

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 30 April 2007

Portfolio: Housing – Councillor D Stallan

Officer contact for further information: Roger Wilson ext. 4419

Committee Secretary: Adrian Hendry, ext.4246

Subject: Ethnic Monitoring



Recommendation:

That no recommendations be made concerning amendments to the Council's Allocations Scheme due to ethnicity as current figures do not show a significant disparity between the ethnicity of applicants in housing need in the District and those allocated both general needs and sheltered accommodation through the Housing Register.

Report:

1. The Council has a Policy Statement for Equal Opportunities in the Provision of Housing Services. The Policy Statement includes a requirement for an annual review of the ethnicity of applicants on the Housing Register, compared with the ethnicity of those allocated accommodation. In addition during 2006, the Council undertook Race and Diversity Impact Assessments across all Services. When assessing Older Peoples Housing Services it was identified that the ethnicity of applicants allocated sheltered accommodation should be monitored separately and is therefore included in this report.
2. The reason for the review is to identify whether or not there are any indications to suggest the Council may be discriminating against any one ethnic group. The review is undertaken by the Housing Scrutiny Panel.
3. The breakdown of the ethnic origin of applicants on the Housing Register at 31/03/07 is set out in the following table:

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	78.3
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0.8
African/Caribbean	2.0
Mixed Race	0.5

Other	2.8
Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
Not Stated	15.6

4. The breakdown of the ethnic origin of Housing Register applicants allocated Council accommodation in 2006/2007 is set out in the following table:

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	75.3
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0.4
African/Caribbean	1.3
Mixed Race	0.7
Other	2.2
Not Stated	20.10

5. Generally, the statistics confirm that the ethnicity of applicants allocated accommodation is similar to those of different ethnic groups on the Housing Register.

6. The following table shows the breakdown of the ethnic origin of applicants on the Housing Register awaiting sheltered accommodation as at 31/03/07.

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	75.9
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0.8
African/Caribbean	0
Mixed Race	0

Other	0.9
Not Stated	22.4

7. The breakdown of the ethnic origin of Housing Register applicants allocated sheltered accommodation during 2006/2007 is set out in the following table:

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	61.3
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0
African/Caribbean	0
Mixed Race	0
Other	0
Not Stated	38.7

8. As can be seen, the breakdown of ethnic groups allocated sheltered housing does raise some concerns as no properties were let to non-white British/Irish applicants last year. However, as a relatively high proportion (38.7%) of applicants allocated sheltered accommodation have not stated their ethnicity, some of these applicants could be from other ethnic groups. Furthermore, there may not be any applicants in such groups wanting the properties which have become available. Moreover, as there are only around 430 sheltered housing properties in the Council's stock with just 62 allocations made in 2006/2007, the sample is far smaller than the breakdown of all Housing Register applicants referred to earlier. When comparing the ethnic breakdown, there appears to be no significant disparity between the ethnicity of applicants in need of sheltered accommodation in the District and those allocated sheltered accommodation.

9. The breakdown of the ethnicity of the population of the District is set out in the table below for information (source EFDC Census 2001):

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	92.41
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	2.14

African/Caribbean	0.78
Mixed Race	1.04
Other	3.63

Statement in support of recommended action:

10. Although a large number of housing applicants do not disclose their ethnicity, it is evident from the analyses shown in the report that the ethnic make up of the Housing Register mirrors the allocation of vacancies sufficiently for the Council to be confident that its Allocations Scheme does not racially discriminate, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, no adjustments to the Allocations Scheme are recommended.

Consultation undertaken:

11. The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation will be consulted on the report at their meeting on 10 May 2007.

Resource implications:

Budget provision: None

Personnel: None

Land: None

Community Plan/BVPP reference: Social inclusion

Relevant statutory powers: Housing Act 1996, as amended

Background papers: None

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Human Rights

Key Decision reference: (if required)