

## **The Vale of Glamorgan Council**

### **Cabinet Meeting: 19 February, 2018**

### **Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Building Services**

### **Amendments to Council's Incentive to Move Scheme**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To agree changes to the Incentive To Move Scheme.

#### **Recommendation**

1. That Members consider changes to the Council's existing Incentive to Move Policy and formally adopt these changes as set out in [Appendix 1](#) to this report.

#### **Reason for the Recommendation**

1. In order to better target the funding to ensure high demand properties are released for those in housing need.

#### **Background**

2. The original Incentive to Move Scheme was first approved by Cabinet (minute C550) on the 29/7/09 with implementation in 2010. At the time the scheme was designed to encourage those tenants, primarily under occupying family accommodation, to move into smaller Council or Housing Association owned homes.
3. The Scheme was subsequently extended further to council tenants in the following circumstances;
  - Eligible to move to age designated accommodation, or are willing to move to properties not normally considered suitable for families with children.
  - Tenants Requiring Medical Adaptations - where a property is not suitable for the occupation of a disabled tenant or a tenant (including members of the tenants immediate household) requires substantial medical adaptations to be carried out which are not considered cost effective, the Council will offer an incentive for the tenant to move to alternative and more suitable accommodation.
  - Providing financial assistance to council tenants who are living in accommodation identified as being suitably adapted in respect of access and internal layout (i.e. wheelchair accessible, stair lift, level access shower, hoists, through floor lift), who no longer require this level of adapted accommodation, AND the accommodation is

required to meet a service pressure (suitability will be determined by the Housing Options Team together with the Housing Solutions Manager).

4. Since this time the pressures and social housing stock and applicants have changed and there has been an increasing need for households with severe mobility challenges.

### **Relevant Issues and Options**

5. The Scheme therefore now needs to be amended to meet these new pressures to ensure that adapted properties become available when no longer needed by the household allowing applicants with disabilities to be assisted into accommodation that meets their requirements as promptly as possible.
6. It is hoped that by amending the Policy it will assist a number of households who are registered on the Homes4U Scheme living in accommodation that is unsuitable and is significantly impacting on their quality of life.
7. The Homes4U Scheme maintains an additional register (Accessible Housing Register - AHR) to the main general needs housing register, specifically recording applicants deemed to have a mobility challenge that may not be resolved with an offer of general needs accommodation.
8. This register is divided into 3 bandings - AHR1,2 and 3 the former being for applicants deemed to be in the most urgent need of moving. Currently on AHR1 there are 59 on this banding 12 (1 bed), 19 (2 bed), 8 (3 bed), 5 (4+ bed). The average waiting time for an offer of suitable accommodation is 440 days and the longest waiting time was 1754 days, however the choice based nature of the HOMES4U Scheme must be reflected within these average days figures as households have the option to remain on the register but choose when to bid.

### **Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)**

9. The Incentive to Move scheme has an annual budget of £46,616 which will be managed to cover the costs of administering the scheme as indicated within the amended policy (Appendix 1)

### **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

10. The ability to successfully manage the social housing provision across the Vale of Glamorgan will assist in the creation of sustainable, balanced and inclusive communities, ensuring accommodation is allocated based upon need and other community and environmental factors, if appropriate.

### **Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)**

11. None arising from this report.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

12. The allocation of social housing will protect and support very vulnerable clients who are more likely to be susceptible to experiencing crime and disorder difficulties through providing safe, stable and appropriate homes.

## **Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)**

13. The development of this scheme is supportive of the Council's Equal Opportunities ethos as it identifies the mechanisms needed for clients to access a suitable and stable home in the Vale of Glamorgan.

## **Corporate/Service Objectives**

14. The report is consistent with the Corporate Plan, Wellbeing Outcome 1: An Inclusive and Safe Vale, Objective 2: Providing decent homes and safe communities.
15. This report is also consistent with the Council's Local Housing Strategy 2015-20 which aims to ensure that the 'Vale of Glamorgan residents have access to affordable, good quality sustainable housing and housing advice and support

## **Policy Framework and Budget**

16. This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.

## **Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)**

17. There has been no direct individual ward member consultation in respect of this report as it is an issue that affects all areas of the Vale of Glamorgan.

## **Relevant Scrutiny Committee**

18. Homes & Safe communities

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Contact Officer**

Ian Jones - Housing Solutions Manager

## **Officers Consulted**

Committee Reports, Legal Division  
Mike Ingram Head of Housing & Building Services  
Pam Toms Housing Solutions & Supported People Team Leader  
Nick Jones, Housing & Strategic Projects Team Leader

## **Responsible Officer:**

Miles Punter - Director of Environment and Housing Services