

<b>People Select Committee</b>
<b>Review of Choice Based Lettings (CBL)</b>
<b>Outline Scope</b>

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<b>Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?</b>	
Council Plan 2015-18 – Environment and Housing Theme - A clean, green Stockton-on-Tees with appropriate housing provision – Objective - Address the housing requirements of the borough	
<b>What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?</b>	
Main issues:	
Choice Based Lettings (CBL) has been in operation locally since 2009 as part of the Tees Valley wide 'Compass' scheme. It enables people on the social housing waiting list to 'bid' for properties suitable for their needs. Since its early development there have been extensive shifts in the housing market and housing policy, particularly relating to welfare reform.	
Registered Housing Providers are experiencing varying demand for their housing stock at the same time as demand for private rented options is rising significantly. Varying demand is affecting the number of times a void property is offered to new tenants and the void-to-re-let timescales.	
Overall aims of review:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To ensure that access to social housing remains fair and equitable, and responds to changing patterns of demand</li> <li>- To ensure best use of the Borough's Housing Stock and minimise void timescales.</li> </ul>	
The review would not examine the Allocations Policy, but alternatives to the Choice Based Lettings method of delivery and in particular the method used to advertise and bid for	

properties.

**The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:**

- Choice Based Lettings – what are the aims and how does it operate?
- what is the current social housing stock situation in the Borough?
- what is the impact of welfare reform on the need and demand for social housing?
- what are the main issues / concerns regarding how CBL is operating?
- what lessons can be taken from other housing providers – why is the private sector particularly attractive at this time? What are our partnering Registered Providers doing to increase demand for social housing?
- what are the alternatives to the current CBL scheme / how can it be improved?

**Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?**

Cabinet, Tees Valley Compass Scheme partners

**Expected duration of review and key milestones:**

To report to Cabinet in October in order to feed into wider Tees Valley review.

**What information do we need?**

Existing information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.):

Tees Valley Choice Based Lettings Scheme - Cabinet Report (June 2008)

Scrutiny Review of Choice Based Lettings Final Report (March 2007)

New information:

Impact of Welfare Reform statistics

Availability and use of housing stock

Alternative methods of CBL delivery

Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)

What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?

SBC Housing / Housing Options

Overview CBL scheme, background, operation, future proposals

SBC Private Sector Housing

Changes in use of private rented sector (SSP report)

Thirteen Group / Compass Steering Groups members

Operation of CBL, future proposals, marketing of social housing

**How will this information be gathered? (eg. financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey)**

Primarily through Committee meetings.

**How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?**

Proposals for change will be subject to public consultation

**How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?**

Any review to the scheme would need to ensure there is no disadvantage for protected groups when accessing social housing.

**How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?**

Improved access to housing primarily contributes towards the following themes of the HWB Strategy:

- Create and develop healthy sustainable places and communities
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health

**Provide an initial view as to how this review could lead to efficiencies, improvements and/or transformation:**

An improved advertising method for social housing that will enable better use of the housing stock and improved access to housing for local residents.

## Project Plan

Key Task	Details/Activities	Date	Responsibility
<b>Scoping of Review</b>	Information gathering	Prior to 13 July	Scrutiny Officer Link Officer
<b>Tri-Partite Meeting</b>	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives of review	<b>1 July</b>	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Corporate Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer

<b>Agree Project Plan</b>	Scope and Project Plan agreed by Committee	<b>13 July</b>	Select Committee
<b>Obtaining Evidence</b>	Background to CBL scheme / Reasons behind need for change / Demo of current scheme  Sam Cook / Julie McNaughton / Joanne Andrews (Thirteen Group) - Consideration of Proposals for Change / Demo of new web interface	<b>13 July</b>  <b>14 September</b>	Select Committee
<b>Members decide recommendations and findings</b>	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations	<b>14 September</b>	Select Committee
<b>Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders</b>	Circulation of Report		Scrutiny Officer
<b>Tri-Partite Meeting</b>	Meeting to discuss findings of review and draft recommendations	<b>TBC</b>	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Corporate Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
<b>Final Agreement of Report</b>	Approval of final report by Committee	<b>By Circulation</b>	Select Committee, Cabinet Member, Corporate Director
<b>Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee</b>	Consideration of report	<b>[27 October]</b>	Executive Scrutiny Committee
<b>Report to Cabinet/Approving Body</b>	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval to Cabinet	<b>8 October</b>	Cabinet/ Approving Body