

Members' Library Service Request Form

Date of Document	18/04/18
Originator	James Coutts
Originator's Ref (if any)	
Document Title	Housing Allocations - Overcrowding

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Additional information:

Authorised By	Douglas Proudfoot
Designation	Head of Service, Development
Date	18/04/18

For Office Use Only:	
Library Reference	55/18
Date Received	18/04/18
Bulletin	Apr 18

REPORT TO: Members Library Service

MEETING DATE:

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)

SUBJECT: Housing Allocations – Overcrowding

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To note a 'reassessment of overcrowding' exercise that will take place shortly to assist those on the Council's housing list who are found to be experiencing physical overcrowding in their homes.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note that the 'reassessment of overcrowding' exercise will take place to ensure that those currently experiencing overcrowding continue to be given priority points to assist them with re-housing and, where appropriate, those housing applicants who desire an extra bedroom continue to be able make that choice. However, in the latter circumstances, their application for housing will no longer receive overcrowding priority points.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Due to the current configuration of the Orchard Housing Management System, overcrowding points are automatically awarded when an application for housing shows the number of required bedrooms is greater than the number of current bedrooms.
- 3.2 It is intended that this process should be de-automated and that those who are not 'physically' overcrowded should have the overcrowding priority points removed i.e. a couple in a one-bedroom property who desire a two-bedroom will continue to be able to exercise this option, however, their application will no longer be awarded overcrowding points as they are not physically overcrowded.
- 3.3 It is estimated that approximately 900 applications will be subject to the review, of which up to a third may no longer be granted overcrowding points. Those who are found to be directly affected will be sent an

explanatory letter and given the option to discuss their application and housing options with housing staff.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This action will ensure that only applicants who are actually overcrowded will receive overcrowding points in line with the existing allocations policy.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - none
6.2 Personnel - none
6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

Appendix: Allocations Policy - Review of Overcrowding (letter template)

AUTHOR'S NAME	Douglas Proudfoot
DESIGNATION	Head of Service (Development)
CONTACT INFO	James Coutts x7483
DATE	9 April 2018

Date: []

[Applicant Name
Address Details]

Dear [Applicant Name],

Allocations Policy - Review of Overcrowding

East Lothian Council has recently reviewed the way overcrowding points are awarded to applicants on the housing list.

It found that some applicants were given overcrowding points because they would like an extra bedroom, for example: -

- a couple in a one bedroom property may wish to be considered for a two bedroom property and currently would be awarded points for overcrowding that recognises that they were one bedroom short.
- a single parent living in a one bedroom property, looking for a two bedroom for access to a child would also be given overcrowding points as they require an extra bedroom.

On examination of our records, we have established that you have been awarded overcrowding points when, in fact, you are not physically overcrowded.

As a result your housing application has been reviewed and your overcrowding points have been removed as you are not physically overcrowded. Please note that the number of bedrooms you have chosen will not be affected in any way. This action is fairer with regards to households who are experiencing genuine overcrowding.

If you would like more information about your housing options, please visit the Council's web site www.eastlothian.gov.uk or should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact your local housing office on 01620 827827.

Yours sincerely,

[Community Housing Officer]