the Equalities Act 2010 in its current allocations policy. This will continue into the amended policy.

### Regulatory Impact

To comply with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

### Recommendations

That the Management Committee approves the changes and the new policy.

## Introduction & Background

### 1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to detail what we consulted applicants on and the outcome of that consultation.

Details of the changes to the policy have been discussed with our partners at the Govan Local Lettings Community meeting.

### 2.0 Background

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 introduced a number of changes to the allocation of social housing in Scotland. For example, changes in reasonable preference groups, property ownership, suspensions, short SSTs, appeals and consultation. This was detailed in the Committee Report; Changes to the Allocations Policy dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

Before recommending changes to Committee we consulted with our local partners and also with applicants as part of the annual waiting list review.

### 3.0 Discussion - Outcome of consultation

The outcome of the consultation is that we received 47 responses. The consultation looked at changes to the points awarded, priority for waiting list categories, the reason and length of time for suspensions and a new appeals process.

The results are detailed below

#### 3.1 New Points /Priority Categories

Priority	Type of Application	Changes to Priority	Results
1 <sup>st</sup> :	Transfers  Get 17% of lets	Increase priority for our tenants who are under-occupying their exiting home	Agree 42: Disagree 5
2 <sup>nd</sup>	No cap on number of Statutory homeless (Referred by Council)	No change, Currently we receive 5 referrals per month	Agree 44: Disagree 3
3rd (a)	General Waiting List  Get 80% of Remaining lets	Added a new category to assist those suffering domestic abuse  Increased priority for any social tenants who is under-occupying their exiting home	Agree 44 Disagree 3  Agree 44 Disagree 3

3rd (b)	Non Statutory Homeless People .Get 20% of Remaining lets	Added medical points to help give homeless people with medical needs greater priority	Agree 46 Disagree 1
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### 3.2 Suspension

The reasons for suspensions are detailed in the act. The length of the suspension is open to debate. We propose a 12 month suspension because we can review suspended applicants as part of the annual waiting list review.

Reason for Suspension	length of suspension
Been convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment : The offence has been committed in the locality of the home by either the applicant or someone who resides with them	12 months
Has a conviction for using the house for illegal or immoral purposes: Can be either the applicant or someone who resides with them	12 month
Previously been evicted by court order or under grounds 3/4 of the 2001 Act (this is related to damaging property, furniture or communal areas)	12 months
Abandonment of a previous tenancy	12 months
Has repeatedly refused reasonable offers of accommodation	12 months

#### Comments

<p>“The above 'suspension rules' are fair”</p> <p>“The time period in my opinion is appropriate. However if the tenant/person has repeat behaviour, I feel it should be a complete void application”.</p>
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### 3.3 Appeals and Complaints

We propose to make it easier to complain. There is an option to appeal to the Sherriff Court if applicants are not happy with their application being suspended under the statutory grounds. If you do not want to do this, or if you are not happy with any outcome, you can contact the Housing Manager. If that fails to resolve the issue it can be dealt with as a complaint under our Complaint Handling procedure.

#### Comments

No opinion expressed
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## **4.0 Conclusion**

There has been an over whelming endorsement to the proposed changes to the points and waiting list priorities. This ranges from 89% in favour of an increase in points for RSL tenants who are under occupying their home to 97.80% in favour of awarding, Non-Statutory Homeless Applicants medical points.

There were only two people who responded to proposed changes to suspensions, however these are statutory suspensions and the only points of debate is the length of time a suspension should last.

No-one expressed a view with regards to streamlining the appeals process.

## **5.0 Recommendations**

We would recommend that the above changes are incorporated into our allocations policy. An update of the Policy is available on request.

## Appendix One

### Allocation Categories and Points under the current Allocation Policy

Categories	Points Awarded	New points
Homeless or threatened with homelessness	40	40 = unmet needs points if req'd
Insecurity of tenure – private let	15	15
Staying care of family/friends	10	10
Overcrowding for every bedroom lacking	8	8
Each bedroom lacking thereafter	4 (Maximum of 12 points)	4
Under occupation (existing tenants)	8	12
Where a property has dampness or poor energy efficiency	10	10
Property is below tolerable standard	30	30
Applicant sharing kitchen/cooking facilities	2	2
Applicant sharing a living room with another household	2	2
Applicant Sharing W.C. Shower/Bath with another household	2	2
To support or receive support from family members or friends	8	8
To sustain employment or education	8	8
Applicants experiencing harassment or abuse	25	25
Essential medical	25	25
Advisable medical	15	15
Flat Share	8	8
Domestic abuse		25

