

Private Rented Sector Offers Policy for Homeless Households

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 (sections 148 and 149) introduced provisions which enable the council to bring its statutory housing duty under section 193 of the Housing Act 1996 to an end, by making an offer of a private rented sector tenancy rather than a social housing tenancy. This policy sets out the basis on which the council will use this power.
- 1.2 The policy should be read in conjunction with:
 - The Accommodation Placement Policy for Homeless Households – this sets out how homeless households will be prioritised for private rented sector properties in different locations
 - The Accommodation Procurement Policy for Homeless Households – this sets the council’s approach to procuring private rented sector properties including those for private rented sector offers (“PRSOs”)
- 1.3 This policy replaces the council’s approach to private rented sector offers previously set out in its Supply and Allocation of Social Housing Reports.

Section 2: Who private rented sector offers (PRSOs) will be made to

- 2.1 The council’s policy is that a PRSO may be made to any homeless household where the law allows it. At the time of writing this means any household that applied to the council as homelessness on or after 9th November 2012 could be made a PRSO.
- 2.2 The number of households that will be made a PRSO each year will depend on the supply of suitable private rented sector properties. Annual targets for PRSOs will be set out in the council’s annual Supply and Allocation of Social Housing Report, which is subject to agreement by the Cabinet Member responsible for Housing.

2.3 The following groups will ordinarily be excluded from PRSOs:

- a. Households eligible for Community Supportive Housing (sometimes known as sheltered housing)¹ - as it is unlikely that this type of housing can be provided in the private rented sector.
- b. Households that need wheelchair adapted properties – as these can be hard to procure in the private rented sector.
- c. Any household which the council determines would be unable to manage a private rented sector tenancy.

2.4 Exceptions may also be made for other households in respect of whom there is a compelling reason why a PRSO would not be appropriate. A decision will be taken after a consideration of each household's individual circumstances.

2.5 The following **general principles** will apply when making private rented sector offers:

- **One suitable offer will be made.**
- **Support to move may be offered.** In the main this will focus on households that are relocating from London and will be tailored to the individual needs of each household and may include help to: transfer any care and support packages, access to employment support, enrol children in schools, register with a GP and to access other local services. Support to other households that are not moving outside London may also be offered in some circumstances and the need for it will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Section 3: Reviewing and monitoring the policy

3.1 The impacts of this policy will be monitored and reported on annually as part of the Supply and Allocations report approved by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for housing each year. The policy will be reviewed after it has been in operation for twelve months and the outcome will be reported to the Cabinet Member.

¹ These are generally people aged 60 or older but some young people may be eligible