

**HOUSING COMMITTEE**

**9 APRIL 2019**

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<b>Report Title</b>	<b>DECANT POLICY</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To present the revised Decant Policy to Committee.
<b>Decisions</b>	The Committee <b>RESOLVES</b> to i.) adopt the revised Decant Policy ii.) grant delegated authority to the Head of Property Services in consultation with the Head of Housing Services and the Chair and Vice Chair of Housing Committee to amend the policy to reflect operational changes, updates in terminology or changes due to legislation.
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Consultation has taken place with the Chair and Vice Chair of Housing.
<b>Financial Implications and Risk Assessment</b>	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.  Lucy Clothier, Principal Accountant Tel: 01453 754343 Email: <a href="mailto:lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk">lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Implications</b>	There are no legal implications arising from this report and its recommendations. Tel: 01453 754369 Email: <a href="mailto:patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk">patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk</a>
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<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	An annual review will be carried out to update the policy and any fundamental changes will be brought back to Housing Committee.
<b>Background Papers/ Appendices</b>	Appendix 1 – Revised Decant Policy

**1.0. Introduction**

- 1.1 At the meeting held on 29 March 2016, members approved the amended Decant Policy. The amendments mainly focused on ensuring that the residents in sheltered housing schemes, that had been approved for closure as part of the Sheltered Housing Modernisation project (the red schemes), would receive priority by direct matching in certain circumstances and upgrading all residents in those schemes to ‘Gold Band’ on Homeseeker Plus. This has enabled residents to start to move quickly where they wish to.

- 1.2 As members are aware, two of the sheltered schemes have now closed and lessons have been learnt from these moves, which have resulted in some further proposed amendments to the policy to assist with the support that the Council is providing to those residents that need to move.
- 1.3 The opportunity has also been taken to review the policy overall as the policy not only covers the specific situation of rehousing those residents in the 'red' sheltered schemes but all situations where the Council may need to rehouse residents in its housing stock in order to carry out major repairs or refurbishment or decides to dispose of properties or demolish properties for redevelopment.

## **2.0. The Proposed Changes**

- 2.1 The Decant Policy currently states that tenants can be direct matched to other sheltered housing properties within the same or adjoining Parishes and be placed in gold band on Homeseeker Plus for all other sheltered properties.
- 2.2 The proposal is to amend this to enable tenants to be direct matched to sheltered properties across the entire district or to general needs properties within the same or adjoining Parishes and to be placed in 'Gold Band' for all other properties.
- 2.3 Direct matching within the same or adjoining Parishes for sheltered properties has been found to be too restrictive as tenants will sometimes wish to move outside of their immediate area due to the need to be close to family or other support networks or they may have a previous connection with another Parish. It is therefore proposed that the Council direct matches across the district for sheltered housing properties.
- 2.4 With regard to general needs properties, it has also been established that not all residents wish or need to remain in sheltered housing and so it is proposed that there is the ability to direct match to general needs properties within the same or adjoining Parishes. Internal consultation has decided that to propose to broaden this out to all properties across the district is too wide as this may restrict the stock of general needs properties that remain available for the Council to discharge its duties under current Homelessness Legislation.
- 2.5 The other changes are minor changes to update terminology, job titles and to provide clarity to officers responsible for complying with the policy.
- 2.6 The Decant Policy has specifically been approved by Housing Committee to apply to the 'red' schemes in the Sheltered Modernisation Project and properties at Gloucester Street and Bradley Street. Any approved revisions to the policy will then apply to the rehousing of any of the remaining residents at these addresses.
- 2.7 The proposed amendments have been considered in terms of the potential equality impacts and the changes do not have any detrimental impact.

### **3.0. Recommendation**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the revised Decant Policy is approved and that delegated authority is granted to the Head of Property Services in consultation with the Head of Housing Services and the Chair and Vice Chair of Housing Committee to amend the policy to reflect minor operational changes, updates in terminology or changes due to legislation. Any fundamental policy changes will be reported back to Housing Committee.