

Consultation outcomes and response: draft Tenancy Strategy 2021

A questionnaire was available to be completed on-line (also as hard copy on request) for 12 weeks during February to April 2021.

- 1 46 responses were received to the consultation exercise, consisting:
 - 15% home owner or private tenant; 74% social housing tenant; 2% private landlord; 4% on Homefinder register; 11% Other (incorporating Registered Providers).
 - 70% of consultees expressed overall agreement with the proposed draft Tenancy Strategy, with 22% disagreeing.
 - Asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposal that secure, lifetime tenancies be used in most cases: 89% agreed and 11% disagreed.
 - 70-76% agreed with the use of flexible tenancies in certain specific circumstances, with between 9-11% disagreeing:
 - Specifically in relation to the proposed use of flexible tenancies for accommodation for homeless households: 70% agreed; 11% disagreed.
- 2 Whilst views were sought as to whether flexible tenancies should be considered in the future for larger or substantially adapted properties, the Strategy specifically commits that should either of those scenario's be considered in future, any proposed change/s will be subject to our standard consultation and formal approval processes to be carried out at that time.
- 3 A responder queried:
I assume that any flexible arrangements would ensure that tenants would be offered an adequate property to better fit their needs, and also flexibility with timetabling of moves and offering help and support through the process?

In response to that comment, it is confirmed that:
Alternative rehousing offers are dependent on a range of factors, such as eligibility, need, availability of accommodation to meet that need, the individuals own wants/expectations, etc. Therefore, the Council's minimum commitment would be to support in the finding of suitable, appropriate alternative accommodation: depending on circumstances, that may involve, for example, an offer of alternative suitable accommodation in social or private sectors, or support in finding suitable alternative accommodation in the private sector.
- 4 Asked whether they agreed or disagreed with advice and guidance given within the draft Strategy to Registered Providers:
 - 67% of responders agreed and 4% disagreed;
 - athewith regard to whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposal on use of Affordable Rent, 72% agreed and 22% disagreed.
- 5 A responder made the point that:

The recommendation for Affordable Rents (AR) not to exceed the social rent cap is somewhat contradictory to the AR scheme. AR levels are reviewed at relet and set inline within guidelines of 80% market rent value. LHA cap is also taken into consideration at this point and rent is set within this to ensure it is accessible to those in receipt of housing related benefit. The AR scheme is there to encourage development, by recommending rents do not exceed the social rent cap this reduces the benefit provided to RPs and ultimately the resources available to development of much needed additional housing in the City.

We acknowledge this concern whilst also, obviously, being concerned ourselves that social sector homes be affordable to the local population. In the light of this comment we considered, again, Derby's current position with regard to levels of LHA (Local Housing Allowance) and Social Rent Cap for different property types/sizes and, in response, we have broadened the scope of wording within clause 5.6 of the Strategy, amending it from '*except where a higher rent is critical to ensure the viability of building larger properties of 4 or more bedrooms...*' to '*except where a higher rent is critical to ensure viability; typically, we may expect that exception to apply to the building of larger properties of 4 or more bedrooms, a minority of 3 bed properties or to properties with specialist features...*' so as to avoid unintentional discouragement of much needed RP development. It is reminded that RPs must 'have regard to' the guidance within the Strategy; they are not bound by it.

- 6 Further comment was made that consideration should be made to the addition of '*a section to 3.10 to the effect of the provision of temporary accommodation to homeless single people in supported accommodation*'.

No change to the Strategy has been made in this regard since we are of the view that clause 3.10 a) of the Strategy does already address that point.