



Doncaster Council

Agenda

To all Members of the

CABINET

Notice is given that a Meeting of the Cabinet is to be held as follows:

Venue: Room 007a and b - Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

Date: Tuesday, 6th March, 2018

Time: 10.00 am

Items for discussion:

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. To consider the extent, if any, to which the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting.
3. Public Questions and Statements.

(A period not exceeding 20 minutes for questions and statements from members of the public and Elected Members to the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones. Questions/Statements should relate specifically to an item of business on the agenda and be limited to a maximum of 100 words. As stated within Executive Procedure Rule 3.3 each person will be allowed to submit one question/statement per meeting. A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by e-mail to the Governance Team no later than 5.00 p.m. on Thursday, 1st March 2018. Each question or statement must give the name and address of the person submitting it. Questions/Statements should be sent to the Governance Team, Floor 2, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU, or by email to Democratic.Services@doncaster.gov.uk).

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Issued on: Monday, 26 February 2018

Governance Services Officer for this meeting:

Amber Torrington
Tel. 01302 737462

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
www.doncaster.gov.uk

4. Declarations of Interest, if any.
5. Decision Record Forms from the meeting held on 20 February, 2018 for noting (previously circulated).
- A. Reports where the public and press may not be excluded.**
 - Key Decision**
 6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework. 1 - 40
 - Non-Key Decision**
 7. Doncaster Council Housing Allocation Policy Review. 41 - 90
 - For Information**
 8. PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE REPORT - Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. 91 - 98

Cabinet Members

Chair

Ros Jones, Mayor of Doncaster

Vice-Chair

Councillor Glyn Jones, Deputy Mayor

Councillor Nigel Ball

Councillor Joe Blackham

Councillor Rachael Blake

Councillor Nuala Fennelly

Councillor Chris McGuinness

Councillor Bill Mordue

Councillor Jane Nightingale

Portfolio Holder for:

Housing and Equalities

Public Health, Leisure and Culture

Highways, Street Scene and Trading Services

Adult Social Care

Children, Young People and Schools

Communities, Voluntary Sector and the Environment

Business, Skills and Economic Development

Customer and Corporate Services



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 6th March 2018

To the Mayor and Members of Cabinet

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FRAMEWORK

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Mayor Ros Jones	All	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Doncaster Council is committed to ensuring that high-quality, customer focused services are delivered in the Borough. Doncaster is a diverse area, where people from many different backgrounds and cultures live, work and visit.
2. Most people in Doncaster want to live in a community where they know their neighbour, feel safe and have the opportunities to achieve their potential, regardless of their background, their circumstances, or where they live.
3. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Framework sets out in one place our EDI objectives and arrangements for embedding equality into everything we do. It outlines our commitment to EDI, and links directly to the strategic ambitions set out in the 'Doncaster Growing Together' (DGT) prospectus, our plan for the Borough.
4. The EDI Framework is the Council's approach and commitment to EDI and the key part this plays in meeting community development, workforce and customer needs. The Council and its partners have a commitment to celebrating this diversity, promoting good relations between our diverse communities and ensuring that services are appropriate and accessible for everyone. We want Doncaster to be an open and honest, diverse and inclusive place which is receptive to new ideas, creativity and innovation. To achieve this we believe that it is our responsibility to work on embedding diversity and inclusion into all relevant areas and that responsibility is wider than the requirement of current equality legislation. Details of the Public Sector Equality Duty can be found in Appendix D.

5. In developing this framework we invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to work with us to help shape our approach, build on our strengths and learn from best practice. The LGA recognised that “good progress has been made in 2017 evidenced by the development of the EDI framework and associated governance arrangements” as set out in this report.
6. The LGA team provided a summary statement that captures the process, outlines their involvement, their initial recommendation and their thoughts on our draft Framework. This can be found in Appendix F.
7. To support our wider commitment the framework has been developed in conjunction with the EDI Board, which is formed from Elected Member and Senior Officer Champions and is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for EDI. They have helped to shape the Framework, and have endorsed this approach. The EDI Board will have responsibility for driving and monitoring the delivery of the objectives in this framework.
8. The Council is required to show due regard to the three aims of the General duty in the delivery of its work; A due regard statement has informed the development of the EDI Framework. The due regard statement will not be completed until the EDI Framework has been approved and adopted; however the current working version is attached Appendix E.

EXEMPT REPORT

9. Not applicable

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. It is recommended that that the Chair and Members of the Cabinet:
 - Approve the EDI Framework
 - Policy Statement (Appendix A)
 - Objective Summary (Appendix B)
 - Governance Profile (Appendix C)
 - Note and review the attached ‘due regard’ statement (Appendix E);
 - Note and comment on the LGA Summary Statement (Appendix F)

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

11. The principal aim of the EDI Framework is to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives, visits or works in Doncaster through tackling inequalities and strengthening community cohesion. It is our way of making sure that different individuals, groups and communities are not disadvantaged when accessing service, employment or going about their everyday lives.

BACKGROUND

12. In March 2014 the Mayor and Cabinet approved the Equality and Inclusion Plan 2014 – 2017. This plan laid the foundations of how the Council would continue to embed EDI into service delivery and how we would deliver our corporate objectives. It is now time to review our EDI priorities to ensure they represent the rich diversity of our residents and reflect the changing landscape. The revised EDI Framework covers the next four years and aligns with our strategic plan for the Borough, Doncaster Growing Together.

13. To strengthen our approach and make good use of 'best practise' we invited colleagues from the Local Government Association (LGA) to work with us to shape and define our EDI Framework. LGA colleagues were on site for two days in December 2016 and comprised of Colleagues from the LGA, Newcastle City Council and Leeds City Council. During their visit the team met with a range of local stakeholders including:
- Partners (including the leads for anti-poverty, financial inclusion, community cohesion and the independent chair of the Inclusion and Fairness Forum.
 - Directors
 - Cabinet Members
 - The Assistant Director for the Strategy and Performance Unit
 - The Assistant Director for HR, Communications and Executive Office
 - Members of the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion steering group
 - Front Line staff
 - People Managers
 - A group meeting with a selection of cross party Members and individual meetings with the Portfolio Holder for Equalities Diversity and Inclusion and the Chair of OSMC.
 - Staff with direct responsibility for Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion.
14. The review team provided a set of short and longer term recommendations for consideration and these have been used to help shape and inform our approach in developing the Council EDI Framework and our focus for the next four years. Since the review a considerable amount of progress has been made, this is summarised below:
- We have developed a new EDI framework which contains our equality objectives which will underpin the themes and objectives that make up the Doncaster Growing Together (DGT) to ensure EDI is woven into all our key programmes;
 - We have embedded a greater strategic oversight of the EDI agenda and improved governance arrangements within the Performance Management Framework which includes information on progress made against the EDI objectives and forms part of the Quarterly Performance monitoring cycle;
 - Set up a strategic board to oversee the delivery of this framework. The EDI Board is now operational and has played a key role in developing this framework;
 - Future activity has been identified to include staff EDI networks/champions across the Council;
 - We have developed front line insights through shadowing experiences across the Council and partner agencies. Case studies submitted have provided the council with a deeper understanding of the interactions that front line services encounter with residents on a daily basis, and have been fed into the DGT prospectus and Complex Lives programme where there has been an increased use of story based evidence balanced with quantitative evidence;
 - From a workforce perspective Doncaster Council has an annual calendar of events which promote EDI. It also ensures that it not only complies with its obligations as an employer under the Equality Act 2010 but goes beyond the equality protected characteristics in its

policy framework to promote a culture of dignity and respect for all employees;

- The EDI framework takes account of work already completed such as the BME Health Needs Assessment, which sought to explore demographic data on Doncaster's BME population and to undertake focused engagement activities with local people (including individuals and groups) and organisations, to address and reduce health inequalities across the borough.

Key Priorities

15. The recommendations to develop a set of objectives linked directly to our existing priorities, for Doncaster this is our Doncaster Growing Together (DGT). DGT has been developed through an extensive engagement process involving partners from across the Team Doncaster Partnership over the last year and was agreed at full Council on 21st September 2017.
16. In line with the Council's commitment to embedding EDI into everything we do, our EDI framework and more specifically our equality objectives mirror the themes and objectives that make up the Doncaster Growing Together portfolio, namely:

Doncaster Learning – ensuring we prepare our young people for fulfilling lives, with bold reforms that will broaden their horizons and ambitions, bringing our education system and business community together to give our young people more exposure and opportunities to flourish;

Doncaster Working – developing the economy through continued inward investment, targeting higher skilled jobs and more emphasis on supporting existing businesses to grow. Ensuring local people can connect to opportunities is a key aim here.

Doncaster Caring – supporting our most vulnerable residents, whether children, adults, disabled people, families, older people. The emphasis here is on joining up social and health care and support and on shifting our focus to prevention and support that enables people to enjoy life with their families and communities.

Doncaster Living – developing Doncaster as an attractive and secure place to live, including meeting housing needs, including for vulnerable people, developing town centres and the arts culture and leisure offer, and using physical activity, including cycling to improve population health and well-being

Our Approach

17. The Council's approach to continue to develop, deliver, monitor and govern the EDI objectives will be delivered through this Framework, consisting of 4 key elements:

A. EDI Policy: A high level statement of intent outlining the Council's ethos and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion; (Appendix A)

B. EDI Objective Summary: An overview of the Council's EDI objectives that are directly linked to DGT priorities and outcomes. This will describe

our vision for the objective; provide a description of the current position and baseline data; explain what our focus is and why we have chosen to include it in our first year of the EDI plan and highlight how each objective will be delivered; (Appendix B)

C. Governance Profile: An account of how EDI will be managed, monitored, evaluated, reviewed and reported within the Council and across Team Doncaster; (Appendix C)

D. Real Life Studies: Information relevant to the delivery of EDI that showcase best practice and more importantly tell the stories of real people and the impact this framework has had on their quality of life.. These will be produced and published on the EDI internet page.

Our Objectives

18. Using the DGT themes, which have been shaped through consultation outlined in paragraph 32, as a starting point, national, regional and local data was collected, an equality filter was applied and a baseline profile was developed. The first year of the framework will be focussed on the delivery of priority objectives through existing programmes/and or the creation of bespoke work streams.

Connected Council Theme

Objective 1: To be an open and inclusive employer, promoting a culture of dignity, respect and collaboration to create greater capacity to respond to change and better ways of working.

Caring Theme

Objective 2: People with learning disabilities are helped to be more independent. They are enabled to find employment and live in their own homes as part of the community.

Objective 3: Older people continue to live at home for as long as possible, maintaining their independence in their local community.

Objective 4: Increase the percentage of children accessing the Early Years entitlements and increase the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development

Learning Theme

Objective 5: Pupil attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged¹ young people is improved;

Objective 6: Greater work readiness of all children and young people particularly for disadvantaged young people;

Objective 7: More young people from disadvantaged, BME backgrounds as well as people with a disability do well at school.

Living Theme

Objective 8: We will help all care leavers to have a good place to live with the support they need

Objective 9: We will identify and reduce the inequalities of health outcomes of BME populations in Doncaster, particularly on access to Mental Health Services

¹ Disadvantaged pupils include those eligible for FSM in the last 6 years or are looked after children for at least one day or are adopted from care.

Objective 10: We will support more people to take up opportunities to get involved in community life through volunteering and participation, particularly for young people and people from BME communities

Working Theme

Objective 11: Increasing the number of Care Leavers entering Employment, Education or Training – so reducing the gap between the Doncaster and Yorkshire & Humber %

Objective 12: Increase the number of people from BME communities that take up apprenticeship opportunities in Doncaster

Objective 13: Reduce the gap in female employment rates and female employment wage rates with organisations within Doncaster that we can influence.

What Next?

19. The focus for 2017/18 will be the delivery of the year one priority objectives as set out in the Objective Summary document (Appendix B) whilst simultaneously gaining further insight into our communities and using this knowledge to shape and define our approach for years two, three and four.
20. The EDI Board will have regular reports on progress towards the objectives set out in this framework. In conjunction with our performance management framework quarterly monitoring process, EDI will have rigour and focus formed with the input from the EDI Board.
21. The EDI Board will actively seek relevant real life stories to showcase best practice, tell the stories of real people and importantly the impact this framework has had on their quality of life. These will be produced and published on the EDI internet page.
22. The EDI Framework is a living document with the flexibility to offer a timely response to emerging priorities and changes happening within in our diverse communities. This will take place through consultation with communities and stakeholders through various channels and the EDI Board will develop and oversee the consultation plan.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY OUTCOMES

Outcomes	Implications
<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	<p>The Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework is a key document for focusing the Council’s attention on these priorities and ensuring it inequalities reduce.</p>
<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster’s people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster 	<p>The Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework is a key document for focusing the Council’s attention on these priorities and ensuring it</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	<p>inequalities reduce.</p>
<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	<p>The Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework is a key document for focusing the Council's attention on these priorities and ensuring it inequalities reduce.</p>
<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	<p>The Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework is a key document for focusing the Council's attention on these priorities and ensuring it inequalities reduce.</p>
<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>The Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework is a key document for focusing the Council's attention on these priorities and ensuring it inequalities reduce.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

23. There is a risk that if we do not have an effective EDI Framework, vulnerable people in Doncaster may not be well served. Failure to implement the EDI Framework could place the council at risk of judicial review based on non-compliance with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [HP 06/02/2018]

24. The EDI framework assists in meeting the public sector equality duty (PSED) in s149 of the Equality Act 2010. It requires public authorities when exercising their functions to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimization; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not.

25. The relevant protected characteristics under the Equality Act are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [AT 06/02/2018]

26. There are no direct financial implications attached to this report. Where possible the individual actions and approaches described in this report will be met from existing budgets. Where this is not possible, appropriate approval will be obtained before committing to expenditure.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [CB 05/02/2018]

27. The Council is required to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 not only in its provisions for employees but in the provision of services. In employment the Council has extended its provisions to include both the legislative equality requirements and those for diversity and inclusion. Embedding diversity and inclusion into all areas of service provision is much wider than the requirements of an equality approach which has been the primary focus within the council and for this to be successful it would require an accompanying programme of education and development

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [NR 06/02/2018]

28. Currently there are no defined technical requirements and therefore no technology implication, however "Customer, ICT and Digital" would need to be involved at any stage should any technical requirements be identified

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: SH 07/02/2018]

29. This report sets in one place EDI objectives and arrangements. Lack of EDI within a community has implications for health specifically in terms of inequality of access to services and unequal outcomes. This framework is important in terms of addressing health inequality as it sets strategic direction and includes specific health inequality objectives as such there are separate health implications as EDI and Health Inequalities are intertwined. In terms of monitoring the Framework, the EDI Board will need to ensure it is able to review how health inequalities are further addressed within the objectives.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [SW 01/02/2018]

30. Decision makers must consider the Council's duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty at s149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share that protected characteristic.
31. A 'due regard' statement has been produced alongside the development of the EDI Framework. The due regard statement will not be completed until the

EDI Framework has been approved and adopted, however the current working version is attached Appendix E

CONSULTATION

32. Consultation has taken place on the development of specific reforms and programmes as part of the development of Doncaster Growing Together including:

- One Doncaster - Independent Commission on Education and Skills
- Town Centre Masterplan
- Doncaster's Place Plan
- Town Centre stakeholder workshops
- Complex Lives Alliance
- Children's Plan

Consultation and engagement on the direction and content of the full Doncaster Growing Together portfolio includes

- Team Doncaster
- Discussions at Executive Board and Cabinet
- Directors and Leadership Team
- Labour Group
- Members Engagement Sessions
- Members Seminar
- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Consultation and engagement on the initial EDI Objectives were shaped by:

- Local Government Association
- Elected Member and Senior Officer Champions
- Strategy and Performance Unit
- Human Resources and Organisational Development

The proposed EDI Objectives form the baseline around which our year one activity will focus. There will be opportunity for additional engagement and further refinement of our focus over the next three years as outlined in paragraph 19.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

33. The background papers to this report are:

Doncaster Growing Together – the 4 Year Borough Strategy, Cabinet 5th September 2017

<https://doncasterintranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MIId=2627>

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Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Framework Statement

Doncaster Council is committed ensuring high-quality, customer focused services to people living, working or visiting our borough. We recognise and value the benefits of diversity and inclusiveness in our communities where we strive to improve the quality of life for all.

We pledge a commitment to celebrating equality, inclusion and diversity whilst promoting good relations between our diverse communities to ensure that our services are appropriate and accessible for everyone. Our aspiration is for Doncaster to be an open, diverse and inclusive borough which is receptive to new ideas, creativity and innovation.

We will adhere to the general duty on public authorities contained in the Equality Act 2010. Due regard will be applied and legitimately considered when carrying out public functions to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with regards to the nine protected characteristics. These nine detailed characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. For Marriage and Civil Partnerships the duty is to eliminate unlawful discrimination only. We are also striving to ensure people are not discriminated against due to their socio economic status (poverty), or because they are care leavers or armed forces veterans. This applies to the Council as an employer, service provider and in relation to any ongoing partnership work or through our public duties.

Equality focuses on improving outcomes for all by responding to individuals or groups differently in order to meet their needs to address differing levels of disadvantage and discrimination.

Diversity recognises respect and value differences to contribute and realise potential by promoting inclusive culture for individuals, communities and employees.

Inclusion is a sense of belonging and making all groups and individuals feel respected and valued.

This Statement is part of Doncaster Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Framework which underpins all of the Council's equality, diversity and inclusion work. In conjunction with other key Council policies and strategies our framework will help the Council to realise its purpose

“that all people in Doncaster thrive”

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Ros Jones
Mayor

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objective summary 2018-2021 Year one



INTRODUCTION

Doncaster Council is committed to ensuring high-quality, customer focused services for the increasingly, rich and diverse communities that make up our borough. Our aim is to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives, visits or works in Doncaster, through promoting inclusion and diversity, tackling inequalities and removing barriers which may prevent people from fulfilling their true potential.

This is our way of helping to ensure that people, groups and communities have equality of opportunity and are not disadvantaged when accessing services, education and employment.

We invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to help us review our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) priorities, to learn from best practice and the good work that has been done.

To ensure EDI is up front and centre in our key programmes, our EDI priorities now align with each theme - Caring, Living, Working and Learning under Doncaster Growing Together (DGT) our Borough Strategy and as a Connected Council ready for the future.

Our priorities (shown in the following pages of this document) have been developed using national, regional and local data and intelligence sources to help gain a better understanding of our borough and it's changing needs. These priorities will be delivered through the existing DGT programmes and/or the creation of bespoke work streams.

To ensure that we are flexible in our approach, we have developed a one year plan as part of our strategy for the next three years, to allow us time to further refine our priorities by better understanding our communities and workforce.

We will build on the work we have done in the last year with the Voluntary and Community Sector and continue to gain a deeper understanding of the interactions that front line services encounter on a daily basis. We now have an annual calendar of events which promotes EDI; and we have built upon the work of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Health Needs Assessment which by talking to communities about there needs and exploring demographic data on Doncaster's BME population.

Following the work we have undertaken with the LGA, they have recognised that "good progress has been made in 2017" evidenced by the "development of the EDI Framework and associated governance arrangements".



Our vision is a connected council ready for the future



We are committed to being a Council that promotes good growth and prosperity for its residents. We will target services that make the most difference to those people who need them most, making the best use of technology, re-designing our services so they are fit for the future and working in partnership with our local communities, voluntary, charity and faith sectors to deliver services together as detailed in our Doncaster Growing Together Plan.

To do this it is important that we develop and engage our workforce to ensure we perform well and work effectively together to transform the council and deliver good value for money services to our residents. Our four year Workforce Strategy, underpinned by a strong focus on equalities, diversity and inclusion, sets out how we will do this.

Our Year one focus will be

- Publish our Gender Pay Gap information; ensuring open and transparent reporting and provide clear explanations of the data to improve our Gender Pay Gap.

- To help make informed decision about our workforce our actions will focus on:

- 1 Our age profile: to increase young people entering the workforce; boost skills to retain older workers; and support effective succession planning;
- 2 Improve protected characteristics information we collect on our workforce systems; and
- 3 Improve recruitment practices to become more reflective of Doncaster's population; and building on being a Disability Confident employer.



What we know

- The council like many public services attracts more women than men to work for it.
- We have an ageing workforce and the 16-24 year age group, is under represented.
- The council's ethnic minority and disability profiles are slightly less than the economically active profile for Doncaster
- We want to have a modern, efficient and flexible workforce to deliver on all of our priorities.
- We want to be an open and inclusive employer, promoting a culture of dignity, respect and collaboration to create greater capacity to respond to change and better ways of working.
- To demonstrate our growing inclusion and diversity aims we are encouraging new networks such as the LGBT network and the Apprenticeship.

Objective 1:
To be an open and inclusive employer, promoting a culture of dignity, respect and collaboration to create greater capacity to respond to change and better ways of working

- Continue with our programme of diversity and inclusion events to promote awareness, understanding and encourage positive behaviours.
- Expand the resources and self-help guides for staff to empower them to help themselves and create sustainable capacity across the workforce.
- Undertake a Staff Survey to give employees a voice on key workforce issues and take appropriate action.

Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents.



We know that lots of things affect your health and well-being. Having a job, living in a safe area and being able to use good quality public services all have an impact on your health.

We need to make sure Doncaster residents, including veterans, people from vulnerable groups and 'seldom heard' communities, can access the support that is available to give them the best care and choice over their own health and well-being.

Objective 2:
People with learning disabilities are helped to be more independent. They are enabled to find employment and live in their own homes as part of the community.

Objective 3:
Older people continue to live at home for as long as possible, maintaining their independence in their local community.

Our Year 1 focus will be

- Over the next 12 months we will help people in Supported Living accommodation to maximise their independence by ensuring we offer the right level of support.
- We will continue to ensure we are providing the right level of support for people currently in Residential Care homes, and that they are in the right accommodation to enable them to reach their full potential

- We will work with our communities to develop a Housing Plan for people with learning disabilities to ensure they can live as independently as possible – taking into account current and future housing needs
- We will continue to work together with health services to ensure that people who are receiving specialist hospital care, do so, as near to their community as possible.

- We will increase employment, voluntary and educational opportunities for people with a learning disability

- We will develop services that are closer to older people's homes to increase their ability to remain independent
- We will improve access to information, advice and guidance for older people and their families

- We will make sure that older people come home from hospital quickly and safely once they are medically fit and support them to remain at home for longer
- We will improve access to and understanding of direct payments and Individual Service Funds so that older people can choose the support they want

What we know

Ageing population

- The rate of admissions of older people into residential care in Doncaster is higher than other parts of the country (430 people in 2016/17) although the rate of admissions into residential care have reduced over the past two years. We want to put alternative support in place that will help older people to keep their independence for longer, living at home and in their community
- There are increasing numbers of older people in the borough, many live alone and require help and support to maintain their independence
- Through the Adults, Health and Wellbeing programme and the Doncaster Place Plan, people will have more choice and control over how they live their lives and the type of the support they wish to receive
- Older people are caring for relatives providing vital support in communities
- The more the population grows and ages, the more people will develop conditions such as Dementia
- There will be an extra 24,500 people aged over 65 by 2039 living in the borough
- Many of our community groups are thriving because of the huge contribution that older people make.

Living independently

- We want to modernise services for people with learning disabilities to be more proactive, creative and bespoke
- There are less people with learning disabilities in paid employment and more people with learning disabilities in residential care (compared to Yorkshire and Humber)

- There is a low number of people with learning disabilities receiving long term support and living independently
- The number of people still living at home 91 days after a period of support is slightly lower in comparison to the Yorkshire and Humber. However our performance is improving
- There will be more local support to enable people to be more independent.

Young people

- There are inequalities in early learning and early achievement of young people from disadvantaged homes, compared to their more well-off peers.
- We want to build strong communities where families are supported and have the skills to be resilient, confident and independent.



**Objective 4:
Increase the percentage
of children accessing the
Early Years entitlements and
Increase the percentage of
children achieving a Good
Level of
Development.**

- We will progress the key actions arising from Co-Creates patient engagement workshops 'Design for Diversity – Learning from seldom heard voices'
- We will increase the opportunities for older people to take up activities during the day that will keep them involved with communities and improve their wellbeing
- We will co-designing and launch an all age Carers Charter

- Publicity materials and advertisements will be revised and widely distributed to reflect the recent changes in the entitlements, including the availability of 30 hours of early education to eligible families
- Intensive support, training and advice continues to be given to nurseries in order to ensure that Doncaster retains its high quality settings which are able to offer the entitlements to families. Therefore, giving the families plenty of choice in childcare in their local area and which meets their needs.

- Training and update sessions to ensure effective assessment practice, is also currently being rolled out. To date, all schools including academies, have attended these training sessions.
- Support and advice is being offered to selected schools in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning being offered to children.
- In 2017, moderation processes were seen to be very strong with 26 schools receiving moderation visits and a further 43 schools received follow up telephone conversations or visits to support outcomes. In 2018, 30 schools have been selected for moderation visits and comprehensive and supportive moderation visits are already being planned with these schools.

Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling.



In Doncaster, our collective efforts can make sure that everyone has the education and skills that they need to live happy, fulfilling lives, learning things they are passionate about, in school and beyond, and doing work that means something to them as they get older.



Objective 5:
Pupil attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged young people in improved.

Objective 6:
Greater work readiness of all children and young people particularly for disadvantaged young people.

Our Year 1 focus will be

- We will work intensively with 'focus schools' where levels of persistent absence are highest, providing direct support to their attendance administrator, to make sure that we are doing all we can to improve attendance levels in schools.

- We will implement the recommendations of the Behaviour Review, working closely with schools to make sure that they are inclusive for all children and young people, and that they provide appropriate support to disadvantaged students.

- We will open a new form of alternative provision in Doncaster call Big Picture Learning which will provide an alternative educational offer for young people who are no longer engaged in learning in mainstream schools and provide access to real world work experience to meet their interests.

- We will roll out an extended model of mentoring to disadvantaged children and young people, finding new ways to recognise and accredit their achievements
- We will implement the recommendations from the review of post 16 education, working closely with providers, the DfE and the regional schools commissioner .

- We will prototype, then pilot, potential solutions to improve the quality of careers information, advice and guidance, based on the learning from the project funded by the Open Data Institute.

What we know

Schools

- Persistent absence in primary and secondary schools in Doncaster is above the national average, with a number of schools reporting rates of 30%, some of the highest in the country. Children in Care do better
- The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions in Doncaster is high
- Attainment levels for children in poverty, in care or from BME backgrounds are too often lower than that of their peers.

Readiness for work

- We need to do more to connect business to employment
- Children eligible for Free school Meals have lower levels of attainment
- Children in Care have worse educational outcomes
- Doncaster has a low percentage of 19 year olds qualified to Level 3, this is even lower for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds
- We want to ensure that opportunities to do well at school extend to all children and young people
- We have a high percentage of children from a

disadvantaged background with no sustained destination at post 16

- We want to encourage greater work readiness for all of our young people, particularly those from a disadvantaged background.



**Objective 7:
More young people
from disadvantaged,
BME backgrounds
as well as people
with a disability do
well at school.**

- We will build on the first phase of the Doncaster Skills Academy work to better target employer engagement and skills training to the children and young people who need it most, whilst working closely with the Careers and Enterprise Company to deliver meaningful encounters with the world of work.

- We will conduct a review of the use of pupil premium in schools and make recommendations for how this resource can be better targeted to support pupils
- We are currently running a child led inquiry into child poverty, and will implement the recommendations of this to improve the life chances of disadvantaged young people across the borough.

- Through the Social Mobility Opportunity Area, we will help more vulnerable children and young people make the most of existing opportunities.

- For the National Citizen Service, we will provide tailored support before, during and after they access the existing programme
- We will be more innovative in our means of engagement with schools but also work with children's homes and residential care centres to recruit participants on to the programme, to ensure young people feel reassured that they are specifically supported.

Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time.



Building upon our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage, we will continue to release the potential of our most creative people and bring new life and energy to our town centres.

We want everyone who chooses to live in Doncaster to have a place they are proud to call home. We want to make the most of our local environment - our countryside, nature reserves, parks and open spaces – to help improve all our health and wellbeing.



Objective 8:
We will help all Care Leavers to have a good place to live with the support they need.

Objective 9:
We will identify and reduce the inequalities of health outcomes of BME populations in Doncaster, particularly on access to Mental Health Services.

Our Year 1 focus will be

- We will review the Housing Allocations Policy
- We will ensure there is a suitable level of housing for care leavers.

- We will publish data showing the prevalence of common mental health problems, access to and completion of treatment as well as success of treatment by gender and ethnic group.

- We will launch a social enterprise company run by care leavers who have experienced living alone and learned the skills; to provide floating support for younger care leavers
- We will improve information, advice and guidance to care leavers.

- We will roll out 'Keys to my Future' to support care leavers to have the skills to live independently.

- We will use this data to influence commissioning and provision decisions by the NHS for 2018.

- We will use this approach to examine and monitor other areas in Doncaster's health and social care Place Plan.

What we know

- The number of young people that leave care over the next two years, will be higher than in previous years (over 100 people)
- We would like people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity
- Data on volunteering and participation is limited, a key barrier to our understanding of who gets involved in community life and we think we need to promote more opportunities for younger people and people from ethnic minorities
- Healthy life expectancy is 59.7 years for males and 61 years for females
- More of our care leavers are in suitable accommodation, compared to those across the country
- Doncaster's population of 306,400 has an age profile broadly similar to other areas apart from young people aged 16-24 years which is lower
- Immigration from within the UK, is negligible in terms of its effect, international migration contributed a net 1000 people to the population
- The BME Health Needs Assessment highlights a number of differences in health outcomes between different ethnic groups.



**Objective 10:
We will support more people to take up opportunities to get involved in community life through volunteering and participation, particularly for young people and people from BME communities.**



- We will develop a new volunteering policy for the Council.

- We will seek to develop a space where people can find out what volunteering opportunities are available across the borough.

- We will examine how our strategic programmes could support greater participation in community life.

Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future.



Over recent years economic growth in Doncaster has been very good – with more jobs, businesses and inward investment contributing to a £5 billion economy.

Over the past year the employment rate has reached record levels, giving more local people a stake in Doncaster's economy and the opportunity to achieve their aspirations. However we still have some challenges to ensure everyone has chance to benefit.



Objective 11:
Increasing the number of Care Leavers entering Employment, Education or Training – so reducing the gap between the Doncaster and Yorkshire & Humber %.

Objective 12:
Increase the number of people from BME communities that take up apprenticeship opportunities in Doncaster Council.

Our Year 1 focus will be

- We will ensure that we do everything we can to enable people to pursue their life ambitions.

- We will increase our understanding around the barriers our residents are currently experiencing, and provide solutions to support their aspirations.

- We will undertake a detailed analysis of employment outcomes for people from BME communities at GCSE and A' Level points.

- We will Identify of barriers – with the option of producing a dedicated targeted workshop
- We will actively Identify partners we can work collaboratively with to make progress in this area.

What we know

- As a council we have a duty of care towards children in care, that doesn't end at the age of 18.
- We need to reduce the gap in female employment rates
- Female self-employed workers are under-represented in Doncaster
- The number of employed males and females from an Ethnic Minority is better than that of both the Yorkshire and Humber and England.
- A low number of people from BME Communities take up apprenticeship opportunities.
- Female part-time employees, earn a median wage of £172.60, compared to £175.50 for males, however the gap for full-time employees is significantly higher.
- 48.7% of our Care Leavers are in, employment, education or training.
- We want to make positive interventions to improve the gap in female employment and wage rates in Doncaster, in those areas in which we have influence.



Objective 13:
Reduce the gap in female employment rates and female employment wage rates with organisations within Doncaster that we can influence.

- We will identify specific businesses keen to work with us on this using sector specialists

- We will need to understand and quantify the barriers to achieving fair equitable wage rates; through surveying local businesses.

- Utilising the energy and spirit of our Team Doncaster partners, we will actively request partners promote opportunities for equitable wage rates.

What Next?

The focus for 2018/19 will be:

The delivery of the year one priority objectives; whilst simultaneously

- Gaining further insight into our communities; and
- Using this knowledge to shape and define our approach for years two, three and four.

The Equality Diversity and Inclusion Board will have an important role:

The EDI Board will have regular reports on progress towards the objectives set out in the EDI Framework.

In conjunction with our performance management framework quarterly monitoring process, EDI will have rigour and focus formed by the input from the EDI Board.

The EDI Board will

- Commission relevant real life stories
 - Showcase best practice
- Tell the stories of real people; and importantly the impact this framework has had on their quality of life - these will be produced and published on the Council's EDI internet page.

The EDI Framework is a living document with the flexibility to offer a timely response to emerging priorities and changes happening within in our diverse communities.

This will take place through consultation with communities and stakeholders through various channels and the EDI Board will develop and oversee the consultation plan.

Future activity has been identified to include developing staff as EDI networks/ champions across the Council.

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Doncaster
Council

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Framework

GOVERNANCE



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1. Introduction

Doncaster Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Framework supports and underpins our Corporate Equality Objectives, which are linked to the wider outcomes included in Doncaster's Borough Strategy (Doncaster Growing Together). Further information around Doncaster Growing Together can be found by following this link: [Doncaster Growing Together](#)

It provides a clear statement of principles in relation to the Council's vision for promoting high-quality, customer focused services to people living, working or visiting our borough.

Our approach is based around five key objectives:

Learning: people have the knowledge and skills for life, creativity and employment;

Working: people benefit from a thriving and resilient economy;

Caring: people live safe, healthy, active and independent lives;

Living: Doncaster is a thriving, resilient and inclusive place to live, work and visit;

Connected Council: Our Council Purpose is to ensure Doncaster and its people thrive, whilst ensuring value for money is at the heart of everything we do.

2. The Law & Legal Duties

Doncaster Council recognises its obligations under The Equality Act of 2010 to show 'due regard' to the three main aims of the Equality Duty, and the need to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider how the decisions that they make, and the services they deliver affect people who share different protected characteristics and publish information to demonstrate how they have done this. In addition the Council is also required to set specific, measurable equality objectives and publish these, along with their Equality Framework.

The Council is also required to publish information to demonstrate it has considered how its activities as an employer affect people who share different protected characteristics.

These are available at: <http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/equality-and-inclusion>

The Equality Act reminds us that there can be no fair society if some groups and communities remain disadvantaged because of their legally protected characteristics. These characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- sex
- sexual orientation.
- pregnancy and maternity
- race/ethnicity
- religion and belief
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership

Doncaster Council is also striving to ensure people are not discriminated against due to their socio economic status (poverty), or because they are care leavers or armed forces veterans, therefore they will be included within our considerations when paying due regard.

3. Our Framework

Doncaster Council has developed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, consisting of 4 key elements:

Statement: *A high level statement of intent outlining the Council's ethos and commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;*

EDI Objective summary (2018-2021)¹

An evidence based objective analysis developed to support the production of the corporate EDI objectives, which aim to highlight the current key EDI challenges Doncaster Council is seeking to address. The summary is linked to the wider outcomes included within Doncaster Growing Together

Governance: *An account of how progress made against the improvement and delivery of the EDI objectives will be managed, monitored, evaluated, reviewed and reported;*

Real Life Stories: *will be developed to offer services the opportunity to tell their stories (to be used within the EDI Annual Report)*

¹ The EDI Framework is a 4 year plan, however the EDI objectives will be reviewed each year to ensure they are relevant and reflect the needs of the community.

4. Management of the Framework

The **Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group** consists of representatives from the Strategy and Performance Unit and Human Resources and Organisational Development.

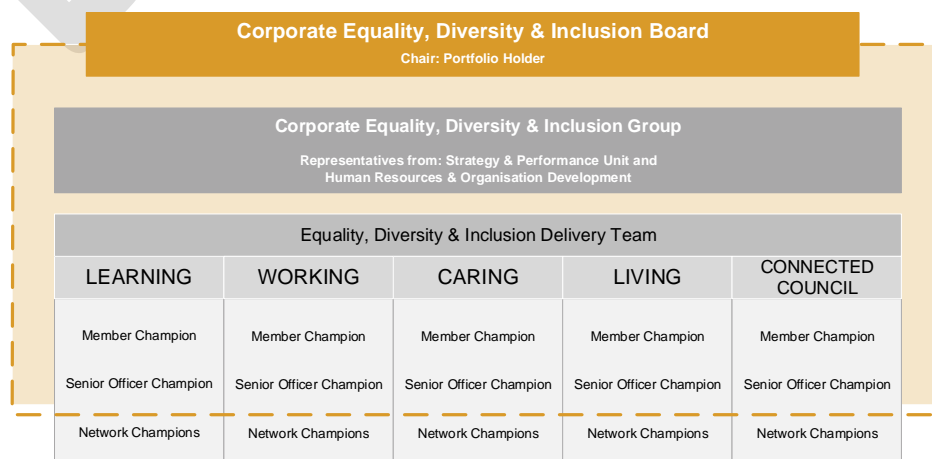
This group is responsible for the strategic overview of the Council’s obligations for promoting and embedding EDI across the organisation and includes the production, management and monitoring of the EDI Framework. The EDI Group also facilitates the development of the EDI Annual Report and co-ordinates the quarterly performance reports that form part of the Corporate Finance and Performance reporting process.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Delivery Team is structured around the five EDI objectives – Learning, Working, Caring, Living and Connected Council. Each objective is headed by a Member Champion, a Senior Officer Champion and is supported by Network Champions. This team leads on the management and delivery of the EDI Framework and ensures it is communicated, delivered and monitored at service level.

The **Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board** is chaired by the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for EDI, and consists of the membership of the Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group and the Member Champions and Senior Officer Champions from within the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Delivery Team.

The key roles of this Board are to co-ordinate EDI work across the Council and monitor, review and reflect on the progress made against the improvement and delivery of the EDI objectives. The Board will review issues escalated from the Delivery Team and advise on mitigating actions. The Board may also request additional information from service areas or partners, as and when required, to ensure the Council continues to effectively manage EDI.

At any one time there are a number of programmes and initiatives that directly impact on EDI. Regular updates will be provided to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board to ensure an informed, consistent approach. Examples of linked activity include: The Inclusion & Fairness Forum, Anti-Poverty, Community Tensions and Domestic Violence.



5. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone within Doncaster Council has a responsibility to ensure that the policies, procedures, services and programmes we deliver reflect our commitment to EDI, as articulated within our EDI Policy Statement.

The Council recognises that in order to embed EDI across all levels of the authority there needs to be strong leadership and effective governance structures in place.

Individual / Group	Role	Responsibility
Chief Executive / Mayor	Provide leadership and promotion of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion throughout the Council and champion the EDI Framework.	Develop a culture which is proactive in supporting the framework; Provides community leadership in securing economic prosperity and maximising potential for all; Promotes inclusive community engagement and empowers communities to create sustainable cohesive communities.
Corporate Management Team	Ultimately responsible for developing the Council's strategy for Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion, and ensuring that the Council is able to deliver its Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.	Agree the Council's EDI Framework for consideration by Executive Board & Cabinet; Provide leadership in the implementation of the EDI Framework; Receive quarterly updates on progress against the Equality objectives.
Heads of Services and Service Managers	Lead their service in the delivery of a positive EDI environment.	Implement the Council's 'due regard' process in their respective service areas; Ensure the corporate 'due regard' process is represented in all key decision reports; Support staff and enable them to contribute towards the delivery of key EDI objectives;
Portfolio Holder	Provide leadership support and promotion of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion throughout the Council and champion the EDI Framework	To lead in the delivery and improvement of the Council's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion agenda To champion the Council's EDI programmes/projects/policies and plans; To network with Member Champions from other Local Authorities To keep other Councillors up to date with EDI activities; To have an understanding of the corporate 'due regard' process and the implications it has the decision making process; To promote inclusive community engagement and empower communities to create sustainable cohesive communities; To promote EDI both internally and externally of the Council; To contribute to the review and development of the Council's EDI framework; To identify training for Member champions to enhance understanding of the EDI agenda; Manage future recruitment of Member and Senior Officer champions; Support the formation of a wider staff network of EDI champions; Support links with the Inclusion and Fairness Forum and Anti-Poverty Board.
Member Champions	To champion the Council's EDI policies and plans	To assist in the delivery and improvement of the Council's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion agenda; To champion the Council's EDI programmes/projects/policies and plans; To network with Member Champions from other Local Authorities To keep other Councillors up to date with EDI activities; To have an understanding of the corporate 'due regard' process and the implications it has the decision making process; To promote inclusive community engagement and empower communities to create sustainable cohesive communities; To promote EDI both internally and externally of the Council; To contribute to the review and development of the Council's EDI framework; To identify undertake training where appropriate to enhance understanding of the EDI agenda;

Support the formation of a wider staff network of EDI champions;
Support links with the Inclusion and Fairness Forum and Anti-Poverty Board.

Senior Officer Champions	<p>To champion the Council's EDI policies and plans To promote EDI both internally and externally of the Council.</p>	<p>To assist in the delivery and improvement of the Council's EDI agenda; To promote EDI both internally and externally of the Council; To contribute to the review and development of the Council's EDI framework; Take ownership of agreed EDI objectives and champion their continued improvement through appropriate challenge and support across, Doncaster Growing Together and wider, where required; To escalate issues/risks to the Portfolio Holder; To champion the Council's EDI programmes/projects/policies and plans; To have an understanding of the corporate 'due regard' process and the implications it has the decision making process; To promote inclusive community engagement and empower communities to create sustainable cohesive communities; To undertake training where appropriate to enhance understanding of the EDI agenda; Facilitate the gathering of evidence to feed into the quarterly challenge process and Annual Report; Support the formation of a wider staff network of EDI champions; Support links with the Inclusion and Fairness Forum and Anti-Poverty Board.</p>
Elected members	<p>Champion EDI in all elements of their areas of responsibility. To promote EDI both internally and externally of the Council.</p>	<p>Have an understanding of the corporate 'due regard' process and the implications it has the decision making process; Promote inclusive community engagement and empower communities to create sustainable cohesive communities.</p>
The Strategy and Performance Unit	<p>Co-ordinate the corporate approach to developing, monitoring and reviewing EDI to ensure the Council's approach reflects current legislation and takes account of relevant performance indicators and action plans.</p>	<p>To facilitates the production of the EDI Framework; To facilitate the gathering of evidence/data to feed into the quarterly challenge process and Annual Report; Undertake horizon scanning to learn from examples of best practice to assist in the journey to becoming 'excellent'; Provide data intelligence to inform decision making.</p>
Human Resources and Organisational Development	<p>co-ordinate the corporate approach, creating a workplace culture where diversity is valued and celebrated</p>	
Staff	<p>To assist in the delivery and improvement of the Council's EDI agenda To promote EDI both internally and externally of the Council.</p>	<p>Familiarise themselves, and act in accordance with, the EDI Framework, the Code of Conduct and the Team Doncaster Charter; To meet the relevant standards of behaviour in the workplace by acting as a positive role model for others; To volunteer as Network champions to assist in the promotion of EDI across the authority.</p>

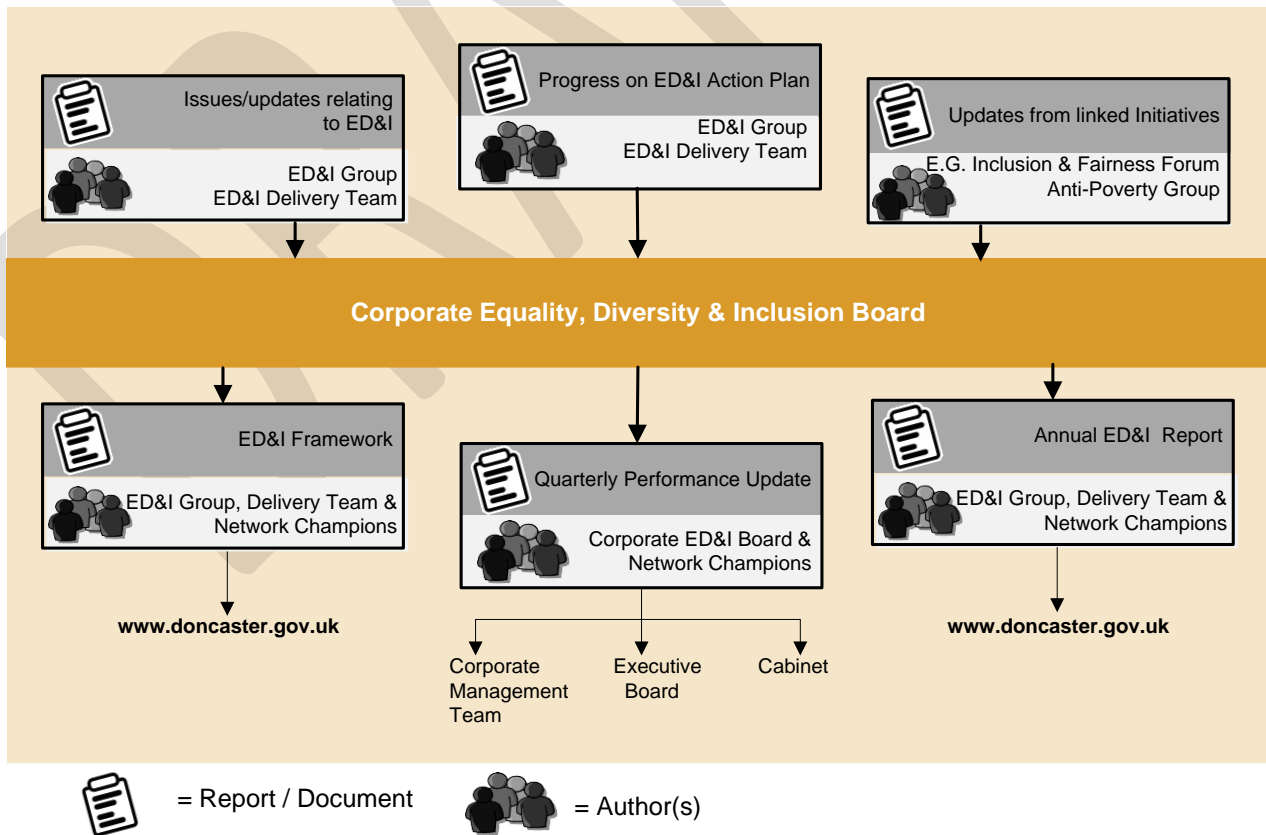
6. Reporting

The Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board will meet on a six weekly basis to receive reports and/or updates on the progress made against the improvement and delivery of the EDI objectives, outlined within the EDI Objective summary. Alongside this, the Board will also receive quarterly updates on the progress made against the programmes which will underpin the delivery of the EDI objectives, via the Council’s existing quarterly performance arrangements.

The Board will also have the ability to request and receive updates from initiatives and programmes that impact upon EDI. Issues relating to EDI that have been highlighted through other mechanisms, i.e. the Senior Management Team and Team Doncaster will also be received by the Board.

The Board will also be responsible for the production of the EDI Framework and the Annual Report

In addition to the formal reporting process, outlined in the diagram below, due regard statements will be published in Council reports where a key decision is required. Policies and procedures may also contain EDI information and/or implications.



The PSED was created by the Equality Act 2010 and replaces the race, disability and gender equality duties. The duty came into force in April 2011 and places a duty on public bodies and others carrying out public functions.

The aim of the PSED is to embed equality considerations into the day to day work of public authorities, so that they tackle discrimination and inequality and contribute to making society fairer.

The Equality duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race,
- Religion or belief and
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

It also applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

The PSED consists of a **general duty**, with three main aims (set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and outlined below); and **specific duties**. The specific duties are designed to help public bodies meet the general duty.

The General Duty

The new Equality Duty requires public bodies to have **due regard** to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- The Equality Act explains that the second aim (advancing equality of opportunity) involves, in particular, having due regard to the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
 - Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

It states that meeting different needs includes (among other things) taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. Compliance with the general equality duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

Specific Duties

In addition to the general Equality Duty, set out above, Section 153 of the Equality Act gives the Government a power to impose specific duties on certain public bodies to enable them to perform the Equality Duty more effectively.

The specific duties are intended to support compliance with the General Duty.

The new specific duties focus on reducing burdens and bureaucracy on public bodies, and moving away from a process-driven approach to focus on transparency.

The specific duties require organisations like the Council too;

- publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually; and
- set equality objectives, at least every four years

Due Regard Statement – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Framework

1 Name of the ‘policy’ and briefly describe the activity being considered including aims and expected outcomes. This will help to determine how relevant the ‘policy’ is to equality.

Equality, Inclusion & Diversity Framework

The Council’s Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Framework sets out our equality objectives and other arrangements for embedding equality into everything we do. It affirms our commitment to equality and contributes to the Council’s priority outcomes. The framework also ensures that the council continues to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

2 Title of person(s) responsible for completing this statement.

Senior Strategy & Performance Manager

Strategy & Performance Officer

3 Summary of the information considered

The council has used a range of data and information across all themes within DGT. We then applied an EDI filter to review the data that highlighted specific issues around the protected characteristics. This process generated a wealth of data to inform the development of our areas of focus. Below are links to key documents and data sources that were considered and that influenced the both the production of the objectives and the key activity will drive the improvements.

[Doncaster Growing Together Portfolio](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/doncaster-growing-together)

<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/doncaster-growing-together>

[State of the Borough](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/state-of-the-borough)

<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/state-of-the-borough>

[BME Needs Assessment](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/health-wellbeing/doncaster’s-health-and-wellbeing-board)

<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/health-wellbeing/doncaster’s-health-and-wellbeing-board>

[Office for National Statistic](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/career-transition-partnership-ex-service-personnel-employment-outcomes-financial-year-201617)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/career-transition-partnership-ex-service-personnel-employment-outcomes-financial-year-201617>

[Apprenticeship data](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships#history)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships#history>

4 Summary of the consultation/engagement activities

Consultation has taken place on the development of specific reforms and programmes as part of the development of Doncaster Growing Together including:

- One Doncaster - Independent Commission on Education and Skills
- Town Centre Masterplan
- Doncaster’s Place Plan
- Town Centre stakeholder workshops
- Complex Lives Alliance

Consultation and engagement on the direction and content of the full Doncaster Growing Together portfolio includes

- Team Doncaster
- Discussions at Executive Board and Cabinet

Due Regard Statement – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Framework

- Directors and Leadership Team
- Labour Group
- Members Engagement Sessions
- Members Seminar
- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Consultation and engagement on the initial EDI Objectives were shaped by:

- Local Government Association
- Elected Member and Senior Officer Champions
- Strategy and Performance Unit
- Human Resources and Organisational Development

The proposed EDI Objectives form the baseline around which our year one activity will focus. There will be opportunity for additional engagement and further refinement of our focus over the next three year.

5 Real Consideration: Summary of what the evidence shows and how has it been used

The data was analysed within the DGT themes and then an EDI filter was added to highlight areas of concern or areas that required improvement. This was used to develop objectives for the first year, namely:

Connected Council Theme

Objective 1: To be an open and inclusive employer, promoting a culture of dignity, respect and collaboration to create greater capacity to respond to change and better ways of working.

Caring Theme

Objective 2: People with learning disabilities are helped to be more independent. They are enabled to find employment and live in their own homes as part of the community.

Objective 3: Older people continue to live at home for as long as possible, maintaining their independence in their local community.

Objective 4: Increase the number of children who are entitled to the 2,3,4 offer achieving a good level of development by the age of 5

Learning Theme

Objective 5: Pupil attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged¹ young people is improved;

Objective 6: Greater work readiness of all children and young people particularly for disadvantaged young people;

Objective 7: More young people from disadvantaged, BME backgrounds as well as people with a disability do well at school.

Living Theme

Objective 8: We will help all care leavers to have a good place to live with the support they need

Objective 9: We will identify and reduce the inequalities of health outcomes of BME populations in Doncaster, particularly on access to Mental Health Services

Objective 10: We will support more people to take up opportunities to get involved in

¹ Disadvantaged pupils include those eligible for FSM in the last 6 years or are looked after children for at least one day or are adopted from care.

Due Regard Statement – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Framework

community life through volunteering and participation, particularly for young people and people from BME communities

Working Theme

Objective 11: Increasing the number of Care Leavers entering Employment, Education or Training – so reducing the gap between the Doncaster and Yorkshire & Humber %

Objective 12: Increase the number of people from BME communities that take up apprenticeship opportunities in Doncaster

Objective 13: Reduce the gap in female employment rates and female employment wage rates with organisations within Doncaster that we can influence.

6 Decision Making

7 Monitoring and Review

8 Sign off and approval for publication

DONCASTER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) PEER FEEDBACK

Aim of Review:

- Develop a clearer understanding of ‘what good looks like’ by Doncaster Council and how it can be achieved.
- Increase levels of confidence amongst staff in different departments about equality, diversity and inclusion and how to implement policies and procedures aimed at minimising inequality, promoting inclusion and diversity, and providing equality of opportunity internally and externally.
- Create a better network on equality nationally.

Activity:

The LGA visited the council on Thursday and Friday 8/9 December 2016. Three peers attended, including, Becca Singh, Pauline Ellis (Leeds Council) and Kirsty Wilkinson (Newcastle Council).

During their visit, the peers met with a range of staff including:

- Directors
- Cabinet
- The Assistant Director for the Strategy and Performance Unit
- The Assistant Director for HR Communications and Executive Office
- Members of the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion steering group
- Partners including the leads for anti-poverty, financial inclusion, community cohesion and the independent chair of the Inclusion and Fairness Forum.
- Front Line staff
- People Managers
- A group meeting with a selection of cross party Members and individual meetings with the Portfolio Holder for Equalities Diversity and Inclusion (Cllr Glyn Jones) and the Chair of OSMC (Councillor John Mounsey).
- Staff with direct responsibility for Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

A series of initial quick wins and longer term recommendations were provided for consideration and included:

- Strengthening Governance arrangements and improving strategic oversight of EDI across the authority – including EDI Champions, allies and leads.
- Accessing best practice
- Understanding and engaging with our communities
- Improving the use of data to future proof services
- The development of real life stories to allow services the opportunity to tell their stories for use in the annual report.

The LGA Review Team was then provided with a draft Framework and identified that ‘Doncaster Council has actively consulted with the Local Government Association (LGA) in developing and strengthening their future approach to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion. It is recognised by the LGA, that good progress has been made in 2017, evidenced by the development of the EDI framework and associated governance arrangements as set out in this report’

Feedback

- 1. Golden Thread:** The LGA Review Team acknowledges that the golden thread is very apparent in terms of the vision giving a clear commitment to EDI. The four associated outcomes articulate how

this will be achieved, and the contribution the community can make towards this. The equality framework is similarly outcome-focused and sets clear equality objectives for each of the Doncaster Growing Together (DGT) outcomes.

- 2. Governance:** The LGA Review Team acknowledges that the governance arrangements seem overall very strong with clear lines of accountability, clear roles and responsibilities. It was identified Doncaster Council may wish to consider ensuring Governance arrangements are explicit.

The Terms of Reference within the EDI Framework have been strengthened in order to better articulate the governance arrangements including, who will be responsible for delivering the actions and the frequency of EDI Board meetings. Doncaster have included, how performance will be measured and reported (i.e. through the council's existing quarterly performance monitoring process)

Doncaster Council may wish to give future consideration to:

- How roles and responsibilities will be monitored, i.e. through PDRs, and/or will they be evaluated with the help of the employee surveys?
- How the sustainability of the Board's commitment over time and the risk of reducing attendance and their role being undermined as a result be considered?
- Options for mainstreaming some of the governance structures considered (e.g. the delivery team)?
- Future Member champion identification and training. This could also be an opportunity to bring a wider view about leadership into the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Framework Governance document.
- Inclusion of timescales – there are some are very ambitious and many are large scale that are upcoming or on-going (e.g. child led child poverty commission, review of support provided by disadvantaged pupils through pupil premium, HWBB transformation programme and Doncaster Place Plan, review of post 16 education). How will the outcomes of these activities feed back into EDI?

- 3. Doncaster Growing Together:** The Doncaster Growing Together prospectus clearly references/includes Equality and Diversity. 'We want Doncaster to be an open, diverse and inclusive place. Everyone has a part to play in recognising and valuing the benefits of diverse and inclusive communities; in seeking to improve quality of life and in creating a sense of belonging that leads to groups and individuals feeling respected and valued'. It is a strength that the EDI objectives link to DGT which is a partnership initiative.

Doncaster Council may wish to give future consideration to:

- The value in identifying the elements which are specifically for the council to lead on directly and make a more explicit link into the Council Plan to further strengthen the "Golden thread"

- 4. Framework Documentation:** The EDI Framework includes an introduction explaining its purpose, how the objectives have been selected and recognition that many actions are being undertaken but that the objectives selected have been identified as priority areas to monitor and report progress on etc.

It also acknowledged that the framework is a 4 year plan and that objectives can be reviewed each year to ensure they are relevant. Additional context has been added to the Framework to identify

how it links together, including an explanation around DGT. This provides a clearer picture and links the objectives identified with the key equality challenges Doncaster faces and is seeking to address based on clear evidence base. This ensures a clearer, objective analysis as to why these are the key ones for Doncaster and therefore why they are important.

To ensure that there is a clear identification of the baseline for the objectives in terms of where Doncaster is starting from and where the Borough wants to be, the baseline has been included within the EDI Framework, where it is also detailed how the objectives are linked to wider outcomes included within Doncaster's Borough Strategy (Doncaster Growing Together).

Doncaster Council may wish to give future consideration to:

- Targets in terms of where Doncaster would like to be are in development by the EDI Board, who will also monitor progress through regular meetings (defined within the Terms of reference). In doing so it will clearly outline what Doncaster wishes to achieve/change, how it will be done, alongside who will deliver it and how performance will be monitored (i.e. via the Council's quarterly performance arrangements)
- To ensure the EDI framework is more understandable to its intended audience, the final version should be considered by the Council's Internal Communications Team to ensure it is written in plain English and that there is consistency in the language used.
- It has been identified that In relation to Learning, Working, Living, Caring it is not clear as to what the themes, policy areas and objectives are.
- Would there be benefit in the DGT having a reference to Connected Council?

5. Objectives: It is has been made clear why some the objectives have been selected (e.g. care leavers accommodation). Baseline information (e.g. some stats on number of young people leaving care without suitable accommodation) has been included to provide context.

Doncaster Council may wish to give future consideration to:

- Produce an equality objectives glossary of terms
- A significant amount of work went into BME health needs assessment which now needs to be put in to action. It would be beneficial to clearly articulate what this work found. The measures need further work, and some could usefully be equality-profiled. E.g. could the employment rate measure be disaggregated for disabled people, BME people etc.?
- Ensuring that the objectives selected are balanced across the protected characteristics.
- Strengthen Links between the objectives and how they reflect identified need

6. Consultation and engagement: The LGA Review Team note that whilst the focus on outcomes for local people in the equality framework is to be applauded, there is no mention of the decision-making process and EIA/EA process, community engagement etc. Some consultation activity which has taken place to date has been referenced within the Due Regard statement.

Doncaster Council may wish to give future consideration to:

- The need to further test the objectives to ensure they are relevant and reflect the demands and needs of local residents.
- Links to the business planning process of the council would be advantageous.



Doncaster Council

Report

6th March 2018

To The Chair and Members of CABINET

Doncaster Council Housing Allocation Policy Review

Relevant Member(s)	Cabinet	Wards Affected	Key Decision
All		All wards	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report sets out the key proposed changes to Doncaster Council's Housing Allocations Policy following a review of the policy and response to emerging legislation. It also highlights the outcomes from the consultation.
 - 1.1 A key part of the review process has been to undertake significant consultation with customer, key stakeholder and elected members. This consultation process helps to ensure that we continue to have a policy that meets the needs of Doncaster people.
 - 1.2 The overall objectives of the Housing Allocations Policy are to:
 - Continue to house those in need within Doncaster.
 - Support stable and vibrant communities;
 - Reflect local priorities;
 - Make the best use of housing stock;
 - Have a clear system in place setting out a framework of eligibility, qualification and priority of access to council homes and nominations made to Housing Associations;
 - Fulfil the Council's Obligations under Part VI and VII of the 1996 Housing Act and Homelessness Act 2002 as amended by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. NO EXEMPTIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Cabinet are asked to agree the Council's Housing Allocations Policy revisions to be implemented from April 2018.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. This policy sets out the revised framework for housing allocations of council homes and housing association nominations in Doncaster. Each year approximately 1,500 council homes out of a total housing stock of approximately 20,200 homes are re-let. This review aims to ensure that the policy is fit for purpose and responsive to changes in housing demand.

BACKGROUND

5. The Housing Allocations Policy was last reviewed and changes agreed in December 2012 following publication of the Localism Act 2011. The policy was implemented in August 2013, after a full review of the Housing Register and updates to the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) IT system.

- 5.1 In 2016/17, at the request of Doncaster Council, St Leger Homes completed a review of the existing policy, which identified 3 proposed changes which were subject to public consultation with customer and key stakeholders

- 5.2 In March 2017 it was agreed that the implementation of the proposed changes be paused to enable an effective policy response to:

- The impact of welfare reforms locally;
- The Housing and Planning Act (H&PA) 2016;
- A review of the homeless system and what the barriers are to effectively supporting resettlement;
- The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and draft code of guidance.

- 5.3 A further review from October 2017 to January 2018 identified further proposed changes.

PROPOSALS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

6. The proposed key changes to the policy are set out below:

- 6.1 **Proposal 1 – Allowing predominantly older owner occupiers onto the housing register** to enable them to access appropriate accommodation, where they have no more than one property that they have equity in, and the equity does not exceed £120k.

- This proposed change recognises that rehousing applicants in this category can reduce pressure on potential social care assistance and also makes best

use of the housing stock by providing another housing option to predominantly older people.

6.2 Proposal 2 - Include a 'Right to Move' exception to the local connection criteria to reflect a legal requirement for council and housing association tenants who need to move to a particular location for employment under the 'Right to Move'

- A legal Right to Move for social housing tenants was introduced in March 2015 under an amendment to section 169 of the Housing Act 1996 for those who need to move to take up a job or live closer to employment or training to support social mobility. We are currently accommodating this under any special circumstances within the local connection exemptions; however, we want to make this an explicit category.

6.3 Proposal 3 – A direct officer for full duty homeless applicants who have not bid on available properties. Where applicants are assessed in the platinum band with a full housing duty in accordance with part vii of the housing act 1996 and homelessness act 2002, as amended by the homeless reduction act 2017 who have not placed a bid on suitable and reasonable accommodation after one month, will have the duty discharged by a suitable offer of accommodation. Applicants will still have the right to review under the homelessness legislation if they think that the accommodation offered is unsuitable.

- To assist an applicant to move on into suitable accommodation as quickly as possible and enable a more streamlined process into a permanent home. To manage customers' expectations and ensure that there is also a quicker move on from temporary accommodation, ensuring best use of specialised supported accommodation.

6.4 Proposal 4 – Create a homeless prevention priority where an applicant is not entitled to any help with their housing costs, to prevent a homeless presentation. Suspending and backdating applications and activating them when they are able to afford accommodation

- This would include cases where parents say that a young adult has to move out (Family License Termination), which, in many cases, significantly impacts on the life chances of the young person. By backdating the applicant's effective date (priority will be based on their circumstances at the time of reactivating their application) the applicant can make a planned move without being disadvantaged. This would also alleviate pressure on the frontline homelessness service and provision of temporary accommodation.

6.5 Proposal 5 – Create a resettlement status in the platinum band to support rehousing to settled accommodation from a resettlement pathway, with an effective date backdated to the date they engaged with the resettlement process.

- To support early intervention and prevention through a resettlement pathway process by registering a pending housing application. When it is deemed they are ready and able to manage a tenancy, the application will be activated and given Platinum priority, with their effective date being the date the applicant started to engage in the resettlement process. This would enable the applicant to be higher up the waiting list as a recognition that they

have worked through the resettlement pathway. This would enable more effective move on from supported housing placements to make places available for those who need them.

6.6 **Proposal 6 - Removal of the debt element criteria for applicants under the resettlement status as a reason to refuse access to the register**

- Significant investment goes into supporting individuals through the resettlement process. The current requirement to have no housing related debt is a barrier to effectively addressing the impacts of rising homelessness and resulting in applicants not moving out of expensive supported accommodation into independent living. This is also resulting in applicants falling back into rough sleeping and is undermining the opportunities we have to address rough sleeping as individuals feel that it's pointless working with services because we won't house them anyway because they owe a debt. The debt will not be written off, just disregarded for access to the housing register.

CONSULTATION

7. Consultation was initially carried out in December 2016 and January 2017 with Council and St Leger Homes employees, St Leger Homes Board, council tenants, partners, stakeholders, housing providers and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for housing. Details of the consultation are included in the background papers to this report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that 6 proposals are adopted and included within the new Allocations Policy.

- 8.2 The proposal that is not recommended for adoption of those consulted upon is that which would restrict applicants from bidding for properties that are bigger than their identified need where a financial viability assessment shows that they would be unaffordable. The unaffordability would be as a result of welfare reform changes that introduced the Social Sector Size Criteria, commonly known as the 'Bedroom Tax'. The reason for not recommending adoption is based on the responses to the consultation where 29% of respondents felt that this was not appropriate and that it did not take account of the longer term need for growing families or changes in financial circumstances. Responses to the consultation from elected members also highlighted these issues.

- 8.3 For all the proposals, the majority of respondents to the consultation were agreement with the changes. On two of the proposals the percentage of respondents who disagreed with the changes was over 10%, whilst it is acknowledged that not everyone was in agreement; it is felt that the benefits of implementing the proposed changes outweigh the perceived negative feedback. The rationale for still implementing the changes is set out below:

- **Accepting predominantly older owners into the General Band** - widening access to affordable appropriate housing options in this way promotes independent living and reduce demand on support services e.g. adaptations and Adult Social Care. The policy will ensure that those able to resolve their

situation with low or no housing needs are given the lowest priority. It is therefore not a detriment to all other applicants.

- **Removal of debt criteria for access to housing register for applicant in Resettlement Priority** – Removing this criterion will ensure that applicants who have had a material change in their circumstance and are engaging in the resettlement pathways have the opportunity to move out of supported accommodation into independent living. Access to permanent housing because of previous debt is a key barrier for applicants who are in supported housing. Significant investment is made in supporting individuals to stop rough sleeping and undertake a resettlement journey, to hold a previous debt as a reason to prevent someone who is ready to move to independent living from doing so doesn't make sense. It also results in applicants falling back into rough sleeping as they do not see the point of undertaking a challenging resettlement pathway with no opportunity of housing at the end of the journey.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

9. To ensure the objectives of the Housing Allocations Policy are delivered in relation to providing stable and cohesive communities whilst making the best use of stock and meeting housing need in Doncaster with the resources available.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

10. The implications on the council's key outcomes are as follows:

Outcomes	Implications
<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	<p>Changes to the Housing Allocations Policy will enable Doncaster to meet its legal requirement to enable social housing tenants to register for housing to facilitate access to offers of employment and training.</p>
<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for 	<p>The Housing Allocations Policy is a framework for access to affordable housing to support sustainable tenancies and communities, meeting housing need using the best use of our available resources.</p> <p>All allocations will be made in accordance with Doncaster Council's Tenancy Strategy which defines the type and length of tenancies offered to support vibrant and sustainable communities.</p>

<p>keeping Doncaster Clean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	
<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	<p>An effective Housing Allocations Policy ensure that properties are allocated to those in need and makes best use of the housing stock. Ensuring families are adequately housed in quality accommodation has a positive impact on educational attainment. The policy supports access to a stable home for those most in need and recognises the need to move on quickly from temporary and unsuitable housing.</p>
<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	<p>Vulnerability is one of the key factors that have been taken into account when identifying housing needs. The inclusion of home owners with a greater equity should have a positive impact on ensuing older people can live independently for longer.</p>
<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>Procedures for the management of allocation of council homes are in place to ensure the process is efficient and customer focused.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

11. The risk of not accepting the revisions to the Housing Allocations Policy is that the Council would not be making best use of the limited social housing and not have a

fit for purpose policy that had regard to changes in demand and relevant emerging issues.

- 11.1 Not adopting the size restrictions proposal has the potential to allow applicants to put themselves into a position where they are moving into a home that they may struggle to afford which could lead to increased rent arrears and debt. In these circumstances appropriate support will be given to minimise the risk of debt.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...HW..... Date...23.02.18.....]

12. It is a legal requirement under the Housing Act 1996 that the council makes all allocations of housing accommodation in accordance with a published scheme. The Act provides the framework for allocating housing accommodation. The provisions of the Localism Act 2011 allow the council the freedom to determine who qualifies for housing accommodation in its area, and develop solutions, which make best use of its social housing stock.

‘Guidance for Local Authorities in England on the Allocation of Accommodation’ was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in June 2012 and ‘Providing social housing for local people: statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England’ was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in December 2013. Local authorities are required to have regard to both these guidance documents when exercising their functions under the Acts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...JCr..... Date.....08.02.18.....]

13. The financial impact resulting from the implementation of the Housing Allocations Policy review is not yet known and further work will be required to accurately cost this.

The policy will be fit for purpose, ensuring the best use of the housing stock in order to maximise lettings rents and to ensuring the rent loss from void properties is managed effectively.

The proposed changes to the existing IT software to reflect the addition of further information fields and the associated costs of a tri-annual review of the Housing register following the policy being approved will be required, under normal circumstances the review costs will be managed with existing resources.

At this stage no additional resources have been identified should there be any resulting costs be in excess of existing resources.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...AC..... Date...07.02.18..]

14. There are no human resources implications specific to the recommendation to agree the Council’s Housing Allocations Policy.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...PW..... Date...07.02.18.....]

15. It is understood that minor changes will need to be made to the existing Choice

Based Lettings IT system to support the proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Policy, which St Leger Homes will progress directly with the 3rd party supplier.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...RS..... Date...08.02.17.....]

16. The proposals put forward suggest that the changes to the housing allocation will ensure that barriers to accessing housing are reduced for some of our most vulnerable members of the community. The home environment is important in enabling access to other health improving opportunities, for example employment, social networks, essential services and amenities such as green space. Access to decent and adequate housing is critically important in terms of health and wellbeing. Good housing offers a stable foundation from which to build a home, and does so through providing shelter, security and space for family life and activities, privacy, personal identity and development. The home provides us with a sense of belonging and connection to where we live and acts as a springboard to develop other aspects of our life.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...GS..... Date.....16.02.18.....]

17. A Due Regard Statement has been completed and is attached to this report.
- 17.1 We have considered the impact of the Housing Allocations Policy on access to social housing across Doncaster and recognise that we cannot meet the demand for this type of accommodation within existing turnover. Therefore, it is essential that we make best use of Council stock by ensuring that applicants with the highest housing need are provided with the most appropriate accommodation.
- 17.2 Each protected characteristic has been considered as part of this process.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

18. None

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Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
Allocations Policy 2018

DRAFT



Doncaster
Council

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Section 1 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This is Doncaster Council's Housing Allocations Policy. The policy is operated on behalf of Doncaster Council by its Arm's Length Management Organisation, St Leger Homes of Doncaster.

1.1 Policy aims and objectives

As we do not own enough properties to meet the demand from everyone who has registered to move to one of our homes, we need to have a system in place which aims to give priority for housing to those who are in most housing need and reflects local priorities.

- This document sets out how we will assess applicants and let our properties and undertake our statutory duties to ensure that reasonable preference is given to applicants in housing need,
- Making use of our housing stock
- Supporting stable and vibrant communities by creating sustainable tenancies;
- Fulfilling our Obligations under Part VI and VII of the 1996 Housing Act and Homelessness Act 2002 as amended by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017.
- That we allocate properties according to our duties under the equalities legislation and in accordance with our tenancy strategy. Doncaster Council and St Leger Homes of Doncaster are committed to making sure that all people are treated fairly and allocations are effectively monitored

1.2 Legal Framework

The Housing Act 1996 part 6 ("the Act") requires the council to make all allocations of housing accommodation in accordance with a published scheme. This document is the full scheme, a summary of this scheme is available free of charge to anyone who asks for a copy, and can be found at www.doncasterhomechoice.co.uk.

The Act provides the framework for allocating housing accommodation, and defines categories of people who must be given reasonable preference when allocating accommodation. These categories, including locally agreed priorities are outlined in section 4.

The Act also requires the council to outline its position with regard to giving applicants choice on the housing offer or to allow households to make a statement of preference on the area in which they wish to live this is in section 1.4.

The provisions of the Localism Act 2011 allow the council the freedom to determine who qualifies for housing accommodation in its area, and develop solutions, which make best use of its social housing stock.

'Guidance for Local Authorities in England on the Allocation of Accommodation' was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in June 2012. Local authorities are required to have regard to this guidance when exercising their functions under Part 6 of the 1996 Act.

'Providing social housing for local people: statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England' was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in December 2013. Local authorities are required to have regard to this guidance when exercising their functions under Part 6 of the 1996 Act.

The policy will have regard to subsequent legislative changes including on criteria or eligibility.

1.3 Related strategies

This policy has regard to:-

- Doncaster Council's Housing Strategy 2015 – 2025
- Doncaster Council's Tenancy Strategy 2018
- Doncaster Council's Place Plan 2016 – 2021
- Doncaster Council's Homeless Strategy

1.4 Statement of choice

We advertise available properties through a choice based lettings scheme known as 'Doncaster HomeChoice'. The scheme enables applicants to view each available property so that they can choose which properties to bid on from the properties they are eligible to move to. This system gives more transparency and choice to the allocation process as we will give feedback on how each property is let through the Recent Lets page on our website. This and other available information, will explain how your application will be assessed and your chances of being rehoused. More information is available on our website at www.doncasterhomechoice.co.uk.

Section 2 Eligibility

2.0 Eligibility

All applications will be considered. The Act and associated legislation states that some applicants are not eligible for an allocation of social housing (except for certain existing social housing tenants including those seeking a transfer who are to be given reasonable preference). Those who are assessed as not being eligible will be notified in writing. We will give the reasons why and inform the applicant that they have the right to a review, as outlined in section 7.

2.1 Who is not eligible?

A person from abroad who is subject to immigration control within the meaning of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 is ineligible for an allocation of housing accommodation unless they :-

- Fall into one of the categories of people set out in regulations who are allowed to apply:
- Or where the Secretary of State has prescribed a household as being ineligible for the allocation of social housing by local authorities in England

We will not allocate to two or more people jointly where one party is ineligible.

Where the applicant falls into one of the ineligible groups, but is a current council or housing association tenant and is requesting a transfer, they may be eligible if their assessed housing need is in a reasonable preference group as defined by the Housing Act 1996 Part VI.

As previously stated the eligibility of persons, including those from abroad is determined by the Secretary of State and is subject to change. We will have regard to any changes that occur after the publication of this policy.

Eligibility for an allocation may change over time therefore acceptance on to the register does not guarantee that the person will be allocated accommodation. Eligibility will be confirmed again at the point of consideration of making an offer of accommodation and on review of their application. Where a person's circumstances have changed and they are no longer eligible, their application will be removed from the housing register.

Section 3 Qualification

In addition to being eligible, applicants need to then qualify to join the housing register.

Those who are assessed as non-qualifying will be notified in writing. We will give the reasons why and inform the applicant that they have the right to a review, as outlined in section 7

3.0 Who does not qualify?

- Applicants without a Local Connection
- Applicants under the age of 16 years
- Applicants who own or have a financial interest and/or have transferred ownership of a property but have continuing rights to live there with equity in their property of more than £120,000 will not be registered unless they have an assessed housing need which they are unable to resolve. This is to support access to affordable housing predominantly for older people to access appropriate sheltered housing and reduce demand on Adult Social Care
- Applicants or members of their household who have a history of significant antisocial behaviour which may include violence or threats of violence to staff or agents of Doncaster Council , St Leger Homes of Doncaster, Registered Providers, previous landlords or the police or if they had been a tenant would have been considered to be a breach of tenancy
- Applicants or members of their household with a history of significant unsatisfactory tenancy conduct
- Applicants or members of their household with housing related debt equivalent to 8 weeks rent arrears with the exception of applicants in the Platinum Resettlement Category who have been identified as ready to move into independent living and are engaging with the resettlement process

We reserve the right to consider applicants in exceptional circumstances who are defined as non-qualifying above, including current Doncaster Council tenants who have accrued housing related debt and have been recommended for rehousing to smaller accommodation by the SLHD Tenancy sustainability team.

3.1 Local Connection

Doncaster HomeChoice operates a scheme with a Local Connection Criteria. Applicants aged 16 or over are able to apply and they must provide evidence that they have a local connection to Doncaster for a minimum 3 years up to and including the date of their application.

A person has a local connection where;

- They have lived for the last 3 years in Doncaster through their own choice – this does not include residence in prisons, institutions or where they have been rehoused in temporary accommodation in the area by another authority
- They are currently employed in Doncaster and have been for the last 3 years
- They have direct family who live in Doncaster and have done so for the last 3 years. Direct family members are spouses, civil partners, parents, grandparents, sons, daughters, brothers or sisters
- They have other special circumstances that connect them to Doncaster

3.2 Applicants exempt from the Local Connection Criteria

- Members of the armed forces and former service personnel, where the application is made within 5 years of discharge
- Bereaved spouses and civil partners of member of the armed forces leaving service family accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner
- Serving or former members of the reserved forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as result of their service
- Existing social housing tenants who have a need to move to a particular locality in Doncaster where failure to meet that need would cause hardship; and have a need to move for work-related reasons, as set out in regulations under the Right to Move 2015
- Homeless applicants as defined in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 where they have not been referred to another housing authority
- Applications may be considered via the National Witness Protection Scheme. This will be decided on a case by case basis by the Head of Access to Homes or Director of Housing Services of St Leger Homes of Doncaster
- DMBC Council Tenants who are assessed into a priority band of Platinum, Gold or Silver
- DMBC Council Tenants on the separate transfer list have to have lived in their current tenancy for a minimum of 12 months

3.3 What checks are made on applicants and what documents are needed?

An application will remain inactive until we receive all the information we require to complete a full assessment. This means that we cannot allocate a property to the applicant during this period. The onus is on the applicant to provide information to confirm their identity, residence and circumstances within 28 days of their original application or change in circumstances.

As a minimum requirement, all applicants must provide the following;

- Two forms of identification, one of which shows their current address, and one which confirms their National Insurance number; and photographic ID where available
- Confirmation of Local Connection
- Proof of Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit for dependant children
- Proof of residence of other household members
- Any evidence or information to support a priority
- Validation of information supplied from the Border and Immigration Agency.
- Landlord References from a current and/or previous landlord where you have been resident at your current address for less than 12 months
- A satisfactory home visit and rental statement and confirmation of no known anti-social behaviour from partner agencies may be accepted in the absence of a landlord reference

Where the applicant is in the Resettlement Category and is ready to move into independent living more flexibility will be applied

3.4 Financial resources

Applicants must give details of their financial resources on the housing application form. This includes any interest in or ownership of property or land and we use this to determine if they qualify to be accepted onto the Housing Register. We also use this information to decide what, if any, priority we will award.

Where applicants choose not to disclose this information we reserve the right to not register a housing application.

3.5 Tenancy Sustainability

A key part of the process involves a Tenancy Sustainability Assessment. This will identify those applicants who may be at risk of failing to maintain a tenancy.

The assessment will provide an opportunity to identify the best housing solution for the applicant and the support that may be necessary to ensure the best chance of a sustained tenancy.

Before we offer a tenancy, we will assess whether an applicant has any housing support needs that could affect their ability to manage a tenancy successfully. This could include referring an applicant to supported accommodation before we offer a tenancy.

We assess Housing applications from ex-offenders through a multi-agency risk assessment process. St Leger Homes is a member of the Safer Doncaster Partnership and we work with South Yorkshire Police, Probation Service and other partners to complete this process. This ensures that any offers of housing we make are in accordance with the risk assessment framework.

3.6 Harassment and Violence

Where an applicant has said they need to move, because they are suffering violence, threats of violence or harassments they will be assessed by Housing Assessment Panel. The panel will consider the evidence provided and a decision will be made to whether additional preference should be given.

We will consider other measures e.g. close circuit television, injunctions, mediation or sanctuary schemes but our primary concern is for the ongoing safety and wellbeing of the victim.

3.7 What happens if false information is provided or where relevant information is withheld?

It is essential to supply the correct information as any applicant seeking to obtain accommodation or enhance their priority by making a false statement, by withholding relevant information, or by failing to tell the Doncaster HomeChoice about any changes in circumstances, may have their application cancelled.

3.8 Deliberate worsening of circumstances

Where we have reason to believe that an applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances to get housing priority we will suspend their application and investigate. If our investigation cannot show deliberate intent, we will reinstate their priority from their original effective date.

Any applicant who has deliberately worsened their circumstances will not be awarded additional priority. However, we also reserve the right to cancel their application.

If the applicant has been allocated a property in these circumstances then we may take court action to evict them, under Ground 5 in Schedule 2 Housing Act 1985 (as amended by section 146 of 1996 Housing Act).

3.9 Suspensions

Some circumstances may result in your application being suspended for up to 12 months. Following a 12 month period the application will be reassessed. The circumstances this includes can be:

- Certain criminal convictions
- Customers in the bronze and general band who have bid and then refused three offers will have their application suspended for six months. This includes refusals of adapted accommodation which would have been suitable.
- Prisoners who do not have a release date
- If we find out that you have become ineligible or non-qualifying to remain on the register, we will suspend you while we carry out our investigations.
- Where we decide that an applicant requires tenancy support to be put in place before we offer a tenancy
- Where an applicant is in the Resettlement Pathway and is not ready to move into independent living
- Where an applicant is in the Homeless Prevention category where they do not have access to housing costs and homelessness can be prevented.
- Where an applicant has not updated their housing application at the request of Doncaster HomeChoice within the timescales given. Applications will be reinstated from the original application date if contact is made within a 3 month period of being suspended and rehousing is still required.

Section 4 How the banding scheme works

4.0 How the banding scheme works

This section explains the banding scheme we use to decide the priority we give to an applicant. There are five bands within the scheme, three priority bands, Platinum, Gold and Silver and two non priority bands, Bronze and General.

We have a Transfer List outside of the scheme for non-priority transfers.

The banding scheme takes into account reasonable preference categories as set out in section 166A(3) of the Housing Act 1996 as amended..

All Doncaster Council tenants who are accepted onto the register will be given advice and support to access the Mutual Exchange register, .

The band in which an applicant is placed, is based on the information supplied on the application form, and relevant supporting information confirming current circumstances.

4.1 Platinum Band

Platinum Band
<p>Full Duty Homeless applicants in accordance with part VII of the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002 as amended by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017</p> <p>Households who are in priority need who have a local connection and have not made themselves intentionally homeless. It includes applicants who do not have a local connection but who would not be safe if they were made to return to an area where they have a local connection. We will award Platinum band from the decision date if alternative suitable private rented accommodation is not available.</p> <p>Where an applicant has been in this priority band for a period of one month and has not placed a bid on reasonable or suitable accommodation an offer of suitable accommodation will be made to discharge the full housing duty.</p>
<p>A resettlement status to support those engaging in the resettlement pathway in supported housing ready to move into independent living.</p> <p>Applicants engaging in a resettlement pathway in supported housing who have been assessed by the Support Provider in conjunction with the client as no longer requiring the level of support provided by the service and;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where the move to independent accommodation has been identified as appropriate and• An appropriate package of resettlement/longer term support is ready to be put in place <p>Applicants in this category will be moving out as a planned move and be actively engaging with the resettlement process.</p> <p>Their priority will be backdated to reflect their time in the pathway where an earlier application was made.</p>
<p>Applicants whose property is in the Doncaster Borough and has been approved for demolition or clearance by the Council. We will move applicants to the platinum band at a date provided by Doncaster Council's nominated officer.</p> <p>Lodgers, who are able to prove 12 month's residency prior to the clearance order being made, can submit a separate application.</p> <p>Owner Occupiers in the approved demolition or clearance area will be moved into the Platinum Band once they have formally agreed to sell their property to Doncaster Council where this is necessary to progress the regeneration scheme.</p> <p>Private tenants in the approved demolition or clearance area will be moved into the Platinum Band once their landlord has formally agreed to sell their property to Doncaster Council.</p>

Applicants will be placed in this band where major works are required to their property and a vulnerable group is in residence as defined in Housing Health and Safety Rating System making it uninhabitable and after an assessment has been carried out as to whether they can resolve their own housing need. Applicants will be placed in this band from a date directed by the Council's Housing enforcement team or the Executive Management Team of St Leger Homes of Doncaster. Applicants who obstruct any repairs will have this priority removed.

Applicants unable to return home from hospital, as their current property does not meet their medical needs or where temporary accommodation would be inappropriate or they require immediate re housing preventing an admission to hospital or institution.

This category includes people who have been in hospital or other institutional care setting where their current home is no longer suitable to return to, even as a temporary measure. Confirmation of the situation must be provided stating that the applicant is ready for discharge and their current property is unsuitable giving the reasons why. Applicants who did not have a home they could reasonably occupy before they went into hospital will be subject to a homelessness assessment. We will award platinum priority from the date we are notified of discharge arrangements. In the event that the Council decides the current home is suitable to adapt or have additional support and this is the preferred solution, the application will not be placed in the platinum band.

Armed Forces and former armed forces personnel in urgent housing need within 5 years of discharge.

This will include those;

- Leaving armed forces with no suitable accommodation and in urgent housing need
- Those injured or disabled needing urgent rehousing
- Bereaved spouses or civil partners who will no longer be entitled to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence and do not have alternative suitable accommodation

Platinum priority will be given following confirmation of discharge and verification of housing circumstances, including financial resources. .

Foster carers in Doncaster who do not have suitable accommodation to foster and are not able to resolve their own circumstances.

Confirmation is required from the relevant foster caring service stating that the applicant is an agreed foster carer where their current accommodation is unsuitable and they are unable to resolve their own circumstances. Priority will be awarded from the date that they are agreed as a foster carer.

Tenants vacating adapted accommodation where the adaptations are no longer required by a member of the household.

This priority will be awarded where the Council is requesting an urgent move due to the extensive nature of the adaptations with an identified applicant in

need.

4.2 Gold Band

Gold Band

Applicants whose current home is overcrowded by two or more bedrooms.

We will use the following criteria to assess overcrowding.

A separate bedroom to each:

- Married or cohabiting couple
- Person who is not a child (age 16 or over)
- Pair of adolescents aged 10-16 years of the same sex
- Pair of children aged under 10 years of age regardless of sex.

In the case of a property with 2 reception rooms, one room will be counted as a bedroom provided it could be reasonably used as such. If the overcrowding occurs for reasons other than natural overcrowding proof will be required that there was no other option and that the situation has existed for a 6 month period. Proof of permanent residence will be required.

We will not rehouse an applicant into accommodation that results in them being statutory overcrowded.

Applicants occupying a property that has been assessed as a category one hazard under the Health and Safety Rating System with a vulnerable group in residence, excluding crowding and space standards.

Applicants living in private accommodation assessed to be prejudicial to health as defined by the Environmental Protection Act or Category One under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System Regulations, where it is agreed by the Council's Housing enforcement team and the Doncaster HomeChoice Manager that the most appropriate course of action is to re-house the household. Where the applicant is the owner occupier of the property they are only eligible if they are not able to resolve their circumstances (this includes raising funds through a loan or mortgage). In all cases, where access to undertake works is unreasonably restricted this may result in priority being removed.

Applicants in critical need for re-housing due to medical or welfare reasons.

Medical priority will be given to people who are chronically sick or severely disabled where their current home is substantially unsuitable for their needs. In the case of physical disability, a suitably qualified Doncaster Council Officer will assess whether adaptation work to an applicant's home is appropriate. Priority will only be given if re-housing is assessed to be more appropriate than undertaking adaptation work to the applicants existing home and where

applicants do not have the ability to resolve their own circumstances.

Welfare grounds covers applicants who need to move for urgent social or welfare reasons where there is an immediate need to move.

This would include special guardians, holders of a residence order and family and friends who are not foster carers but who have taken on the care of a child because the parents are unable to provide care and has been approved by Children Services.

This category also includes those who could not be expected to find their own accommodation, such as young adults with learning disabilities who wish to live independently in the community with appropriate support.

Applicants that need to move to a particular location as not to do so would suffer hardship to themselves or others.

This includes those who will give or receive support to access specialist medical treatment or give or receive care. In these cases an established ongoing medical need must be demonstrated such as mental illness or disorder, physical or learning disability, or progressive medical condition. We also take into account access to transport and distance which impacts on the ability to give or receive support or care in a significant way.

This also includes Doncaster Council Tenants who are affected by Welfare Reform and under-occupying their current tenancy by 2 or more bedrooms and where rehousing to smaller alternative accommodation is recommended by SLHD Tenancy sustainment team following assessment of their circumstances.

Applicants in service tenancies.

Applicant in service or tied tenancies will need to contact the Doncaster HomeChoice team as soon as it is known they must leave their accommodation and evidence of this will need to be provided.

If an applicant is in accommodation tied to their employment with Doncaster Council and they are retiring (or the service is subject to change), consideration will be given by Doncaster Council to them being given the opportunity to remain in their current accommodation where a service tenancy is no longer required. Any application will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Council's nominated officer in conjunction with the Director of Housing Services at St Leger Homes and will include reference to the continuing needs of the service and type of accommodation occupied and other criteria outlined in this Allocations Policy.

Leaving Care.

Any young person under the age of 25 that the Council has assessed and owes a duty to house under the Children Act.

Applicants who have been assessed by Doncaster Council's Housing Options Service as at risk of homelessness who have a local connection who are not statutory homeless and have a priority need under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002 as amended by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017.

Violence or Harassment

All applicants who require rehousing as a result of violence, threats of violence or harassment will be assessed by a multi agency assessment panel who will consider the evidence provided as to the severity and therefore the urgency of the rehousing need and whether additional preference should be given. Other measures will also be considered e.g. close circuit television, injunctions, Mediation or Sanctuary Schemes but the primary consideration is for the ongoing safety and wellbeing of the victim.

4.3 Silver Band

Silver Band

Doncaster Council tenants who are under occupying their current home and request to move to smaller accommodation.

This includes Doncaster Council Tenants who are affected by Welfare Reform and under-occupying their current tenancy by 1 bedroom and where rehousing to smaller alternative accommodation is recommended by SLHD Tenancy sustainability team following assessment of their circumstances.

Silver band priority will be awarded where the tenant has stated they wish to move to smaller accommodation where they are under-occupying their current home. Where applicants have housing related debt due to under-occupation they will be subject to an assessment by SLHD Tenancy sustainability team who will request priority dependant on the outcome of their assessment.

Applicants whose current home is overcrowded by 1 bedroom.

We will use the following criteria to assess overcrowding.

A separate bedroom to each:

- Married or cohabiting couple
- Person who is not a child (age 16 or over)
- Pair of adolescents aged 10-16 years of the same sex
- Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of sex.

In the case of a property with 2 reception rooms, one room will be counted as a bedroom provided it could be reasonably used as such. If the overcrowding occurs for reasons other than natural overcrowding, proof will be required that there was no other option and that the situation has existed for a 6 month period. Proof of permanent residence will be required.

<p>We will not rehouse an applicant into accommodation that results in them being statutory overcrowded.</p>
<p>Applicants who have been assessed by Doncaster Council's Housing Options Service as homeless without having a priority need under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002 as amended by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017.</p>
<p>Applicants who have been assessed by Doncaster Council's Housing Options Service as intentionally homeless and having a priority need in accordance with the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002 as amended by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017.</p>
<p>Applicants taking up a particular employment, education or training opportunity.</p> <p>All applicants will be assessed by Doncaster HomeChoice and Silver priority will be awarded based on individual need where applicant needs to move to a particular locality and hardship would be caused if they didn't move.</p>
<p>Applicants in substantial need for rehousing due to medical/health or welfare reasons.</p> <p>Medical priority will be given to people with an identified ongoing level of illness or disability. Within this category are applicants able to use the facilities within their current home, but is not wholly suitable for their needs due to physical or mental ill health. Their need will be assessed by a Medical Officer or Occupational Therapist.</p> <p>This category also includes applicants who need to move for moderate social or welfare reasons including to give or receive care.</p>
<p>Tenants vacating adapted properties where the adaptations are no longer needed by a member of the household</p>

4.4 Bronze Band

<p>Bronze Band</p>
<p>Those applicants whose priority band has been removed after they have refused 3 reasonable offers will be placed in the bronze band. This is with the exception of Platinum band Full Duty Homeless applicants who are eligible for one offer only before their priority is removed.</p> <p>Applicants who have not been assessed as having a priority but still wish to move will be placed in the bronze band with the exception of applicants indicated below.</p>

4.5 Transfer List

Transfer List
<p>Applicants who are Doncaster Council Tenants, who have lived in their property for over 12 months and are not eligible to be included in any category of the Housing Register will be placed onto the transfer list after a satisfactory inspection of their home and confirmation of satisfactory tenancy conduct. If an applicant is then assessed in to a Reasonable Preference Group detailed above, they will then be placed into the relevant priority band on the Housing Register.</p> <p>Applicants on the transfer list will be held in date order of application.</p>

4.6 General Band

General Band
<p>Applicants who own or have a financial interest in a property and have equity of less than £120,000.</p> <p>It is important that we give housing priority to those who need it the most. For this reason, where applicants have no identified housing need or are able to resolve their own situation will be registered in the General Band. We will consider someone as having sufficient finances to obtain housing for themselves where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They have assets and income of £120,000 and above <p>Where the applicant has specific requirements which they are unable to resolve applications will be considered within this threshold confirmation of their individual circumstances will be considered against the criteria of the Housing allocations policy. We will also take into account disposal of savings, assets or capital when calculating the resources of the applicant which will include the disposal of a property either below the market value or at nil value and any ongoing right of occupation.</p>

4.7 Effective and Registration dates

Applicants in the priority bands of Platinum, Gold and Silver will be placed in effective date order which is the date the priority was awarded. This means that all priority applicants are fairly awarded priority based on their change in circumstances and not their original registration date. If two applicants moved into a priority band on the same date then the applicant with the earlier registration date will take priority.

Bronze and General band applicants and Transfer list applicants will be held in order of registration date.

- If you are a serving or former armed forces personnel, we will backdate your registration date to reflect your length of service on receipt of your service record.
- If you are in the Platinum Resettlement priority we will backdate your effective date to the date of original application to reflect the length of time you have been in the resettlement pathway.
- If your application has previously been suspended under a Homeless Prevention category and you are now able to access housing costs through a planned move we will backdate your application date to the date of your original application. We will assess your circumstances and backdate any relevant priority effective date to reflect your original application date.
- Where an applicant has not updated their housing application at the request of Doncaster HomeChoice within the requested timescales and their application was suspended. Applications will be reinstated from the original application date if contact is made within a 3 month period of being suspended and rehousing is still required.

4.8 Removal of priority

Applicants who are assessed in the Platinum band who have been assessed as Full Duty Homeless in accordance with part VII of the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002 as amended by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and have not placed a bid on suitable and reasonable accommodation after one month may have their duty discharged by a suitable offer of accommodation.

Applicants who are in the Platinum, Gold or Silver priority bands and refuse three reasonable offers, will have their priority removed and will be placed in the Bronze band. The exception to this is applicants who are in Platinum band due to being assessed as Full Duty Homeless, as they would receive one offer of suitable accommodation only, in order to discharge the Council's housing duty under Part VII Housing Act 1996.

Applicants who are assessed in to the Bronze and General band who refuse three suitable offers of accommodation will have their application suspended for six months.

Where a demolition scheme is being held up because applicants are still in their properties, despite all reasonable attempts to help them find suitable

accommodation, one final offer of accommodation will be made. If the applicant refuses the property their priority may be cancelled and legal action may be taken to repossess the property.

If applicants are not actively bidding on properties where it would have been reasonable for them to do so, their application will be reviewed and they may lose their priority status.

It will be the applicant's responsibility to bid for available properties but support will be given where needed and actively identified.

Section 5 Restrictions on the allocation of properties

5.0 Restrictions on the allocation of properties

This section sets out the requirements which applicants may be expected to fulfil before they are allocated a tenancy including the restrictions we place on the allocation of properties.

What are the situations where an allocation may be denied or have a restriction placed on it?

Applicants under 18

Applicants under the age of 18 must fulfil one of the criteria outlined below to be eligible to be considered for a tenancy;

- Have a support mechanism in place or a key worker is available (each case will be assessed individually); or
- Have been accepted as homeless and in priority need under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996; or
- Be a recognised care leaver.

We will work in partnership with Doncaster Children's Trust and the 16/17 year old Protocol.

In these circumstances applicants will be allocated a License Agreement/**Equitable tenancy**.

We will establish if an applicant has a guarantor. We may not proceed with an allocation if a satisfactory guarantor cannot be provided.

Rent arrears and other housing debt

Normally applicants with rent arrears or other housing related debt equivalent to eight weeks rent arrears will not qualify to join the housing register until their arrears have been reduced. This includes current or former tenant arrears, although current Doncaster Council tenants affected by under-occupation restrictions to housing benefit under Welfare Reform will be assessed separately by SLHD Tenancy sustainability team and may be referred for rehousing under the scheme.

Housing related debt that is barred under the Limitations Act 1980 will not be taken into account.

If a customer is registered with housing related debt, it is expected that they will clear the arrears in full before any offer of accommodation is made if they are in a non-priority band.

Every case is considered on its merits and where there are extenuating circumstances, we may offer applicants a tenancy.

This mainly applies to applicants in Platinum, Gold and Silver bands and we would require an agreed repayment plan to be in place with regular payments being maintained before we would make an offer.

Prisoners

Prisoners' housing applications will be activated when they have their release date. Until then, their applications will not be activated. However an offer of accommodation will not be made until the prisoner is released.

Sensitive Let

Where a sensitive let is required due to the location of a property or other circumstances, we may adjust the property eligibility rules, banding order or allocate the property by Direct Match. This is in exceptional cases only.

5.1 What size and type of property will applicants be considered for?

Details of applicants' property eligibility can be found in appendix A. Where a property does not meet the identified housing needs of an applicant any offer may be withdrawn. This may be reviewed separately to the Housing Allocations Policy by a nominated Officer in SLHD and Doncaster Council.

5.2 Restrictions on flats and bungalows

There are certain circumstances where we restrict access to the property type based on factors such as age, disabilities, pets, household size etc. Where there are restrictions, the property advert will explain them so that applicants are aware.

The main restrictions are for ground floor flats, sheltered housing, bungalows or adapted properties. For these we usually restrict access to people over 60 or those who have been assessed by an Occupational Therapist as requiring a certain type of adapted accommodation or facility. Where a property is age designated we will consider applicants over 60 first and remaining applicants in reverse age order, starting with the oldest applicant. General band applicants will be considered after applicants in all other bands as above. If the property is adapted, priority will be offered to applicants with an assessed need for adaptations first. This means that we may bypass a higher priority applicant if they do not have this need.

We may also apply restrictions on an individual basis. Where there is purpose built or extensively adapted accommodation a direct nomination will be requested from Doncaster Council's Accessible Housing Register to ensure best use of housing stock.

5.3 What size home can an applicant apply for?

When looking at bedroom requirements, we have taken into account the shortage of family housing in Doncaster and our need to make the best use of our housing stock.

As a result, we assess the number of bedrooms a household requires by counting the number of people to be housed, their ages and gender of children.

The exception to this is where an applicant is requesting rehousing due to demolition/clearance. Here, the applicant can request another property with the same number of bedrooms as (or fewer bedrooms than) their current home, even if the household does not now meet the minimum household size rules.

A woman who is pregnant with appropriate medical confirmation will be assessed as a household with a child. If she already has a child, the unborn baby will be treated as if it were the same gender.

We take into account households that have; carers, shared access, equal or staying access to decide the number of bedrooms required.

We will also take account of the needs for more bedrooms for families approved to adopt or foster children.

Applicants may be considered for a bedroom in excess of their current assessed needs if they have staying access where a parent has the child up to the age of 17, to stay at least two nights in every week. We will require proof of access. If an extra bedroom is needed to give or receive care, we will require supporting evidence. We make a distinction between someone requiring frequent care and overnight care.

We will not make an offer of a property if it will result in statutory overcrowding.

5.4 Local Lettings policies

In the interest of creating and maintaining sustainable communities where people want to live, we may introduce local lettings policies.

Local lettings policies will usually be proposed by St Leger Homes but must be agreed by Doncaster Council and have agreed review dates.

As local lettings policies are subject to frequent review and change they are not listed in this document. A copy of any current policies in place can be found on the Doncaster HomeChoice website: www.doncasterhomechoice.co.uk

When we advertise properties within a local lettings scheme, we will make this clear in the advert.

Section 6 Advertising and Letting Properties

6.0 Advertising and Letting Properties

This section explains how Doncaster HomeChoice will advertise available properties; sort the bids once the bidding cycle has closed and then offer properties to the successful applicant.

Properties will be advertised in accordance with the publicised cycle.

6.1 Bidding for properties

Bids can be made by telephone, via the internet or in person at reception points.

We operate an assisted bidding list for applicants who require additional support.

Bids can be withdrawn by the applicant at any time within the cycle and reused on alternative properties.

When the bidding cycle is closed we will look at the generated list of applicants who have expressed an interest in a property. Following verification checks, we will offer the in the following way:

- Meeting the lettings criteria as stated in the property advert;
- Band;
- Effective date;
- Registration date.

This is with the exception of purpose built or extensively adapted accommodation where we will request nominations from Doncaster Councils Accessible Housing Register.

6.2 Low demand

We have a range of options available to enable successful allocation of accommodation. Where we know we have less demand for a property we will use one of the following options:

- Open Market
- Fast Track

Open Market

Applicants who do not meet the qualification requirements as detailed in Section 3.0 but can demonstrate that they can maintain a tenancy may be considered for the open market. These properties will be clearly marked during the advertising cycle.

Fast Track

In certain circumstances we may vary the property eligibility rules and invite applicants to place a bid on properties that they would normally not be able to bid on. These properties will be clearly advertised and may be advertised outside of the normal bidding cycle.

6.3 How do applicants find out if they have been allocated the property?

We will contact the successful applicant who will have to decide whether to accept the offer before they will be considered for further offers. If an applicant appears at the top of more than one shortlist in the same lettings cycle, they will be contacted and asked which property they prefer, unless they are currently under offer for a property advertised in a previous lettings cycle. Any offer is subject to confirmation that the applicant is still eligible and qualifying at the time of the offer.

Offers are made subject to a satisfactory verification process confirming the circumstances, eligibility and qualification of the applicant. Applicants will only be made one offer at a time. Once they are made an offer an applicant will not be considered for other offers of accommodation until the current offer is refused.

Applicants who are unsuccessful will not be contacted. However, feedback on homes that have been let will be published weekly at www.doncasterhomechoice.co.uk giving the successful applicant's band, effective date and registration date. This information and information on turnover of accommodation across the borough will help applicants understand their chances of being rehoused.

6.4 How long will applicants be given to decide whether to accept the offer of a property?

Applicants will normally be given 24 hours to make a decision on an offer after an accompanied viewing of the property.

6.5 Will all properties be advertised to bid on?

All properties will be advertised to bid on with the exception of properties required with the following criteria.

- **Purpose built properties or those with extensive adaptations** which meet the specific needs of identified applicants with mobility or other medical conditions where a direct let will ensure best use of stock, due to the lack of this type of accommodation
- **Housing Management purposes such as decanting during major refurbishment**, use as temporary accommodation, allocation to an applicant in the transfer band as a direct let or situations where the rehousing of a household must be a managed process and it is inappropriate to advertise and also cases identified through the No Homeless Process.
- **The Housing Assessment Panel** will assess and decide on Housing Management Lets. This may include applicants who are left in occupation of a Doncaster Council home. In exceptional cases where strict confidentiality is required a decision will be made by the Director of Housing Services at St Leger Homes and in their absence the Head of Service for Access to Homes.
- **Extra Care Housing Schemes** - Access to Extra Care housing will be assessed separately by a panel as these schemes need a balance of tenants with varying levels of personal care and support needs. This is outside of this process.

- **Regeneration Schemes** - Where a demolition area has been agreed by a Doncaster Council cabinet decision to allow for regeneration, it may be necessary to ring-fence properties in adjacent areas for applicants whose homes are to be demolished. In this instance, the decision to ring-fence will be made by a panel chaired by the Council's nominated officer. The following factors will be taken into account when making a decision to ring-fence properties:
 - Timescale of demolition;
 - Availability of suitable properties in the area;
 - Impact of other priorities.

Where there are complex or multiple needs that can only be met within a reasonable time within that area, a decision may be taken by the panel to lift the ring-fencing for such cases.

Feedback on these allocations will be advertised as a Direct Match.

6.6 What is a housing assessment panel?

There may be times when certain circumstances are not covered fully by the allocations policy or may need further assessment. These cases will be referred to the housing assessment panel. We will look at each case individually and assess it on its own merits. We will involve the appropriate agencies before we reach a decision, including multi agency meetings where appropriate.

6.7 What properties are given to the different bands?

Generally, properties will be advertised with a priority order of Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze, Transfer List and then General band. General band applicants will be considered after applicants in all other bands and applicants on the Transfer List. This is to meet applicants in identified housing need and give lower priority to applicants who have the resources available to meet their own housing need.

Certain properties will also be advertised giving applicants in the Open Market an opportunity to place a bid, these applicants will be considered after all other bands.

This priority order may be varied under the terms of individual local lettings policies, sensitive lets or fasttrack properties.

Applicants on the Transfer List who have been made three reasonable offers of accommodation may have their application suspended for a period of six months.

6.8 Adapted Properties

Adapted properties, with the exception of purpose build or extensively adapted properties will be advertised for applicants to bid on and priority will be given to applicants assessed as having an identified need for adapted accommodation. This will include younger people with assessed medical needs for adapted accommodation who will be eligible to bid on age restricted adapted accommodation, although any offer will be subject to a satisfactory risk assessment and Occupational Therapist assessment.

Eligible applicants will be assessed by an Occupational Therapist and their requirements determined by Doncaster Councils Accessible Housing Register (AHR).

In general, the tenancy of any adapted property will be in the sole name of the applicant with a disability.

6.9 Exhausted or nil shortlist

Where a property is advertised and not let, due to refusals or no bids, we reserve the right to vary property eligibility. On this rare occasion we may relax the eligibility criteria or age restrictions, to make best use of stock.

6.10 Type of tenancy that will be offered

The type of tenancy that will be offered will be granted in accordance with DMBC's Tenancy Strategy.

6.11 Withdrawing Offers or properties from advert

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to withdraw an offer for example where there is a change in the applicant's circumstances which affects their application or where false information has been given or relevant information has been withheld. All instances of offers being withdrawn will be discussed with the applicant. This includes where a property is no longer available to let or required for an emergency situation.

6.12 Offers to Employees/Elected Members/Board Members

In order that we are treating all applicants fairly, any applications from employees of Doncaster Council or St. Leger Homes of Doncaster, Elected Members or St Leger Homes of Doncaster Board Members and their relatives, must be disclosed on the application form. These applications will be processed in the normal way, but in order to demonstrate our allocation is both fair and transparent; offers will not be released without the approval of a Head of Service within St. Leger Homes of Doncaster or an appropriate designated officer.

6.13 Joint Tenancies

New tenants are required to take up joint tenancies where appropriate. This includes;

- Married couples
- Applicants living together as a couple
- Two or more people have originally joined the housing register together, if both or all applicants are moving into the property they should be granted a joint tenancy except in the case of
- Age designated accommodation where one party is not eligible; spouses and registered civil partners will be considered
- A person on the register wants a joint tenancy with someone who has also made an application.

6.14 Refusing an Offer

Applicants in all bands, with the exception of Full duty homeless applicants in the Platinum Band who are entitled to one reasonable offer only to discharge a housing duty, are eligible to three reasonable offers of accommodation before their application is reviewed. This includes offers of suitable adapted accommodation.

Applicants within the priority bands of Platinum, Gold or Silver who refuse three offers of suitable accommodation may have their priority removed and their application moved to the Bronze Band. Applicants within the non-priority bands of Bronze, or General Bands who refuse three suitable offers of accommodation may be suspended from the housing register for six months and be unable to bid for accommodation during this period.

Applicants on the Transfer List who refuse three reasonable offers of accommodation may also be suspended from the transfer register for six months.

Each case will be assessed individually as to the reason for their refusal before a decision is made to reduce priority or suspend an application. Applicants will be informed in writing and will be given the right to a review as in section 7.

Section 7 Right of Review

7.0 Right of review

This section details how applicants can request a review of certain decisions made by Doncaster HomeChoice.

Every application is made in accordance with the requirements set out in this policy document and any review will be considered by the Doncaster HomeChoice team for the following reasons and timescales.

7.1 Reasons for review

Applicants are entitled to a review in the following circumstances;

- If it is decided that they are ineligible to join the register. In this case, the applicant will be notified of the decision and the reason for it
- If it is decided that they do not qualify to join the register. In this case, the applicants will be notified of the decision and the reason for it
- Where applicants feel they have been unfairly treated in the allocation process
- Where applicants disagree with their registration or effective date
- Where applicants disagree with a removal of their priority
- Where applicants have been removed from the register other than at their request

7.2 The review process

In all review cases an applicant must make a request within 28 days of the date of the letter informing them of the decision.

A request for review should be made in writing however we will consider verbal requests in certain circumstances.

We aim to deal with an applicant's review within 28 days of receiving all documentation in support of the review. If we are unable to do so, we will acknowledge the review within that time advising applicants when they may expect a reply.

Where an applicant asks for a review of the decision, they will receive details inviting them to submit any further written representations or new information with a bearing on the review and a deadline date will be given.

Applicants are not required to provide reasons for challenging the decision however; this may help their case, as there may be new information, which was not available at the time.

The officer involved in the original decision will not be involved in the review process.

Homelessness reviews will be carried out under a separate process under provisions in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.

If applicants are still not satisfied with the decision, a complaint can be made in accordance with St Leger Homes Complaints procedure.

Section 8 Other Housing Options

This section details other options open to applicants on the Doncaster Councils Housing Register.

8.0 Mutual Exchanges

Secure council and tenants of other Registered Providers, in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, who occupy permanent self-contained accommodation, have a legal right to exchange their tenancies under section 92 of the Housing Act 1985.

A Mutual Exchange is where a tenant can find their own exchange through adverts on the Doncaster HomeChoice website: www.doncasterhomechoice.co.uk, however before an exchange can take place both exchange partners must get their landlords' permission.

All Doncaster Council tenants who are accepted onto the register will be given advice and support to access the Mutual Exchange register.

8.1 Nominations to Housing Associations (Registered Providers)

Doncaster Council works in partnership with other Registered Providers and advertises a proportion of their properties through Doncaster HomeChoice. Applicants can bid on these properties and be considered subject to meeting the matching criteria stated in the advert.

8.2 Other Affordable Housing Options

Due to the limited amount of social housing available it is important that we promote affordable housing options to raise awareness of the range of schemes available and ensure applicants are aware of the range of available housing options.

These options include but are not limited to the following:

- Shared Equity Schemes

If an applicant would like to buy a home of their own but can't afford to, they may wish to consider shared equity in a property. An applicant can buy an initial share of between 25% and 75% of the property and pay a rent on the remaining share that they do not own. Further shares can be bought at a later stage and this can lead to them owning their own home outright.

- Help To Buy

This is a Government backed scheme that helps people who want to buy a new build home.

Further information on current affordable housing options can be found on the Doncaster HomeChoice website or by contacting the Doncaster HomeChoice team direct.

8.3 Private Rented accommodation

Our Home Options Service give advice about options and access to the Private Rented Sector.

St Leger Homes of Doncaster manage and let certain private rented properties which are maintained to a certain standard and will be advertised to let. These properties will be let on a first come first serve basis through St Leger Lettings.

More information on alternative housing options can be found at:

www.doncasterhomechoice.co.uk

Section 9 Sharing information and Confidentiality

9.0 Sharing of information and confidentiality

We will treat all information provided as confidential.

All details held and information processed are subject to the controls of the Data Protection Legislation and European Convention of Human Rights Act, however; we may release and /or request information without consent where necessary under the clauses or exemptions of the Data Protection Legislation and other statute and legal obligations.

DRAFT

Housing Allocations Policy Consultation

Background

Consultation was initially carried out in December 2016 and January 2017 with Council and St Leger Homes employees, St Leger Homes Board, council tenants, partners, stakeholders, housing providers and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for housing. Further consultation has also been completed from September 2017 to January 2018 on the additional proposals as per the following timetable:

September 2017	Housing Portfolio Holder
Oct/Nov 2017	Invitation to Ward Member Seminars
October 2017	Senior Managers – St Leger Homes
November 2017	Homeless and Support Partnership
November 2017	Email to all Stakeholders
November 2017	Press release
November 2017	St Leger Homes Board
Nov 2017 – Jan 2018	Online Customer Survey and email
January 2018	Executive Management Team – St Leger Homes
January 2018	Doncaster Council's Legal Services
January 2018	Housing Portfolio Holder

Online Survey outcomes

Part of the consultation process was an online survey to enable customers to consider 6 of the 7 proposed changes (the change regarding the legislative change around Right to Move was not consulted upon given it is a legislative requirement). The responses to the online consultation are as follows:

Proposed Change	No of respondents	Agree	Disagree
1) Inclusion of predominantly older owners in the General Band	171	138 (81%)	33 (19%)
2) Changes to discharge of Homeless Full Housing Duty	170	153 (90%)	17 (10%)
3) Changes to the Size Criteria and eligibility	195	143 (71%)	52 (29%)
4) Homeless prevention priority	196	178 (91%)	18 (9%)
5) Resettlement Platinum priority	197	179 (91%)	18 (9%)
6) Removal of debt element of Resettlement priority	195	159 (82%)	36 (18%)

Responses to the dedicated email were limited to 3. Responses and feedback were considered as part of the process.

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EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

DONCASTER METROPLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Due Regard Statement Template

How to show due regard to the equality duty in how we develop our work and in our decision making.

Due Regard Statement

A **Due Regard Statement** (DRS) is the tool for capturing the evidence to demonstrate that due regard has been shown when the council plans and delivers its functions. A Due Regard Statement must be completed for all programmes, projects and changes to service delivery.

- A DRS should be initiated at the beginning of the programme, project or change to inform project planning
- The DRS runs adjacent to the programme, project or change and is reviewed and completed at the relevant points
- Any reports produced needs to reference “Due Regard” in the main body of the report and the DRS should be attached as an appendix
- The DRS cannot be fully completed until the programme, project or change is delivered.

<p>1 Name of the ‘process’ and briefly describe the activity being considered including aims and expected outcomes. This will help to determine how relevant the ‘process’ is to equality.</p>	<p>Changes to the DMBC Housing Allocations Policy. The policy was last changed in December 2012.</p> <p>Changes are being made to meet the challenges in the housing market, welfare reform, rising issues of homelessness and rising demand on social care.</p> <p>Changes have been developed by St Leger Homes with an initial consultation with Local Members in October 2015, January 2017 and November 2017 to have regard to emerging legislation. Further consultation has been completed with customers, stakeholders and partners with the last round of consultation concluding in January 2018.</p> <p>There are five changes and one Legislative update:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Owners will be able to apply to join the housing register who have equity of up to £120,000 (excluding savings) and will be included in the general band. To formalise this in the policy the threshold for home ownership equity will be increased from £60,000 to £120,000. However for those owners who meet the threshold but also have an assessed housing need, they will continue to be placed in the priority band appropriate to their needs. The key focus of the Allocations Policy is to meet housing need through allocating the right properties to those in need. When considering owner occupiers, whilst they may have some equity in their home, given the increase in property values, often this is insufficient to enable them to meet their changing housing need. Where owner occupiers are elderly, ensuring that applicants in this category are housed in accommodation that meets their needs can have significant positive impacts on their wellbeing, it can also reduce pressure on longer term social care assistance. Inclusion of owners on the register also helps to make the best use of the housing stock by providing another housing option to predominantly older people.2. Legislative update - To add an exception to the local connection criteria for Council and Housing Association tenants who have a need to move to a particular location
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for employment in accordance with Right to Move 2015. The guidance stated that local authorities do not disqualify persons on the grounds that they do not have a local connection with the authority's district for Social tenants who need to move to take up a job or live closer to employment or training where this would result in hardship. We are currently accommodating this under the 'any special circumstances' criteria within the local connection exemptions; however for clarity we want to make this an explicit category.

3. To discharge the homeless duty on behalf of full duty Homeless cases in the platinum band, if they have failed to seek suitable and reasonable accommodation with 1 month of the duty being awarded. This will be classed as a full and final offer in order to discharge homelessness duty. Currently applicants who are given a full duty under the homeless legislation are awarded Platinum band, an applicant would remain in this band until they are allocated and accept a home. In some instances applicants are remaining in this band, and temporary accommodation, for some considerable time and not moving on to permanent accommodation. This is having the effect of blocking up our limited temporary accommodation thereby reducing our ability to help those in greatest need. Staying in temporary housing also has a negative impact on the individual. This change will assist applicants to move into suitable accommodation more quickly and enable a more streamlined process. This approach will also enable us to manage customers' expectations with regards to available permanent accommodation.
4. Creating a homeless prevention priority where an applicant is not entitled to any help with their housing costs, to prevent a homeless presentation. Suspending and backdating applications and activating them when they are able to afford accommodation. This would include cases where parents say that a young adult has to move out (Family License Termination), which, in many cases, significantly impacts on the life chances of the young person.

		<p>By offering a back date in effective date and priority if their circumstances at the time of rehousing merit it, the applicant can make a planned move without being disadvantaged. This would also alleviate pressure on the frontline homelessness service and provision of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>5. Creation of a resettlement status in the platinum band to support a resettlement pathway. To support early intervention and prevention through a resettlement pathway process (Complex Lives, Wharf House / Open House etc.) by registering a pending housing application. When it is deemed they are ready and able to manage a tenancy, the application will be activated and given Platinum priority, with their effective date being the date the application was registered. This would enable the applicant to be higher up the waiting list as a recognition that they have worked through the resettlement pathway. This would enable more effective move on from supported housing placements to make places available for those who need them.</p> <p>6. Removal of the debt element criteria for applicants under the resettlement status as a reason to refuse access to the register. This is a barrier to effectively addressing the impacts of rising homelessness and resulting in applicants not moving out of expensive supported accommodation into independent living. This is also resulting in applicants falling back into rough sleeping and is undermining the opportunities we have to address rough sleeping as individuals feel that it's pointless working with services because we won't house them anyway because they owe a debt.</p>
2	Service area responsible for completing this statement.	St Leger Homes of Doncaster Directorate of Housing Services
3	Summary of the information considered across the	Any applicant requesting social housing under this process will have been assessed against the criteria of Doncaster Council's Housing Allocations Policy. The housing

protected groups.

allocations policy and associated procedures have been assessed under the Equalities Act. All protected characteristics have been considered via this process and no issues have been identified for any of the characteristic groups in relation to inequality.

SLHD staff responsible for the allocation process are trained in the Equalities Act and making reasonable adjustments to action as appropriate.

SLHD procedures take account of the Equalities Act and pay particular attention to those falling within protected characteristic groups and assessments of proportionality and reasonable adjustments are made at every stage the housing application and assessment process and all reasonable adjustments will be made depending on the protected characteristic to ensure that no applicant is unduly treated or affected because of their characteristic. No applicants are deemed non qualifying due to a protected characteristic.

We have considered the impact on the housing register and housing need and recognise that this will increase the chances of a sustainable home for more applicants. This also make best use of Council stock by ensuring that customers with different needs can join the waiting list and bid through the choice based letting system, ensuring transparency for customers.

Each protected characteristic has been carefully considered below: -

Age

Inviting owners to join the waiting list will increase their housing options and allow access to affordable housing for those most in need.

Disability

It is not anticipated that the changes will adversely affect individuals based on their disability. Where required a property suitability visit is carried out before a property is allocated and any reasonable adjustments are made at that point. The use of fixed term tenancies for extensively adapted and purpose built accommodation will support the best

	<p>use of housing stock. Where fixed term tenancies are used this is underpinned by a robust review process which will take into account the ongoing needs of the individual.</p> <p>Race</p> <p>We monitor the profile of the Housing Register and Allocations by ethnicity as part of the monitoring information we collect. It is not anticipated that the process will adversely affect individuals based on their race and race will not be a factor that will be considered when deciding if an individual will be assisted under the process.</p> <p>Gender</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the changes will adversely affect individuals based on their Gender and this factor will not be assessed as part of the process.</p> <p>Sexual Orientation</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the changes will adversely affect individuals based on their sexual orientation and this factor will not be assessed as part of the process.</p> <p>Religion and Belief</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the changes will adversely affect individuals as a result of any specific religion or belief they may have. If religion and belief are a circumstance that will determine a tenant's residential location then this will be considered should they refuse a property.</p> <p>Maternity and Pregnancy</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the changes will adversely affect individuals who are pregnant or post maternity and such characteristics do not form part of the process. Pregnant women and families with children qualify for appropriate accommodation under the DMBC's Housing Allocations Policy and any offer of alternative accommodation under the changes will be size appropriate for the needs of the whole family. All our procedures take into account safeguarding arrangements and if any concerns for children or families wellbeing as a result of this process we would undertake the appropriate referrals to enable the necessary support and help to be offered and provided.</p>
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		<p>Gender Reassignment It is not anticipated that the changes will adversely affect individuals who have undergone gender reassignment.</p> <p>Marriage and Civil Partnership It is not anticipated that the changes will adversely affect individuals if they are married or in civil partnerships.</p>
4	Summary of the consultation/engagement activities	<p>Local Ward Member consultation Considerations and analysis of information has been undertaken in liaison with the Access and Allocations Service Manager at SLHD. Advice and liaison has taken place with DMBC Legal Services Detailed consultation with customers, stakeholder and partners was completed in January 2018</p>
5	Real Consideration: Summary of what the evidence shows and how has it been used	<p>The evidence shows that the changes do not adversely affect any person falling within any of the protected characteristics. We have carefully considered each characteristic and also carefully considered the impact on the allocations process and waiting list applicants and have put measures in place to ensure impact is negated.</p> <p>All applications will be reviewed against the new policy changes and appropriate support given. The review plan will be supported by an equality impact assessment.</p>
6	Decision Making	<p>The decision maker has been made aware of the Due Regard Statement and any issues arising from it.</p>
7	Monitoring and Review	<p>Activity under this process will be reported to the Director of Housing Services.</p> <p>The process will be reviewed for its effectiveness after 12 months.</p>
8	Sign off and approval for publication	



Doncaster Council

Report

6th March 2018

**To the Chair and Members of the
Cabinet**

**PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE REPORT - Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal
Committee**

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Chris McGuinness	Conisborough, Edlington and Warmsworth, Mexborough, Sprotborough, Roman Ridge, Hexthorpe and Balby, Town, Bentley, Adwick Le Street and Carcroft, Norton and Askern, Wheatley and Intake, Stainforth and Barnby Dunn and Thorne and Moorends.	No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. As part of the Council's approach to monitoring and evaluating its relationship with external organisations and partnerships this report provides details on activities undertaken by the following organisation:

Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

EXEMPT REPORT

2. This is not an exempt report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. To note the feedback and comments in respect of the Council's partnership arrangements with **Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee**.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Reviewing the activities of partnerships where the Council or Executive appoints representatives helps to ensure alignment with Borough wide priorities, improved stewardship of public funds and public confidence that effective controls are in place to manage any relevant risks. Effective governance also ensures partnerships' working contributes to the effective and efficient provision of services to the Public and the achievement of value for money.

BACKGROUND

5. At its meeting on 19th May 2017, Council agreed that where it made appointments to external partnerships, a mechanism should be put in place to report back to the Council on the activities of that body in a consistent manner. As the Council increasingly works with partners to achieve common objectives and/or ensure effective stewardship of public funds this process will demonstrate greater transparency and accountability within partnership working.

Attached at Appendix A is a Partnership Governance template relating to **Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee** this provides Members with an overview of key activities undertaken, any significant future activities and any significant governance or other issues.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6. Without consistent and effective information on their activities, it is more difficult for the Council to understand and register the effects of decisions made by partnerships and take action where appropriate on any decisions made / proposed. The option to do nothing, therefore, misses the opportunity / requirement to respond to the ever-growing incidence of partnerships working and strengthen the Council's control framework and its management of risks.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

7. To regularly report back on the activities of partnerships provides an opportunity to strengthen governance arrangements, monitor the effectiveness of those arrangements and raise awareness of wider partnership activities.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

8. Good partnerships governance has the following impacts on Council priorities

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	<p>Flood Risk management throughout the borough reduces the flood risk to properties, businesses and infrastructure.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	

	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>Strengthening partnership working by identifying, managing and reducing risks in order to enable strategic and operational partnerships achieve all our objectives.</p> <p>By providing robust partnership guidance ensures the stewardship of public funds.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

9. Failure to review partnerships' and key internal groups' activities exposes the Council to risks that can impact on a number of levels as follows:
- Failing to ensure an effective Strategic Fit
 - Failing to identify and address the gaps and shortfalls in Relationships
 - Failing to fully assess and plan for the Organisational Impact the changes will have
 - Failing to robustly develop and test the Economic Case for partnership working
 - Reputational damage to DMBC due to flawed partnerships
 - Conflicts of interest not being managed
 - Damaged relationships with partners.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS Officer Initials: SRF Date 23/02/18

10. S 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a general power of competence which allows local authorities to do anything an individual can do, unless prohibited by law (and subject to public law principles). This power allows for the general oversight of the external organisation on which Council members and officers sit. It is important that where the Authority nominate officers or members to sit on external partnerships they we do have an ongoing oversight of the governance standards of the partnerships. As a

minimum, the partnerships should be aware and have policies reflecting the ethical standards of behaviour expected of public office holders as detailed in the Nolan principles.

It is essential that those the Council appoints to sit on outside bodies understand their duties and responsibilities in relation to their position on those bodies and the limit of any delegations they may enjoy. Further specific advice should be sought if they are in any doubt as to these matters.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS Officer Initials RT Date 26/02/18

11. DMBC Make an annual contribution of £93,650 to the Local Levy. This amount is part of DMBC central revenue budgets.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS Officer Initials D.K Date 17/10/2017

12. There are no Human Resource implications.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS Officer Initials P.W Date 23/02/2018

13. There are no Technology implications

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS Officer Initials CEH .Date 23.02.18

14. There are significant impacts on health and wellbeing associated to flooding and the perceived risk of flooding. Effective partnership processes via the Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to manage flood risks throughout the Borough can support the health and wellbeing of Doncaster communities.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS Officer Initials K.H Date 04/01/2018

15. There are no Equality implications.

CONSULTATION

16. Not required.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

17. Report to Council 19th May 2017, Governance Arrangements: Oversight And Transparency Of The Work Of External Partnerships And Council Committees.

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

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Peter Dale (Director of Regeneration and Environment)

**PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE – REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY
TEMPLATE AND GUIDANCE NOTES**

1. NAME OF PARTNER ORGANISATION:

Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANISATION

The Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) is a committee established by the Environment Agency under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 that brings together members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and independent members with relevant experience for 3 purposes:

- to ensure there are coherent plans for identifying, communicating and managing flood and coastal erosion risks across catchments and shorelines
- to encourage efficient, targeted and risk-based investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management that represents value for money and benefits local communities
- to provide a link between the Environment Agency, LLFAs, other risk management authorities, and other relevant bodies to build understanding of flood and coastal erosion risks in its area

3. NAME OF THE COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVE(S) APPOINTED TO THE ORGANISATION AND THE CAPACITY IN WHICH THEY SERVE:

Committee Members
Cllr Chris McGuinness

4. NAME OF COUNCIL'S LEAD OFFICER:

Kyle Heydon – Senior Flood Risk Engineer (DMBC)

5. KEY ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD April 2016 to April 2018

To ensure (to include formal approval of the programme expenditure) the Environment Agencies 6 year medium term capital programme, continues to be delivered. £100m for all of Yorkshire of Capital expenditure has been spent in 2016/17.

The forecast Capital expenditure from April 2017 to April 2018 is £130 million pounds to ensure protection of 300,000 properties a target set by central government.

The overall settlement for the MTP up to the year 2020/21 is around £600 million pounds, which now includes the additional recovery moneys following

the 2015 floods.

Setting of the Local Levy, of which Doncaster MBC contributes £93,650 pounds per annum.

6. KEY ACTIVITIES EXPECTED TO BE UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD April 2018 TO April 2019

To ensure (to include formal approval of the programme expenditure) the Environment Agencies 6 year medium term programme, continues to be delivered.

Setting of the Local Levy, of which Doncaster MBC contributes £93,650

7. DETAILS OF ANY SIGNIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUES

None

8. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

None.

9. PLEASE STATE NAME OF RELEVANT DIRECTOR OR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Peter Dale (Director) and Gill Gillies (Assistant Director)

10. DATE: 22/02/2018

11. DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED REPORT – To be confirmed

List of current projects under Yorkshire RFCC, in Doncaster MBC's area.

Project Name	Number of Properties Benefitting	Description	Cost
Bentley PS Replacement	2170	Existing Pumping Station upgrade/replacement (EA)	£8m
Skellow Rail Bridge Parapet Raising	N/A	(EA)	£2k
Kirk Sandall Pumping Station Refurbishment	N/A	Existing Pumping Station refurbishment (EA)	£10k
Kearsley Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme	35	Extent of scheme unknown at present, still in feasibility stage (DMBC)	£145k
Dunston Hill Bridge Bank Refurbishment, Stainforth	N/A	Refurbishment of existing raised defences on River Don (EA)	£1.6m
Station Road PLP, Askern	5	Scheme completed (DMBC)	-
Kearsley Brook Industrial Estate Screen Replacement	N/A	New trash screen on existing culvert (DMBC)	£60k
Shirley Pool (SSSI) Water Level Management Plan	N/A	(IDB)	Not Known
Danvm DC – Hydraulic Modelling	N/A	Hydraulic Modelling of Danvm IDB district (IDB)	£137k