

Tenancy Strategy 2017 Consultation

The consultation on the Tenancy Strategy update ran for one calendar month (1 December 2016 – 31 December 2016) and was available to Registered Providers as well as to the general public.

Public Consultation

Two members of the public completed the consultation, and the results were that they both:-

- Found the main points of the Tenancy Strategy clear to understand.
- Would not want to see any changes made to the proposed Tenancy Strategy.
- Did not think that any particular group would be affected more than others by the approach the council is taking.

Registered Provider Consultation

There were four responses from Registered Providers, the key points being that:-

- The LHA section was too prescriptive about the level of rent setting in Cherwell.
- Confirmation was required in the succession rights section as to whether the changes were compliant with tenancies created before April 2012, or to only to tenancies created before then.
- The amount of options for people aged under 35 is somewhat limited.
- Whether the Voluntary Right to Buy exceptions covers any types of housing except general needs housing.

Impacts of consultation responses

Whilst considering the responses, the Tenancy Strategy update must be viewed as a refreshing of an existing document – and so any changes reflect legislation changes in the same period.

The two responses from the general public had no suggestions for the improving the document, but the Registered Providers had four, so these had to be given consideration as to whether they would have any impact on the document:-

- With regards to the LHA rates being too prescriptive, our data monitoring of RP rents have shown that a prescriptive approach is sometimes required to ensure that Affordable Rent levels stay below the BRMA rates in our district.
- The succession rights were altered in the Localism Act, and the Tenancy Strategy just reflects these alterations. This means that any tenancy created after April 2012 will be subject to the new succession rules, although it does not retroactively affect tenancies created before April 2012.
- The previous housing options for people under 35 have been withdrawn by Central Government policies, and whilst we are trying to alleviate the impact that this will have, the options are still limited.
- The Tenancy Strategy states that any "specialist accommodation" will be excluded from the Voluntary Right to Buy - and so while a property might no longer be classified as a "Sheltered property" it would still be excluded from the Voluntary Right to Buy as a "Retirement Living property" is more specialist than a general needs property.