

## DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATION TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**Subject:** Proposed Amendments to Housing Allocations Policy

**Date of Decision:** 19.7.23

**Decision Number:**

2/2023

**Background:**

There is a significant gap between the need and supply of larger homes which is why we are seeking approval to begin this process of consultation and amendment to our policy as a matter of urgency.

The Council's current policy for the allocation of affordable housing gives priority to existing tenants who would like to downsize to a smaller home, freeing up and improving the supply of much needed larger affordable homes. Applicants are restricted to apply for one-bedroom properties which whilst of a size that may meet their need, may often fail to meet their aspiration. Officers and members have discussed how extending this policy to allow tenants to downsize to two as well as one-bedroom homes would create more choice and a better incentive, which in turn could create a better supply of larger affordable homes in Chelmsford.

Any proposed change to a local housing authority's allocation policy must be consulted with those that are likely to be affected, in this case local Registered Providers of social housing under Housing Act 1996 s.168(3). There is no specified time period or process for this consultation and previously we have done this by letter emailed to our partners giving four weeks to respond. We therefore propose to apply the same timescale and process.

**Decision and Reasons for Urgency:**

The Chief Executive decided to exercise his delegated authority to take urgent decisions and authorise the start of the process of consultation and amendment to Housing Allocations Policy. He did so on the grounds that there was a significant gap between the need and supply of larger homes and starting the process as soon as possible would be beneficial. There was also a gap over the Summer until the next Cabinet meeting.

**Supporting Information:**

The Leader of the Council was consulted before taking the decision and had no objection to it.