

Focussed questions on the draft allocations policy

Housing Allocations Policy consultation

1. Introduction

We are running a consultation on our new Draft Choice Based Letting and Housing Allocations Policy (Draft CBL and Housing Allocations Policy) and we would welcome your views on the proposed changes.

All councils are legally required to publish an allocations policy and to ensure that properties are let according to that policy, as well as giving details on other matters to be considered.

Whilst the Draft CBL and Housing Allocations Policy has had a number of minor changes, there are three key changes to the policy as outlined in the following questions.

Part 1. Changes to how we prioritise homeless applicants

Part 2. Options to ensure the housing register can better meet local housing demand

Part 3. Reasonable preference for Armed Forces personnel and their families

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

2. About you

Question Title

1. Which best describes your position?

- Resident in Melton Borough
- Resident outside Melton Borough
- Responding on behalf of an organisation. If so are you happy to provide details of that organisation ?

Question Title

2. Please provide details of that organisation, if you are happy to do so?

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3. Part 1

Changes to how we prioritise homeless applicants

In order to comply with the Homelessness Reduction Act and guidance relating to homelessness applicants, we are proposing to place applicants who we assess as homeless and in priority need of housing in Band 1 of the housing register (the highest priority), to seek to accommodate them as soon as possible.

We are also proposing to directly match those applicants to properties (based on the number of bedrooms required as opposed to the property type. For example, if someone required a 2 bedroom property, they could be match to 2 bedroom flats, maisonettes, houses or bungalows). This is in recognition of their urgent housing requirements.

Question Title

3. Do you agree with the proposed changes described above?

- Yes
- No

Question Title

4. Please explain why?

Non-priority homeless applicants

Where applicants make a homelessness application and are found not to have a priority need for housing, however, they are found to be homeless and have a local connection to the borough, they will be awarded an extra 6 months waiting time.

Question Title

5. Do you agree with the proposed changes described above?

- Yes
- No

Question Title

6. Please explain why?

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4. Part 2

Options to ensure the housing register can better meet local housing demand

The process of developing a new allocations policy provides us with the ideal opportunity to better match the number of applicants on the waiting list with the annual number of properties which become available to let.

The purpose of this is three-fold:

1. To ensure that eligible applicants have a realistic prospect of being housed
2. Not to raise peoples' expectations unrealistically
3. By reducing the overall number of applicants on the list, we are able to offer a more bespoke and supportive service to enable people to access suitable accommodation.

To achieve this, the Draft CBL and Housing Allocations Policy includes looking at residency and employment. This will both reduce the total number on the waiting list to a more balanced figure, and also focus the allocation of much needed social housing on those applicants with the strongest connection to the borough, though there are exceptions to the local connection criteria, for example, for people who work in the borough or who are fleeing violence or harassment.

The proposals also look to remove those Band 4 applicants with no housing or welfare need, unless they are eligible for older persons accommodation.

Please note:

For those current applicants who are no longer eligible to remain on the council's housing register, advice and support will be provided to assist them in finding alternative accommodation.

The following three questions will look at the new proposals to reduce the number of applicants on the register, as stated above.

Changes to the local connection criteria for both residency and employment

Residency

The new policy will move from the current definition for residency, which is living in the borough for "6 out of the last 12 months or 3 out of the last 5 years" to state that applicant will need "2 years residency within the borough" and it will remove "moving into the borough due to a family connections" as a classifying factor, unless to give or receive care/support.

Question Title

7. Do you agree with the proposed changes described above?

- Yes
- No

Question Title

8. Please explain why?

Employment

The new policy introduces a proposed change from 1 year of employment within the borough to 2 years of employment within the borough.

Question Title

9. Do you agree with the proposed changes described above?

- Yes
- No

Question Title

10. Please explain why?

The removal of Band 4.

Band 4 currently includes applicants with no housing need, for example:

- Private tenants and tied tenants adequately housed with no medical or welfare or exceptional need to move
- A new applicant with security of tenure and no welfare or medical need
- A transfer applicant who requires a move to the same bedroom size property and has no medical or welfare or exceptional need to move.

The proposal is to remove applicants without a housing need. However, we will move those people currently in Band 4 who are eligible for older person's accommodation, to Band 3. This is because we have a larger supply of older person's accommodation for which there is less demand.

Question Title

11. Do you agree with the proposed changes described above?

- Yes
- No

Question Title

12. Please explain why?

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5. Part 3

Reasonable preference for Armed Forces personnel and their families

In recognition of Armed Forces Covenant 2011 and the Armed Forces Bill 2021, the council is proposing to award eligible Armed Forces personnel applicants an additional 9 months waiting time.

Question Title

13. Do you agree with the proposed changes described above?

- Yes
- No

Question Title

14. Please explain why?

Question Title

15. Do you have any other comments which you would like to make about the Draft CBL and Housing Allocations Policy?

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6. Equalities information

The following questions are for equalities monitoring purposes. The information you provide will remain anonymous and completion of the questions is voluntary.

Question Title

16. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Intersex
- Prefer not to say

Question Title

17. Is the gender you identify with the same as the sex you were registered with at birth?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question Title

18. My sexual orientation is?

- Bisexual
- Gay/Lesbian
- Heterosexual/Straight
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Question Title

19. Which of the following age groups do you belong to?

- Under 16
- 16-18
- 19-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74

- 75 or over
- Prefer not to say

Question Title

20. Do you consider yourself to have a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question Title

21. If yes, please state the nature of your disability or illness.

- Physical impairment (for example, using a wheelchair to get around and/or difficulty using your limbs)
- Sensory impairment (for example, blind or deaf)
- Mental health condition (for example, depression or schizophrenia)
- Learning disability (for example, dyslexia, Downs syndrome)
- Cognitive impairment (for example, Autism or head injury)
- Long-standing illness or health condition (for example, cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease)
- Other (please specify)

Question Title

22. Other please specify

Question Title

23. My ethnicity is?

- Asian: Indian

- Asian: Pakistani
- Asian: Bangladeshi
- Asian: Chinese
- Asian: Any other Asian background
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background
- White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- White: Irish
- White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- White: European
- White: Any other White background
- Other ethnic group: Arab
- Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group

Question Title

24. My religious belief is

- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim

- Sikh
 - Other
 - No religion
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