

This report is public	
Cherwell District Council Allocations Scheme	
Committee	N/A – Portfolio Holder Decision
Date of Committee	N/A
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio holder for Housing - Councillor Nick Cotter
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	21 October 2025
Report of	(Interim) Executive Director – Neighbourhoods – Nicola Riley

Purpose of report

To make minor amendments to the Housing Allocations Scheme.

1. Recommendations

The Portfolio Holder resolves:

- 1.1 To make the changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme outlined within the report.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Allocations Scheme is the Policy that ensures the fair allocation of social housing properties within District and is used for the administration of the waiting list for social housing, which is part of our statutory duties.
- 2.2 The Council reviews its scheme regularly to ensure it remains compliant with legislation and is also still meeting the needs of applicants in the best way. The last review took place in 2024/25.
- 2.3 When legislation changes that affects the Council and the way it administers its waiting list, it is necessary to update our Allocations Scheme to reflect these changes.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	There are no new financial implications outlined in the report as the existing arrangement is captured in the base revenue budget Kelly Wheeler

	Finance Business Partner, 24 November 2025			
Legal	<p>There are no direct legal implications arising from this report or the new scheme.</p> <p>It is best practice to regularly review and update policies to ensure that they stay in line with changes to policy and legislation.</p> <p>The report and appendices set out clearly what sections of the existing policy are being changed and the rationale behind these changes.</p> <p>Denzil – John Turbervill, Head of Legal Services, 9 December 2025</p>			
Risk Management	<p>As it is part of our statutory housing duties, to not review the policy to ensure it is compliant with legislation, is fair and inclusive and is meeting the needs of the district would present a risk.</p> <p>Therefore, a regular review of this policy is prudent as part of mitigating actions for this risk. This and any further risks will be managed through the Service Operational Risk and will be escalated to the Leadership Risk Register as and when deemed necessary.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 1 December 2025</p>			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact	x			The 2024 Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment has been updated and is included within the Appendices of the report. This has been reviewed as part of this process.
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	x			The Allocations Scheme provides a framework of how social housing is allocated within Cherwell. It ensures the prioritisation of certain household circumstances based on what the legislation or on local demand factors. The work of the team and support provided ensures that vulnerable groups are able to access the services of the team.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	x			Many vulnerable groups assisted by the team and who are accessing the waiting list for housing will have protected characteristics. As part of any application, all protected characteristics that an applicant may have are captured as part of this process. This is primarily for monitoring purposes, but it does allow for adjustments to be made.

Climate & Environmental Impact		x		Policy does not relate to delivery of new homes or the quality of existing property
ICT & Digital Impact		x		Not applicable
Data Impact		x		Not applicable
Procurement & subsidy		x		Not applicable
Council Priorities	Quality Housing and Place Making			
Human Resources	Not applicable			
Property	Not applicable			
Consultation & Engagement	No further consultation is necessary due to the nature of the changes being made.			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 As part of its statutory duties, the Council manages the waiting list for social housing and also allocates social housing properties within Cherwell on behalf of Registered Providers of social housing that have housing stock within the district. The Council no longer has a significant stock holding of its own following a transfer of its housing stock to what is now Sanctuary Housing. The waiting list comprises of around 2000 households that have varying degrees of housing need. The prioritisation of this need is set out within the Allocations Scheme.
- 3.2 The Allocations Scheme provides the framework for assessment and prioritisation of housing applicants. The Allocations Scheme just covers allocation of social housing and does not cover temporary accommodation, supported accommodation, Extra Care or Shared Ownership schemes.
- 3.3 The prioritisation and administration of housing applications and applicants is outlined within legislation, however, councils do have some flexibilities to be able to manage and administer their own schemes and prioritise certain applicant circumstances.
- 3.4 The Allocations Scheme was last reviewed in 2024/25. It is good practice to regularly review schemes to ensure they are compliant with legislation but also to respond to emerging trends and needs.
- 3.5 Changes to legislation and some other minor wording and clarification changes are necessary to ensure effective and legislatively compliant management of the scheme.

4. Details

4.1 The appendices of the report detail the changes proposed and why they have been made.

4.2 However, below is a summary of the main changes proposed.

- The definition of and change in the local connection criteria for care leavers.
- A change in the local connection criteria for victim/survivors of domestic abuse.
- Changes to the wording within the Band 1 criteria for statutory homelessness.
- Changes in wording relating to the worsening of a householders circumstances.

The changes proposed are shown in Appendix one and are illustrated in red.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not bring make the changes to the Allocations Scheme. This is rejected as it is important that the Council has Policies that are up to date with legislation and can respond to current challenges.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 It is important that the Council has up to date policies and procedures for its statutory and key service areas and it is important that they are legislatively and operationally sound. A periodic review of policies is therefore appropriate.

Decision Information

Key Decision	No
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	Not applicable
Ward(s) Affected	All wards

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Updated Cherwell District Council Allocations Scheme
Appendix 2	Summary of changes proposed and rationale for them being proposed
Appendix 3	Updated Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Richard Smith – Head of Housing
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Executive Director Approval (unless Executive Director or Statutory Officer report)	Report of an Executive Director