

REPORT TO COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE 20th DECEMBER 2018.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT POLICY

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1.1 Approve the draft Housing Management Policy.

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 The Policy Development and Review Framework in Part 4B of the Scheme of Governance (the Framework') is the Full Council approved procedure for how all council policies are to be developed and reviewed. To support the Framework, in May 2018 the Directorate Management Team of Business Services approved a process for reviewing existing policies within Aberdeenshire Council. Under this process all existing policies should be subject to a full review within five years.
- 2.2 As defined in the Policy Review and Development Framework, a policy is generally a formal, concise, accessible statement on how the Council intends to conduct business and deliver services. Generally, it is a statement of intent with rules that influence and enable decision making. A policy statement lessens the risk of conflict and removes the opportunity for unfair selective application of rules.
- 2.3 To ensure a consistent format for developing and reporting policies the Directorate Management Team also approved a standard policy template similar to the template used for HR employee policies.
- 2.4 In December 2017 the Communities Committee approved the Local Housing Strategy 2018 – 2023 (item 10). The strategy sets the direction of the Housing Service for the next five years.
- 2.5 To support the delivery of the Strategy and in accordance with the Policy Development and Review Framework, the Housing Service has undertaken a review of the key Housing Policies.
- 2.6 The local housing strategy adopted by the Council in December 2017 was shaped by engagement with tenants, the general public, public, private and voluntary organisations and groups. During the engagement exercise there was no demand from tenants or other service users to make significant changes to existing policies. As a result the Housing Service undertook a light-touch review concentrating on making the policies more transparent and accessible. No further consultation was undertaken on the development of the revised policy.

- 2.7 In order to simplify the policies, remove overlaps and eliminate duplication the opportunity was taken to combine the key policies into one overarching policy statement for the service.
- 2.8 **Appendix 1 to this report sets out the Housing Management Policy statement.** This policy is the overarching policy for the Housing Service and covers the following functions:-
- Tenancy Services;
 - Housing Options and Homeless Service;
 - Asset Management and repairs
 - Affordable Housing and Private sector Housing.
- 2.9 The policies covering Estate Management, Stock Management, Repairs and Tenancies Management were last reviewed in June 2007. The Homelessness Outcome Statement was last updated in July 2014.
- 2.10 The Policy Statement sets out the main principals which guide the delivery of services. It will be supported by a range of operating procedures and guidance notes.
- 2.11 The policy has been considered by the six area committees. Each Area Committee provided a range of comments on the draft policy which have allowed the Housing Service to improve the scope of the policy. Relevant extracts from the Area Committee Decision Sheets can be read in **Appendix 2** along with the service response to each comment.
- 2.12 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section D 1.1d of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as this relates to a decision on policy and resource matters.

4 Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out as part of the development of the proposals set out above. It is included as Appendix 3 and overall it is considered that the policy will have a positive impact on our communities through the provision of affordable housing based on assessed need.
- 4.2 There are no specific staffing and financial implications arising from this policy as it reflects the current situation on which the Housing budget was set.

4.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

- ACORP001 – budget pressures. Management of business plans continues to provide mitigation.
- ACORP002 – changes in government policy, legislation and regulation. Officers have carried out a horizon-scanning exercise to anticipate changes over the next five years. The policy as presented to the Committee has been drafted to ensure compliance with forecast changes but will have to be reviewed if unanticipated changes are introduced.
- ACORP005 – working with other organisations. The policy has been designed to encourage strong partnership working with social housing providers in the area.

4.4 Town Centre First Principle:- the provision of affordable housing will have a positive impact on town centres. A Town Centre Impact Assessment was carried out as part of the development of the Local Housing Strategy and the assessment remains valid for this policy. A copy of this assessment is provided as **Appendix 4** to this report for information

Stephen Archer
Director Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Alan Morris, Service Development Co-ordinator and Rob Simpson, Head of Housing.

22/11/2018

APPENDIX 1

Policy Title: - Housing Management.

Summary Table

Policy Status (circle as appropriate)	<i>Draft</i>
Responsible Officer	<i>Andrew Mackie, Dave Thomson, Alexander MacLeod, Allan Jones - Housing Managers</i>
Policy Sponsor	<i>Rob Simpson, Head of Housing</i>
Authorised by	<i>Communities Committee</i>
Approval Date	<i>September 2018</i>
Review Date	<i>September 2021</i>

1. Policy Statement

The aim of the Housing Management Policy is to support the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy 2018 – 2023 and to provide a framework for the management of the Housing service.

The Policy contributes to all 16 of the Scottish Government's national outcomes as well as to the 4 national housing outcomes.

At a local level the policy contributes to the delivery of the following priorities as set out in Aberdeenshire Council's Council Plan 2017 – 2022:-

- Have the right mix of housing across all of Aberdeenshire
- Work to reduce poverty and inequalities within our communities
- Protect our special environment, including tackling climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions

2. Scope

The policy covers anyone who uses any of the services provided by Housing, these include:-

- Aberdeenshire Council Housing Tenants
- Those people wishing access to Aberdeenshire Council's housing list and assessment process;
- Any person requiring housing options advice relating to homelessness, homeless prevention or housing support;
- Those people who are homeless, threatened with homelessness or are at risk of homelessness;
- Careleavers;

- Those people eligible for the Low Cost Shared Equity Scheme;
- Older people and those with a disability who require access to appropriate affordable housing and support in order to live as independently as possible;
- Home owners and private sector tenants seeking support to repair, maintain, adapt and improve their homes through the scheme of assistance;
- Those people aged over 60 and/or with a disability seeking access to aids and adaptations to live independently through the care and repair service;
- Landlords in the private rented sector;
- Homeowners and private tenants seeking private water supply grants;
- Households in the private sector seeking advice and support to access grants on energy efficiency measures;
- Minority ethnic communities including Syrian New Scots and Gypsy/Travellers;
- Owner occupiers in mixed tenure estates;
- Victims and perpetrators of antisocial behaviour including owner occupiers and tenants in the private rented sector;
- Victims of gender-based abuse and sexual exploitation
- Victims of domestic abuse..

3. Principles

The following principles set out the main responsibilities for Housing:-

- 3.1 The service will seek to combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities for all tenants and service users in all aspects of its policies and procedures. This means the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race (including Gypsy Travellers), religion or belief, sex (gender), or sexual orientation.
- 3.2 Detailed procedures and guidance will be developed for all Housing functions in support of this policy. All Housing staff will be supported to undergo appropriate training to ensure they are equipped to carry out the roles expected of them.
- 3.3 The service will ensure high quality, customer focused services are delivered to all users of the service equally across Aberdeenshire irrespective of their geographical location. This includes achieving the Scottish Social Housing Charter and Care Inspectorate requirements.
- 3.4 Tenant Participation will be embedded in everything the service does. Decisions will be developed in conjunction with tenant groups. All tenants will be provided with the opportunity to monitor and scrutinise the service provided.
- 3.5 The service will monitor tenant satisfaction and in conjunction with tenant groups will undertake regular performance management reviews to ensure continuous improvement of the service. Monitoring and evaluation of customer satisfaction will be carried out within the framework of the annual report to tenants produced as part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

- 3.6 The service welcomes all feedback from tenants and service users and will use this feedback to improve service delivery. Any complaints or expressions of dissatisfaction with the services provided will be investigated in accordance with council policy with a review to resolving the matter as quickly as possible. If this is not possible and the matter is taken to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) the service will cooperate fully with any investigation to ensure the matter is effectively resolved.
- 3.7 The service recognises the important role the Scottish Housing Regulator plays in protecting the interests of tenants, homeless people and others who use the service and will work with the Regulator to address concerns arising from any significant performance failure which affects, or has the potential to affect service users.
- 3.8 The service will provide free information, advice, guidance and support to any person presenting with a housing options or tenancy management issue, this may include information relating to homelessness, homeless prevention, housing support, housing repairs and neighbourhood disputes.
- 3.9 The service recognises its responsibilities under health and safety and will take all practical steps to ensure that any activities carried out on its behalf by its employees, contractors and subcontractors comply with all statutory, legislative and regulatory requirements and do not adversely affect its tenants, service users, the general public and its staff.
- 3.10 The service will operate a user focussed, effective, efficient and economic reactive repairs service which meets the needs of tenants which can also, in appropriate situations, process the recharging of repair costs to tenants.
- 3.11 Through a sustained 30 year programme of planned investment informed by a comprehensive and robust stock condition database the housing stock will be modernised and adapted to meet the changing needs of tenants and those targets in relation to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and the Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (EESH). Appropriate information and support will be offered to tenants to encourage them to take upgrades.
- 3.12 The service will work with owner occupiers to maintain mixed tenure estates and carry out common repairs to properties in an open and transparent way.
- 3.13 The service will ensure fair and open access to Aberdeenshire Council's housing list and assessment process and will work with all partners to identify barriers and remove them.
- 3.14 Housing need will be assessed using the agreed criteria and appropriate housing will be let to those in the greatest need, making best use of available stock, maximising choices and creating sustainable communities.

- 3.15 Tenancy changes will be managed in such a way as to minimise void periods so reducing void rental loss.
- 3.16 A comprehensive homeless service will be given to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The service will work with partners to identify those at risk of homelessness during transitions and to support early intervention. Those people requiring additional support will be offered housing support. All necessary action will be taken to sustain tenancies, support tenants and prevent homelessness.
- 3.17 In line with guidance and legislation, all applicants for temporary accommodation will be treated fairly and appropriately in terms of tenancy provision, quality and location depending on availability of stock.
- 3.18 The service will meet its legislative responsibilities to tenants as stipulated within the tenancy agreement and will work with tenants to ensure that they in turn comply with their tenancy obligations.
- 3.19 The service will take appropriate and proportionate action to deal with any breaches of tenancy conditions including making all reasonable attempts to intervene at an early stage. Regular contact will be made throughout the process and the service will ensure all legislative requirements are complied with and that legal action is only taken as a last resort.
- 3.20 The rent collection service will be managed to maximise income and ensure that all tenants pay the rent owed. Payments will be regularly monitored and appropriate action will be taken to support tenants falling into arrears to ensure that their debt is cleared. Legal action to recover debt and the possibility of eviction will only be considered as a last resort.
- 3.21 As part of the rent setting process, and in compliance with legislation, Tenants will be consulted on rent, service charges and other charges. The aim will be to ensure that charges set provide value for money, are fair, affordable and reflect the cost of providing the service.
- 3.22 The service will ensure that the Council meets its legislative responsibilities under the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 by taking appropriate and proportionate action to deal with any issues and/or complaints including making all reasonable attempts to intervene at an early stage. Regular contact will be made throughout the process. Legal action will only be taken as a last resort.
- 3.23 As required the service will liaise with external agencies and other services within the council including making appropriate referrals for information to assist, support and prevent incidences of antisocial behaviour across Aberdeenshire. The service will work alongside external partners and other council services to monitor and maintain a register of all ASBO's and ABC's.
- 3.24 The service will ensure delivery of practical support to victims of antisocial behaviour and will carry out antisocial behaviour investigation work on behalf

of, and act on complaints received against, owner occupiers and tenants in the private rented sector.

- 3.25 The service will work with multi agency partners to meet Equally Safe requirements for Violence against Women Partnerships (VAWP) and play a role in tackling and embedding locally Scotland's National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation.
- 3.26 Through the Strategic Housing Development Plan the service will seek to increase the supply of affordable housing to meet housing need.
- 3.27 First time buyers and those who can demonstrate a significant change in their household circumstances that affects their housing need will be assisted to purchase a property to suit their needs by administering and nominating eligible purchasers for the Low Cost Shared Equity Scheme.
- 3.28 The service will support people with an identified particular need, such as older people or those with a disability, to live as independently as possible through improving access to appropriate affordable housing.
- 3.29 Support will be provided through the scheme of assistance to homeowners and private sector tenants to repair, maintain, adapt and improve their homes. Financial assistance will be prioritised for homeowners with the highest levels of need where there is no entitlement to financial assistance and clients have no alternative means of funding to carry out aids, adaptations and essential repairs.
- 3.30 The service will work with Environmental Health and homeowners in order to identify and improve houses that are already below the tolerable standard and to help owners prevent their properties from falling below the tolerable standard.
- 3.31 Support will be provided through the care and repair service to people aged over 60 and/or with a disability to access aids and adaptations to help them live independently.
- 3.32 The service will work to improve management standards through engagement with landlords in the private rented sector.
- 3.33 Assistance will be provided to Homeowners and private tenants in the form of private water supply grants to address the adequacy and wholesomeness of private water supplies.
- 3.34 To help improve the energy efficiency of homes in the private sector the service will ensure that all households have access to services to identify possible energy efficiency improvements within their homes and will provide assistance to source any grants or schemes available to help with these measures.
- 3.35 Minority ethnic communities will be supported to access appropriate land or housing and support to encourage social integration. Syrian New Scots families

will be located where they can access services in accommodation appropriate to their needs.

- 3.36 Appropriate accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers will be identified through the Gypsy/Traveller site provision strategy. Local authority run sites will be well managed and compliant with relevant Scottish Government standards for tenancy rights and physical conditions. Assistance will be provided to Gypsy/Travellers who would like to develop private sites.
- 3.37 Unauthorised encampments will be managed in a fair, balanced and coordinated way. The service will ensure that the Council fulfils its statutory duties in respect of both the settled community and Gypsy/Travellers.

3 Related Links

Local Housing Strategy
Tenant Participation Strategy
Strategic Housing Investment Plan
Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy
Gypsy/Traveller Unauthorised Encampment Policy
Scheme of Assistance
Allocations Policy
Rent Arrears
Below Tolerable Standards Policy
Equally Safe
Scotland's National Action Plan to Prevent and Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation.
Building Safer Communities
GIRFEC
Scottish Government guidance on management of HRA

4 Index of Documents

a) Policy

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes
15 th June 2018	New Policy	

b) Distribution

Name	Title
Rob Simpson	Head of Housing
Andrew Mackie	Acting Housing Manager Tenancy Services
Allan Jones	Housing Manager Options and Homelessness
Dave Thomson	Housing Manager Asset Manager and Repairs
Alexander MacLeod	Housing Manager Strategy

APPENDIX 2

AREA COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Item 06	Area Committee: Kincardine and Mearns	
	Date Of Committee Meeting 30/10/2018	
Reference	Comment	
KMAC 1	Management of voids needs to be timely and well communicated. Tenancy changes should be viewed not only as a rental loss but also as a home not being made available to tenants.	Agreed. The aim is to turn around void properties as quickly as possible. The recent issues with voids relate to the Housing Improvement Programme where properties were held void to allow a range of works to be carried out at one time. These whole property works would be too difficult to do if the properties were occupied. The programming of these works is currently being reviewed and action will be taken to get existing voids back into use as quickly as possible.
KMAC 2	The policy should include reference to Care Leavers.	The scope of the policy has been amended to include reference to Care Leavers.
KMAC 3	Details should be included around victims of domestic abuse and the management process around this.	Again the scope of the policy has been amended to specifically include victims of domestic abuse. This is a policy and not a process so will not include specific details on the management of domestic abuse.
KMAC 4	Consideration given to the growing issue of those with no recourse to public funds and how this can be managed.	The policy is wide and specifically covers the provision of advice and support to people in housing need. Detailed information on housing options will be provided to users of the service when required.
KMAC 5	There needed to be better communication with tenants when works were being delayed and or brought forward.	This is a valid comment and Housing is working in partnership with the Property and Facilities Management

		Service and its contractors to ensure that the tenants are kept informed of progress with planned improvements and any potential delays.
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Item 4	Area Committee: Marr	
	Date Of Committee Meeting 6/11/2018	
Reference	Comment	
MAC1	With reference to paragraph 3.28 of the policy, to request a fuller response to concerns about unavailability of appropriate housing stock for people with disabilities and, with reference to the EIA, to query whether there had been any consultation with disabled people.	<p>The Housing Service will consult with all relevant stakeholders on the development of new policies. With regards the availability of housing stock for people with disabilities this is already being addressed. In the Local Housing Strategy there is a target to deliver 15% of affordable homes as suitable for people with particular needs. This is how we have performed over the last five years:</p> <p>2013/14 – 15% 2014/15 – 21% 2015/16 – 33.6% 2016/17 – 9.8% 2017/18 – 16.5%</p> <p>All available housing including the new build properties are allocated according to the allocations policy. 15% of all new build affordable housing is identified for Particular Needs Clients and this involves ongoing communication and pre-allocation by Development Officers and Housing Options staff. Options staff decide on the allocations from their assessment of priority and the availability of available properties.</p> <p>Looking ahead to the next Strategic Housing Investment</p>

		<p>Plan 2019-2024, this identified a maximum delivery of 2,354 homes, with around 590 potentially suitable for particular needs households, which is 25% of the overall delivery. 73 of these homes will be wheelchair accessible. These will include affordable homes in town centres.</p> <p>This document does not make any shift in policy. As a result no specific consultation exercise took place but consultation covering a wide range of stakeholders had been carried out during development of the Local Housing Strategy and little demand for policy changes had been identified during those consultations.</p>
MAC2	<p>To suggest that it would be preferable for the Council and housing associations to use the same allocation criteria and to request further information on any plans to harmonise the criteria.</p>	<p>Aberdeenshire Council works very closely with Social Landlord providers in many ways to meet local housing need. One way is through Apply4Homes which allows people in Aberdeenshire and Moray to apply to up to five different social landlords in one go.</p> <p>Although each provider shares the same system each application will be assessed individually according to each provider's policy so the points awarded for the application will be different.</p> <p>Allocations policies are based around the strategic aims and objectives of each provider. Each will be geared to meeting a specific housing need. There are no plans at present to standardise allocations policies but each provider will continue to seek ways to work closer</p>

		together to meet housing need in the area.
MAC3	To raise concerns and request further information on the policy of suspending housing applications for 6 months after refusal of an offer in cases where the applicants were already Council tenants.	The policy recognises the constraints there are on the service in terms of availability of suitable accommodation to meet all housing needs. However, so far as possible, Housing Officers will do everything they can to match the needs of the individual to the accommodation that is available. Only one offer of housing will be made to any tenant on the Management Transfer list. If the tenant refuses this offer and cannot provide sufficient evidence that the offer was unreasonable, the application will be suspended for up to 6 months and the tenant will be removed from the Management Transfer List. The tenant has a right of appeal in which the decision can be reviewed and overturned but if it is not the suspension stays in place.

Item 7	Area Committee: Banff & Buchan	
	Date Of Committee Meeting 6/11/2018	
Reference	Comment	
a)	<p>Committee requested the following information:</p> <p>Briefing note giving details of how many voids there are in Banff and Buchan and how long the properties have been empty, why there is such a significant increase in lost rents compared to the previous year, and the timeframe for EESH and how this is progressing,</p>	<p>This is not directly relevant to this exercise. A briefing will be provided for Committee in due course. Progress with the HRA Capital and Revenue accounts was last reported to the Communities Committee on the 8th November. The report states that lost rents arising from voids are forecast to be £414,000 higher than budget.</p> <p>The increase is due to higher numbers of voids with longer</p>

		<p>void periods held for Internal Wall Insulation (IWI) improvement works but with these delayed due to delays in the start of the new Housing Improvement Plan (HIP) contract. The level of voids is expected to reduce once the HIP programmed works start with the housing service looking at options to accelerate the release of some of these voids through completion of works via the in-house IWI Repairs team.</p> <p>The Housing Improvement Programme (HIP) was designed to allow Housing to meet the Government EESSH standards by 2020.</p>
b)	Briefing note on roof solar panels giving details of how effective the investment in these has been since installation, and	This is not directly relevant to this exercise. A briefing note will be provided to Committee in due course.
c)	Briefing note to provide information on Anti-Social Behaviour, the resources available and how this is being dealt with in Banff and Buchan.	This is not directly relevant to this exercise. A briefing note will be provided to the Committee in due course.

Item 6	Area Committee: Buchan	
	Date Of Committee Meeting 13/11/2018	
Reference	Comment	
(1)	To request that Principles, 3.15 (page 6), be strengthened to reflect that there will be additional benefits to minimising void periods such as reducing waiting lists whereby meeting the needs of our customers and tackling poverty and inequalities, and	

Item 6	Area Committee: Buchan	
	Date Of Committee Meeting 13/11/2018	
Reference	Comment	
(2)	Having noted that Principles 3.4 (page 5) states that 'Tenant Participation will be embedded in everything the service does.', to request that all tenants groups be consulted on this draft policy	No policy changes were proposed by way of this exercise. However the Housing Service will always seek to gain the views of its tenants and service users whenever making major changes to policies or the services provided.

Item 8	Area Committee:- Garioch	
	Date of Committee Meeting 13/11/2018	
Reference	Comment	
(1)	Committee:- Noted the assurance from the Service that there would be no change to the involvement of Councillors and Committee in formulating the detail of the policies that sit under the Housing Management Policy; and	The role of Councillors in policy formation is clearly set out in Part 4B of the Scheme of Governance. The Housing Service will continue to involve Councillors and Committees in formulating the details of all policies.
(2)	Requested that a briefing note be provided on homelessness in Garioch.	This is not directly relevant to this exercise and a briefing note will be provided in due course.
(3)	Noted that a robust database of facilities available and where would be useful with respect to housing appropriate for disabled residents.	Work is ongoing to ensure that our systems and databases are both robust and meet our future needs and requirements.

Item 8	Area Committee: Formartine	
	Date Of Committee Meeting 20/11/2018	
Reference	Comment	

(1)	<p>The Committee approved the draft policy in relation to Housing Management and provided the following comments:-</p> <p>To present data in more user-friendly way;</p>	<p>Noted – Housing will explore ways of setting out the main principles of the policy in a shorter format for publishing on the Council’s website.</p>
(2)	<p>To clarify a difference between neighbourhood disputes and neighbour disputes; and</p>	<p>A neighbour dispute is usually something that affects adjacent neighbours and may concern boundary disputes, excessive noise, disputes over parking etc. A neighbourhood dispute involves more people in the area and relates for antisocial behaviour, vandalism etc. In many ways the differences between the two are irrelevant, if they are impacting on the lives of the people in the area it is best that they be resolved as quickly as possible before matters escalate.</p>
(3)	<p>On the importance of tenant participation strategy.</p>	<p>The Housing Service is committed to tenant participation. The Tenant Participation & promotion Team are currently reviewing their structure.</p>

APPENDIX 3

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).	
Service	Infrastructure Services
Section	Housing
Title of the activity etc.	Housing Management
Aims of the activity	The delivery of a high quality, customer focused Housing service covering;- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management; • Tenancy Services; • Housing Options and Homeless Service; • Affordable Housing and Private Sector Housing
Author(s) & Title(s)	Douglas Newlands, Housing Manager Asset Management - (now Dave Thomson, Housing Manager Asset Management) Angela Keith, Housing Manager Tenancy Services - (now Andrew Mackie, Acting Housing Manager Tenancy Services) Allan Jones, Housing Manager Options and Homelessness Alexander Macleod, Housing Manager Strategy
Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.	
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of feedback from tenant groups and events; • Analysis of complaints, complements and comments received through the Feedback Team; • Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) returns and tenant consultation surveys; • Care Inspectorate returns; • Internal performance monitoring;

<p>Internal Consultation with staff and other services affected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal management and team meetings; • Local cross functional meetings; • Tenant Participation Promotion Team; • Communities Committee; • Area Committees; • HMT • SLT • Property and Facilities Management
<p>External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local RSLs; • Contractors; • Tenant Working Group; • Service users and stakeholders; • Citizens Panel • Scottish government

<p>External data (census, available statistics).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Social Housing Charter reporting and returns • External Benchmarking – annual returns are completed for Scottish Housing Best Value Network, the Scottish Housing Regulator and the Scottish Social Housing Charter. • Scottish Government research and reporting • Care Commission reports
<p>Other (general information as appropriate).</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.

<p>Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
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Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.

<p>What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.</p>	<p>Measures:</p>	<p>Timescale:</p>

Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting “yes” in the applicable box/boxes below.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger	Yes			
Age – Older	Yes			
Disability	Yes			
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)	Yes			
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Gender – male/female			Yes	
Pregnancy and maternity			Yes	
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			Yes	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			Yes	
Marriage and Civil Partnership			Yes	

Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?

Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.	Age – younger. Affordable Housing provides opportunities to first time buyers, who are typically younger households, to purchase properties at a discounted fixed price, through Low Cost Shared Equity and provides opportunities to access Mid-Market rental properties. Of course younger people may find it difficult to obtain a mortgage or be able to afford rental properties even at mid-market rates.	

	<p>Age – older. There are specific services provided to older tenants in Sheltered Housing where additional housing support is provided to help sustain tenancies and allow people to live in the community for longer. There are also neutral impacts as there are a set of procedures and tenancy conditions that apply equally to older people and all other tenants.</p> <p>The service also promotes independent living by assisting people to live in homes which are free from repairing issues. This policy has a positive impact, particularly on older people.</p>	
	<p>Disability – The policy is tenant focussed to ensure existing tenants with disabilities or particular needs can sustain their tenancies through a range of housing support e.g. through aids and adaptations, garden maintenance and Sheltered Housing, etc.</p> <p>It will also support disabled people obtaining suitably adapted accommodation from the Council. There are also neutral impacts as there are a set of procedures and tenancy conditions that apply equally to those with disabilities and all other tenants.</p>	
	<p>Race: Gypsy Travellers – There are specific services provided to Gypsy Travellers through the provision of traveller’s sites. In terms of race in general the policy has a neutral impact as procedures linked to the policy and tenancy conditions apply equally to all tenants regardless of race.</p>	
	<p>Refugees/and Asylum Seekers have access to good quality affordable housing which meets their needs, culture and lifestyle.</p>	

	<p>All – provision of affordable housing based on defined criteria helps to meet the housing needs of our communities. Unfortunately demand currently exceeds supply.</p>	
	<p>The policy aims to empower Homeless people to transform their lives; provide suitable temporary accommodation where necessary for those who are homeless until a permanent housing solution can be found; satisfy the accommodation needs of service users by assessing suitable options through a housing options approach and those who require additional support to find or remain in their homes, receive housing support.</p>	
<p>Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?</p>		
<p>If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?</p>	<p>A wide range of consultation is carried out including with :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Outcome Groups, • Citizens Panel, • Minority Ethnic Working Group, • Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group, • Gypsy/Traveller Interagency Group, Minority Ethnic Outreach Project Group • Disabled Groups. <p>Consultations are carried out in relation to specific projects – for example large scale alterations to Sheltered Housing, void relatable standards, etc.</p> <p>All feedback received has helped shape the development of this policy.</p>	
<p>Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?</p>		
<p>These should be</p>	<p>Mitigating Steps</p>	<p>Timescale</p>

<p>included in any action plan at the back of this form.</p>	<p>The Housing Service will continue to maximise funding streams to optimise the delivery of affordable housing. This will include bids to Scottish Government, using alternative funding models and considering all affordable housing tenures to address housing methods.</p>	<p>On-going</p>
	<p>The Housing Service will continue to identify suitable land for development of affordable housing, through discussion with stakeholders; internal and external, i.e. Property Services, Estates, Planning, Private Developers, RSLs and other public bodies.</p>	<p>On-going</p>
	<p>In order to meet the demands of potentially homeless and homeless households in the area, Aberdeenshire Council's Options and Homelessness service is currently working on implementing a Housing Options approach in line with the Housing Options Guidance released by the Scottish Government in 2016</p>	<p>2018</p>
	<p>The Welfare Reform agenda will require Aberdeenshire Council to assess the provision of temporary accommodation charging to ensure affordability across all tenures.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council is committed to assess ways of providing suitable accommodation for those under the age of 35 and where there is a requirement for supported accommodation. A charging strategy will be assessed to ensure that welfare reform changes are managed and mitigated as far as possible.</p>	<p>On-going</p>
	<p>The Housing Service will continue to explore options of providing access to funds, to assist those homeowners who have debt secured on their property, but still require financial assistance with repairs and maintenance</p>	<p>On-going</p>

Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?	
<p>These should be included in the action plan.</p>	<p>Overall the policy aims to create mixed and sustainable communities, which will promote good relations and encourage integration and equalities.</p> <p>The policy also aims to promote tenant participation and involvement of tenant groups. All tenants are encouraged to become members of their local groups. If there is a specific need for a specific group for one or all of the protected groups this would be encouraged, facilitated and promoted.</p> <p>The service will hold regular meetings with tenant groups including the TSTWG.</p> <p>The service will carrying out regular tenant satisfactions surveys as part of the SSHC. The results will be scrutinised by the tenant groups.</p> <p>Customer Feedback information will be monitored to identify any issues that need to be investigated and addressed.</p>
Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?	
<p>The policy is supported by procedures which ensure consistency of service delivery regardless of protected characteristics. Quality assurance measures are in place to monitor procedures linked to this policy which would identify any issues which can then be addressed. Legislation also underpins the policy and complying with this will also ensure equalities as legislation also has equal opportunities built into it.</p> <p>The policy incorporates a requirement to make appropriate referrals to enable tenants and other customers to be provided with the support they need to ensure they all have the same opportunities.</p> <p>Providing information in various formats to meet the particular needs of various groups such as translating documents or providing information in large print or audio. In addition using a variety of communication methods such as phone, text, emails etc.</p> <p>Ongoing and regular consultation with tenants through a variety of means and meetings will impact directly on policy and strategy development. Individuals have multiple opportunities to highlight any issues in relation to their needs and aspirations and in relation to protected groups. There is also an opportunity to attend tenant and officer working groups.</p> <p>The Housing Service also operates a variety of home visits and inspections on a routine and as requested basis, the results of which influence future strategies and working practices.</p>	

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?	
<p>These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).</p>	<p>The procedures that have been developed to deliver the policy are reviewed regularly to address any equality issues identified through tenant feedback or the monitoring via the Quality Assurance measures.</p> <p>Officers and Tenant Groups meet regularly to review performance and service delivery covered within the policy.</p> <p>The SSHC will ensure ongoing tenant scrutiny and benchmarking which is supported by membership of SHBVN and HouseMark.</p> <p>An independent market research company currently gathers feedback from tenants throughout the capital programme works and provides quarterly reports. Survey questions will be reviewed to consider how best to collate data of any potential impact on all protected groups.</p>
Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?	
<p>Please complete the appropriate box/boxes</p>	<p>1 No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.</p> <p>The policy covers the provision of housing services to tenants and all other users of the service. It aims to ensure these services are delivered to a high standard and provide value for money.</p> <p>Procedures to deliver the policy have been developed in consultation with service users. These are designed to meet the needs of tenant’s and other customers and to ensure all tenants live in a safe and secure environment.</p> <p>These procedures are applied to all regardless of protected characteristics.</p> <p>Quality Assurance measures are in place to ensure the procedures are followed and that all tenants and other customers are treated equally. In many cases legislation and ultimately the courts regulate compliance with equalities requirements.</p> <p>There are other procedures which have been developed to achieve positive outcomes for particular protected groups. Aids and adaptations, garden maintenance, the Sheltered Housing Service and the provision of Gypsy Traveller sites focus on achieving positive outcomes for those with disabilities and/or in the older age group and Gypsy Travellers respectively</p>
	<p>2 Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.</p>

	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen

* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.

N/A

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

Sign off and authorisation.	1) Service and Team	Housing Management Team		
	2) Title of Policy/Activity	Housing Management – covers all activities undertaken by the Housing Service.		
	3) Authors: We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/ activity.	Name:	Andrew Mackie,	
		Position:	Acting Housing Manager Tenancy Services	
		Date:		
		Signature:		
	4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name:	Rob Simpson	
		Position	Head of Housing	
		Date:		
		Signature:		
	5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name:	Stephen Archer	
		Position:	Director Infrastructure Services	
		Date:		
		Signature:		
	6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee, e.g. Communities Committee.	Date:		

	7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdnshire	Date:
(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO		Date:

:

Action Plan					
Action	Start	Complete	Lead Officer	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications

Note no additional actions are required, this assessment has identified a number of activities which are undertaken as part of the normal business.

APPENDIX 4

TOWN CENTRE FIRST IMPACT ASSESSMENT (TCFIA)

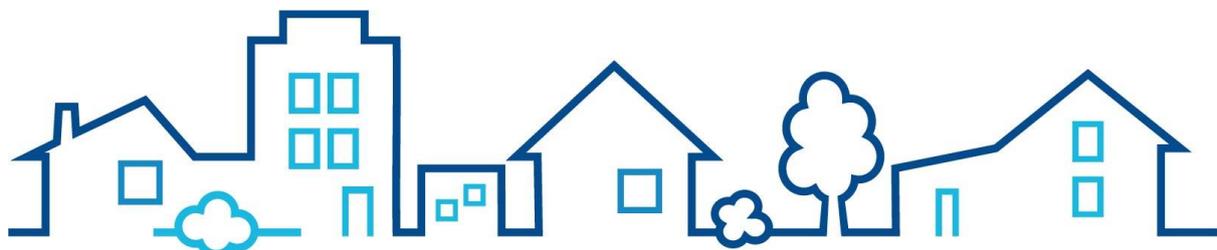
Aberdeenshire Council recognises that town centres have an important role to play in the sustainable development of local economies.

The Town Centre First Impact Assessment (TCFIA) allows officers in all services to identify the detrimental and beneficial effects that decisions we take may have on our town centres. It will allow officers to consider any implications that council decisions may have on Aberdeenshire’s key town centres. Examples of this include changes to: the provision of civic and community facilities, employment land, retail, residential buildings, cultural assets, transportation, leisure and tourism.

A Town Centre Ambassador has been nominated within your service, you can locate your Town Centre First Ambassador through the Town Centre First Principle Arcadia pages.

Project Information	
Title of Committee Paper	Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023
Service	Infrastructure
Department	Housing
Author	Ally Macleod
Have you consulted your Town Centre First Ambassador?	YES

1) Could your Project Paper cause an impact in one (or more) of the identified town centres? – Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Inverurie, Westhill, Stonehaven, Ellon, Portlethen, Banchory, Turriff, Huntly, Banff, Macduff.	
Yes - please specify	No
New affordable housing development proposed in a number of settlements across Aberdeenshire. Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Inverurie, Westhill, Stonehaven, Ellon, Portlethen and Banchory are high investment priorities in the plan. Banchory, Huntly, Turriff, Banff and Macduff are medium	

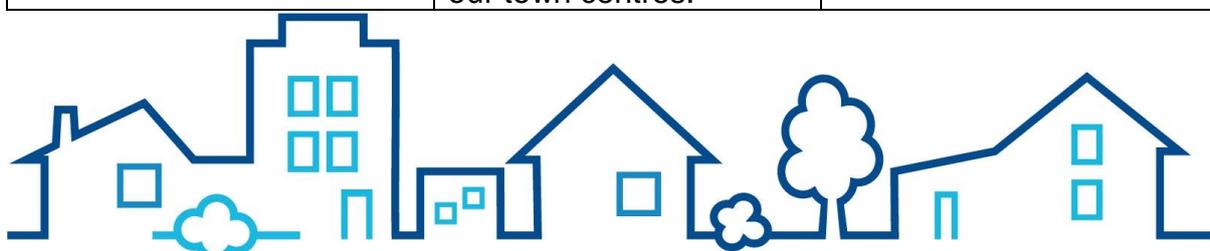


<p>investment priorities. All towns have housing need and the plan attempts to address this need across Aberdeenshire. Strategy proposes bringing back empty homes into use and this will have an impact on town centres.</p> <p>More suitably adapted homes will be made available for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Through the private sector and independent living, there are actions to help people live independently and for landlords to improve the condition of their properties.</p>	
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<p>2) If approved would your project cause an impact (either positive or negative) with regards to the footfall of any of these town centres?</p>	
<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>

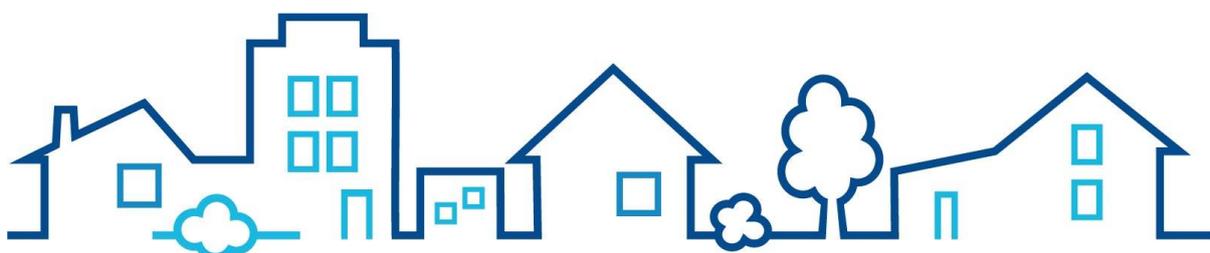
<p>3)</p>	
<p>Please describe the aims of the committee paper?</p>	<p>To comment on the draft Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023</p>

<p>4) What are the positive and negative impacts?</p>		
Impact	Describe the positive impact?	Describe the negative impact?
<p>Please detail any potential positive and negative impact the project may have on Aberdeenshire's Key Town Centres.</p>	<p>Increased footfall arising from affordable housing development.</p> <p>Support to local economy by allowing people to live and work in the identified towns and their town centres.</p> <p>Supports sustainable mixed communities in our town centres.</p>	



	<p>Development of affordable housing creates local employment opportunities.</p> <p>Improvements to the appearance, design and environmental quality arising from affordable housing development.</p> <p>Investment driven into town centres.</p> <p>Improvements to the private sector stock.</p> <p>Ensuring high management standards in the private rented sector.</p> <p>Support to allow people to live independently in their own communities</p>	
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<p>5) What mitigating steps will be taken to reduce or remove negative impacts? If none see Q6</p>	
Mitigating Steps	Timescale



6) Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.

Question 7: Sign off and Authorisation	
3) Author: I have completed the TCIA impact assessment for this policy/ activity.	Name: Ally Macleod Position: Housing Manager Strategy Date: 7 November 2017 Signature: .
4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: As Above Position: Date:
5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Rob Simpson Position: Head of Housing Date:
6) Have you consulted with your Town Centre First Ambassador?	Yes
	No
7) TCFIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: tcfia@aberdeenshire.gov.uk	Date Sent:

