

FINAL SUMMARY OF KEY PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING NORTH YORKSHIRE HOME CHOICE POLICY (AND DRAFT NYC ALLOCATIONS POLICY).

Section	Recommendation
1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	
1.4 Monitoring and Review	Removal of right to restrict cross boundary mobility as will no longer apply
1.10 Local Lettings Policies	<p>Rewording of relevant section to:</p> <p>The council may operate local lettings policies to enhance the sustainability of defined communities. This means that allocations may be given to particular customer groups outside the reasonable preference categories.</p> <p>Local lettings policies will be evidence-based and be approved for particular properties in defined geographic areas following consultation.</p> <p>Local lettings policies will be time limited and will be monitored to ensure that they do not discriminate directly or indirectly on any equality ground and that overall, preference is still given to applicants in the reasonable preference groups.</p>
1.11 Sensitive Lets	<p>Rewording of relevant section to:</p> <p>Sensitive lets can be used when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The previous tenant has caused significant neighbour nuisance, which has taken significant time and resources to resolve • Where there has been significant drug and/or alcohol related nuisance • Where there has been significant noise nuisance
2. THE HOUSING REGISTER	
2.3 Local Connection	<p>Retention of current NYHC Criteria with the exception of employment which has been amended to read:</p> <p>An applicant is employed in the partnership area on either a full or part time basis and have been working for a minimum of six months. The main place of work must be in the partnership area. Casual, seasonal, and voluntary work is not included. An employment contract must remain valid at the point of offer..</p>

2.3.1 Exceptions to Local Connection	Addition of Divorced or separated spouses/civil partners of Service personnel who need to move out of accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence. In line with statutory guidance
2.4 Homeowners	Statutory homeless applicants accepted under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, or those with an accepted relief duty who are in priority need may be considered as an exception, as it would not be in our best interests to delay rehousing these applicants due to the significant costs in providing temporary accommodation.
2.5 Sufficient Financial Resources	Decision made to retain existing criteria Who have a combined household income and/or savings and/or equity of £60,000 which would enable them to meet their own housing need through ownership or private rented.
2.8 Refusal of two offers	If an applicant refuses two suitable offers of accommodation made in writing within a 12-month period, their application will be cancelled and will not qualify to join the Housing Register for a minimum period of 12 months from the date of cancellation.
4. ASSESSING HOUSING NEED	
4.2 Armed Forces Reasonable Preference	<p>Amendment to current policy to reflect legislative requirements:</p> <p>Members of the armed forces who fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories above, and who have an urgent housing need and meet one of the following criteria, will on activation of their housing application have the date of their priority band backdated by 6 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the persons service, or • Formerly served in the regular forces • Has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of their spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service, or • Is serving or has served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person’s service <p>Those who have been dishonourable discharged are excluded.</p>

Gold Band	Addition of: Applicants whose home is subject to an Emergency Prohibition Order by North Yorkshire Council
Medical Priority	Rewording of existing criteria: Gold Band: Applicants whose current accommodation is assessed as having a direct or serious impact on a medically diagnosed health and/or wellbeing condition where a property move would remove or significantly improve the impact Silver Band: Applicants whose current accommodation is assessed as compromising a diagnosed medical and/or health and wellbeing condition where a move to an alternative property would improve the impact
5. THE CHOICE BASED LETTINGS SCHEME	
5.3 The Bidding Cycle	Recommend removal of bidding by coupon, automated bidding line and text message as these methods are rarely used
APPENDIX 3: HOMELESS APPLICANTS	
Homeless Applicants	Recommend that there are no restrictions placed on bidding for any homeless applicants, however we retain the right to make a direct offer at any point in time.
APPENDIX 4: OVERLOOKING A SUCCESSFUL BID	
Reasons for overlooking a bid	Remove mandatory ground for arrears and make all grounds discretionary.
APPENDIX 5: BEDROOM NEED	
Assessing bedroom need	A separate bedroom is allocated for each pair of children of the same sex aged under 16 in line with benefit rules.
Bedsits	Applicants living in bedsits are not generally classed as lacking a bedroom. Policy already allows discretion if rooms are particularly small.