

Ongar

Town Council



Aimi Middlehurst
Town Clerk

R Wilson Esq
Assistant Director of Housing (Operations)
Communities Directorate
Epping Forest District Council
Civic Offices
High Street
Epping CM16 4BZ



28th January 2015

Dear Mr Wilson,

Re: Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme & Tenancy Policy

The Town Council would like to make the following observations:-

HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME

Flexible (fixed term) Tenancies

Item 9.1 and 9.2

As stated under the Tenancy Policy applicants could find this section confusing.

Tenancy Start Dates

Item 11.1

All home seekers should be given the opportunity of viewing the property offered.

Residency Criteria

Item 14.3

Under this proposal there will be a large change with applications – because of that some applicants stand to lose their place on the housing register. Making that kind of decision is unfair retrospectively – is there any provision for difficult cases or flexibility.

Changing the period of residency in the area before being allowed entry onto the housing register is proportionate in view of the pressure on housing stock. This Council believes that altering the residency time for existing applicants retrospectively is unfair and likely to cause unwarranted distress and uncertainty.

Financial Criteria

Item 14.7

An additional bullet point to be added – Applicant will be required to produce relevant evidence of income and savings.

Proof of Identity

Item 16.4

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Requirements under the current scheme are more robust but this is not so with the draft scheme. The latter should be more comprehensive.

Proof of Residency

Item 16.8

An alteration to the last sentence of paragraph 16.8 to remove the words "from time to time".

TENANCY POLICY

Assessment Criteria – Decision on granting a Flexible (fixed term) Tenancy

Item 3.8

Bullet point 2 - the draft policy has omitted this point that is contained in the current scheme. Why is this?

Bullet point 6 – The current scheme specifies the financial thresholds taken into account. In the draft scheme this information is omitted so tenants have no indication of the Council's threshold regarding income.

Item 3.11

A definition of "care leaver" would be helpful.

Introductory Potentially Secure Flexible (fixed term) Tenancies

Item 7.2 and 7.3

These clauses will be very confusing for tenants. What is the thinking behind stating 9 years? What happens at the end of 10 years?

Tackling Social Housing Fraud

Item 11.1

Councillors think that further details should be given in the draft to make tenants more aware of the aspects of Housing Fraud Officers remit especially regarding illegally sub-letting and Right to Buy visits.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards



Aimi Middlehurst
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