

# **GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **NOTICE OF CALL-IN**

**Report Number: COM 5**

**Subject: Review of allocations scheme**

**Date of Consultation: 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

**The following three Members of Council give notice that the above proposed decision(s) should be referred to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration.**

**Signed: Colin Fox Councillor**

**Jamie Smith Councillor**

**Lee Sutton Councillor**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

**The reason (s) for this Call-in is/are as follows:-**

**1. Application of 1 year claim backdating to those who can prove 24 hours per week work irrelevant criteria to tenancy considerations.**

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**2. Application of 1 year claim backdating to those who can prove 24 hours per week work not expected to be applied in many cases; policy therefore unnecessary.**

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**3. Application of 1 year claim backdating to those who can prove 24 hours per week work risks compounding inequality of reasons that may underlying non-working/short working status on grounds of protected characteristics e.g. age or disability, additionally risk of discrimination by association to a protected characteristic, such as could be applied to a full time carer in receipt of carers allowance.**

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**4. Application of 2 choice limit to accommodation offers and introduction 3 month geographical preference to offers surplus to requirements due to existing application review processes.**

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### **NOTES:**

- (1) This notice must be signed by either the Chairman or any three Members of the Council (excluding Cabinet Members).**
- (2) Members should be aware that, as part of the call-in procedure and to avoid any unnecessary call-ins, a valid reason(s) will need to be given at the Scrutiny Committee for that call-in and, therefore, it is advisable for Members to contact the relevant officer to satisfy any minor queries or to discuss the proposed reason for the call-in prior to the formal submission of this form.**

**(3) Members should note that in order to make this call-in valid the reasons for the call-in MUST be specified in writing above.**

**(NB) Members should note that, in accordance with Article 6, paragraph 6.5.3 of the Constitution, if the Head of Central Services is of the opinion that the call-in process is being abused, he may refuse to deal further with the call-in.**

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

**Date Notice Received:**

**Subject:**

Review of Allocations Scheme

**Is this decision for:**

<b>Cabinet</b>	Yes	<b>Is it a Key Decision?</b>	Yes
<b>Single Member</b>	No	<b>Is it a Key Decision?</b>	No
		<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Linden
<b>or a Key Decision for an Officer</b>			No

**Date for Decision:**

2 April 2014

**For publication/  
Not for publication?**

If not for publication, why is the information exempt?

N/A

**Report by:**

Group Manager Housing Services

**Matter for decision**

Cabinet are asked to adopt a revised Allocation scheme for operation by the Housing Options team. The scheme provides the mechanism for allocating social housing within the Borough. The key changes from the existing scheme are;

- The introduction of a residence criteria for applicants before they could qualify for an allocation
- A clear definition of 'unacceptable behaviour' that, if committed by applicants, would lead to a decision that they did not qualify for an allocation.
- The introduction of a safe surrender scheme where tenants can, in certain circumstances, surrender their tenancy and not be penalised if they seek to apply for housing at a later date.
- Additional preference awarded to applicant who work more than 24 hours per week by backdating their application by 12 months.
- Restricting the number of offers of suitable accommodation to two, where the applicant is not statutory homeless. (Statutory homeless cases will continue to be restricted to one offer.)
- Limiting the time that applicants can express a preference of geographical area where they will accept an offer of accommodation to 3 months.

<b>Existing relevant Council policies</b>
Homelessness Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, Tenancy Policy
<b>Budget details</b>
None
<b>Consultations</b>
<p>The proposed scheme has been sent to all other registered providers that operate within the Borough, which is a statutory requirement. In addition, the scheme has been before the GYCH Tenants Forum, Norfolk Housing Alliance and Great Yarmouth Housing Group (Voluntary Sector). All GYBC members have been notified of the consultation. The consultation has also been available via the GYBC website. The closing date for the consultation is 21.3.2014. These key points were also considered and endorsed by the Great Yarmouth Community Housing Board on 27.1.14.</p> <p>Some responses have been received concerning i) how victims of domestic abuse may be impacted, ii) The need to include our method of allocating Housing with Care (no change from existing policy) &amp; iii) whether additional preference should be awarded for long term residents of the Borough. These matters will be considered and any relevant amendments will be made before implementation.</p> <p>An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and the changes proposed within the revised scheme are both reasonable and proportionate.</p>
<b>Financial Implications</b>
The proposed scheme will be resourced for existing budgets.
<b>Legal Implications</b>
Nplaw have been consulted to ensure the scheme meets statutory requirements.
<b>Executive Board or Director Consultation</b>
Yes
<b>Possible options and recommendations</b>
Cabinet are asked to adopt a revised Allocation scheme
<b>Background Papers</b>
The draft revised scheme is attached.

**Notes:**

- (1) Non confidential reports to Executive must be publicly available for five days beforehand.
- (2) Non confidential reports dealing with key decisions to be taken by a single Executive Member or Officer must be publicly available for five days before the decision is taken. Whether or not such a report is confidential, a copy must be given as soon as practicable to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Chairman.

For Member Services Department Use  
Report No.  
Date circulated to Members of Council  
Expiry of call in  
Called in

COM 5  
4 April 2014  
14 April 2014

**Subject**  
**Review of Allocations Scheme**

**Decision**

That the revised Allocations Scheme be adopted.

**Reasons**

To revise the current Allocations Scheme driven from changes in legislation.

**Options Considered and Rejected**

None

**Conflict of Interest**

None

Does this report raise any legal, financial, sustainability, equality, Crime and Disorder or Human Rights issues and, if so, have they been considered?	Issues	
	Legal	Yes
	Financial	Yes
	Risk	No
	Sustainability	Yes
	Equality	No
	Crime and Disorder	No
	Human Rights	No
	Every Child Matters	No

**Subject: Revised Allocation Scheme**

**Report to: Executive Management Team**

**Report by: Trevor Chaplin, Group Manager Housing Services**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**SUBJECT MATTER AND RECOMMENDATION / DECISION REQUIRED:**

This report details the draft revised Allocations Scheme that is currently out to consultation.

EMT is asked to endorse the revised scheme for approval by Cabinet.

**Subject: Revised Allocation Scheme**

**Report to: Cabinet**

**Report by: Trevor Chaplin, Group Manager Housing Services**

**Date: 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**SUBJECT MATTER AND RECOMMENDATION / DECISION REQUIRED:**

This report sets out the process undertaken in revising the current GYBC Allocations Scheme.

Cabinet are asked to adopt the revised scheme.

**1.0 Background**

1.1 The current allocation scheme was adopted in October 2011. This followed a review of the housing options service which aimed to provide a service from the customer's perspective.

1.2 The need to revise the current scheme has been driven from changes in legislation e.g. Localism Act, Welfare Reform Act and learning from the current way of working.

**2.0 Consultation**

2.1 In November 2013 a consultation document was taken to Cabinet Briefing Session (CBS) outlining where changes were possible or required to the current scheme. CBS were invited to submit comments on those potential changes. .

2.2 Following the meeting in November, a number of key areas to be included within a revised policy were identified and drafted for further consideration by CBS on 6.1.14. These included;

- The introduction of a residence criteria for applicants before they could qualify for an allocation
- A clear definition of 'unacceptable behaviour' that, if committed by applicants, would lead to a decision that they did not qualify for an allocation.
- The introduction of a safe surrender scheme where tenants can, in certain circumstances, surrender their tenancy and not be penalised if they seek to apply for housing at a later date.
- Additional preference awarded to applicant who work more than 24 hours per week by backdating their application by 12 months.
- Restricting the number of offers of suitable accommodation to two, where the applicant is not statutory homeless. (Statutory homeless cases will continue to be restricted to one offer.)
- Limiting the time that applicants can express a preference of geographical area where they will accept an offer of accommodation to 3 months.

2.3 These key points were also considered and endorsed by the Great Yarmouth Community Housing Board on 27.1.14.

2.4 A revised scheme has been drafted based upon the key points agreed. The proposed scheme has been sent to all other registered providers that operate within the Borough, which is a statutory requirement. In addition, the scheme has been before the GYCH Tenants Forum, Norfolk Housing Alliance and Great Yarmouth Housing Group (Voluntary Sector). All GYBC members have been notified of the consultation.

2.5 The consultation has also been available via the GYBC website. The closing date for the consultation is 21.3.2014.

2.6 Any revised scheme will require amendment to working procedures for the Housing Options team.

### **3.0 Recommendation**

3.1 Cabinet are asked to adopt the revised scheme.

Does this report raise any legal, financial, sustainability, equality, Crime and Disorder or Human Rights issues and, if so, have they been considered?	Issues	
	Legal	Yes
	Financial	No
	Risk	No
	Sustainability	No
	Equality	Yes, see EqIA
	Crime and Disorder	No
	Human Rights	No
	Every Child Matters	No

# GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL (GYBC)

## ALLOCATION SCHEME 2014

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The current allocation scheme was adopted in October 2011. This followed a review of the housing options service which aimed to provide a service from the customer's perspective and deliver the following objectives;

To give priority to those in greatest housing need

- To ensure that those who have the greatest housing need have the greatest opportunity to secure suitable housing.
- To help meet local housing needs and prevent homelessness
- To enable applicants to make informed choices about their options
- To develop stable communities by assisting people to find a home of their choice in their areas of choice
- To make best use of social housing stock in Great Yarmouth and reduce the number of void homes
- To promote equality of opportunity to those seeking homes
- Deliver an allocations scheme that is transparent and easy to understand

1.2 The need to revise the current scheme has been driven from changes in legislation e.g. Localism Act, Welfare Reform Act and learning from the current way of working.

1.3 When framing an allocation scheme GYBC will have regard to:

The GYBC Tenancy Strategy

The GYBC Homelessness Strategy

Statutory guidance on allocation schemes issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG)

1.4 Any allocation scheme must also give a 'reasonable preference' to certain categories. These are;

- a) Homelessness Households who are homeless (within the meaning of Part VII of the 1996 Act, i.e. the Homelessness Legislation); this includes people who are determined by a Council as not having a priority need.
- b) Homelessness Households who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Housing Act.

- c) People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
- d) People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability).
- e) People who need to move to a particular locality within the area for example, to be nearer to special training opportunities, or special medical facilities to avoid hardship to themselves or others.

## **2.0 Priorities**

2.1 The allocation scheme will reflect the current corporate and housing priorities of GYBC.

### **2.2 Council Priorities**

- Promoting economic growth & job creation
- Protecting & supporting vulnerable people
- Engaging with and creating healthy, vibrant communities
- To be an ambitious and enterprising Council

### **2.3 Housing Priorities**

- Maximise the number of new homes built in the Borough and in particular the number of social and affordable homes
- Ensure that all homes, regardless of sector, are at least of a decent standard, contribute to the good health of their occupants and reduce fuel poverty
- Make the best use of the social housing stock in the Borough and to reduce the number of empty homes in the private sector
- Give people the advice, help and support when they need it and to improve access to all housing sectors, social, private rented and owner occupation
- Build and maintain sustainable communities, provide chances for people to improve their circumstances.

### 3.0 Eligibility & Qualification

3.1 Under s160ZA of the 1996 Housing Act as amended by the 2011 Localism Act, local authorities must consider whether applicants are eligible for an allocation of accommodation. This relates to some people who may have been living abroad or who do not have permanent permission to remain in the UK. It does not apply to existing tenants of Great Yarmouth Community Housing (GYCH) or other Registered Providers (RP's).

3.2 A Local authority (LA) may only allocate accommodation to people who are defined as qualifying. Subject to the requirement not to allocate to persons from abroad who are ineligible and ensuring compliance with exceptions for the armed forces, it may decide who does and does not qualify..

3.3 We propose that applicants should not qualify if they (or, where appropriate, members of their household or visitors):

- a. Owe significant housing related debt to a Council, Registered Landlord or Private Landlord. (*Significant housing debt is rent arrears/use and occupation charges, including housing benefit and court costs, equivalent to 8 weeks and above chargeable rent/monies for the property, rechargeable repairs and repayable rent deposits*)
- b. Have been convicted of illegal or immoral use of their home
- c. Have committed social housing fraud
- d. Have been a nuisance and annoyance to neighbours or others in the locality, sufficient to have warranted action by the police, Council or landlord
- e. Have been subject to an Anti -social Behaviour Order, an Anti-Social Behaviour Contract, Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction, Demotion of tenancy or any similar penalty introduced under future anti-social behaviour legislation
- f. Allowed the condition of their property to deteriorate beyond reasonable wear and tear
- g. Have been a perpetrator of domestic abuse
- h. A decision has been made by a LA that they are intentionally homeless
- i. Have placed themselves in housing need or a greater housing need through an act or failure to act e.g. moving to a smaller property to create an overcrowded situation.
- j. Are able to meet their own need, after considering their individual circumstances. This may include circumstances where the applicant has sufficient financial or other resources to purchase in the private sector. Current home owners will not necessarily be disqualified, particularly if their medical needs exclude other options.
- k. Are owed a statutory re-housing duty under the Housing Act 1996 and have refused one suitable offer of accommodation.

- l. Are not owed a statutory homelessness duty and have refused two suitable offers of accommodation. Applicants in this category will be able to re-apply after a period of 12 months
- m. Do not meet the residence or local connection condition set out in paragraph 4
- n. Are under eighteen, unless they come within the exceptional circumstances set out in paragraph 5

3.4 GYBC will offer a safe surrender scheme where applicants in certain circumstances will be able to surrender their tenancy and not be subject to non qualification or reduced preference. The details of the safe surrender scheme are at Appendix 1.

3.5 Applicants will be assessed as to whether or not they qualify at the time of application and, if applicable, again at the time an allocation is due. All applicants will be considered on the individual merits of their situation. If they do not qualify, they will be given reasons and have the right to a review (see paragraph 10).

#### **4.0 Residence/Local Connection**

4.1 Applicants must be able to prove they meet at least one of the following residence conditions below and that residence was by 'choice'.

- a. Applicants are resident in the GYBC Borough at the time of application and were resident for the past 2 years continuously.
- b. Applicant has been accepted as owed a statutory re-housing duty under the Housing Act 1996 as amended.
- c. Applicant can demonstrate that they need to move to the Borough in order to receive special care or support and the nearest or most appropriate care for support that is available is in the GYBC Borough

(Applicants placed in Great Yarmouth by another organisation e.g., into supported housing, in care or placed in the private sector by another local authority discharging its homelessness duty is not considered 'by choice' and will not qualify for local residence. However when the duty has expired, residence connection will begin to accrue from this date)

4.2 Para 4.1 above will not apply if;

- a. The applicant is a member of the Armed Forces and former Service personnel, where their application is made within five years of discharge

- b. The applicant is a bereaved spouse or civil partner of a member of the Armed Forces leaving Service Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner
- c. The applicant is a serving member or former member of the Reserve Forces who needs to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service

## **5.0 Other Qualification Categories**

5.1 There are additional circumstances where a LA may consider whether an applicant qualifies for an allocation.

5.2 A person is unable to hold a tenancy in law if they are under 18 years of age. It is possible for a tenancy to be held in trust on behalf of an underage person by an adult or Social Services.

5.3 Applicants under the age of 18 will only be admitted to the scheme in exceptional circumstances and will only be offered an allocation if a suitable trustee has been appointed.

## **6.0 Local Lettings Plans**

6.1 The Council, or its partner Registered Providers, may operate Local Lettings Plans in order to achieve a clearly defined objective in relation to accommodation of a specific type and/or in a geographic location. Local Lettings Plans may be used to meet the following objectives:

- a) To create mixed, balanced and settled communities and/or
- b) To encourage the development of sustainable tenancies and communities within particular developments or geographic areas, and/or
- c) To make the best use of accommodation benefitting from attributes that make it particularly appropriate for applicants of a particular description, and/or
- d) To address concentrations of deprivation or anti-social behaviour

The above list is for illustrative purposes and is not exhaustive.

## **7.0 Priority under the Allocation Scheme**

7.1 The allocation scheme must be able to distinguish between applicants on the basis of priority and state how a property will be allocated where there are two or more applicants of equal priority. The scheme must allow a reasonable preference to those eligible and qualifying falling within the groups listed at para 1.4 above. There is no obligation to award additional priority to an applicant who fits in more than one reasonable preference category.

7.2 The scheme awards priority based upon;

- a) The applicant has a housing need due to homelessness, housing conditions, overcrowding, medical need, social welfare grounds and under-occupation.
- b) The applicant is an existing tenant that would result in a particular property being made available, e.g. an adapted or large property.
- c) The applicant is awarded priority due to financial circumstances.

7.3 Within these particular groups, differing levels of priority can be awarded dependent upon the level of e.g. medical need or financial hardship

7.4 Where there are two or more applicants of equal priority, the property is offered to an applicant who has an exceptional need for the geographical area or property type available. Otherwise, priority is awarded to the applicant with the earliest application date, defined as the first date of contact. (The scheme of awarding priority is attached at Appendix 2).

7.5 We will consider whether a household is under or over occupying a property with regard to the size criteria used when assessing housing benefit i.e.

- Children under 16 of the same gender will be expected to share a bedroom
- Children under 10 will be expected to share a bedroom regardless of gender
- A tenant or partner with disabilities requiring a non-resident overnight carer will be allowed an extra bedroom.

7.6 The same criteria will apply in deciding how many bedrooms an applicant requires in any property allocated to them. Consideration will be given for any medical or social need (including children with disabilities) that leads to a family requiring more bedrooms than allowed under these criteria. Medical needs will be assessed by the Council's medical adviser. Social needs will be considered by a senior council officer who may request evidence from other agencies.

7.7 Legislation permits that some applicants who are eligible and qualify for an allocation, have their priority reduced. In most cases, applicants will not qualify for an allocation under para 3.3 above and will have to re-apply when the behaviour has been mitigated. However there will be cases where the applicant's behaviour is such that an allocation is not appropriate but they have not reached the threshold to not qualify. An example will be a tenant in rent arrears but not to the 8 week level. In such cases priority can be reduced until the applicant has taken steps to improve the behaviour. This may be by maintaining a payment arrangement for an acceptable period, paying an acceptable lump sum or clearing the arrears.

7.8 A further example where reduced priority may be awarded is where a housing need exists but a sustainable tenancy would only be possible if a support package was in place. Reduced priority would be awarded until the support package was available and the applicant had agreed to accept the support. This would ensure that an offer is not made before an applicant is ready to take on a tenancy.

7.9 It is also possible to award increased preference for some categories of applicants who fall within the existing reasonable preference categories. Additional preference will be awarded to applicants who can demonstrate that they are in paid work for at least 24 hours per week by backdating their date of application by 12 months.

7.10 An allocation can be made, regardless of other priorities, to an applicant who has an established connection with the property and who qualifies under the scheme, e.g. is not guilty of unacceptable behaviour and where under-occupation would not result. This may include when a joint tenant serves a Notice to terminate a tenancy and the remaining tenant makes an application.

## **8.0 Choice**

8.1 GYBC is committed to offering applicants a choice of accommodation and allowing them to express reasonable preferences. However the Council may not be able to meet all requests due to the level of demand or availability of accommodation. We will therefore limit the length of time that applicants may express a preference in terms of geographical area and type of property. Applicants will be given advice and information by the Council's Housing Options Advisers to help them understand their options and make informed choices.

8.2 Applicants will be permitted to make a preference of the geographical area and type of property that they wish to be considered for, for a period of three months. If applicants have not been allocated a property within the three month period, housing options will reserve the right to offer properties outside the applicants' preferences.

8.3 Applicants who are owed a statutory housing duty under the Housing Act 1996 as amended will be made one offer of suitable accommodation. Refusal of that offer will result in a discharge of the homelessness duty and being removed from the allocation pool.

8.4 Other applicants will be allowed two offers of suitable accommodation. Refusal of two suitable offers will result in the applicant being removed from the allocation pool. Applicants will be able to re-apply after a period of 12 months.

## **9. Transfers and Management moves**

9.1 Existing tenants who wish to transfer but do not have a reasonable preference under the scheme do not fall under part 6 of the Housing Act. Landlords are still able to nominate such tenants for a transfer. GYBC have found that operating one combined pool of applicants has been the most efficient way of granting existing tenants a transfer.

## **10. Information and Review of Decisions**

10.1 Applicants have the right to request such general information as will enable them to assess how their application is to be treated (including what preference they will be given) and if and when accommodation appropriate to their needs will be available.

10.2 Applicants have the right to be informed of any decision about their case, which is likely to be, or has been, taken into account in considering an allocation to them.

10.3 It is important that applicants are able to request a review of an allocation decision in a clear, fair and efficient process. Applicants may request a review of a decision under paragraph 10.2 above or a decision that they are ineligible or do not qualify. Reviews should take place as soon as possible in order not to disadvantage an applicant. (Decisions on homelessness applications have their own statutory review process).

10.4 The review process under the allocation scheme is as follows:

- a. An application must be made by the applicant within 21 days of the decision regarding their application. But we may extend the time limit in exceptional circumstances.
- b. The review must be conducted by another council officer who was not involved in the original decision and is senior to the officer who made the original decision.
- c. The review process will normally be based on written representations.
- d. The review officer may make further inquiries and interview applicants and other interested parties but there will be no requirement to hold a full oral hearing.
- e. The review should be concluded within 8 weeks of the review request

or as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards. The decision on review will be and communicated in writing to the applicant and give reasons if against the applicant.

## Appendix 1

### Safe Surrender

A Safe Surrender may be agreed between a tenant of one of the registered providers in Great Yarmouth that allocate from the common register and the Council.

The safe surrender needs to be agreed before the tenancy is ended.

The tenant will need to give notice in the usual way. A shorter notice period may be agreed at the landlord's discretion.

The tenant must be unable to manage the tenancy satisfactorily due to illness, support or other needs which cannot be met at that time.

Where possible support will be arranged to enable the tenant to remain.

A safe surrender agreement can be reached:

- I. where the property is in danger of deterioration but substantial deterioration (under £500) has not yet occurred and does not occur before vacant possession is given.
- II. **and/or** the tenant is struggling to pay the rent, but the rent account is not yet more than 8 weeks in arrears (net) and does not become so before vacant possession is given.
- III. **and/or** the tenant is in breach of other terms of the tenancy but this has not yet reached the level where a reduction of preference would usually be applied and does not become so before vacant possession is given.
- IV. **and/or** other similar circumstances as agreed between the scheme landlord and the Council.

Where a Safe Surrender is agreed, if the tenant subsequently applies to the Great Yarmouth housing register their priority will not be reduced for matters relating to that tenancy, unless there were issues that have subsequently become known.

Their priority will be assessed according to current need and circumstances.

If a subsequent homelessness application is made, the fact that a safe surrender was agreed together with all the circumstances at that time would be taken into account. However the Council cannot fetter a possible future homelessness decision

## Appendix 2

When we are notified of a vacancy, we will allocate the property to the applicant in highest housing need, who requires this particular property based on the following criteria:	
<b>Stage 1 - Preference groups</b>	
<b>Priorities for short-listing</b>	<b>Summary Guide of Criteria</b>
All homeless people as defined in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (whether or not the applicant is owed a statutory homeless duty )	
People occupying unsanitary or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.	To include hospital discharge problems
People living in overcrowded housing conditions – includes temporary accommodation.	One bedroom short Two bedrooms short Three bedrooms short
People who need to move on medical grounds	High Medium Low
People who need to move on social welfare grounds – exceptional need to move	Applicants who need to move due to domestic abuse, extreme violence or harassment. Not safe to remain in current property. Would also include Ex-Forces.
Under-occupation	Normally relates to Social Housing in GY including those subject to the social sector size criteria. Also, property of value released to initiate chain of transfers.
Release an adapted property	Normally refers to Social Housing in GY although in specific circumstances could include temporary accommodation. Property of value released to initiate chain of transfers.
Financial situation	Circumstances could result in additional priority for affordability or hardship reasons.
<b>Stage 2 Additional preference - used when number of applicants have same level of priority,</b>	
Have exceptional need to be in area and/or property type compared to other applicants.	Could be social, medical, employment, training or educational reasons.
Applicant is in paid work for 24 hours per week. backdated for 12 months	Date of registration is

<b>Stage 3 Final deciding factor if needed after Stage 2.</b>	
Date applicant registered.	
<b>Over-riding Priority</b>	
Emergency Card	Emergency need to be determined by relevant Service Unit Manager or Group Manager and would ensure next suitable available property is offered.

## Community (Equality) Impact Assessment

Service being assessed	<b>GYBC Allocations Scheme 2014</b>
Who will be involved in completing this assessment?	<b>Trevor Chaplin, Group Manager Housing Services</b>
Start Date	<b>March 2014</b>
End Date	<b>March 2014</b>
What is the purpose of the service?	<b>To give people advice, help and support to access &amp; maintain suitable housing</b>
Is this assessment being undertaken because of changes to the service? If so what are they?	<b>Revised Allocation Scheme following changes to legislation, revised statutory guidance from CLG and learning from the current way of working.</b>
<p>The purpose of an equality impact assessment is to understand how services can help the Council to meet its duties under Equalities legislation. The duties can be summarised as</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eliminate discrimination</li> <li>2. Advance equality of opportunity</li> <li>3. Foster good relations between different parts of the community</li> </ol>	<b>The revised allocation scheme provides a more defined scheme that enables both staff operating the scheme and customers understand who will be given priority for housing and who will not. A more defined scheme enables unfounded perceptions to be challenged.</b>

## Community (Equality) Impact Assessment

How does this service help the Council to do this, in particular in relation to the categories specifically mentioned in legislation - Race, Gender/Sex, Disability, Age, Religion/Belief, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy & Maternity and in respect of Duty 1 only – Marriage and Civil Partnerships?	
How will you know that service is working as it should?	<b>Applicants in the allocation pool are offered suitable housing in a shorter period of time, nomination and void times are reduced, no properties where no suitable applicant is available, reduced numbers and time spent in temporary accommodation.</b>
What data have you used to help you make this assessment?	<b>Management data including, demand on the service, numbers in the allocation pool, number of cases awaiting assessment, no of social housing properties let, average nomination time to landlords, no of properties where no applicant is suitable, voids data, numbers in temporary accommodation, average length of stay in temporary accommodation &amp; CORE data</b>
Is there any additional data that you need to collect to help in continuous improvement?	<b>Enhanced understanding of who our customers are and the services they require. Customer satisfaction data, enhanced understanding of CORE data.</b>
How have you ensured that this service has been designed from a customer's perspective and how have you involved customers in that process?	<b>The revised allocations policy was devised from data of customer experiences of the current scheme.</b>
Has any other consultation been carried out, including to ensure that we have taken into consideration the needs of those not currently using the service?	<b>A statutory consultation is under way on the GYCH website. The proposed scheme has been sent to all other registered providers that operate within the Borough. The key points of the scheme were endorsed by the GYCH Board. The scheme has been before the GYCH Tenants Forum, Norfolk Housing Alliance and Great Yarmouth Housing Group (Voluntary Sector). All GYBC members have been notified of the consultation.</b>

## Community (Equality) Impact Assessment

<p>What is, or what do you expect to be the impact of the way you work on different parts of the community, including those covered by equality legislation?</p>	<p>Who benefits? <b>Residents of the Borough</b></p> <p>Who should be expected to benefit but don't – Why not? <b>N/A</b></p> <p>Use the data gathered above to explain the answers to the above questions</p> <p><b>The revised scheme will give priority for housing to local residents of the scheme by introducing residence criteria. This will disadvantage people currently residing outside the Borough which may include categories specifically mentioned in equality legislation. Safeguards are included within the scheme in that applicants who are statutory homeless e.g. applicants fleeing domestic violence and applicants who need to move to the area to receive special care or support are exempt from the 2 year residence criteria. The introduction of residence criteria meets statutory guidance and is reasonable and proportionate when balancing the need of local residents against those of residents outside the Borough. Applicants who are either ineligible for or do not qualify for an allocation under our scheme are offered alternative housing options.</b></p>
<p>On the basis of what you have found out, which of these options will you now follow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No major changes</li> <li>• Adjust the policy</li> <li>• Continue the policy</li> <li>• Stop and remove the policy</li> </ul> <p>Assess the options choose one or more and explain why.</p> <p><b>Subject to any further comments from the consultation it is proposed to continue with this policy. No negative impacts have been identified that would not be reasonable and proportionate.</b></p>
<p>Say how the new policy will be reviewed to assess the impact</p>	<p><b>Data will be analysed monthly and reviewed after one year in April 2015</b></p>

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<p>What now needs to be done and by who?</p>	<p>This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any actions that need to be taken <b>Review of data as listed above.</b></li> <li>Who is going to do them <b>Housing Options Managers</b></li> <li>When they are going to be done <b>Monthly</b></li> <li>When they are going to be reviewed <b>April 2015</b></li> <li>How will the impacts be evaluated <b>Comparisons of data year on year.</b></li> </ul>
<p>Signed off by</p>	