

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN 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 ‘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.</p>	<p>Review of Doncaster Council’s Housing Allocations Policy last updated in 2018. This policy sets out the criteria for access to council homes and nominations to Housing Associations (Registered Providers) for a proportion of alternative social housing in Doncaster. Statutory Guidance is given in Part VI of the 1996 Housing Act and Code of Guidance.</p> <p>This is a substantial review, with eighteen initial changes considered and fourteen identified potential changes reaching consultation stage.</p> <p>Changes are being made to respond to changes in the housing market, reduction in turnover of family housing to relet and significant increases in demand from applicants who are unsuitably housed and increasing homelessness, to ensure that the policy is fit for purpose and prioritises those most in need.</p> <p>Change 1</p> <p>Include incentives for under occupiers of council houses to downsize to a bungalow or flat e.g. enhanced priority.</p> <p>Why? To increase the number of family houses to re let as we do not have enough for those families in most need. To support our tenants into more affordable and suitable long-term accommodation.</p> <p>Change 2</p> <p>Allocate a proportion of higher demand properties to those with lower needs.</p> <p>Why? To create balanced and sustainable communities. To give people in lower bands a chance of being rehoused.</p>
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Change 3

Give priority to larger families in a priority band for larger properties (4 bed+ houses).

Why? Only 2% of our housing stock is four bed or larger. There are less opportunities for larger families to be rehoused, so if they are in a priority band we should rehouse them first

Change 4

Strengthen the tenancy ready process and the affordability/sustainability of accommodation. Collect more information at application stage to offer targeted support before rehousing applicants who are at risk of tenancy failure e.g. due to affordability issues or previous tenancy failure.

Why? To extend our tenancy sustainability support offer and stop tenants being set up to fail where there are concerns about affordability and sustainability of accommodation

Change 5

Review of priority awarded to Homeless applicants with a priority need in accordance with best practice, e.g. where homelessness cannot be prevented for the unintentionally homeless who are vulnerable.

Why? To prevent delays in Platinum priority being awarded to those with limited rehousing options.

Change 6

Restrict applicants awarded Platinum priority who are moving from supported housing projects into independent living to those where we can nominate homeless people to fill their space. Remove the priority backdate currently given to these applicants.

Why? To open up the referral pathways into supported housing for single homeless cases. Remove the backdate of the priority effective date as this is to the detriment of a growing number of statutory homeless single people.

Change 7

Ensure the priority given to domestic abuse victims reflects the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Why? To have a clear rehousing policy in line with best practice.

Change 8

Change the way we prioritise people bidding on bungalows and age-designated flats advertised to 50+, 40+ and 30+ to band and effective priority date order to ensure we are rehousing people most in need.

Why? Currently, we prioritise applicants in age order before considering their level of housing need which is potentially open to legal challenge as discriminatory.

Change 9

Amend priority for armed forces to include separated/divorced partners in the Platinum priority band if they have left forces accommodation in the last 5 years and have a housing need that they cannot resolve.

Why? To be explicit in meeting the recommendation to support families moving out of armed forces accommodation.

Change 10

Review the number of offers to applicants before they may lose their priority or, in the case of Bronze and General Band, may be suspended for 6 months e.g. 1 offer for all homeless applicants (in all bands), 1 offer for all platinum applicants, 2 offers for all gold applicants and 3 offers for all other bands.

Why? To be consistent on the number of offers to applicants given a priority band. To speed up the rehousing process and reduce the number of refusals.

Change 11

Amend Doncaster Council's Accessible Housing Register (AHR) policy to include a refusal penalty in line with the revised Housing Allocations policy (change 10).

Why? Many applicants on the Accessible Housing Register have refused more than 10 offers of accommodation that would meet their assessed needs. To be consistent with other applicants in priority bands. To reduce the time it takes to re let these properties.

Change 12

Simplify the advertising of low demand properties by promoting schemes we know are harder to let on our website to raise awareness and interest before we have a vacancy.

Why? To reduce the administrative process and identify potential tenants more quickly. To ensure more transparency and provide more information on schemes to enable customers to make informed decisions.

		<p>Change 13</p> <p>Be clearer on where we reserve the right to not offer a property e.g. where there is a local lettings policy, a property is not medically suitable, we receive an unsatisfactory reference at confirmation stage etc.</p> <p>Why? To increase applicants' understanding of the reasons why we may not continue with an offer of accommodation.</p> <p>Change 14</p> <p>Include Doncaster Council's right to suspend the housing register and allocations process to respond to an emergency situation / extraordinary circumstance.</p> <p>Why? To be able to respond to emergency events that present overwhelming short term demand on available stock e.g. floods and the pandemic.</p>
2	<p>Service area responsible for completing this statement.</p>	<p>SLHD Housing and Customer Services on behalf of Doncaster Council.</p> <p>Doncaster Council Legal Services</p>
3	<p>Summary of the information considered across the protected groups.</p>	<p><i>Protected user groups as defined by the Equalities Act 2010 are: Age, Disability, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Maternity and Pregnancy, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership</i></p> <p><i>Doncaster have chosen to add three additional groups which are not included in the Equalities Act 2010. These are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Armed Forces and Veterans</i> • <i>Homelessness</i> • <i>Socio-economic</i>

Below is confirmation of the declared protected groups available, by category, for both the Housing Register as of 1 September 2022 and the Public Consultation on the Housing Allocations Policy Review, which was open for 10 weeks from 20 June 2022 to 31 August 2022.

As of 1 September 2022 there were c 8,000 active housing applications on the housing register including 1072 on the transfer list.

Responses vary from the public consultation and the percentage respondents are listed for comparison against each protected characteristic.

Age

Results from public consultation responses are representative of the age profile of the Housing Register. Although applicants aged 75 and over appear to be underrepresented, we are not able to draw this conclusion due to 13% of respondents not confirming their age.

	% Housing Register	% Public Consultation
Under 18	0.05	7.25
18 – 24	9.69	
25 – 34	25.80	19.52
35 – 44	20.96	18.13
45 – 54	14.71	15.94
55 – 64	13.44	14.90
65 – 74	9.10	7.04
75+	6.24	3.81
Not answered	-	13.39

Disability

Due to a high percentage of those not answering this question in the consultation we cannot draw conclusions on the true percentage of those with a disability. During stakeholder events we also engaged with Statutory and Voluntary sector organisations supporting disabled people, including Adult Social Care, Live Inclusive service users, Public Health and RDASH .

	% Housing Register	% Public Consultation
Yes	32.53	21.59
No	0.09	56.58
Prefer not to say	3.02	8.20
Not answered	4.34	13.63

Race

Considering over 17% of respondents preferred not to give this information or did not answer, the profile of respondents is very close to the profile of applicants on the housing register.

	% Housing register	% Public Consultation
White British	82.38	71.48
White Irish	0.17	0.35
Gypsy Traveller	0.21	0.23
White Any Other	9.01	6.35
Black African	1.97	1.15

Black Caribbean	0.26	0.35
Black Any Other	0.29	0.23
Arab	0.37	0.00
Chinese	0.18	0.12
Asian Bangladeshi	0.05	0.00
Asian Indian	0.23	0.00
Asian Pakistani	0.55	0.12
Asian Any Other	1.60	0.69
Mixed W&B African	0.11	0.12
Mixed W&B Caribbean	0.68	0.46
Mixed White & Asian	0.29	0.69
Mixed Any Other	0.33	0.23
Other Ethnic Group	0.99	0.12
Prefer Not to Say	0.33	3.58
Not answered	-	13.74

Sex

Although we are not able to confirm the shortfall in make responses as over 15% of respondents to the public consultation chose not to provide this information, there is still a higher percentage of female respondents to the public survey than represented on the housing register. Direct contact was made with each applicant through their account, on

social media and both the HomeChoice and corporate websites to encourage participation.

	% Housing Register	% Public Consultation
Male	63.29	21.02
Female	36.71	63.51
Prefer not to say	-	2.89
Not answered	-	12.59

Gender Reassignment

This group was over represented in terms of the percentage of responses from the public consultation to the housing register and also over 17% of respondents did not provide this information.

	% Housing Register	% Public Consultation
Yes	0.13	1.85
No	99.87	80.25
Prefer not to say	-	3.93
Not answered		13.97

Sexual Orientation

Despite over 27% of respondents not providing this information on the public consultation, groups are well represented in the consultation.

	% Housing register	% Public consultation
Heterosexual	80.86	65.82
Bisexual	1.20	3.81
Gay	0.64	0.69
Lesbian	0.61	0.46
Prefer not to say	7.76	12.39
Not answered	8.93	15.59

Religion and Belief

Comparable information is not available from the Housing Register. Over 23% of respondents chose not to give this information.

	Actual No.	%
Christian	275	31.76
Catholic	67	7.74
Jewish	1	0.12
Muslim	17	1.96
Buddhist	4	0.46
Hindu	0	0.00
Sikh	0	0.00
No Religion or Atheist	281	32.45
Other	18	2.08
Prefer not to say	81	9.35
Not answered	122	14.09

Armed Forces Veterans

We consulted with the Community Covenant Group during Stakeholder consultation where all organisations and related services are represented.

	Actual No.	%
Yes	75	0.92
No	7026	85.86
Prefer Not to Say	1082	13.22
Total	8183	-

The impact of the 14 proposed changes have been considered against each characteristic and are identified below in terms of positive, negative and neutral impact.

Change 1 Include incentives for under occupiers of council houses to downsize to a bungalow or flat e.g., enhanced priority.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
Age	Positive	The enhanced priority will support applicants who want to move from a council house into a flat or bungalow into more appropriate and sustainable accommodation.
Disability	Positive	The enhanced priority will further support those with medical rehousing needs to move from a council house into a flat or bungalow into more appropriate and sustainable accommodation.
Race	Neutral	The change does not impact on Race

	Sex	Neutral	The change does not impact on Gender
	Sexual Orientation	Neutral	The change does not impact on Sexual Orientation
	Maternity and Pregnancy	Positive	The aim of this change is to increase the amount of family houses available to relet to those most in need.
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	The change does not impact on Gender reassignment
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	The change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership
	Veterans	Neutral	The change does not impact on Veterans
	Homelessness	Positive	The aim of this change is to increase the amount of family houses to relet to those most in need.
	Socio- economic	Positive	Increasing the amount of affordable family housing to those most in need.

Change 2 Allocate a proportion of higher demand properties to those with lower needs. This change does not distinguish between households based on any of the characteristics below.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
Age	Neutral	The change does not impact on Age
Disability	Neutral	The change does not impact on Disability
Race	Neutral	The change does not impact on Race
Sex	Neutral	The change does not impact on Gender
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	The change does not impact on Sexual Orientation
Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	The change does not impact on Maternity and Pregnancy
Gender reassignment	Neutral	The change does not impact on Gender reassignment
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	The change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnerships

	Veterans	Neutral	The change does not impact on Veterans
	Homelessness	Positive/Negative	The potential impact can be both positive and negative. Positive as it will, in some cases, support homeless prevention by enabling applicants to access social housing before their circumstances escalate. Negative because it will reduce the number of properties allocated based on housing need and available to those most in need including statutory homeless applicants.
	Socio-economic	Neutral	This change does not impact on socio economic
<p>Change 3 Give priority to larger families in a priority band for larger properties (4 bed+ houses). This change is targeted to rehousing larger families in housing need who have limited opportunities to access the private rented sector.</p>			
	Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
	Age	Neutral	This change does not impact on Age

	Disability	Neutral	This change does not impact on Disability
	Race	Neutral	This change does not impact Race
	Sex	Neutral	This change does not impact Gender
	Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This change does not impact Sexual Orientation
	Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact Maternity and Pregnancy
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact Gender reassignment
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact Marriage and Civil Partnerships
	Veterans	Neutral	This change does not impact Veterans
	Homelessness	Positive	This will prioritise larger families who are predominantly homeless or threatened with homelessness to access the limited amount of 4 bed and larger properties becoming available to re let.

		This group of applicants have fewer options in the private rented sector if on a low income due to the benefit cap.
Socio- economic	Neutral	This change does not impact Socio-economic
<p>Change 4 Strengthen the tenancy ready process and the affordability/sustainability of accommodation. Collect more information at application stage to offer targeted support before rehousing applicants who are at risk of tenancy failure e.g. due to affordability issues or previous tenancy failure.</p> <p>This change will identify those who have limited income and also issues with previous tenancy failure.</p>		
Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
Age	Positive	Young people under 25 on benefits have limited access to help with housing costs and need initial support in managing a tenancy.
Disability	Neutral	This change does not impact on Disability
Race	Neutral	This change does not impact on Race

Sex	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This change does not impact on Sexual Orientation
Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact on Maternity and Pregnancy
Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender reassignment
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership
Veterans	Neutral	This change does not impact on Veterans
Homelessness	Positive	This will identify applicants at an earlier stage who would benefit from tenancy support to sustain a tenancy and prevent homelessness.
Socio- economic	Neutral	This change does not impact on Socio-economic

Change 5 Review of priority awarded to Homeless applicants with a priority need in accordance with best practice, e.g. where homelessness cannot be prevented for the unintentionally homeless who are vulnerable.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
Age	Neutral	This change does not impact on Age
Disability	Neutral	This change does not impact on Disability
Race	Neutral	This change does not impact on Race
Sex	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This change does not impact on Sexual Orientation
Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact on Maternity and Pregnancy
Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender reassignment
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership
Veterans	Neutral	This change does not impact on Veterans
Homelessness	Positive	The aim of this change is to support homeless applicants

		in accessing the appropriate priority to avoid delays in the process and reduce time in temporary accommodation
Socio- economic	Neutral	This change does not impact on Socio-economic
<p>Change 6 Restrict applicants awarded Platinum priority who are moving from supported housing projects into independent living to those where we can nominate homeless people to fill their space. Remove the priority backdate currently given to these applicants. We have worked with supported housing providers to look at this option and how it will work in practice.</p>		
Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
Age	Neutral	This change does not impact on Age
Disability	Neutral	This change does not impact on Disability
Race	Neutral	This change does not impact on Race
Sex	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This change does not impact on Sexual Orientation

	Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact on Maternity and Pregnancy
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender reassignment
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership
	Veterans	Neutral	This change does not impact on Veterans
	Homelessness	Positive	The aim of this change is to restrict priority to those leaving supported housing projects to providers who will accept nominations for homeless applicants to fill that place. This is to support the Council in discharging statutory duties and is especially important given the rise in single statutory homeless cases.
	Socio- economic	Neutral	This change does not impact on Socio-economic

Change 7 Ensure the priority given to domestic abuse victims reflects the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
Age	Neutral	This change does not impact on Age
Disability	Neutral	This change does not impact on Disability
Race	Neutral	This change does not impact on Race
Sex	Neutral	This support is not Gender specific
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This change does not impact on Sexual Orientation
Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact on Maternity and Pregnancy
Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender reassignment
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership
Veterans	Neutral	This change does not impact on Veterans

	Homelessness	Positive	This change will support both domestic abuse victims who are homeless and those who wish to make a planned move who will have clear pathways into priority bands.
	Socio- economic	Neutral	This change does not impact on Socio-economic
<p>Change 8 Change the way we prioritise people bidding on bungalows and age-designated flats advertised to 50+, 40+ and 30+ to band and effective priority date order to ensure we are rehousing people most in need.</p>			
	Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
	Age	Positive/Negative	This is both positive and negative as applicants aged 60 and over will continue to be given priority for this type of accommodation. Underage applicants, with the exception of those with assessed medical needs for adapted properties, will now be considered in priority band order and not age.
	Disability	Neutral	This change does not impact on Disability as those with

		needs for adapted accommodation are prioritised regardless of age.
Race	Neutral	This change does not impact on Race
Sex	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This change does not impact on Sexual Orientation
Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact on Maternity and Pregnancy
Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender reassignment
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership
Veterans	Neutral	This change does not impact on Veterans
Homelessness	Positive/Negative	Applicants aged 60 and over who are homeless will be considered before underage applicants.

	Socio- economic	Neutral	This change does not impact on Socio-economic																					
<p>Change 9 Amend priority for armed forces to include separated/divorced partners in the Platinum priority band if they have left forces accommodation in the last 5 years and have a housing need that they cannot resolve.</p> <p>This change is in line with recommended practice.</p>																								
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Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact on Maternity and Pregnancy																						

	Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender reassignment
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership
	Veterans	Positive	This change will support veteran's families in accessing housing in Doncaster who meet the criteria. The priority award will increase their chances of being rehoused and is in accordance with best practice.
	Homelessness	Positive	This will ensure that divorced or separated spouses of armed forces personnel will not have to go through the homeless assessment route as will have a clear pathway into a priority band
	Socio- economic	Neutral	This change does not impact on Socio-economic
<p>Change 10 Review the number of offers to applicants before they may lose their priority or, in the case of Bronze and General Band, may be suspended for 6 months e.g. 1 offer</p>			

for all homeless applicants (in all bands), 1 offer for all platinum applicants, 2 offers for all gold applicants and 3 offers for all other bands.

This change impacts on all applicants and we are committed to support applicants in making informed choices and classing offers as reasonable that meet any identified needs such as access to care and support. Vulnerability is actively identified throughout the application and offer process and appropriate support given, including assisted bidding and pro-active work with individuals, advocates and family members to ensure that they are not disadvantaged through this process.

After consideration of the feedback, this change has been amended to make it fairer, consistent and a transparent solution for customers in response to concerns raised. This will make it a more equitable solution which is easier to communicate and administer.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
Age	Neutral	This change does not impact due to the safeguards above
Disability	Neutral	This change does not impact due to the safeguards in place
Race	Neutral	This change does not impact due to the safeguards in place
Sex	Neutral	This change does not impact due to the safeguards in place
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This change does not impact due to the safeguards in place

	Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact due to the safeguards in place
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact due to the safeguards in place
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact due to the safeguards in place
	Veterans	Neutral	This change does not impact due to the safeguards in place
	Homelessness	Positive	This will support people who have priority for homelessness to make informed decisions about the housing options available to them. It will also ensure that applicants in each homeless category have an equitable and consistent number of offers and support shorter stays in temporary accommodation.
	Socio- economic	Neutral	This does not impact Socio-economic
<p>Change 11 Amend Doncaster Council’s Accessible Housing Register (AHR) policy to include a refusal penalty in line with the revised Housing Allocations policy Change 10</p>			

Vulnerability is actively identified throughout the application and offer process and appropriate support given, including assisted bidding and pro-active work with individuals, advocates and family members to ensure that they are not disadvantaged through this process.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
Age	Neutral	This change does not impact on Age
Disability	Positive	This will support disabled applicants to make more informed decisions about the housing options available to them. The implementation of this change needs to be managed and applicants supported in this transition.
Race	Neutral	This change does not impact on Race
Sex	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This change does not impact on Sexual Orientation
Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact on Maternity and Pregnancy

	Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender Reassignment
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership
	Veterans	Neutral	This change does not impact on Veterans
	Homelessness	Neutral	This change does not impact on Homelessness
	Socio- economic	Neutral	This change does not impact on Socio-economic
<p>Change 12 Simplify the advertising of low demand properties by promoting schemes we know are harder to let on our website to raise awareness and interest before we have a vacancy.</p> <p>This change is to be more transparent in the advertising and letting of lower demand homes by promoting them on our website. This will give applicants information on properties that may be more realistic options if they meet the criteria of the property advert.</p>			
	Protected Characteristic	Impact	Further explanation
	Age	Neutral	This change does not impact on Age

	Disability	Neutral	This change does not impact on Disability
	Race	Neutral	This change does not impact on Race
	Sex	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender
	Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This change does not impact on Sexual Orientation
	Maternity and Pregnancy	Neutral	This change does not impact on Maternity and Pregnancy
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	This change does not impact on Gender reassignment
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This change does not impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership
	Veterans	Neutral	This change does not impact on Veterans
	Homelessness	Positive	This change will give applicants who need housing urgently more information about properties that may be suitable for them and enable them to make an informed choice.

	Socio- economic	Neutral	This change does not impact on Socio-economic																					
<p>Change 13 Be clearer on where we reserve the right to not offer a property e.g., where there is a local lettings policy, a property is not medically suitable, we receive an unsatisfactory reference at confirmation stage etc.</p> <p>This change is to manage the expectations of applicants and provide more clarity on the offer process</p>																								
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		<p>Change 14 Include Doncaster Council’s right to suspend the housing register and allocations process to respond to an emergency / extraordinary circumstance.</p> <p>This change is to enable an appropriate response to emergency events that present overwhelming short-term demand on available housing stock. This will be managed through the emergency planning process and reflect corporate priorities. Potential impact on protected groups will be assessed at the time and the outcome dependent on the situation.</p>															
4	Summary of the consultation/engagement activities	<p>Elected members Five consultation events with 47 elected members in attendance to form the policy changes. Monthly updates to elected members from February onwards which are ongoing.</p> <p>Parish Councils We presented the changes to the Parish Council joint committee, provided with a factsheet and encouraged them to engage their parishioners in the Public Consultation.</p>															

Employee groups

Six employee groups were consulted with across Access to Homes and Housing and Customer Services whose role in directly/indirectly impacted by the policy. They were also given information to support customers in taking part in the consultation.

Survey with under-occupiers of council homes claiming assistance with housing costs to inform Change 1 proposal

Our Community Involvement Team contacted 234 council tenants identified as under-occupying a council house by 2 or more bedrooms, of pensionable age, and claiming help with their housing costs, to understand if there were barriers to those wanting to downsize to a bungalow or flat. This has informed the proposed policy change and also additional work being carried out with our Tenancy Sustainability Team in making proposals to extend the support offered in this situation.

Stakeholders

451 organisations in total were consulted with during the stakeholder consultation. Direct face-to-face consultation was carried out with 59 different stakeholder groups including Voluntary Sector organisations, Complex Lives, Housing Associations, Supported Housing Providers, Public Health and a range of council departments. A presentation and/or factsheet was emailed detailing the proposed amendments to Doncaster Council's Housing Allocation Policy. Stakeholder feedback was noted during the direct consultation and via the use of a dedicated email inbox where an additional 26 were received. This feedback informed the changes and those taken to final public consultation.

A full record of the consultation will be retained should it be required.

Public Consultation

The total responses to the online public consultation from June 2022 to 31 August 2022 over 10 weeks was 866 of which 98% lived in the Doncaster Borough. Fifteen were from outside of the borough, eleven of which have active housing applications. There were an additional 1041 comments. There was also an opportunity to suggest any changes that

		<p>may have been missed in the proposals and 222 responded. The main themes are covered section 16.5 of the main report.</p> <p>Community Engagement Direct engagement with twelve community groups completing the survey above and totalling 239 of the total responses. Community Groups included family hubs, Doncaster Youth Council, GIG (Get Involved Groups) and the Minority Partnership Board.</p> <p>Legal Input Advice and support throughout from Doncaster Council Legal Services.</p>
5	<p>Real Consideration:</p> <p>Summary of what the evidence shows and how has it been used</p>	<p>Analysis of the proportion of each protected characteristic in comparison with the profile of the current Housing Register shows a comparable percentage response. This is positive considering the number of unanswered responses which ranged from 13 - 27%. The one disparity was that the proportion of female respondents to the survey was higher than the gender profile of applicants on the housing register.</p> <p>Given the length and content of the survey, the level of engagement and completion is positive and reflects the current focus on access to affordable housing.</p> <p>There are 19 positive impacts on protected groups in the fourteen proposed changes, particularly around impact on homeless households, which supports one of the aims of the policy. There are 3 potential positive/negative impacts which will need to be monitored.</p> <p>Staff and stakeholders were empowered to assist and support the public to complete the survey to ensure that no one was excluded for participating.</p> <p>The impact of Changes 10 and 11 relating to reducing the number of offers made to an applicant before losing their priority or being suspended, will inform the support and advice given to applicants as part of the process and also the need for a robust, consistent and fair procedure to be in place.</p>

		Vulnerability is actively identified throughout the application and offer process and appropriate support given, including assisted bidding and pro-active work with individuals, advocates and family members to ensure that they are not disadvantaged through this process.
6	Decision Making	<p>A summary of the overall findings of this statement have been included within the relevant reports as well as being attached in full as Background Papers.</p> <p>Cabinet will consider this report on the 30 November 2022 on the outcome of the consultation and recommended changes to the Housing Allocations Policy following input from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLHD Executive Management Team (completed) • Doncaster Council Executive Leadership Team • Feedback from Scrutiny on consultation process • Doncaster Council Executive Board • Feedback from Scrutiny on the policy changes (23 November 2022). Verbal update to be given to Doncaster Council Cabinet on 30 November 2022
7	Monitoring and Review	<p>Activity under this process will be reported to SLHD Director of Housing and Customer Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process will be reviewed for its effectiveness after 12 months with agreed performance indicators to identify if the policy is fulfilling its objectives and if there are any unexpected consequences or changes in priority that need to be addressed.
8	Sign off and approval for publication	<i>*To be completed on approval of the recommended policy changes*</i>