
To: Communities and Housing Policy Board

On: 12 March 2024

Report by: Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure

**Heading: Renfrewshire Common Housing Allocation Policy – Council
Allocation Targets for 2024/25**

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following approval by the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board in January 2019, the Renfrewshire Common Housing Allocation Policy was implemented by the Council on 1 May 2019.
 - 1.2 Applicants are placed in one of five groups according to their circumstances and targets are set for the proportion of lets to each of the groups. These targets are set and reviewed annually by the Council. This report contains the targets proposed for 2024/25.
 - 1.3 To assist in setting the allocation targets, analysis of the homelessness trends and profile of the Council's waiting list was carried out. A summary of which has been provided within this report.
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2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Communities and Housing Policy Board:

- 2.1 Approves the Council's allocation targets for 2024/25 as set out in section 4 of this report; and
 - 2.2 Notes that the target for lets to the Statutory Homeless Group will be reviewed in September 2024 and that if any change to targets is proposed, authorisation will be sought from the Policy Board at its meeting of 29 October 2024.
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3. Background

- 3.1 Housing applicants are placed into one of the following five groups based on their circumstances. Depending on the group applicants are placed in, a level of priority ('A' to 'D') may also be awarded. Targets are set for the proportion of lets to each group and as properties become available for let applicants are selected from the five groups according to the agreed targets.

Statutory Homeless Group	Mobility Group (general and transfer applicants)	General Applicants Group (not landlord's own tenants)	Transfer Applicants Group - with housing need	Transfer Applicants Group - no housing need
Statutory homeless	A critical need B urgent need C moderate need D no need	A critical need B urgent need C moderate need D no need	A critical need B urgent need C moderate need D no need	Based on date of application

- 3.2 The Council and its four local housing association partners within the Common Housing Allocation Policy (Bridgewater, Linstone, Paisley and Williamsburgh) use the same groups but each landlord sets its own targets, taking account of the profile of its own Housing List and stock profile.

4. Council Allocations Targets for 2024/25

- 4.1 The Council and other social landlords have a statutory duty to give reasonable preference to people in housing need (people who are statutorily homeless, living in unsatisfactory housing conditions and tenants of social landlords who are under occupying their current home). The targets set for each of the groups must take account of this duty.
- 4.2 The proposed targets for 2024/25 have been informed by analysis of the demand from those who are statutorily homeless, the Council's housing list and lettings over the last few years. The current allocation policy has been in place since May 2019 and as such some of the reportable information, including trend analysis comparisons, is somewhat limited due to a significant proportion of this period being when various Covid-19 restrictions were in place.

The key points to note from this analysis are:

- There were 4,951 applicants on the Council's housing list at the end of the financial year 2022/23. The six monthly figure for 2023/24 for applicants on the housing list was 4,678.
- The Council let 945 properties in 2022/23. The 6 monthly figure for 2023/24 was 512.

- Most lets are made through the Group system (81% in 2022/23). The 6 monthly figure for 2023/24 was 72.5%. The remaining 19% (181 lets) made out with the group system are: special lets, sheltered housing lets and lets associated with the approved housing regeneration programme.
- Within the Group system, 41% of lets went to statutory homeless applicants in 2022/23. The number of homeless applicants at year end 2022/23 was 245. Just over 57% of group lets went to statutory homeless applicants in the first 6 months of 2023/24. This has helped to contain the snapshot number of homeless applicants at the end of the first six months of 2023/24 at 231, however, the total number of homeless applicants across 2023/24 is expected to be in excess of 1,000. The total number in 2022/23 was 935.
- Like all local authorities across Scotland, Renfrewshire is experiencing significant pressures in meeting demand for social housing. As reported to the Policy Board in January, whilst Renfrewshire is experiencing increasing homelessness and local housing pressures, it is not currently at risk of 'systemic failure' as some other local authorities are. However, if homeless presentations continue to rise in the coming months, there is little resilience left across the system and it is anticipated Renfrewshire may struggle to continue to provide both temporary and settled accommodation in line with our statutory duty. It is anticipated that local social rented housing pressures will continue to build here in Renfrewshire, with it being likely that there may be a significant increase in the number of homeless applications in the current and next financial year.
- Lets to Mobility applicants remain the same, at 13% of lets by the Council over the last three years. This figure is constrained by the suitability of available stock and a property-led approach is used to maximise opportunities to let suitable properties to applicants with mobility needs. Year-end figure for 2022/23 was 13% against a 10% target. The six-monthly figure for 2023/24 is 12.7%.
- Existing Council tenants are placed in one of two groups – Transfer Applicants with housing need who made up 12.3% of the applicants on the housing list at the six-month point and Transfer Applicants with no housing need who made up just over 22% of all applicants on the Council's list at the six month point.
- Applicants who are not currently Council tenants and are not homeless or have mobility needs, are placed within the General Applicants group. This is the largest group of applicants, currently representing around two-thirds of all applicants on the housing list. This group includes both people with housing need and with no housing need. The applicants with a housing need held in this group represent around 60% of all applicants on the housing list.

- Renfrewshire Council and the national and local RSLs operating in Renfrewshire provided 62 social rented lets during 2022/23 as part of the national Homes for Ukraine response. Since the resettlement programme started there have been a total of 158 social rented lets to displaced persons from Ukraine with 111 lets from Council stock. Moving forward, the General Applicants Group will also include Ukrainian Displaced Persons who are awaiting settled accommodation in Renfrewshire. This will help ensure that Renfrewshire continues to play its part in meeting the needs of those arriving in Scotland from Ukraine.

4.3 Taking account of the above information, and the duty to give reasonable preference to housing need, targets proposed for 2024/25 are set out in the table below:

Lets Through Group System	2022/23		2023/24 (6 months)		2024/25
Group	2021/22 Target	Actual Lets %	Current Target	Actual Lets %	Proposed Target
Statutory Homeless	49%	41%	49%	57.1%	55%
Mobility	10%	13%	10%	12.7%	10%
General Applicants (not landlord's own tenants)	23%	35%	26%	23.4%	24%
Transfer Applicants (with housing need)	15%	9%	12%	6.5%	10%
Transfer Applicants (with no housing need)	3%	2%	3%	0.3%	1%

4.4 Summary of proposed targets:

- To ensure the Council continue to meet their statutory obligations to homeless people and to reduce time spent in temporary accommodation, particularly B&B, it is proposed that we allocate 55% of available properties to the Statutory Homeless Group. This target will be reviewed in September 2024 taking account of local and national pressures on the system. If, as a result of the review, any change to targets is proposed, authorisation will be sought from the Policy Board at its meeting of 29 October 2024.
- Properties that meet mobility requirements are let on a property led approach and it is proposed that we continue to keep a target of 10% of available lets to the Mobility Group where properties meet mobility needs.

- It is proposed that the target for the General Applicants groups is decreased from 26% to 24%. Applicants with an assessed housing need in this group make up just over 30% of all waiting list applicants and it will now include Ukrainian Displaced Persons.
- It is proposed that the Transfer Applicants with housing need allocations is set at 10% to ensure we continue to meet the needs of our existing tenants.
- 1% of allocations for the Transfer applicants with no identified housing need is proposed to allow the continuation of rehousing opportunities for existing Council tenants who have an aspirational desire to move to an alternative property type or area. This small allocation of housing will continue to free up the tenants existing home to fulfil other demand from the Councils housing waiting list.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None
3. **Community/Council Planning:**
 - **Our Renfrewshire is thriving** – Meeting the needs of housing applicants
 - **Building strong, safe and resilient communities** – Creating strong communities in our approach to allocating homes
4. **Legal** – None
5. **Property/Assets** – None
6. **Information Technology** – None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – None
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** – None

11. **Privacy Impact** – None
 12. **COSLA Policy Position** – None
 13. **Climate Change** – None
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List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Papers - None
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