

NOTICE OF DELEGATION OF DECISION TO CABINET MEMBER BY STRONG LEADER

Section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, the senior executive member may discharge any of the functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet or may arrange for them to be discharged by another member of the Cabinet or Officer. On 1st December 2010, the Council adopted the Strong Leader Model for Corporate Governance 2011 as required under Part 3 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The 2007 Act).

I, Marcus Hart, as Strong Leader, delegate the decision to agree the variation to the Local Letting Plan for new affordable housing at Berrington Court, Silverwoods, Kidderminster to the Cabinet Member detailed below:

Cabinet Member- Councillor Chris Rogers

Dated:

30th June, 2017

Signed:



Leader of the Council

NOTICE OF DECISION OF CABINET MEMBER

Pursuant Section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended by section 63 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the senior executive member may discharge any of the functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet or may arrange for them to be discharged by another member of the Cabinet or Officer. On 1st December 2010, the Council adopted the Strong Leader Model for Corporate Governance 2011 as required under Part 3 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The 2007 Act).

In accordance with the authority delegated to me by the Leader, I have made the following decision:

Subject	Decision	Reason for decision	Date for Decision to be taken
Berrington Court Local Letting Plan (LLP)	To agree a variation to the previously approved LLP for Berrington Court with Community Housing Group to meet obligations of the County Council who provide Revenue funding. The variation is that we would agree to a waiver of the Allocations Policy Local Connection criteria in exceptional circumstances where adult social care require a unit of accommodation for a short period of time (no more than 6 months) to meet the exceptional health needs of a particular individual.	This decision allows the Registered Provider (RP) to let the new dwellings in line with the LLP rather than the allocations policy and will allow for the creation of a balanced, sustainable community.	asap

I confirm that the appropriate statutory officer consultation has taken place with regard to this decision.

Dated: 23/07/2017
 Signed: 
 Councillor:  Cabinet Member

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Strong Leader Report

Local Letting Plans; Berrington Court and Shared Housing properties

OPEN	
DIRECTOR:	Mike Parker
CONTACT OFFICER:	Kate Bailey
APPENDICES:	1. Shared Housing Local Letting Plan 2. Berrington Court Local Letting Plan

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide details of the proposed Local Letting Plans and to seek approval for the same. Shared Housing projects owned by Community Housing and Berrington Court Extra Care scheme will not be allocated in accordance with the Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy and therefore we require Local Lettings Plans (LLP).

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Leader is asked to approve for adoption the Local Letting Plans for Berrington Court and Shared Housing properties owned by Wyre Forest Community Housing.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 All nominations and allocations to properties owned by Registered Providers in Wyre Forest must be let in accordance with the Allocations Policy unless a Local Lettings Plan is in place. The LLP will outline alternative criteria for letting properties.
- 3.2 Shared Housing Properties: Wyre Forest Community Housing has a number of properties which could be converted into shared units of housing. These properties mainly consist of two bedroom flats in high rise blocks, the Walshes etc that have higher service charges than the average and will become harder to let from 2019 when people aged under 35 in receipt of housing benefits in social housing will no longer qualify for the one bedroom rate. Instead they will receive the lower shared room rate making these units of accommodation unaffordable.
- 3.3 Berrington Court: Wyre Forest Community Housing have developed an Extra Care housing facility that opened in October 2016 and has previously been subject to a LLP. WCC Adult Social Services provide a revenue contribution towards the project and have requested that a change be made to the local connection criteria in exceptional circumstances. The amendment to the LLP proposes a waiver of the local connection criteria but only on a short term basis where a unit of accommodation is required in exceptional circumstances for less than 6 months.
- 3.4 The Council has an Extra Care Strategy based on housing accommodation and support needs and therefore delivery of schemes such as Berrington Court help to meet the council's overall strategic housing aims and required numbers.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Berrington Court: Residents residing in the facility will have access to care and support above the provision found in sheltered housing and should enable people to remain living independently but in a safe environment. These types of schemes are typically let by way of an allocations panel made up of the District Council, landlord and Adult Social Care (County Council) and this stock is let in the same way.
- 4.2 Berrington Court will still be allocated to people in housing need and who have a connection to the district but there may be an exceptional case over a short timescale who has very high needs but no local connection to the area. It must be proven that their needs can only be met by this type of housing and that a space isn't available in the area where they do have a connection.
- 4.3 Shared Housing properties: The Council was successful in getting grant from the dCLG to fund a shared housing officer to develop model shared housing projects across the county. They are currently working with CHG but will work with a number of landlords interested in the project. From April 2019 people aged under 35 will no longer be entitled to the one bedroom housing benefit rate in social housing. The shared room rate, they will be able to claim, is considerably less than the rent and they will therefore be unable to afford social housing. This will have a potential impact on the Council's ability to discharge its homeless duty for single vulnerable people who Registered Providers are likely to refuse on affordability grounds.
- 4.4 CHG is now looking to pilot a small number of properties (between 5 and 10) in the first year that are let to two individual tenants for them to share. This equates to between 5 and 7.5% of lettings of this type per annum.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The development of Local Lettings Plans is permissible within the overall Allocations Policy and the policy will be made publically available through the Home Choice Plus website.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 EIA screening complete. No negative implications.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 None

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The use of a Local Lettings Plan for Berrington Court will enable the council to ensure accommodation goes to those primarily with a local connection and housing need as well as those with higher level care and support needs and will support the County Council in their responsibilities.

9.2 A Local Lettings Plan for shared housing properties will ensure CHG are able to continue to let stock that would otherwise be unaffordable and the Council can continue to discharge its rehousing functions.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 None.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.

Local Lettings Plan

Scheme Name:	Berrington Court, Felix Baxter Drive, Kidderminster
Landlord:	Wyre Forest Community Housing
Does a S.106 agreement apply to this scheme?	Yes Scheme is 100% affordable rent.
Full Address (as advertised)	100 units of Extra Care on Silverwoods (numbers / street names not yet known). Berrington Court, Felix Baxter Drive, Kidderminster DY11 7FH
Number, Size, Type and Tenure of units	100 one and two bedroom apartments for affordable rent. (35 @ 1 bedroomed apartments; 65 @ 2 bedroomed apartments)
Reasons for developing a LLP (including evidence where relevant)	The scheme has been developed in conjunction with the County Council and District Council and will require a Letting Plan that imposes a slight variation to the Allocations Policy to be able to meet and address funding partner's requirements.
Aims and Objectives of LLP	To ensure the correct mix of residents within the scheme including self funders and those with low, medium and high care needs. It is important to ensure the correct balance so the scheme isn't inundated with high need cases where adequate care cannot be provided within the resources.
Are any allocation restrictions proposed in terms of Home Choice Plus bandings?	No
Are any allocation restrictions proposed in terms of numbers of household members to be allocated to family sized properties	No
Are any allocation restrictions proposed in terms of ages of	N/A

children?	
Is it proposed to advertise any properties for priority to Transfer applicants?	No but there will be a mix of both transferring tenants and applicants.
Are any other restrictions outside of the Home Choice Plus allocations policy proposed?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Applicants must be 55 years old and above although there will be an exceptional circumstances waiver. Applicants to the scheme will be assessed on the basis of need and eligibility for the scheme outside of the usual HC+ criteria. However 60% of all lettings will go to people registered on HC+ and 40% of lettings to applicants suggested by Adult Social Care. The maximum capital threshold will also be waived where it is not possible for the applicant to meet their housing needs through the housing market.</p> <p>An allocations panel will be established to meet and agree lettings. The panel will be comprised on representatives from WFDC, WCC and TCHG.</p>
Date of LLP	27 June 2017
Date of review against objectives	June 2020