

Considerations of consultation feedback – Private Rented Sector Offer Policy consultation, November 2023

Consultation feedback		Officer response	Actions proposed
Broad themes	Comment themes		
Quantitative feedback	28 of 41 respondents (68%) agreed with the draft policy overall.		
	<p>Respondents said that the draft policy would have a positive impact on the following areas by 69% or more:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reducing reliance and pressure on temporary accommodation. ▪ Enabling applicants to find appropriate housing. ▪ Widening the choice of available housing solutions. ▪ Using the private rented sector to fulfil the council’s responsibility to provide accommodation for people who are homeless or threatened by homelessness. ▪ Relieving pressure on the Housing Register. ▪ Making best use of private sector accommodation. ▪ Building positive relationships with private landlords. 		
	Respondents said that the draft policy was both easy to understand (76%) and provided sufficient information (61%).		
Positive comments	General positive/supportive comments	No officer response is required (positive consultation feedback).	None.
Concerns and suggestions	General concerns and/or critical/not supportive comments.	The council believes that private rented accommodation should be offered to people who are homeless to give them a chance to improve their livelihoods. The landlord has the final decision on whether to accept a tenant into a property. We will make sure that people who are homeless and placed in private rented accommodation are sign-posted to support services to help meet their individual needs.	None.
	Comments related to the process of renting privately (regarding individual tenancies).	The council will make sure that people who are offered a private rented sector offer (PRSO), will have the funds to sustain a tenancy. The council will also work with both the landlords and tenants to ensure that the needs of both parties are met. The council will treat all individuals equally and with respect and be available to support tenants and landlords during the tenancy. As stated in the policy, the council will make and approve a private rented sector offer. However, the landlord will have the final decision on whether households will be accepted into the property.	The policy states that the council will consider whether applicants can afford housing costs without being deprived of essentials. The policy has been updated to include the statement “as part of our overall assessment, consideration will be given as to whether financial assistance is required in terms of deposit or rent in advance.”
	Comments/questions on property size/standards, inc. safety, landlord checks etc.	The council will make sure that all properties considered for a private rented sector are suitable and meet individual needs, with reference to Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012. The council will work with the landlord to ensure that a written tenancy agreement has been agreed which is adequate for the individual and landlord.	None.

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Broad themes	Comment themes		
	Comments/questions on refusing an offer/requesting a review of the suitability of accommodation.	The council has certain suitability requirements and standards to meet when offering a PRSO. The applicants have a right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation offered. The council must meet certain regulations when carrying out this review. If the applicant still refuses an offer, after a review, then no further housing offer will be made. An applicant has a right to appeal to the County Court on a point of law if they are dissatisfied with the review outcome.	None.
	Comments on the need to continue building council/social housing.	The council is aware of the need to build more council housing. The local plan is in development and is considering how to address the housing development needs of the city.	None.
	Some individuals may not be able to sustain a private rented tenancy (inc. some may not be able to afford it, landlords may not accept certain 'high risk' tenants).	When providing a PROS, the council will ensure that the accommodation is suitable and affordable to the individual. The landlord will be able to ask for references from tenants, consider whether they can afford this rent (i.e. through credit checks) and make the final decision on whether to accept tenants. The council is currently reviewing our offer to landlords.	The policy states that the council will consider whether applicants can afford housing costs without being deprived of essentials. The policy has been updated to include the statement "as part of our overall assessment, consideration will be given as to whether financial assistance is required in terms of deposit or rent in advance."
	Comments/questions on whether the policy will add to pressure/competition/unaffordability in the private housing market.	The council does not believe that this will affect the market supply of private accommodation. The property rental price is decided by the landlord.	None.
	Comments/questions on the private renting market (inc. SCC's management/regulation) generally.	There is a tenancy fraud team within the council who will investigate any fraudulent activity around social housing tenancy.	None.
	Comments around having a simpler/easy-read version of the policy, including for those with disabilities/those for whom English is not their first language.	The council will consider providing a shorter version of the policy that is easier to read if required. The case officer will be able to support people who are homeless with the steps of the PRSO. The case officer can also flag with the homelessness team if a short version is required, or if a document needs to be translated into another language to be accessible to an individual.	None.
	Comments discuss the fact that it may not be possible to provide adaptations in the private rented sector.	When providing a PRSO, the council will ensure that the accommodation is affordable, suitable and meets the individual's needs. It is accepted that for some cases it is more challenging to find suitable accommodation for people with a disability who may require adaptations to the accommodation. The adaptations may delay the offer and will require permission from the landlord. The council will ensure that the accommodation is suitable for the needs of the individual.	None.