

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Thursday, 11th July, 2013

7.00 pm

**Council Chamber
Thanet District Council
Margate**

**www.thanet.gov.uk
01843 577000**

Please note that under the Council's procedure rules, no audio or visual recordings shall be made at any Council meeting except for official recordings by the clerk or recordings agreed by the Chairman to be made by accredited media organisations

We may be able to provide this document in a different format such as Braille, audio or large print, or in another language. Please call 01843 577165 for details.

Date: 1 July 2013
Ask For: Anona Somasundaram
Direct Dial: (01843) 577046
Email: anona.somasundaram@thanet.gov.uk



You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the Thanet District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent on Thursday, 11 July 2013 at 7.00 pm for the purpose of transacting the business mentioned below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G Bach".

Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager

To: The Members of Thanet District Council

FIRE ALARM PROCEDURES: If the fire alarm is activated, please vacate the offices via the stairs either through the security door to the left of the Chairman or opposite the lifts in the foyer. Please do not use the lifts. Please assemble in Hawley Square on the green. Officers will assist you and advise when it is deemed safe to return to the Chamber.

AGENDA

Item
No

Subject

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**
- 3a **MINUTES OF ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16 MAY 2013** (Pages 1 - 10)
To approve the minutes of the annual meeting of Council held on 16 May 2013, copy attached.
- 3b **MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 16 MAY 2013** (Pages 11 - 12)
To approve the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Council held on 16 May 2013, copy attached.
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
To receive any announcements from the Chairman, Leader, Members of the Cabinet or Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.1 (iv).
5. **REPORT BACK TO COUNCIL ON PETITION RELATING TO PLEASURAMA SITE, RAMSGATE** (Pages 13 - 16)

<u>Item No</u>	<u>Subject</u>
6.	<u>PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</u> To receive petitions from the public in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme, as set out in Council Procedure Rule 12.
6a	<u>PLEASURAMA SITE, RAMSGATE</u> (Pages 17 - 22)
7.	<u>QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</u> To receive questions received from the press or public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.
7a	<u>QUESTION NO. 1 - PLEASURAMA SITE, RAMSGATE</u> (Pages 23 - 24)
7b	<u>QUESTION NO. 2 - PLEASURAMA SITE, RAMSGATE</u> (Pages 25 - 26)
7c	<u>QUESTION NO. 3 - SENIOR LEVELS</u> (Pages 27 - 28)
8.	<u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL</u> To receive questions from Members of the Council in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.
9.	<u>MOTIONS ON NOTICE</u> To receive any Notices of Motion from Members of Council in accordance with the Council Procedure Rule 16.
10.	<u>LEADER'S REPORT</u> (Pages 29 - 30)
11.	<u>ALLOCATIONS POLICY</u> (Pages 31 - 110)
12.	<u>LOCAL AUTHORITY MORTGAGE SCHEME</u> (Pages 111 - 120)
13.	<u>TRANSEUROPA OUTSTANDING DEBT</u> (Pages 121 - 124)
14.	<u>REVIEW OF POLICIES & PROCEDURES - PROBITY AND REPUTATION - RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET AND REQUEST BY STANDARDS COMMITTEE</u> (Pages 125 - 134)
15.	<u>CALL-IN AND URGENCY - ANNUAL REPORT</u> (Pages 135 - 136)
16.	<u>REPORT ON URGENT DECISION - LOCAL PLAN</u> (Pages 137 - 140)
17.	<u>REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES</u> (Pages 141 - 144)
18.	<u>REPRESENTATION ON RAMSGATE CHARITIES</u> (Pages 145 - 148)

This page is intentionally left blank

COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 16 May 2013 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Douglas W Clark (Chairman); Councillors Dark, Alexandrou, Aldred, Bayford, Binks, Bruce, Campbell, Cohen, Coleman-Cooke, Day, Driver, Duncan, Dwyer, Edwards, Everitt, Fenner, Gibson, Gideon, D Green, E Green, I Gregory, K Gregory, Grove, Harrison, C Hart, S Hart, Hayton, Hibbert, Hornus, Huxley, Johnston, King, Kirby, Lodge-Pritchard, Marson, Matterface, Moore, Moores, Nicholson, Poole, Roberts, D Saunders, M Saunders, Savage, H Scobie, W Scobie, Sullivan, M Tomlinson, S Tomlinson, Watkins, Wells, Wiltshire, Wise, Worrow and Wright

COUNCILLOR CLARK IN THE CHAIR

Councillor Clark thanked Members for all the good wishes they conveyed to him during his recent illness.

The Leader welcomed Councillor Clark back and this was endorsed by a round of applause.

WELCOME TO COUNCILLOR ROZANNE DUNCAN

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Rozanne Duncan to the meeting and congratulated her on her recent election as district councillor for the Cliftonville East Ward.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Leader proposed, and the Deputy Leader seconded, that Councillor Dark be elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

There being no further nominations, Councillor Dark was **UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED** Chairman for the 2013/14 municipal year.

RECESS

There was a short recess, during which the new Chairman was invested with the Chain and Badge of Office.

Following this recess, Councillor Dark made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office of Chairman, returned thanks for her election and formalised Councillor Pat Moore as her escort and Louise Drelaud as her reserve escort.

COUNCILLOR DARK IN THE CHAIR

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Leader proposed, and the Deputy Leader seconded, that Councillor H Scobie be elected Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

Councillor King proposed, and Councillor Driver seconded, that Councillor Grove be elected Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

Upon the nominations being put to the vote (which the Chairman requested to be recorded), Councillor H Scobie was declared **ELECTED** Vice-Chairman for the 2013/14 municipal year, *29 voting for Councillor H Scobie and 27 voting for Councillor Grove, as follows:*

FOR COUNCILLOR H SCOBIE: Councillors: Aldred; Alexandrou; Campbell; Clark; Cohen; Dark; Duncan; Dwyer; Edwards; Everitt; Fenner; Gibson; D Green; E Green; Harrison; C Hart; S Hart; Hibbert; Huxley; Johnston; Lodge-Pritchard; Matterface; Moore; Nicholson; Poole; H Scobie; W Scobie; Watkins; and Worrow

FOR COUNCILLOR GROVE: Councillors: Bayford; Binks; Bruce; Coleman-Cooke; Day; Driver; Gideon; I Gregory; K Gregory; Grove; Hayton; Hornus; King; Kirby; Marson; Moores; Roberts; D Saunders; M Saunders; Savage; Sullivan; M Tomlinson; S Tomlinson; Wells; Wiltshire; Wise & Wright

RECESS

There was a short recess, during which the new Vice-Chairman was invested with the Badge of Office.

Following the recess, Councillor H Scobie made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office of Vice-Chairman, returned thanks for his election and formalised his wife, Mrs Scobie, as his escort and Councillor W Scobie, as reserve escort.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was NOTED that the Council Procedure Rule referred to in the fifth paragraph of page 9 of the minutes should read, "27.4", and not, "28.4".

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 18 April 2013 were, subject to that amendment, approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements under Council Procedure Rule 2.1 (iv).

7. RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUNCTIONS - EXECUTIVE

It was NOTED that:

- a) as Thanet Local Strategic Partnership no longer existed, paragraph numbered 3 on page 6 of Replacement No. 2 of Annex 2 should be removed;
- b) the words, "Margate Renewal Board", should be removed from paragraph numbered 5 on page 6 of Replacement No. 2 of Annex 2, on the basis that this Board no longer existed.

The Council NOTED:

1. the executive delegations as set out at Replacement No.2 of Annex 2 to the report, subject to the amendments at (a) and (b) above.

2. the Cabinet Portfolios, Cabinet Portfolio Holders, Shadow Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Operational Accountabilities, as follows:

Portfolio Holder	Name of Portfolio	Operational Accountability
Councillor C Hart Leader of the Council <i>Shadow Leader of Council: Councillor Bayford</i>	Leader of the Council Strategic Economic Development Services	Co-ordinate all major policy development, projects, community development initiatives and resourcing issues. Economic Development & Regeneration; East Kent Opportunities Ltd; Thanet Regeneration Board.
Councillor Johnston <i>Shadow Cabinet Member: Councillor Wells</i>	Community Services	Community Safety, Margate Task Force, Events, Community Development, Cultural Development, Indoor and Outdoor Leisure, Safeguarding Children, Play Areas, Sport, Youth, Tourism, Your Leisure, Kent Ltd.
Councillor D Green <i>Shadow Cabinet Member: Councillor Marson</i>	Housing and Planning Services	Housing Intervention, Private Sector Housing, Housing Needs/Homelessness, Housing Strategy, Client-side East Kent Housing, Building Control, Strategic Planning, Planning Applications, Planning Enforcement, Conservation
Councillor Poole Deputy Leader of the Council <i>Shadow Cabinet Member: Councillor Moores</i>	Operational Services	Foreshore, Allotments, Property Management (including asset disposal, acquisition and asset management), Emergency Planning & Business Continuity, Kent Innovation Centre, Media Centre, Port of Ramsgate, Ramsgate Royal Harbour Marina, Broadstairs and Margate Harbours, Cemeteries and Crematorium, Coastal Engineering, Commercial Property, Grounds Maintenance, Parks and Open Spaces Management (including Trees), Playground Maintenance, Public Toilets, Street Cleaning, Waste and Recycling, Off Street Parking, On Street Parking including Temporary Road Closure Orders, Thanet Coast Project, Water Safety and Beach Services
Councillor Everitt <i>Shadow Deputy Leader and Shadow Cabinet Member: Councillor Wise</i>	Financial Services	Capital, Treasury Management, HRA and Insurance, Budget Setting, Monitoring and Final Accounts, Income, Payments, Systems Control and Improvement, East Kent Audit Partnership

Portfolio Holder	Name of Portfolio	Operational Accountability
Councillor Fenner <i>Shadow Cabinet Member:</i> Councillor Bruce	Business, Corporate and Regulatory Services	Business Information and Improvement, Information and Communications (including Public Relations, Marketing, Press Relations, Internal Communications, film locations and Records and Data Management), Business Support and Compliance (including Corporate Governance), Policy and Business Planning (including Performance Management), Procurement and Contracts, Business Transformation and Options East Kent Services Client-Side, East Kent Human Resources Client-Side, covering: Benefits, Customer Services, Human Resources (including internal Health and Safety), IT, Revenues (including Debt Recovery) CCTV, Street Scene Enforcement, Land Charges, Licensing, Environmental Health, including integrated Pollution Control, Street Nameplates, Statutory Nuisance, Food Safety and External Health and Safety Democratic Services including Electoral Management, Member Services and Legal Services

8. CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES, POLITICAL BALANCE, APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, PANELS AND BOARDS

Proportionality Options

The Leader proposed, and the Deputy Leader seconded, that Option 2 for achieving proportionality, as set out in the report, be adopted.

Councillor Bayford proposed, and Councillor Bruce seconded, that Option 1 for achieving proportionality, as set out in the report, be adopted.

Upon the two motions being put to the vote (which the Chairman requested to be recorded), it was **RESOLVED** to adopt Option 2, *28 voting for Option 2, 28 voting for Option 1 and the Chairman exercising her casting vote for Option 2, as follows:*

FOR OPTION 1: Bayford; Binks; Bruce; Coleman-Cooke; Day; Driver; Duncan; Gideon; I Gregory; K Gregory; Grove; Hayton; Hornus; King; Kirby; Marson; Moores; Roberts; D Saunders; M Saunders; Savage; Sullivan; M Tomlinson; S Tomlinson; Wells; Wiltshire; Wise; Wright

FOR OPTION 2: Aldred; Alexandrou; Campbell; Clark; Cohen; Dark; Dwyer; Edwards; Everitt; Fenner; Gibson; D Green; E Green; Harrison; C Hart; S Hart; Hibbert; Huxley; Johnston; Lodge-Pritchard; Matterface; Moore; Nicholson; Poole; H Scobie; W Scobie; Watkins; and Worrow.

Standards Committee - proportionality

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** that Council agrees to waive proportionality for the Standards Committee and to apply the approximate proportionality as set out in Table 4 of the Report.

Nominations to Committees, Panels & Boards for 2013/14

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** to note the nominations to Committees, Panels and Boards for the 2013/14 municipal year as follows:

Planning Committee

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group	
1	Campbell	1	Binks	1	Cohen			1	King
2	Matterface	2	Kirby						
3	Everitt	3	Hayton						
4	Edwards	4	Sullivan						
5	Fenner	5	S Tomlinson						
6	Alexandrou	6	Wright						
7	Gibson								

Planning Committee (pool of substitute Members)

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group	
1	Dark	1	D Saunders	1	Worror			1	Grove
2	Aldred	2	M Saunders						
3	E Green	3	K Gregory						
4	Dwyer	4	Coleman-Cooke						
5	Huxley	5	TBD						
6	Nicholson	6	TBD						
7	W Scobie								

Licensing Board

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group	
1	Nicholson	1	Coleman-Cooke			1	Duncan	1	Grove
2	Huxley	2	Roberts						
3	Watkins	3	M Tomlinson						
4	Edwards	4	S Tomlinson						
5	Campbell	5	M Saunders						
6	Clark	6	I Gregory						
7	Matterface								

Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group	
1	Harrison	1	Gideon	1	Worror			1	Driver
2	Campbell	2	I Gregory						
3	Moore	3	Hornus						
4	Huxley	4	D Saunders						
5	Gibson	5	M Tomlinson						
6	Hibbert	6	K Gregory						
7	Watkins								
8	Nicholson								

Governance and Audit

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group	
1	Lodge-Pritchard	1	Binks	1	Worror				
2	Campbell	2	S Tomlinson						
3	Moore	3	Day						
4	W Scobie	4	D Saunders						

General Purposes

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group	
1	C Hart	1	I Gregory			1	Wiltshire	1	King
2	Poole	2	Marson						
3	Everitt	3	Kirby						
4	Fenner	4	S Tomlinson						

Boundaries and Electoral Arrangements Working Party

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group	
1	D Green	1	Gideon			1	Duncan		
2	Johnston	2	Hornus						
3	W Scobie	3	Roberts						

Constitutional Review Working Party

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group		Independent Members (non Councillors) *	
1	Nicholson	1	Hayton							1	Robin Hills †
2	Watkins	2	Wright							2	Linda Frampton #

NOTE: * drawn from the Independent Members of the Standards Committee

Key † Chairman (*ratified later at the meeting*)
Vice-Chairman (*ratified later at the meeting*)

Joint Transportation Board

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group		Parish/ Town *	
1	Clark	1	D Saunders							1	Sheila Bransfield
2	S Hart	2	M Saunders								
3	Dwyer	3	Savage								
4	Aldred	4	K Gregory								

NOTE *: nominated by Thanet Association of Parish Councils.

NOTE: The Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board for 2013/2014 will be a Thanet District Council Member

Standards Committee

Labour		Conservative		Thanet Independent Group		UKIP		Independent Group		Independent Members (<i>non Councillors</i>)		Parish / Town *	
1	Nicholson	1	Marson					1	Grove	1	Robin Hills †	1	Jennifer Fletcher
2	E Green	2	Roberts							2	Linda Frampton #	2	David Lawson
3	Johnston	3	M Tomlinson							3	Jiggy Bhore	3	John Way
										4	Joanne Pearman		

NOTE *: Nominated by Thanet Association of Parish Councils.

Key † Chairman (*ratified later at the meeting*)
Vice Chairman (*ratified later at the meeting*)

East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee

1	Leader of the Council
2	Deputy Leader of the Council

Appointments of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to Committees, Panels and Boards for the 2013/14 municipal year

Upon nominations being made for each committee, panel or board, in turn, the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen declared **ELECTED** were as follows:

NOMINATION(S) FOR:	MEMBER ELECTED Councillor:
Chairman of the PLANNING COMMITTEE On the proposal of the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader, and there being no further nominations	COHEN
Vice-Chairman of the PLANNING COMMITTEE On the proposal of the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader, and there being no further nominations	CAMPBELL
Chairman of the LICENSING BOARD On the proposal of the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader, and there being no further nominations	NICHOLSON
Vice-Chairman of the LICENSING BOARD On the proposal of the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader, and there being no further nominations	HUXLEY
Chairman of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL On the proposal of Councillor Bayford, seconded by Councillor Wise, and there being no further nominations	GIDEON
Vice-Chairman of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL On the proposal of the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader, and there being no further nominations	HARRISON
Chairman of the GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE On the proposal of the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader, and there being no further nominations	WORROW
Vice-Chairman of the GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE On the proposal of the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader, and there being no further nominations	LODGE-PRITCHARD
Chairman of the JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD On the proposal of the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader, and there being no further nominations	CLARK

Appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to the Standards Committee and Constitutional Review Working Party

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. THAT Mr Robin Hills be appointed Chairman of the Standards Committee and Constitutional Review Working Party for the 2013/14 municipal year;
2. THAT Mrs Linda Frampton be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Standards Committee and Constitutional Review Working Party for the 2013/14 municipal year.

9. RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUNCTIONS - OFFICERS

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, it was **RESOLVED**:

“THAT the Officer Delegations for the 2013/14 Municipal year, as set out in Annex 1 to the report, be approved”.

10. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS - 2013/14 - 2014/15

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, it was **RESOLVED**:

“THAT Council approves the revised calendar of meetings, as set out in Annex 1 to the report”.

11. ANNUAL REPORT - CHAIRMAN OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel Annual Report for 2012/13 was NOTED, Councillor Driver, the Chairman of the Panel for the 2012/13 municipal year, having left the meeting earlier.

12. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

It was NOTED that the proposed lists of Outside Bodies at Annexes 1 & 2 to the report and the recommendations at paragraph 6.4 of the report should refer to the term, “2013/14 to 2014/15”.

It was proposed by the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader:

1. THAT Council agrees to remove Orbit Housing from the list of Non-Executive Outside Bodies;
2. THAT Council agrees the list of Executive related Outside Bodies for the term, 2013/14 to 2014/15, as set out at Annex 1 to the report;
3. THAT Council agrees the list of Non-Executive related Outside Bodies for the term, 2013/14 to 2014/15, as set out at Annex 2 to the report;
4. THAT Council agrees the representation on the Non-Executive related Outside Bodies for the term, 2013/14 to 2014/15, as set out at Annex 2 to the report, subject to:
 - a) the representative on Age UK: Thanet being Councillor P Moore;
 - b) the representatives on the Citizens Advice Bureau, Thanet being Councillors D Green and Dwyer;

- c) the representative on Parking and Traffic Regulation Outside London being Councillor Poole; and
- d) Councillor S Tomlinson being replaced by Councillor Clark as a representative on The Friends of Margate Cemetery.

Prior to the motion being put to the vote, Councillor M Tomlinson resigned as a Council representative on The Friends of Margate Cemetery.

The motion was subsequently declared CARRIED, 28 voting for and 27 against.

13. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2013/14

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, it was **RESOLVED**:

“THAT the recommendations as set out at paragraph 6 of the report be adopted, namely:

1. That the Kent and Medway Independent Persons Forum (formerly Kent and Medway Independent Standards Committee) be added to the list of approved organisations in the Members' Allowances Scheme, subject to the approval of East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel;
2. That Council notes the comments of the East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel on the 2013/14 Members' Allowances Scheme.”

14. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE AND ANNUAL REPORT

Upon Councillor Worrow presenting the annual report, Council **RESOLVED** to approve its contents and the recommended actions within the action plan.

Meeting concluded : 7.58 pm

COUNCIL

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 16 May 2013 at 8.30 pm in Council Chamber, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Mrs Kay A Dark (Chairman); Councillors Clark, Alexandrou, Aldred, Campbell, Cohen, Duncan, Dwyer, Edwards, Everitt, Fenner, Gibson, D Green, E Green, Grove, Harrison, C Hart, S Hart, Hibbert, Huxley, Johnston, King, Lodge-Pritchard, Matterface, Moore, Nicholson, Poole, H Scobie, W Scobie, Watkins, Wells, Wiltshire, Wise and Worrow

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

17. REVISED TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR 2013/14

In response to a query raised by Councillor Wise, Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive, explained that the disclaimer clause in the report was considered best practice and would protect Council against any litigation by members of the public who may rely upon information contained in this Statement document to make their own private investment decisions.

It was proposed by Councillor Everitt, seconded by the Leader and RESOLVED:

“THAT the revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement be approved”.

18. AGREEMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR 2013/14

Councillor Johnston proposed and Councillor D Green seconded,

“THAT Council approves the priorities and actions in the Thanet Community Safety Plan 2013/14 as set out in Annex 1 to the report.”

Amendment

Councillor Wells proposed, and Councillor Wise seconded, an amendment as follows:

“THAT the following words be added to the end of the motion:

‘subject to this amendment being included in the Action Plan; ‘to proactively discourage the placement of young and adult offenders and other vulnerable people from London and other areas into Thanet.’”

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was declared LOST.

The original motion was subsequently ADOPTED.

Meeting concluded: 8.58 pm

REPORT BACK TO COUNCIL - PETITION RELATING TO PLEASURAMA SITE

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Eastcliff Site**

Summary: **To report back to Council on a petition from the Friends of Ramsgate Seafront, requesting the Council to, “stop the freehold of the Pleasurama being sold”.**

For Information

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 At its meeting on 18 April 2013, Council received a petition containing 1072 valid signatures from the Friends of Ramsgate Seafront, requesting Council to:

“Stop the Freehold of the Pleasurama site being sold”,

1.2 The petition also stated:

“We the undersigned believe the proposed sale of the Pleasurama freehold to the current developer is an unacceptable solution, since this developer has lost public trust and confidence and this proposal will not achieve the stated aim, of regenerating the Ramsgate Seafront. We now call on Thanet District Council to dismiss this developer and this proposal ...”
--

1.3 Upon debating the petition, Council resolved to refer it to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

1.4 Consequently, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, upon considering the petition on 23 April 2013, agreed the following:

1. To set up a Pleasurama Site Development Task & Finish Group as a priority scrutiny project for 2013/14;
2. Officers to draft the terms of reference.

1.5 The decisions taken by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel were referred to in an officer's report on options for future action, considered by Cabinet at its extraordinary meeting on 29 May 2013. At that meeting, it was agreed:

1. That Cabinet supports the setting up of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel task and finish group, and advises that the following considerations should be taken into account in proposing a course of action for the Council:
 - A focus primarily on the key issues to help guide the way forward for the Council as a whole

- Cabinet's support for the work, including the cost of seeking confidential appropriate legal and commercial property advice
- Consideration of action moving forward that may involve legal processes needs to be done in a way that does not prejudice the position of the Council in a court action
- Legal, financial and time risks associated with any proposed course of action are considered with care, including those associated with alternative developments
- Seeking an expeditious result so that Cabinet can move forward on this site.

2. That Cabinet expresses its strong dissatisfaction with the progress made by the developer in the last four months to move forward with this development, and signals a shift into a new phase of the development in which it wishes to see robust alternatives to the current arrangements being developed and acted upon by the Council.

2.0 The Current Situation

2.1 Council is asked to note the decisions taken by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet, as referred to at paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5 above.

3.0 Corporate Implications

3.1 Financial and VAT

3.1.1 As detailed in the report to Cabinet on 29 May 2013

3.2 Legal

3.2.1 As detailed in the report to Cabinet on 29 May 2013

3.3 Corporate

3.3.1 As detailed in the report to Cabinet on 29 May 2013

3.4 Equity and Equalities

3.4.1 As detailed in the report to Cabinet on 29 May 2013

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 This report is for information only

5.0 Decision Making Process

5.1 This report is for information only

Contact Officer:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager, ext 7187
Reporting to:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager, ext 7005

Annex List

None	N/A
------	-----

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
Petition	Democratic Services

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	n/a
Legal	n/a

This page is intentionally left blank

PETITION TO COUNCIL – PLEASURAMA SITE

To: **Council - 11 July 2013**

By: **Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Eastcliff**

Summary: A Petition to the Council has been received in relation to the Pleasurama site, Ramsgate

For Information

1.0 Introduction and background information

1.1 A petition containing 1056 valid signatures was received from Mr Nicholas Cooper on behalf of the Friends of Ramsgate Seafront, on 20 May 2013, as follows:

“We wish TDC to explicitly reassure Friends of Ramsgate Seafront that under no circumstances will a discretionary extension of the practical completion date be given to SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd or any developer of Royal Sands before or after 22nd May 2013. Should SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd fail to meet this deadline, TDC must act immediately and restore the site to the People of Ramsgate to implement their own Vision for the Future.

“We, the undersigned, believe extensions to deadlines for the uncompleted work on the Pleasurama site will only compound the problems and leave the people of Ramsgate with a useless eyesore for many years to come.”

1.4 The petition front sheet is attached as Annex 1.

1.5 Mr Cooper, as petition originator, has confirmed that he will present the petition to Council at this meeting. Under Council Procedure Rule (CPR) 12.6, he will have five minutes in which to speak.

1.6 As the petition has more than 1000 signatures, Council is required to debate it.

3.0 Options

3.1 The Council may take any of the following actions:

- i) Make recommendations to Cabinet
- ii) Hold an inquiry into the matter
- iii) Undertake research into the matter
- iv) Hold a public meeting
- v) Hold a consultation
- vi) Hold a meeting with Petitioners
- vii) Refer the Petition for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- viii) Require a Senior Officer to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to give evidence
- ix) Write to the Petition Organiser setting out its view about the request in the Petition

4.0 Corporate Implications

3.1 Financial

3.1.1 A decision by the Cabinet not to under any circumstances grant an extension of time for the completion of the Development is likely to result in the termination of the Development Agreement. This would impact on the finances of the Council in terms of the loss of a significant capital receipt as well as the unbudgeted costs of any connected or resulting litigation.

4.0 Legal

4.2.1 Decisions in relation to the Ramsgate Royal Sands site are the responsibility of the Cabinet and the current Development Agreement gives the Cabinet the absolute discretion to extend the time for completion of the Royal Sands development by up to two years. However, as a public body the Council is required to determine any request from the Developer for an extension of time in a reasonable and rational manner having regard to all the relevant surrounding circumstances. Consequently, as a matter of law, the Cabinet cannot fetter its discretion by, as the Petitioners demand, determining in advance the outcome of any such request from the Developer.

4.3 Corporate

4.3.1 In January the Cabinet instructed officers to bring back an options report if by 22 May 2013 the Developer did not have the necessary finances in place to complete the development or have an agreement in place for the construction and operation of the hotel. Cabinet duly considered an options report at the extraordinary meeting of Cabinet held on 29 May 2013 and resolved to support the setting up of an Overview & Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to make recommendations to the Cabinet on how to proceed. As at the date of writing this report, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel has yet to agree the Terms of Reference of a Task & Finish Group.

4.4 Equity and Equalities

4.4.1 None apparent

5.0 Recommendation

5.1 Members are requested to debate the Petition in accordance with the above.

6.0 Decision Making Process

6.1 Under Council Procedure Rule 12.6, Council is required to debate the Petition. However, only Cabinet can make substantive decisions in respect of the Ramsgate Royal Sands site.

Contact Officer:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager ext 7005
Reporting to:	Dr Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive and S. 151 Officer

Annex List

Annex 1	Petition Front sheet
---------	----------------------

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	N/A
Legal	N/A

This page is intentionally left blank



Save Our Heritage Annex 1

Petition to Thanet District Council

We wish TDC to explicitly reassure Friends of Ramsgate Seafront that under no circumstances will a discretionary extension of the practical completion date be given

to SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd or any developer of Royal Sands before or after 22nd May 2013. Should SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd fail to meet this deadline, TDC must act immediately and restore the site to the People of Ramsgate to implement their own Vision for the Future.

We, the undersigned, believe extensions to deadlines for the uncompleted work on the Pleasurama site will only compound the problems and leave the people of Ramsgate with a useless eyesore for many years to come.

- This developer has lost public trust and confidence and this development will not achieve the stated aim, of regenerating the Ramsgate Seafront.
- This April, thanks to the support of over 1000 Ramsgate residents, Friends of Ramsgate Seafront persuaded TDC not to sell the old Pleasurama site Freehold to SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd. — A Major Victory!
- In January 2013, TDC set a deadline of 22nd May 2013 for SFP, to find the money needed to complete the Royal Sands development.
- SFP Ventures have already wasted 10 years and been proven, long before the economic downturn of late 2008, to have insufficient funds.
- It is already clear that they will not be able to complete the development at the regular practical completion date, which is the 28th February 2014.
- TDC cannot morally continue to give more opportunities to a failed developer to further damage the legacy of Ramsgate's seafront.
- The site is a flood risk where no updated risk assessment has been carried out.
- The cliff face is fragile and the development would limit the ability to provide effective maintenance.
- Much of Ramsgate's historic heritage would be lost forever.

Visit our Website for more information:

www.friendsoframsgateseafront.org.uk

 Join us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/groups/516220578418850

DEMOCRATIC
20 MAY 2013
SERVICES

1286
SIGNATURES

This page is intentionally left blank

QUESTION NO. 1 FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC – PLEASURAMA SITE, RAMSGATE

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**
By: **Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager**
Classification: **Unrestricted**
Ward: **N/A**

Summary: Councillor Poole to receive a question from a member of the public in relation to the Pleasurama site, Ramsgate

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1. Council Procedure Rule No. 13 governs the process for questions to be submitted by members of the public.
- 1.2 The following question, addressed to Councillor Poole, has been received from Kandice Jones in accordance with that Rule.

“I explicitly ask to be formally reassured that TDC is not going to give the discretionary extension till 29 February 2017 to SFP or any other developer.”

- 1.3 In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.7, the Chairman will, at the meeting of Council, invite the questioner to put their question to the Member named in the notice. If the questioner is not present, the question shall not be put and shall be answered in writing.
- 1.4 Under Council Procedure Rule 13.8, if the Member to whom the question is directed is present they will provide an oral answer. If that Member is not present, the question will be answered by the Leader or another Member nominated by the Leader for the purpose unless it is inappropriate for the Leader to give an oral answer or to nominate another Member to give an oral answer, in which case the question will be dealt with by a written answer.

2.0 Corporate Implications

2.1 Financial

- 2.1.1 None arising from this report

2.2 Legal

- 2.2.1 None arising from this report

2.3 Corporate

2.3.1 Council Procedure Rule 13 affords members of the public the opportunity to ask questions of Members of the Cabinet at ordinary meetings of the Council. The total time devoted to all questions from members of the public cannot exceed 30 minutes.

2.4 Equity and Equalities

2.4.1 None arising at this stage

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 This report is for information purposes only.

4.0 Decision Making Process

4.1 This report is for information purposes only.

Contact Officer:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
Reporting to:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

Annex List

None	
------	--

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	n/a
Legal	n/a

QUESTION NO. 2 FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC – PLEASURAMA SITE, RAMSGATE

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**

By: **Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **N/A**

Summary: Councillor Hart to receive a question from a member of the public in relation to the Pleasurama site, Ramsgate

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1. Council Procedure Rule No. 13 governs the process for questions to be submitted by members of the public.
- 1.2 The following question, addressed to Councillor Hart, has been received from Mr Ray Sun in accordance with that Rule.

“A deadline for information to be received from SFP by TDC was set for 22 May 2013. SFP have not met this. Discussions are ongoing (this equates to an extension of time). Will TDC now please stop discussions and retract anything agreed to since 22 May 2013?”

- 1.3 In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.7, the Chairman will, at the meeting of Council, invite the questioner to put their question to the Member named in the notice. If the questioner is not present, the question shall not be put and shall be answered in writing.
- 1.4 Under Council Procedure Rule 13.8, if the Member to whom the question is directed is present they will provide an oral answer. If that Member is not present, the question will be answered by the Leader or another Member nominated by the Leader for the purpose unless it is inappropriate for the Leader to give an oral answer or to nominate another Member to give an oral answer, in which case the question will be dealt with by a written answer.

2.0 Corporate Implications

2.1 Financial

- 2.1.1 None arising from this report

2.2 Legal

- 2.2.1 None arising from this report

2.3 Corporate

2.3.1 Council Procedure Rule 13 affords members of the public the opportunity to ask questions of Members of the Cabinet at ordinary meetings of the Council. The total time devoted to all questions from members of the public cannot exceed 30 minutes.

2.4 Equity and Equalities

2.4.1 None arising at this stage

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 This report is for information purposes only.

4.0 Decision Making Process

4.1 This report is for information purposes only.

Contact Officer:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
Reporting to:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

Annex List

None	
------	--

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	n/a
Legal	n/a

QUESTION NO. 3: FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC – SENIOR LEVELS

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**
By: **Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager**
Classification: **Unrestricted**
Ward: **N/A**

Summary: Councillor Hart to receive a question from a member of the public in relation to Senior Levels

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1. Council Procedure Rule No. 13 governs the process for questions to be submitted by members of the public.
- 1.2 The following question, addressed to Councillor Hart, has been received from Mr Duncan Smithson in accordance with that Rule.

“The people of Thanet are, as a result of Transeuropa, Pleasurama and Portas TV programme, asking for immediate resignations at Senior Levels. Do you accept any responsibility or do you blame legacy; if neither, who should be held responsible?”

- 1.3 In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.7, the Chairman will, at the meeting of Council, invite the questioner to put their question to the Member named in the notice. If the questioner is not present, the question shall not be put and shall be answered in writing.
- 1.4 Under Council Procedure Rule 13.8, if the Member to whom the question is directed is present they will provide an oral answer. If that Member is not present, the question will be answered by the Leader or another Member nominated by the Leader for the purpose unless it is inappropriate for the Leader to give an oral answer or to nominate another Member to give an oral answer, in which case the question will be dealt with by a written answer.

2.0 Corporate Implications

2.1 Financial

- 2.1.1 None arising from this report

2.2 Legal

- 2.2.1 None arising from this report

2.3 Corporate

2.3.1 Council Procedure Rule 13 affords members of the public the opportunity to ask questions of Members of the Cabinet at ordinary meetings of the Council. The total time devoted to all questions from members of the public cannot exceed 30 minutes.

2.4 Equity and Equalities

2.4.1 None arising at this stage

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 This report is for information purposes only.

4.0 Decision Making Process

4.1 This report is for information purposes only.

Contact Officer:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
Reporting to:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

Annex List

None	
------	--

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	n/a
Legal	n/a

LEADER'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**

By: **Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: **To receive a report from the Leader in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.2**

For Information

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Council Procedure Rule 2.2 provides that:

The Leader of the Council may make an oral report, not exceeding ten minutes, on key issues arising since the last meeting of Council.

The Leaders of any other Political Group may comment on the Leader's Report. The comments of the Leaders of the other Political Groups shall be limited each to five minutes. The other Group Leaders will comment in an order determined by the number of Councillors within those Political Groups, with the largest Group commenting first, and so on.

The Leader has a right of reply to each Group Leader limited to two minutes, in hierarchical order, to any comments made on his/her report.

The total time (including time slots as mentioned above) will be limited to 31 minutes.

The Leader of the Council and the Leader of any other Political Group may appoint substitutes to speak on their behalf.

No motions may be moved nor resolutions passed under this item.

1.2 As there are now four "other Group Leaders", as referred to in Council Procedure Rule 2.2, it may be necessary to suspend that Rule in so far as it limits the "total time" to 31 minutes, in order to allow each of those Group Leaders five minutes in which to make speak.

1.3 A recommendation for amending Council Procedure Rule 2.2 will be brought to Council at a future date, following consideration by the Constitutional Review Working Party and Standards Committee.

2.0 Corporate Implications

2.1 Financial and VAT

2.1.1 Any implications will be covered in the Leader's Report.

2.2 Legal

2.2.1 Council Procedure Rule 29.1 allows for the suspension of any Council Rules of Procedure, except Rules 21.6 and 22.2, by motion on notice or without notice if at least one half of the whole number of members of the Council are present. Suspension can only be for the duration of the meeting.

2.3 Corporate

2.3.1 Any implications will be covered in the Leader's Report.

2.4 Equity and Equalities

2.4.1 Any implications will be covered in the Leader's Report.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 It is recommended that Council Procedure Rule 2.2 be suspended, for this meeting, in so far as it limits the "total time ... to 31 minutes". This is to allow each of the Group Leaders 5 minutes to respond to the Leader's Report.

4.0 Decision Making Process

4.1 It is for Council to decide at this meeting whether or not to suspend Council Procedure Rule 2.2, as recommended at paragraph 3.1 above.

Contact Officer:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, Ext 7187
Reporting to:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager, Ext 7005

Annex List

None	
------	--

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	N/A
Legal	N/A

Allocations Policy

To: Full council – 11 July 2013

Main Portfolio Area: Housing & Panning Services

By: Victoria May, Housing Options Manager

Classification: Unrestricted

Ward: All wards

Summary: To approve the Allocations Policy following the close of consultation.

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 The current Lettings Policy was adopted in October 2004 following publication of Allocations of Accommodation Code of Guidance. There is a statutory obligation for each local housing authority to publish how they will let their homes. The economy has changed considerably and the new National Allocation Policy was published in June 2012 taking into account the new powers the Localism Act gives local Authorities. This report is to obtain Overview and Scrutiny views following the close of consultation. The consultation comments are attached.

2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 The Allocations Policy made nine key proposed radical changes in the new policy which are:
- Closed housing register to households outside of the Thanet district
 - Introducing a residential criteria
 - Tighter guidelines when accessing unacceptable behaviour
 - Rise in age for additional bedrooms for children of opposite sex
 - Tighter guidelines on additional bedroom requests for carers
 - Re-categorisation of priority bands
 - Priority for Armed Forces personnel
 - Tighter guidelines on dealing with households who owe current or former tenancy debts
 - Clarification on income, savings and assets
- 2.2 The proposed changes were originally discussed and introduced to members in September/October 2012 via 3 workshops which 19 Councillors attended. The Allocations Policy was also presented to the SMT Managers Forum on 20th December 2012 and a further Cabinet briefing was held on 7th January 2013. Additional workshops were held with East Kent Housing and the Housing Options Team which was informative.
- 2.3 The Allocation Policy did receive a lot of media interest including local paper coverage and discussions were aired twice on local radio stations. Cllr Green was invited to attend a discussion on BBC Parliament around proposed changes.

- 2.4 The main focus of the Allocations Policy is to use the powers outlined in the Localism Act to prioritise local people within Thanet and ensure that households that apply on the housing register are assessed fairly to maximise the use of the available stock by ensuring that households are housed in appropriate sized, affordable accommodation and that we house those in the most housing need.
- 2.5 The 5 week public consultation closed on 1 March 2013. We emailed out a link to the draft Allocations Policy to approximately 100 stakeholders to include housing associations, East Kent local authorities, Kent County Council, Thanet MPs & Members and other partner organisations. A dedicated page was uploaded onto the TDC website for the duration of the consultation and there were also links from the communications consultation pages. In addition to target the existing households on the housing register an information page was set up on KentHomechoice enabling those that were actively placing bids for social housing to view the document and take part in the snap survey for the consultation. Hard copies were made available for collection at the Gateway and were posted out to residents on request who were unable to access a computer or call into the gateway.
- 2.6 In total we received 178 online responses of which 72 were households on the housing register. The comments made focussed on the nine key areas and the following issues relating to the content of the Allocations policy were raised from the responses and following Overview & Scrutiny's comments they have been incorporated into the final revised Allocations policy that cabinet have agreed.

3.0 Results and actions

3.1 Closed housing register to households outside of the Thanet district

Result: This was supported with 88.2%(157) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 2.2%(4) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 9.6%(17) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of the 9.6%(17), 23.5%(4) of these responses were from households on the housing register that live outside of the Thanet District.

Action: No change to policy

3.2 Introducing a residential criteria

Result: This was supported with 82%(146) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 2.8%(5) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 14.7%(26) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of the 14.7%(26), 26.9%(7) of these responses were from outside of the Thanet District.

Action: Due to homeless households being assessed against local connection criteria in the Housing Act 1996 (amended 2002) they should be excluded from the residential criteria.

3.3 Tighter guidelines when accessing unacceptable behaviour

Result: This was supported with 92.1%(164) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 3.9%(7) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 3.3%(6) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal.

Action: No change to policy

3.4 Rise in age for additional bedrooms for children of opposite sex

Result: This was supported with 69.7%(124) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 10.7%(19) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 18%(32) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of the 18%(32), 46.9%(15) are currently on the Housing Register.

Action: No change to policy

3.5 Tighter guidelines on additional bedroom requests for carers

Result: This was supported with 71.4% (127) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 19.7% (35) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 7.9% (14) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of the 71.4%(127) who agreed and strongly agreed with this proposal, 23.6%(30) are registered disabled.

Action: Section added to include a room maybe disregarded if it has specific adaption's such as a through floor lift at the social housing providers discretion.

3.6 Re-categorisation of priority bands

Result: This was supported with 74.7% (133) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 14% (25) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 10.2% (18) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal. Of all the responses received 40.4% (72) were received from households on the Housing Register.

Action: No change to the policy

3.7 Priority for Armed Forces personnel

Result: Of all the responses received, 65.7%(117) of people agreed or strongly agreed, with 21.9% (39) neither agreed or disagreed, and 11.8% (21) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this proposal.

Action: Assess the Armed forces personnel against residential criteria (2.1) & (6.6) Owner/occupiers.

3.8 Tighter guidelines on dealing with households who owe current or former tenancy debts

Result: This was supported with 87.7% (156) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 6.2%(11) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 5.1% (3) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal.

Action: No change to policy

3.9 Clarification on income, savings and assets

Result: This was supported with 80.9% (144) of people agreeing or strongly agreeing, with 7.9%(14) neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 9.6%(17) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposal.

Action: To reword and divide this section to improve understanding.

3.10 Additional section has been added to the Allocation Policy relating to bedroom tax which is now in section 8.3.

4.0 Options

4.1 For full council to approve the final version of the Allocations Policy.

5.0 Next Steps

5.1 To adopt the Allocation Policy.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 Financial and VAT

6.1.1 The Allocations Policy has very limited financial implications. The consultation has been carried out using the TDC web pages and links to these web pages were emailed out to stakeholders. We produced some hardcopy documents and in addition to officer time, this is the only cost incurred in producing the policy.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 The author considers there are no legal implications.

6.3 Corporate

6.3.1 The Housing Policy has strong links with the ethos and priorities of the Corporate Plan. In particular Priority 2 “We will tackle disadvantage across the district” stating we will focus on disadvantaged groups to better target the services they need & working with partners to tackle the main housing issues effecting local people. Other priorities like 7: “We will plan for the right type and number of homes in the right place to create sustainable communities in the future.” Meeting local housing need and supporting this by housing local people will improve Thanet residents’ quality of life.

6.4 Equity and Equalities

6.4.1 Equity and equality are addressed within the policy, but an Equalities Impact Assessment has also produced (please see attached). The policy does not negatively impact on any residents of the district and aims to improve the chances of households in housing need to be being re-housed in social housing.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 For full council to approve the Allocations Policy.

7.0 Decision Making Process

7.1 This is a policy framework decision which only Council can take.

Contact Officer:	Victoria May, Housing Options Manager
Reporting to:	Madeline Homer, Director of Community Services

Annex List

Annex 1	Final draft of Allocations Policy
Annex 2	Consultation comments
Annex 3	Full Equality Impact Analysis

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin – Financial Services Manager
Legal	Harvey Patterson – Legal Services Manager
Communications	Hannah Thorpe – Corporate Communications Officer

This page is intentionally left blank

Thanet District Council

Housing Allocation Policy



Index

Foreword

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Aims of the Allocations policy

2.0 Who is eligible?

- 2.1 Residential Criteria
- 2.2 Qualifying persons
- 2.3 Ineligibility on the grounds of unacceptable behaviour
- 2.4 Voluntarily worsening your housing circumstances

3.0 Assessment of Need

- 3.1 The banding system
- 3.2 Medical priority
- 3.3 Kent Agency Assessment
- 3.4 Suitable size of accommodation
- 3.5 Additional bedroom requests
- 3.6 National Witness Mobility Service (NWMS)
- 3.7 Other considerations in determining need

4.0 Determining priority

- 4.1 Homeless households
- 4.2 Domestic Abuse
- 4.3 Separated households
- 4.4 16 and 17 year olds
- 4.5 Serious offenders
- 4.6 Armed Forces
- 4.7 Reduced priority

5.0 Housing for older people

- 5.1 Sheltered housing
- 5.2 Extra care housing

6.0 Financial Criteria

- 6.1 Current rent arrears
- 6.2 Former tenancy debts
- 6.3 Statute Barred
- 6.4 Savings and Assets
- 6.5 Owner/Occupiers

7.0 Allocations exceptions

- 7.1 What does this mean?

8.0 Transfer applications

- 8.1 Thanet District Council tenants
- 8.2 Transfer Incentive Scheme
- 8.3 Bedroom Tax for tenants
- 8.4 Management transfers

9.0 How homes are let

- 9.1 Choice based lettings
- 9.2 Waiting time
- 9.3 Local lettings policies
- 9.4 Discretionary powers

10.0 Applying to the Thanet Housing Register

- 10.1 What is the Housing Register?
- 10.2 How to apply for housing
- 10.3 Proof of identity and supporting information
- 10.4 Renewing an application
- 10.5 Changes of circumstances
- 10.6 Removing or suspending your household from the register
- 10.7 Members of the council, staff members and their relations

11.0 Reviews and Customer feedback

- 11.1 Right to a review
- 11.2 Complaints, compliments and comments

12.0 Equality and diversity

13.0 Information sharing

- 13.1 Information sharing protocol
- 13.2 Personal data

Appendix 1 Proofs of identity required

Appendix 2 Priority bands and criteria for reasonable preference

Appendix 3 People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds

Foreword

This policy sets out our priorities for how social rented housing in the Thanet district is allocated, and the guidelines which determine entitlement and eligibility to that housing. This will supersede any existing and former policy relating to the allocations of housing and is in accordance with the requirements of Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.

It also explains what help people can expect from us in meeting their housing needs, and sets out the system and processes by which we let council-owned homes and make nominations for housing owned and managed by housing associations. The policy sets out:

- Who is eligible to be accepted onto the housing register
- How homes are allocated
- How to apply to Thanet's housing register
- How priority for housing applicants will be given
- How transfer applications will be assessed
- Eligibility for different property types

As at 1st April 2013, the Council is landlord of 3047 properties which are broken down as follows:

Accommodation Type	No of Properties
Studio Flats	79
One bedroom flats/maisonette	552
One bedroom house	1
Two bedroom flats/maisonette	787
Two bedroom house	596
Three bedroom flats/maisonette	27
Three bedroom houses	924
Four bedroom flats/maisonette	2
Four Bedroom houses	78
Five bedroom house	1

During the period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013 we housed 282 households in the following accommodation:

Accommodation Type	No of Lets
Studio Flats	20
One bedroom flats/maisonette	95
One bedroom house	0
Two bedroom flats/maisonette	83
Two bedroom house	26
Three bedroom flats/maisonette	22
Three bedroom houses	33
Four bedroom flats/maisonette	0
Four Bedroom houses	3
Five bedroom house	0

As you can see, there is clearly insufficient social housing in the Thanet district to meet the need of every household on the housing register. It is therefore essential that each household is assessed and given the appropriate priority against the new policy.

1.0 Introduction

The Housing Register and this Allocations Policy operates under the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 – Part VI (as amended) and takes into account the three codes of guidance issued by the Government - Allocation of Accommodation: Code of Guidance for Housing Authorities 2002, the Allocation of Accommodation: Choice Based Lettings Code of Guidance for Housing Authorities 2008 and Fair and Flexible: Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England 2009. This Policy will be reviewed annually and may have to be amended to reflect any legislative changes.

1.1 Aims of the allocation policy

The Choice Based lettings policies and key objectives are:

- Empower applicants by offering choice, through a range of housing options, choice and information which will enable them to make realistic decision in relation to their future housing prospects.
- To target scarce resources to those in the greatest need.
- To challenge the perception that a homeless application offers the best route to re-housing, where possible creating active incentives for applicants to choose the housing register.
- Ensure sufficient priority is awarded to transfers in order to make best use of the social housing stock.
- Promote the development of sustainable mixed communities and neighbourhoods of choice

2.0 Who is eligible?

2.1 Residential Criteria

Households, who are Thanet residents and have been living within the Thanet district for a continuous period of 3 years immediately prior to date of application. For households currently temporarily residing outside of the district and where their principle home was in Thanet prior to moving can be considered if they have been resident in Thanet for 3 out of the last 5 years. Examples of this could be hospital, HMP, temporary lodgings, women in refuges.

Armed Forces Personnel will be exempt from this criteria providing their last settled home was in Thanet immediately prior to entering the Armed Forces.

Households that are owed a duty under the Housing Act 1996 (Amended 2002) will be exempt from this criteria.

Households who can evidence full time employment within the district and require to live in the area due to their job can also be considered.

2.2 Qualifying persons

Qualifying persons, all 'qualifying persons' are eligible to have their application added to the Housing Register. Part VI of the Housing Act 1996, (as amended), confirms that the Secretary of State may prescribe who are or are not qualifying persons. Currently, the following persons are entitled to join the housing register:

- Qualifying persons aged 16 or 17 (see Section 4 for further details)
- Any person aged 18 or over, and
- Their current home is their only home, or sole residence, unless proven otherwise with reason and

- They do not have access to a suitable home elsewhere, and
- They are not already on the housing list, either on their own or with someone else, and
- They are not ineligible for housing assistance under section 160A(1) and (3), and 185(2) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), or any regulation prescribed by the Secretary of State. In general terms a person from abroad who is subject to immigration control is ineligible for housing assistance, and
- They, or a member of their household, have not been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant.

2.3 Ineligible due to unacceptable behaviour

Thanet District Council may treat persons as ineligible for an allocation of accommodation if they or a member of their household have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant or lose their home. Examples of unacceptable behaviour are;

- breach of tenancy agreement
- nuisance or annoyance to neighbours
- conviction of using for immoral or illegal purpose
- damage or neglect of your home
- conviction for arrestable offence in the locality of your home
- domestic violence causing another household member to leave the home
- false statement to induce grant of tenancy
- premium paid for assignment
- subletting
- tied accommodation when dismissed for misconduct

Where a person has previously been found not eligible due to unacceptable behaviour, but now believes this should no longer be held against them, the applicant can make a fresh application. The local authority can allow an application if they are satisfied that the person's behaviour has improved. This would be accepted, where an applicant had held a tenancy and a good tenancy reference was received or if specific satisfactory documentation was received upon Thanet District Councils request.

2.4 Voluntarily worsening your housing circumstances

Where an applicant moves from accommodation that was available for their occupation that was more suitable for them than the accommodation they have moved to and which it was reasonable for them to have continued to occupy. This category also applies where they have left temporary accommodation provided by the council under a duty arising via the Housing Act 1996 (as amended Homelessness Act 2002) to provide interim accommodation to homelessness households. For an applicant to have intentionally worsened their circumstances there must be evidence that it would have been reasonable for the applicant to have remained in their original accommodation.

3.0 Assessment of Need

3.1 The banding system

To try and be as fair as possible in deciding who should be offered properties, we use a banding system to determine priority for re-housing. Assessment is based on an applicant's housing circumstances, suitability of the property, and any medical problems.

Persons eligible to join the housing list will have their application assessed by a Housing Options Advisor and placed into one of four bands, in accordance with the 'Fair and flexible' statutory guidance. The bands are referred to as 'A, B, C, and D', and applications in band A will be given the highest priority for re-housing, band B the next highest, then C, with band D applicants having the lowest priority. Further details of how an applicants circumstances will determine the priority band they are placed in, are set out in (Appendix 2).

Band A – Urgent housing needs

Factor 1	Urgent medical or welfare needs.
Factor 2	Management transfer.

Band B – Serious housing needs

Factor 1	People occupying very overcrowded housing or otherwise living in very unsatisfactory housing conditions.
Factor 2	Social housing tenants in Thanet who are under-occupying by one bedroom or more.
Factor 3	Armed Forces Personnel

Band C – Reasonable preference

Factor 1	People who are homeless
Factor 2	People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
Factor 3	People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability

Band D – General housing needs

Factor 1	People who are intentionally homeless, or who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances
Factor 2	People who are homeless by another local authority

3.2 Medical priority

Applicant's who indicate in their application form that they consider their health or disability is adversely affected by their current housing conditions, will be asked to complete a Welfare and Medical Assessment form describing their health problems. Additional information, such as from a medical professional, may also be submitted. A home visit may be made to establish how the medical issue is affected in real terms by their housing situation. Applicants should be aware that even if they provide supporting documents stating that a move to alternative accommodation is essential, it is for the council to determine the appropriate level of priority in accordance with the allocation scheme (See Appendix 3 for more information).

All medical information supplied will be assessed initially by the Thanet Medical Panel, consisting of a minimum of two council Housing Advisors. Cases that are unable to be determined due to the complexity will be advised of the Kent Agency Assessment process. Dependent on the case, we can request information from Now Medical. Applicants will be advised by letter of the medical

priority awarded and the type of accommodation identified as being suitable for their needs.

If we determine that a particular type of property is required on medical grounds; for example a home with no internal stairs, the applicant will be expected to bid for accommodation matching that criteria. Bids placed on accommodation that does not meet the required criteria may be bypassed. Contact may be made to explain your accommodation needs based upon the information we have on file. If the applicant continues to bid on accommodation that does not meet their medical requirements any priority awarded on medical grounds will be reviewed. If an applicant's medical circumstances improve, any priority awarded on medical grounds will be reviewed and may be removed.

3.3 Kent Agency Assessment

The Kent Agency Assessment (KAA) process is a mechanism for Health or Social Services professionals, and their agents, to refer an applicant with a housing related health/support need, to the council for help accessing suitable accommodation. A Kent Agency Assessment should be used where an applicant requires re-housing due to a health/support need that cannot be met in, or is being exacerbated by, their current accommodation and the form provides all the supporting information required to assess an applicant's housing needs. Applicants will be advised by letter of the level of priority awarded and the type of accommodation identified as being suitable for their needs.

Where an applicants needs are so great or severe that general housing is not suited, there are documents to evidence this or where a duty of care is owed by another statutory partner Thanet District Council will be able to refuse the KAA and send back to the referrer to ensure the applicant is provided with the appropriate accommodation that is suited to the applicants needs.

3.4 Suitable size of accommodation

The council considers the suitable size of accommodation for a household to be as shown in the following table. Properties that have specific adaption's such as a through floor lift, the social housing provider can disregard this as a bedroom. If you have any children aged 12 or under on the date of offer, you will have priority over applicants without children of that age in the same band as you when we offer houses with private gardens.

Single Person	Studio or one bedroom flat (inc up to 32 weeks pregnant)
Couple	One bedroom flat (inc up to 32 weeks pregnant)
Families with one child (under 18)	Two bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with two children of the same sex up to 16 years old	Two bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with two children of the opposite sex where the eldest child is under 10 years old as in line with housing benefit regulation	Two bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with two children of the opposite sex where at least one child is 10 years old or over as in line with housing benefit regulations	Three bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with three children	Three bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with four or more children	three or four bedroom flat, house or maisonette

Households with special housing needs	studio flats, bungalows, sheltered flats and accommodation as defined by Kent Agency Assessment (see section 3.3)
---------------------------------------	---

3.5 Additional bedroom requests/carers

Where households request an additional bedroom due to medical or health needs we will not allow additional rooms for medical equipment, or for the applicant or partner to occupy additional rooms. We will only consider the room requirement of households to be increased as in line with housing benefits for a carer if:

- The carer is not already a household member (in which case they may be able to share with other members of the household, a partner perhaps, so being a carer doesn't entitle them to an extra room), or
- A non resident carer is required for either the claimant or the partner and the claimant or partner receives disability living allowance care at either middle or highest rate or attendance allowance and supporting evidence is provided by a medical professional to confirm this requirement.

3.6 National Witness Mobility Service (NWMS)

In order to assist the national police force to tackle serious crime and to support witnesses in the legal process, the council works in partnership with colleagues in the NWMS and will, as required, accept referrals from this source.

Such cases will have been assessed and verified by the NWMS managers and referrals will only be accepted with the agreement of the Housing Options Manager. There are particular confidentiality considerations for such cases and no personal information will be taken until the applicant accepts a direct offer of accommodation in the district. Any proposed offer will be checked for suitability by the NWMS before the offer is made and details of successful lettings may not subsequently be made available to the public.

3.7 Other considerations in determining need

Because of the shortage of social housing and in order to make best use of all the available stock, there may be occasions when properties are restricted to applicants who have particular medical needs. There are limited availability of purpose built and adapted properties for people with disabilities. People with a need for such accommodation will be considered for suitable vacancies on the basis of medical priority. If a ground floor property becomes available, and at the time of allocation there are no suitable applicants requiring ground floor accommodation the property may then be let to those registered for a house, maisonette or upper floor accommodation, at the discretion of the council.

Priority for houses will be given to applicants with dependent children therefore if the household consists of adult children only i.e. over the age of 18 you may not be offered a house. Because of the very limited availability of four bedroom homes, priority for three bedroom properties with two living rooms (lounge & dining rooms), will be given to larger families, to ensure best use is made of the available stock. For households that are pregnant, 6 weeks prior to the birth of the baby, registration will take place of baby X to enable those households to bid on suitable accommodation. This will mainly benefit those that would require an additional bedroom following the birth.

4.0 Determining priority

4.1 Homeless households

We are committed to extending choice of housing to those who are accepted as homeless under the Council's statutory duties, ensuring effective use of Council resources and the provision of temporary accommodation. Consequently those accepted as being owed the full statutory housing duty under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), will be given a period of a month from notification of acceptance within which to bid for properties through Kent Homechoice. If at the end of the month they have not been bidding appropriately for a property, officers may bid on their behalf for each suitable property that becomes available and may change bids when an applicant has applied for a property that they are ineligible for. When a bid is successful for a suitable property this will then constitute as a offer or nomination for the purposes of discharging the homeless duty. Direct lets can be made to households owed a homeless duty.

The Localism Act 2011 gives a legislative change to enable the way in which the duty on authorities to secure accommodation under section 193(2) of the 1996 Act can be brought to an end with an offer of suitable accommodation in the private sector. These changes allow local authorities to end the main homelessness duty with a private rented offer. The duty can only be ended in the private rented sector in this way with a minimum 12 month assured shorthold tenancy. If the household becomes homeless within two years of taking the tenancy then the reapplication duty (section 195A(1)) applies.

4.2 Domestic Abuse

If any household is experiencing domestic abuse they should report this to the police. Housing Options can provide advice and assistance for victims and one option could be to secure accommodation in a refuge which will be a place of safety. Households in the local Oasis refuge will have their housing assessed by the Homeless Criteria and if accepted will then be banded as per the Service Level Agreement 2013. Social tenants should notify their Neighbourhood Manager if you are experiencing domestic abuse and you believe you are in danger in your existing home.

4.3 Separated households

If one member of the household is suitably housed and the 'partner' could move into the property without causing additional housing need then their banding could be prioritised based upon that accommodation.

Children will only be considered on an application if they primarily reside with that household. If that child also resides with another household they will only be considered as part of the household they primarily reside with.

4.4 16 and 17 year olds

Young people under the age of the age of 18 are eligible to join the housing register (subject to exemptions). If you are aged 16 or 17 the law states that you are not old enough to hold an assured or secure tenancy. In exceptional circumstances an applicant aged under 18 maybe eligible to join the housing register:

- If you are a non-dependent applicant aged 16 or 17, requiring independent accommodation, which is not provided by Specialist Childrens Services (SCS)

- If you are a teenage parent aged 16 or 17
- If you are aged 16 or 17 and leaving local authority care
- If you are aged 16 or 17 and owed a housing duty by Thanet Council

Where you are an applicant aged under the age 18 and are eligible to be on the housing register, if you are successful within an allocation of a property, you must have an appropriate adult aged 18 or over, to hold your tenancy in trust for you until you reach the age of 18. This will be in the form of an “Equitable Agreement” where the trustee will hold the legal estate, but is not liable for the rent.

Young people may also be asked to attend and interview with a Neighbourhood Manager from East Kent Housing to ensure that you have the skills to sustain a tenancy. You must be willing to be referred for floating support to assist with tenancy sustainment if necessary.

If you are under 18 and have a serious housing problem, you are homeless or in threat of becoming homeless, please contact either Kent County Council Children’s Specialist Services on 08458 247 100 or the Housing Options Team. We will make every effort to ensure that you are able to remain within your parental or family home. Where it may not be appropriate for you to remain in your home, you will need to attend a joint assessment with a Housing Options Officer and Children’s Specialist Services Social Worker to see what your needs are. This will be arranged with you and normally will take place within your home or at the Thanet Gateway.

4.5 Serious Offenders

Applications made by serious offenders, as defined by the Serious Crime Act 2007 will be subject to an appropriate assessment of their eligibility, which will take MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) guidance into account. Any allocation will only be made following a multi-agency risk assessment and where suitable and safe accommodation has been identified.

4.6 Armed Forces

Armed Forces Personnel means a person who is serving in the regular forces or a person who has served in the regular forces within three years of the date of their application for an allocation of social housing under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. The Regulations give effect to the Government’s commitment to ensure that members of the regular and reserve forces, and their families, are given appropriate priority for social housing if they need it when serving or after they have left the Armed Forces.

These Regulations are made by the Secretary of State under section 166A(7) of the Housing Act 1996, inserted by section 147 of the Localism Act 2011. Section 166A(7) gives the Secretary of State power by regulation to amend the reasonable and additional preference provisions in section 166A(3) which determine who has priority for an allocation of social housing.

The Regulations provide that local housing authorities must frame their allocation scheme to give additional preference to the following persons if they fall within one or more of the statutory reasonable preference categories and are in urgent housing need:

- a) serving members of the regular forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service
- b) former members of the regular forces

- c) bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- d) serving or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service

For members of the Armed Forces, band B will be awarded and residential criteria will be applied (2.1). In addition armed forces personnel will not be discriminated against when assessing their financial situation (6.4/6.5) however if they own their own home the normal housing assessment will take place (6.6).

4.7 Reduced priority

Your housing priority can be reduced in the following circumstances:

- If you are in band A, claiming a critical medical priority with an urgent need to move, and you reject two suitable offers of accommodation (regardless of area & type of property) we will reduce your medical priority to band C for 12 months, after which we will re-assess your priority.
- If you make your housing situation worse (for example by moving to a house that is more overcrowded than your previous one) we will assess you as if you were still living in your previous home for 12 months. At the end of this period we will re-assess your priority.
- If your home has a category 1 hazard but you fail to co-operate with your landlord when he is trying to carry out the repairs, your application will be placed in band D until the works have been completed. After this, your priority will be re-assessed.

5.0 Housing for older people

5.1 Sheltered housing

Sheltered housing is housing designed for persons over 55 with housing related support needs. Sheltered housing will normally only be available to persons requiring the level of support offered in this type of accommodation. Eligible persons may be subject to an assessment by the landlord to establish their support needs and suitability for living in the scheme selected. Applicants over 55 years of age will be considered as well as applicants with a disability who require the accommodation and support provided within a sheltered scheme. In the latter case, some landlords will accept persons over 50 years of age.

Priority for allocations to ground floor sheltered and elderly persons accommodation will be given to current tenants on the housing register, living on an upper floor, within the same block, who have a medical/mobility need for ground floor accommodation. Allocations made thereafter will be based on individual need. This will then free up a property for another applicant via CBL. If the assessment indicates that the person requires a higher level of support than can be provided by sheltered housing, they will be advised that sheltered housing would not be appropriate and referred to Adult Care Services.

5.2 Extra care housing

Extra care is housing for older people where additional support and social care services are provided in accordance with assessed need. Extra Care housing is intended to enable older people to live as independently as possible for as long

as possible and improve the quality of life and choice that older people can expect as they become less able. Extra care housing will be advertised through Kent Homechoice but a dedicated allocation panel, consisting of representatives from the Council and Social Services, will make allocations. Allocations through this panel will be based on an assessment of the level of support and care required by the applicant.

6.0 Financial criteria

6.1 Current rent arrears

We may take into account, in accordance with S167(2B) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), current rent arrears. If a tenant of a social landlord applies on the housing register we will apply for a tenancy reference from your current landlord. If the applicant/tenant is in arrears and there is a failure to maintain a payment arrangement, the application may be suspended until the situation is resolved. For households that are affected by welfare reform and have accrued rent arrears, each case will be considered on their own merit based upon circumstances, level of debt, reasons why they are effected, efforts to pay etc. Where any application is suspended for the above reasons the applicant will be notified in writing of the decision and the grounds for it (S167(4A)(b)).

6.2 Former tenancy debts

We may also take into account former tenancy debts with another social landlord (registered social landlord or local authority). If an outright possession order was granted by the court and no efforts have been made to clear this debt, or we have reason to believe that an outright possession order would have been granted, we will not consider your application until this debt has been cleared. If a debt is owed to any social housing provider you will not be eligible for housing on the housing register.

Housing associations (HAs) participating in the choice based lettings scheme may have policies which prevent them offering a tenancy to an applicant who has former/current tenant arrears with another local authority or HA.

6.3 Statute Barred debts

A debt is statute-barred if legal proceedings for the recovery of the debt from the debtor have not been started within a period of six years from the date when the debt became payable. Although the debt continues to exist, Thanet District Council is unable to take any legal action against an applicant in order to recover the debt.

If an applicant applies for housing and has a former tenancy debt with Thanet District Council and it is **not** statute barred then the applicant will be required to clear this debt subject to any duty that the council may have to an applicant under relevant legislation.

If the debt **is** statute barred then Thanet District Council will not pursue this debt through the legal channels however the applicant will still be required to clear this debt.

6.4 Income

If any member of the household is earning a higher rate salary which places them in the higher or additional rate taxable bands (as per HM Revenue & Customs) then you will not be considered on the housing register.

6.5 Savings and Assets

If an applicant applies on the housing register and has savings and/or assets of over £16k they will not be considered on the housing register as in line with housing benefit regulations (Armed Forces Personnel will be exempt from this rule). The applicant will be expected to use this money to secure accommodation. If it is considered that an applicant has purposely deprived themselves of capital in order to meet the criteria to apply on the housing register their application will not be considered.

6.6 Owner/Occupiers

If an applicant owns their home they will not be considered on the housing register unless there is a substantial reason to move. If specific or specialist accommodation is required due to change in circumstances, each application will be considered based upon evidence on file such as a Kent Agency Assessment (see 3.3).

7.0 Allocations exceptions

7.1 What does this mean?

People who apply to join the housing register are assessed in accordance with the provisions of Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended). There are a number of circumstances where people will be assessed outside of this and will have their applications managed by the local authority and/or housing association separately. These circumstances are:

- Mutual exchange.
- An application made under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) (Homelessness) and consideration for temporary accommodation under this Part.
- Transfers involving a temporary decant for major works, or other management reason not involving an application from the tenant.
- Where a local authority secures the provision of suitable alternative accommodation under the Land Compensation Act 1973, section 39.
- The grant of a secure tenancy under the Housing Act 1985, section 554 or 555, regarding a defective home.
- Any duties arising from an application made under the Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976, section 27 or 28.
- Where a secure tenant dies, the tenancy is a periodic one, and there is a person qualified to succeed the tenant under the Housing Act 1985, section 89.
- Where a secure tenant with a fixed term tenancy dies and the tenancy remains secure by virtue of the Housing Act 1985, section 90.
- Where a secure tenancy is assigned to someone who would be qualified to succeed to the tenancy if the secure tenant died immediately before the assignment.
- The grant of a secure joint tenancy where the tenancy is held by one of the joint tenants as a sole tenancy.
- The grant of a secure sole tenancy to a former joint tenant, where the joint tenancy has been terminated by one joint tenant and the other tenant wants to remain in the property (when this is in accordance with eligibility for that specific property type).
- Where a secure tenancy vests or is otherwise disposed of in pursuance of an order made under:
 - the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, section 24 (property adjustment orders in connection with matrimonial proceedings);

- the Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984, section 17(1) (property adjustment orders after overseas divorce); or
- the Children Act 1989, Schedule 1, paragraph 1 (orders for financial relief against parents).

8.0 Transfer applications

8.1 Thanet District Council tenants

Social tenants can apply to move to alternative council and housing association owned property. Priority awarded to their application will be based on an assessment of their housing needs. Applications for transfer may be made jointly by separate tenants of the council who wish to apply for housing together, on the condition that both tenancies will be relinquished if the council makes an acceptable offer of a transfer to a third property. Transfer applications will be subject to checks relating to the condition of the applicant's property and their compliance with the conditions of their tenancy.

8.2 Transfer Incentive Scheme/bedroom tax

In order to encourage council tenants who are under-occupying homes to move to smaller non-family housing, or if a tenant is occupying fully adapted, wheelchair accessible accommodation and no longer requires the use of these facilities, a grant of £1,000 is currently offered. Any debt owed to Thanet District Council will be cleared using this money prior to the remainder being paid to you. This grant will only be payable if the move is as a result of a successful bid to alternative council or housing association property through the choice based lettings scheme. For more information please refer to the East Kent Housing Transfer Incentive Scheme policy.

8.3 Bedroom Tax for tenants

From April 2013, people of working age who under-occupy their property will have their housing benefit cut by 14% for one spare room and 25% for two or more spare rooms. Therefore, for tenants who are affected should contact their landlord/housing officer. The social housing provider should explore your housing options and if a move is appropriate and agreed either a direct let will be offered within existing stock or you will be placed into band B for under-occupying.

8.4 Management transfers

The council recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where the only way a housing need can be resolved is through the use of discretion. If a council or housing association tenant has an urgent need for re-housing due to a confirmed risk to the personal safety of themselves or their household, or other exceptional factors, their landlord may agree a management transfer. This will only be agreed if there are no other options available or feasible and you are in immediate housing need. Please contact East Kent Housing for more information on the Management Move Policy.

9.0 How homes are let

9.1 Choice based lettings

We are one of 14 local authorities and 23 housing association partners involved in Kent Homechoice the choice based lettings service which is used to let social homes across the whole of Kent. As a partner we are committed to offering the

greatest choice possible in the allocation of social housing in the district, whilst ensuring that housing goes to those with the greatest need.

Choice based lettings (CBL) schemes are designed to introduce an element of choice for people who apply for council and housing association homes. Choice based lettings allow people applying for a home, including existing tenants who want a transfer, to bid for properties which become available. Available properties are advertised through various channels and the adverts will describe the property and which type of household can bid for it. For example, if it is for an elderly or disabled person, or for a household which needs a certain number of bedrooms.

Where an applicant may have difficulty in making bids for properties without assistance, they may nominate a friend, relative or advocacy worker from an appropriate agency to act on their behalf. In certain circumstances applicants can be added to the assisted bidding list and sent a fortnightly personalised freesheet with details of all the properties they are eligible to bid for. Once bids have been made they are sorted in order of priority, and the person with the highest priority normally gets considered first for the property. If that person turns the offer down, the next person on the list gets the chance to see it, and so on.

There will be certain situations where choice in the allocation of housing has to be restricted – such as when the council or a housing association needs to re-house a household in an emergency. The circumstances when this may apply are set out in the policy. Apart from these exceptional cases, housing will be allocated to applicants who bid for a specific property, and all applicants will have the opportunity to bid for properties they are entitled to be considered for, having regard to household size and other eligibility criteria.

Choice based lettings enables those seeking housing in the district to identify the level of priority they have been awarded within the allocation scheme, to develop awareness of the availability of accommodation suitable to their needs within the district, and to make informed decisions which balance their need for accommodation with the availability of properties that meet their requirements. As a result applicants can decide whether to wait until they have sufficient priority to obtain their ideal property, or whether to lower their aspirations and bid for properties they are more likely to have a chance of obtaining. It also helps applicants to make an informed choice about whether they wish to seek alternative solutions to their housing needs.

9.2 Length of time

The housing register will differentiate between people who are in the same priority band according to the date their priority band was awarded.

9.3 Local lettings policies

Local Lettings Policies have been introduced to help maintain and promote a balanced and sustainable community, in line with the Kent Sustainable Communities Protocol. The Council has the power under s167 (2e) of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, to allocate particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories or not. However, in operating local lettings policies, we need to ensure that, overall, reasonable preference for allocations is given to applicants in the reasonable preference categories; and that our local lettings policies do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, on racial or other equality grounds, as set out in Paragraph 5.26 of the Allocations Code of Guidance issued in November 2002.

Examples of situations when a local lettings policy may be used include:

- New developments where there is a need to achieve a balanced mix of household sizes
- Criteria that aim to reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour in areas that have existing high levels of ASB.
- Rural Housing developments where a local connection is identified in the Section 106 agreement.

Following the implementation of a Local Lettings Plan on a development any re-lets on the site will be subject to the same criteria as outlined in the plan.

9.4 Discretionary powers

The Allocations Policy cannot cover every eventuality and in special cases where there are exceptional needs or hardship, the Housing Options Manager has discretionary power to review any criteria within the policy to ensure an additional priority is awarded and/or approve offers of housing, sometimes outside of choice based lettings. A full audit trail should be available to evidence the decision reached and the reasons why.

10.0 Applying to the Thanet Housing Register

10.1 What is the Housing Register?

The Housing Register is essentially the list of people who wish to be housed by a social landlord in the Thanet district and existing tenants who wish to transfer to another council or housing association property. We receive a large number of enquiries each year from people looking to rent a home in the district and the housing register is constantly growing. Regrettably, there are only enough properties becoming available to be able to house those most in need. As a result of this shortfall, applicants for housing, and in particular those identified as having no or low need, may never be housed. We will only accept households who would reasonably be expected to reside with each other and joint tenancies will only be offered to cohabiting couples as recognised in law.

Applicants may want to consider other options for re-housing such as renting accommodation in the private sector. Thanet District Council has a team of Housing Options Officers who can provide advice and information about how to access other types of housing. Further information about other options available can be found on the Kent Homechoice website: www.kenthomechoice.org.uk

Because of the limited amount of social housing available, we have a system to prioritise households on the housing register in accordance with their identified need for housing and to manage the letting of social homes in accordance with our objectives. The criteria and rules that relate to this system are set out in (Appendix 2) of this policy.

10.2 How to apply for housing

People wishing to apply for housing should complete a housing application form. To do this visit the Kent Homechoice website at www.kenthomechoice.org.uk and choose the Register tab.

It is important that the application is completed fully and any evidence requested on the form is provided. Additional priority for length of time on the Housing Register will only start to accrue from the date that we receive all the information necessary to make an assessment. Incomplete applications without photographs

and supporting information may be returned to the applicant. Once the form has been completed and all the information has been provided, the council may need to make additional enquiries.

In accordance with S171 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), a tenancy granted on the basis of information subsequently found to be false or because material information has been withheld, may result in legal action being taken by the landlord to recover possession of the property. In addition it may be decided that an applicant has committed a criminal offence where:

'he knowingly or recklessly makes a statement that is false and may lead the council to award priority for housing if the statement was relied on when assessing the application'.

A person guilty of such an offence would be liable on summary conviction to a fine of up to £5,000.

10.3 Proof of identity and supporting information

The housing options department has a service level agreement with the housing benefit department, enabling officers to use the verified identification documents, to process their housing register application.

Every person making an application to the housing register will need to supply 2 identical passport-sized photographs, or an alternative type of photographic identification acceptable to the council, for each named applicant or joint applicant must accompany all applications. These should be recent photographs with the applicant's name printed on the reverse together with his/her signature. (Appendix 1) has more information about providing proof of identity.

10.4 Renewing an application

It is an applicant's responsibility to renew their application each year. Every applicant will be sent a renewal request, close to the anniversary of the date of registration, which will include a request to provide information on any change in circumstances. If the renewal form is not returned within four weeks the application will be cancelled without further notice. An application can only be considered for reinstatement in exceptional circumstances and if the request is made within six months of the cancellation date.

10.5 Changes of circumstances

Once placed in a priority band, applicants should notify the Council of any material change in their circumstances that will affect their priority for housing, for example:

- A change of address, for themselves or any other person on the application.
- Any additions to the family or any other person joining the application
- Any member of the family or any other person on the application who has left the accommodation.
- The health of any member of the family or any other person on the application, getting better or worse.
- A change in the applicants income or employment status

Applicants will normally be required to complete a new housing register form. Applications will be temporarily suspended from bidding while the Council assesses the information provided by the applicant and completes further enquiries that may be necessary. The council will carry out an assessment of

each applicant's entitlement and priority for re-housing on the basis of information which has been provided by the applicant or otherwise received in connection with the application.

10.6 Removing or suspending your household from the register

The Housing Options team can remove or suspend your application in the following instances:

- If you refuse two offers of housing that you have placed bids on within the last 12 months we will suspend your application for 12 months, after which we will re-assess your priority.
- if we are awaiting additional information from you

There are also circumstances where we will remove your application from the Register. When we do so we will contact you, explaining the reason. There are a number of reasons why we may remove your application, for example:

- you have accepted an offer of accommodation from us
- you have completed a mutual exchange;
- you have failed to renew your application (we ask you from time to time if you wish to remain on the Register)
- you have not responded to letters or phone calls from us, when we are seeking information from you;
- you are no longer eligible to join the Register

Households will have the opportunity to request a review on this decision.

10.7 Members of the council, staff members and their relatives

To ensure that we are seen to be treating all applicants fairly, any application from members of the council, employees of the council or associated persons must be disclosed on the application form. Such applications will be assessed in the normal way but in addition be passed to the Housing Options Manager to be audited. In order to ensure public confidence, any accommodation allocated to the applicant under the scheme must be approved by the Housing Services Manager following appropriate checks. The term 'associated persons' above is as defined in S178 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).

11.0. Reviews and Customer Feedback

11.1 Right to a review

Applicants have the right to ask for a review of any decision made under the terms of this policy with which they do not agree.

Please note that only information that has already been supplied can be reviewed. If an application has been correctly assessed but the applicant failed to supply the requested or appropriate information at the point of application they are not entitled to have their application reviewed. They will instead be asked to submit a new application, which gives a clear account of their current situation. If an applicant is eligible for inclusion onto the housing register by virtue of this new application, priority will begin from the date that all the correct information is received. **An application will not be backdated.**

A request for a review must be made to the Housing Options Manager within 21 days of being notified of the decision. Following the request for a review being received the Council has a maximum of 8 weeks to respond. If the review is likely

to take longer the applicant will be notified of the amended response time. The Council's decision on the review will be final and the applicant will not be entitled to a further review of that decision. Reviews of decision requested under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) are outside the scope of this Allocations Policy.

11.2 Complaints, compliments and comments

We aim to provide a high standard of customer care and to treat every application equally. We appreciate feedback and would welcome any comments about how we can improve or increase the service that we offer. If an applicant is dissatisfied with any aspect of the way in which their application for housing is dealt with, other than one for which a review can be requested, they should contact the council and, if the matter is not resolved to their satisfaction, make a formal complaint which can be via telephone, email, in writing or by visiting the Thanet Gateway Plus.

12.0 Equality and diversity

We are committed to delivering a service that is accessible and equitable to all the communities that we serve. We will ensure that people will be treated with respect and dignity. We will monitor access to the housing list, and the assessment of need in accordance with our equality impact assessment. We will make certain that no-one is discriminated against on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Sex (gender)
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

The various application forms referred to in this policy can be made available in a number of different languages. We can also arrange a translation service for people who visit the Council Offices. If you require this service, you should contact our Housing Options Team.

13.0 Information sharing

13.1 Information Sharing Protocol

We will share data provided by a person applying for housing in accordance with the Information Sharing Protocol agreed by the Kent Choice Based Lettings Partnership. When completing an application form, either using a paper copy of the form or on-line, the person is asked to provide their consent to the sharing of personal data between the parties to the protocol. Personal data can be shared provided the person has given informed consent and the sharing is for the purposes for which consent is given. Informed consent means that the person has the capacity to give consent, is aware of what information is to be shared, whom it is to be shared with and what it is to be used for. Personal information is only disclosed to other parties with the person's consent or in exceptional circumstances where disclosure without consent is necessary. These reasons are:

- Where there are overriding legal, social or public interest considerations, for example there is a risk of seriously harm to the person themselves or to others if the information is not disclosed.
- Where the information is required by a local authority department or external auditors to carry out a statutory function.
- Where the information is required by the police as part of a criminal investigation.

13.2 Personal Data

Information provided to the council by housing applicants is confidential. The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) provides individuals with a right to request access to any of their personal data held by the Council, and a right to know where the data came from, how it is used and why it is held. Such a request is called a “subject access request” and applies to personal data in housing files.

Subject access requests should be made in writing to the Director of Community Services, and must describe the information sought. Applications must state their name and provide proof of their identity (please see appendix 1).

If the person considers the personal information they have received is inaccurate, they may request that it is amended or removed from their records. If this is accepted by the council, appropriate action will be taken to amend the records. In the event of a disagreement, the information will remain and the person’s comments will be recorded on file.

Disclosure of information may be denied by the local authority in the following circumstances:

- The information could prejudice criminal proceedings.
- Legal professional privilege could be claimed.
- A care professional is of the opinion that disclosure could result in a risk of serious harm to the person or others as a result of disclosure.

Information held on file may include documents submitted by third parties, for example, health care professionals. This will only be provided to the applicant with the permission of the third party concerned.

Appendix 1 – Application Checklist

Please check that the information you have given is correct, ensuring that:

- You have answered all the necessary questions
- You have included your name, address and postcode on page 1 (if you are of 'no fixed abode' you must use state a care of or correspondence address)
- You have signed and dated the application form
- You have or will be providing the following items (these must be originals and not copies)

Proof of Identity

(This is required for ALL household members).

Please provide either ONE of the documents from list A or TWO documents list B

List A

- Passport
- Driving Licence
- Birth or Marriage Certificate
- Medical Card

List B

- A letter addressed to you from a solicitor, social worker, probation officer, the Home Office, HM Revenue & Customs
- A letter addressed to you from Housing Benefit or Council Tax
- A recent gas, electricity or water bill
- A recent bank statement

Proof of Current Address

(This must be provided even if you are of 'no fixed abode' and only using the address as a care of or correspondence address)

Please provide ONE item from the list below for each adult or non-dependent child named on the application to be re-housed.

- Utility Bill
- Council Tax bill
- Bank/Building Society Statement
- Housing Benefit entitlement letter
- College/School letter
- Letter from a professional person or organisation (i.e. Doctor; Probation Service; Social Services)
- Payslip with address
- Letter from Department of Work & Pensions (e.g. Benefit or Pensions letter)
- Tenancy agreement (if you are still within the fixed term of the tenancy)
- Mobile phone or telephone Bill

Proof of Income

(Please provide proof of ALL income being received by the applicant)

- The last six weekly, last three fortnightly or last two monthly wage slips for you and your partner.
- Your latest accounts if you are self-employed and letter from the HMRC which indicate self-employment
- Benefit award letters i.e. Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Pension Credit

- Child Benefit award letter
- Working and Child Tax Credit letters

Proof of Savings or Capital

(For people not receiving income-based Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support, income-related Employment Support Allowance, or Pension Credit Guarantee)

- Full statements for each account showing the last two months' transactions
- Documents showing any stock, shares, bonds, or certificates owned

Additional Documentation

(You will also be required to supply additional documentation should any of the following apply)

- Proof of pregnancy i.e. MAT B1 form or pregnancy record (including the EDD)
- At least two valuations of any property owned in the UK or abroad and details or any outstanding mortgage or loans secured on this property.
- Home Office documentation, such workers registration scheme documents; residence cards or visas, for persons subject to immigration control or persons who do not hold a Great Britain and Northern Ireland passport.
- Notice to quit, possession order, notice of eviction or letter giving notice if you are being asked to vacate your current home.

Without this information it will not be possible to process your application for housing, so you must provide everything as quickly as possible.

DRAFT

Appendix 2 – Priority bands and criteria for reasonable preference

The banding scheme reflects the legal requirement set out in the section 167(2) of the Housing Act 1996 which requires that the allocations system gives “reasonable preference” for people in five groups:-

- *People who are homeless (within the meaning of Part VII (7) of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002)*
- *People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2), or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3)*
- *People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions*
- *People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability); and*
- *People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).*

The local authority may award “additional preference” to particular individuals, provided that they have “urgent housing needs”. The authority may take into account a wide range of actions when considering whether to give an individual “additional preference” or whether to give a lesser priority, but it must be able to explain the reasons for the decision.

Band A – urgent housing needs

Applications from persons who meet the following criteria:

1. Urgent medical or welfare needs.
Where an urgent medical need has been agreed with the local authority or a high priority referral has been accepted by the local authority under the Kent Agency Assessment procedure.
2. Management transfer.
Where the social landlord requires the tenant to move or the tenant needs to move due to violence, harassment, intimidation or threats of violence likely to be carried out, major works or other urgent management reason.

Band B – serious housing needs

Applications from persons where none of the above in Band A applies but who meet the following criteria:

1. People occupying very overcrowded housing or otherwise living in very unsatisfactory housing conditions.

Where a household is suffering from the following:

- a. Major overcrowding, that is lacking two or more bedrooms.
- b. Living in supported people funded housing and needs to move, as support is no longer required.

- c. Where a Category One hazard exists under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, which cannot be resolved within a reasonable time.
2. Social housing tenants in Thanet who are under-occupying by one bedroom or more.
3. Members of the Armed Forces

Band C – reasonable preference

Applications from persons where none of the above in band A or band B applies but who meet the following criteria:

1. People who are homeless.
Where the local authority have accepted a re-housing responsibility under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), or determined that the person does not have a priority need for accommodation, or the household will be homeless soon. *Please refer to Service level agreement re: Domestic Abuse victims*
2. People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
Living in insecure housing, for example on a licence agreement or non-secure tenancy, but excluded occupiers
Lacking bathroom or kitchen
Lacking inside WC
Lacking cold or hot water supplies, electricity, gas, or adequate heating
Overcrowding
Sharing living room, kitchen, bathroom/WC
Property in disrepair, with a Category 1 hazard
Poor internal or external arrangements
Social housing tenants in Thanet under-occupying by one bedroom
3. People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability.
Where a medical need has been agreed with the local authority or a priority referral has been accepted by the local authority under the Kent Agency Assessment procedure.
4. Mobility.
People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the local authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or to others. For example, to give or receive care, or to take up employment.

Band D – general

Applications from persons where none of the above in band A, band B or band C applies, or:

1. People who are intentionally homeless, or who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances.
Where a decision has been made by the local authority under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) or, where a person has deliberately worsened their housing circumstances and would have been found to be intentionally homeless if an application under Part VII had been made.

2. People who are homeless by another local authority

This applies where a duty is owed by another local authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996, or who are occupying accommodation secured by another local authority under section 192(3).

DRAFT

Appendix 3 - People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (criteria may apply to any member of the household)

Medical or welfare priority is awarded where the current housing is adversely affecting the health or wellbeing of an applicant, or member of their household, and whereby a move would positively improve their health or wellbeing. Below are examples of where priority would be awarded.

Band A – Urgent medical or welfare needs

- Any life threatening illness being made worse by housing conditions
- A person who is housebound due to stairs or steps (e.g. using a wheelchair in an upstairs property)
- Any person who requires specifically adapted accommodation that they are lacking.
- Any person who cannot be released from hospital until alternative accommodation is secured.

Band C – People needing to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability

- Severe mental health problems affected by current accommodation.
- Elderly persons with moderate to severe arthritis which significantly affects mobility (e.g. spine, legs) living upstairs or on a steep hill.
- Conditions requiring on going medical treatment, being very severely exacerbated by living conditions (e.g. extreme cases of asthma).
- Conditions causing a reduction in mobility (e.g. breathlessness, dizziness) when combined with stairs or poor location.

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

Q1. Closed Housing Register

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to close the Housing Register to applicants from outside Thanet?

139 (78.1%) *Strongly agree*
18 (10.1%) *Agree*
4 (2.2%) *Neither agree nor disagree*
3 (1.7%) *Disagree*
14 (7.9%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

58 (32.6%)

Strongly Agree

thanet residents should get first choice over people who dont work or live in thanet

1. There may be exceptional cases of applicants with family ties to Thanet.

Only individuals from thanet should be on the housing register

I was born & bred here & i could not get housed at all as outsiders were getting housed as the amount of children they have also i think people who are debtors should be made to prove they can clear their debts no matter their circumstance,i beleive a lot of people are finding a way to fiddle the bidding system as well

Unless they have good reason, i.e. relatives need help from one another, so have to be nearer to look after relatives.

It's an appropriate time to start taking control and focus on our local residents.

I think the current system is extremely unfair. We have a lot of people coming into the area who fancy living by the sea or who think it will be cheaper. Also a lot of eastern europeans have moved to this area knowing that they could get council housing and benefits.

This is only common sense and will stop undesirables from other parts of the country settling among us in Thanet. Unless of course they can pay for accomodation here.

strongly agree as i have been on the housing register since december 2011 i am in band c and have been informed by a council employee that even though my circumstances have changed considerably in the past 4 weeks my band will not change as i have enough in savings and monthly incomings due to a private pension to rent in the private sector.i have just under 5 thousand pounds in savings and receive around 1,150.00 per month in pensions so i feel the changes would benefit myself and other persons in my position,at my time of life i am 65 next month there is a need to have some savings so as not to be a burden on my family i worked for croydon council for over 25years and joined the pension scheme to give myself a better quality of life in later years and feel i should not be discriminated against because of this.the private sector have very few properties for mature tenants and are very expensive the housing association seem to have a great deal of properties for fifty pl us persons.

It's hard enough as it is to obtain a home, without the need for applicants from other areas.

Would be a great approach for other social landlords to take also. Would also be helpful if the private sector would follow suit to reduce the burden being placed on the area by London boroughs and other areas more affected by the Welfare Reform proposals.

The Highest Priority should be given to those who were actually born in Thanet if they have children, so that they can stay close to their immediate families.
This should have been done years ago

Hopefully this policy will stop the transit to this area of "Dole by the seaside" unemployed. Local people who have a commitment to Thanet will stay long term in the housing provided.
I believe parts of Thanet (particularly Cliftonville West) have become "dumping grounds" for persons from other towns and cities ie London or elsewhere, in particular single persons. This is still going on and it creates an unfair pressure on one bedroomed accommodation in Thanet.

Please also remove from the register any applicants currently on it who are from outside the area.

Thanet has been a dumping ground for other boroughs 'problem' residents for too long. This should have been sorted years ago.
thanet is a small place, residents from within its boundaries should not have to wait longer than people from outside the area. this is a welcome change in housing policy.
As a council, there is a responsibility to ensure that those within our own district are given a priority.
We need to look after the area housing as others from outside the area who just want to live by the sea has to be stoped

Local schools, doctors etc are already heavily over subscribed. People should not be encouraged to move to Thanet for a ride!
Thanet needs to have an opportunity to stabilise and sort out many of its problems. This is a step in the right direction
i was put into band d cat with no explanation.and have been on the list years and years.properties are rarely given to band d so i am slowly loosing faith with the council.so why on earth do we give priority to outsiders of thanet when you cant house the people already here

Whilst I agree with this proposal I hope that TDC will not support any Government proposal to require those with "unoccupied" bedrooms to house immigrants.

Whilst I agree with this proposal I hope that TDC will not support any Government proposal to require those with "unoccupied" bedrooms to house immigrants.
I think it is brilliant that they are now only going to give local housing to LOCAL people! it means us that live here will have a greater chance of finding a property within the area we choose to live and having to live here for 3 years first is even better.

As a homeowner some might think I'm not in a position to make any judgements about this proposal, but being able to walk into your own house and shut the door is the fundamental need of any human being, be it rented or owned, and how disheartening it is for so many Thanet born people to see "outsiders" arriving here and seemingly taking priority! So yes these are positive proposals, my question is, why has it taken so long??
think its great that the people who live and care in thanet are given priority over outsiders

Thanet housing needs to be kept for Thanet Residents. Far too many migrants being offered council housing when local residents on the register are not prioritized for their needs. Too many dodgy private landlords who don't upkeep the properties just grab the rent!
The council should not allow Government pressure to take more immigrants. The next step for this Government would be to suggest that those in under occupied accommodation should take in immigrants.

This area is drowning under the level of claimants and benefit recipients and yet we allow people from other areas to continue to come into the area and add to the numbers of those in need.

Local homes for local people should be the priority. People in more 'need' from other areas should be prioritised in the LA area they live only.
Maybe East Kent Housing area?

Thanet cannot support its own residents already. There is a lack of jobs, schools, doctors etc so why would we want to continue to increase the housing register from outside the area, thus putting more strain on our limited resources
people of Thanet do not want Thanet to turn into an urban grotto and that is exactly what is happening because all the councillors of the area give a damn about is money in their own pockets, they don't give a damn about the area themselves. Truth is most of them probably don't even come from the area and I would bet my last £1 that a good number of councillors don't live in the area! How the hell are we supposed to turn the fortunes of a town like Margate around when we keep filling the area up with people claiming benefits? The gap between the income levels in Thanet and the cost of living in Thanet purely because we are in the south is becoming too great and honest, decent workers are struggling to find a point to it all. I think changing the banding systems and finally showing equality to the people who actually pay their taxes is long overdue and only fair. Why should people who don't work be the only ones to benefit where housing is concerned? I'm pretty sure that wasn't the original point of the social housing ethos in this country! It is almost impossible for anyone to get on the property ladder if they live off a single salary anymore so why shouldn't this long discarded section of the society benefit from the right to buy situation with council properties they could rent, if they were offered them too? Surely it is more financially beneficial to Thanet District Council to have a balanced quota of private paying tenants to housing benefit tenants to even out the cost of supporting people on benefits? With all due respect to the current government the Right to Buy Schemes available only offer properties in the middle of the Newington Estate or in Canterbury and they are still too expensive for what people earn around here... and I know, I've looked! This area deserves more. The workers of this area deserve more.

It should always have been this way.

I am in my 3rd year of waiting for a council house & of course ill agree with anything that benefits Me & my daughter

I agree that a local policy should be in place. I have lived and worked in the Thanet area all my life. I have little chance to affordable housing in the area I contribute to. It seems unfair that the banding policy means that people with no connection can be housed in a new affordable property because they have been "dumped" in Thanet by other authorities, in refuges ect.

It is unfair that local people are not housed first from the Housing Register. This area has for a long time has people "dumped£ here from other areas (notably London areas) as well as immigrants coming in. It is important that agricultural land is not used for housing as once that is gone, Thanet will lose some of its charm. Therefore, make any housing only for local poeple and renovate old or empty housed after warning any owners.

we live in the area and its our councils money that is being spent so we deserve priority. personally i have been waiting 3 years to be moved after living in thanet all my life

Agree

Special cases should be allowed to join register, eg to unite a family

although i think people who have very strong links who have moved away ahpuld still be considered. for example if someone moved away but are now divorced and their parents and children are here they should still count. I think a minimum of five years should be considered with people who have been here or at least went to school here being the highest priority. If we can not house the people in Thanet then surely we can not house the people that is not in Thanet.

However, there may be certain circumstances where a non-resident has a valid reason to want to move to Thanet, eg. to live near family for health reasons.

I think there should be residential criteria as there is such a housing shortage in Thanet

Neither agree or disagree

The people from outside Thanet may wish to work here but would leave property in their area for others. The vast number of new lettings to people from abroad is much more serious as local people are not able to get a place within a reasonable time.

Disagree

I think that this needs to be flexible and looked at on a case by case situation. For example, I am aware of a case where an elderly gentleman (over 80) living in London in council/housing association accommodation wishes to move closer to his son who lives in Ramsgate. His son has a partner and two small children and can not move out of Thanet to move closer to his father.

There is a concern that Children who are cared for by the local authority and resident in Thanet that are not resident for 3 years but have made strong local connections will be disadvantaged from securing a stable and long term home in an area where they have developed social relationships and secure attachments to the community

I agree in general with this proposal, however discretion should be allowed for special circumstances, for example, an elderly parent or parents wishing to move back close to their family from outside the area. This would not only be morally correct but would ensure family care for older people and would off-load the social services and NHS on a national level. there would be real cost benefits at national level or though they may not be seen locally. Perhaps government could recognise this and contribute to Councils implementing such a policy.

Strongly disagree

I feel that this will impact upon those clients who are fleeing another area, for example where they are victims of domestic abuse

My elderly father has lived in Thanet for quite a number of years, after my mother died he has got progressively ill,so I need to move from Wilts to be near him. I am 61 and would need social housing for I would need security of tenancy that I would not get with private lettings. Being on pension credit I could not afford private letting.

Stops people (on low incomes) having the freedom to move around. This is what councils have done to traveller people and are now exercising this same policy to poor people.

housing should be open to all and be undiscriminatory. people should be allowed to live in what are they choose as they could have a very valid reason for wanting to live in a different area

I lived in Thanet for 23 years. I moved away and got married and now I want to return but unfortunately cannot buy a property therefore I need the council's help.

I have been on the housing list for 2 and a half years and bid regularly. I desperately want to move back to Thanet and due to your new rule changes that's going to be completely unaffordable. I want to work but will not be able to afford the private landlords rents. This will now result in me staying where I am and remaining here whether I like it or not, I'm devastated at this change. I understand the practicalities of the rules but still think they are totally unfair and biased. Could you not change it so as not to add anymore from outside Thanet but include existing applications? If I now move to Thanet I won't be able to work as I won't be able to afford the private Landlord rates I think that exceptions should be allowed. Each application should be considered individual and considered on the grounds of the reason for the application. The applicant needing to move out of their current borough due to their welfare and have local connections such as family or work should be considered and given priority if necessary.

The policy stated that those eligible are Thanet residents who have been living within the Thanet district for a continuous period of 3 years immediately prior to date of application. Does this apply to those fleeing Domestic Abuse, who may have come to Thanet to live in the Refuge or have fled DA to the Thanet area to be with a support network; or those that have fled the area and returned with legal protection. Many clients are unable to live in the area with which they have local connection as this is simply their danger area, this excludes them from being on the housing register.

There maybe many varied reasons for a person wishing to be accommodated in Thanet - family connection, one's only friends being already resident, etc,

2. Residency Criteria

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce new residential criteria which requires applicants to have lived in Thanet for a minimum of three years in order to qualify for the Housing Register?

127 (71.3%) *Strongly agree*
19 (10.7%) *Agree*
5 (2.8%) *Neither agree nor disagree*
9 (5.1%) *Disagree*
17 (9.6%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

55 (30.9%)

Strongly Agree

I hope this means priority is given to residents of Thanet and not non-English families.

minimum 5 would be better

I strongly agree that there should be a 3 year residential criteria as long as it does not affect homeless applicants.

about time there are to many people that have never lived in thanet that get a house just like that where people that have lived here all there lives are still waiting years

Unless relatives are needed to be closer to look after relatives, flexibility for qualification

We need to stop accommodating people from all over the South East.

This is a very good idea as it will dissuade people from moving to be near the sea or because they feel it is a cheap area.

This has been needed for many years now. I am glad our council has grasped the nettle!

I have lived in Thanet my whole life, and people who have just moved here are being priorotised over me. Disgusting

Would prefer to see five years' continuous residency.

This should be five years.

We need to safe the true residents of thanet

With this criteria, there will already be commitment to the area.

An excellent suggestion for which Members and Officers alike should be commended.

You should add people who have previously lived in this area and have direct family here too. I was a council tenant in thanet for 15 years before I went into the military. Upon return found that I could not get council housing.

Should be longer

i think that 5 years should be the minimum and then only applicable if in full time employment

I think the minimum should be increased to 5 or more years at least though in order for the person to have made some kind of contribution to the area they wish to settle in

applicants should also prove that they have worked for the minimum of three years to qualify i feel that it is a very fair way to allow people who have lived in the area a long time to be housed first. As the real residents end up getting pushed to one side and never seem to get a look in as people come to the area and they know how to work the system so they get straight to the top of the list and housed first.

For too long Thanet has been a dumping ground with all the socio-economic problems that that brings. We are trying hard to rejuvenate our area and need people keen to develop a sense of belonging and community spirit.

here here

Thanet residents are already concerned regarding the amount of persons being relocated to Thanet from London and districts to free up London housing stock for more rental money.

For far too long Thanet has been a dumping ground and all the socio-economic problems that that brings. We are all trying hard to improve our area in many many different ways, so it is vitally important that all residents have a genuine need to live here. Supporting and showing an interest in their local community allows it to grow and develop into a pleasant place for us all to live in.

Personally I would like the time period to be a minimum of 5 years.

Longer - 5 to 10 years

This is a good starting point as TDC is not saying we won't accept people from outside the area but that people who wish to move here or are placed here by other councils have to show that they settled into the area and are supporting the local economy.

Local residents should always have priority.

Once again I have lived here since 2005

I believe that this will enhance the social housing estates as a lot of the 'local' residents take more pride in Thanet and its future.

At least three years should be a criteria for anyone to be considered but not at the expense of anyone who has born here or lived here much longer. There should also be checks to make sure there is no 'cheating' and the people being considered to try to integrate (learn English if necessary) and do contribute.

Agree

people should be living in thanet a lot longer before they can qualify for housing

This would be good for the community

I agree with this but do hope there would be put in place a special circumstance prior, for example : A mother/father feeling there home from a different area due to domestic violence, a family member having come to the area and care for an elderly relative. Some cases must be based individually.

I agree to a point, but there is always the possibility that someone who has not lived in Thanet for three years will require emergency accommodation or otherwise due to unforeseen circumstances. Perhaps if they can prove that they already had plans to remain in the area long term? Through a job contract or something?

There should be some discretion to this rule ie if you have left the area with 12 mths for a valid reason & return

Agree, however there should be allowances for exceptional circumstances.

please clarify this for people who are already on the register. Will they remain on the register?

Neither agree or disagree

i would recommend living in thanet for at least 5 years. you should be moving to the area for other reasons than to find housing

How does that work with the people already on the register that have not lived in Thanet for 3 years? I will have lived here for 3 years in July.

Moving because location is liked or ethnic groups exist should be discouraged. The private sector is not an option if you need to work here.

Disagree

add 'or no connection with thanet' to criteria .. eg if someone from Whistable works in Thanet they should be allowed to join the Thanet register, likewise to unite families

Similar to comments on question one

Should be a minimum of 2 years some residents if in an emergency situation would have to go to a private landlord or homeless (and homeless is to be changed according to circumstances). No 2 years is enough. If your on the register like myself I've got to wait till Sept 2013 when Ive been in Thanet 3 years not acceptable.

Strongly Disagree

3 years is not long enough to demonstrate a real connection to the area. This proposal is too simplistic. We should be looking at a larger picture, ie: is their a solid and long term (many years) family connection with the area and more importantly, with a specific village if this is where they are trying to go. We should be looking at overall family history and not just requiring individuals to have been "in the area" for a few years.

Residents of Supported Housing (for which there is no local connection applied) may have only been resident in the district for a short time (up to 2 years) before being ready to move on to independant accommodation. In applying a 3 year local connection requirement, these tenants will not be able to access social housing which may 'silt up' the scheme and have a negative impact on throughput in supported housing. This is particularly pertinent in cases such as domestic abuse and accommodation for offenders where it may not be possible or desirable for the client to reconnect to their area of origin.

should have proof that they have worked in this area already and show that they have indeed already contributed to the local area by paying their taxes and their own rent before they can apply for housing in the area. Too many people think they deserve homes just because they are humans and exist, a large number of people in this area need to be reminded that they are required to earn the privelege of social housiong because that's what it should be - a privelege, to help out those truly in need of some help. I have a friend who has had a council property in Thanet since she had her first baby when she was 17, she's now 38 and she's never worked, she's sitting pretty in a 3 bed house that is furnished a lot more expensively than my ridiculous privately rented 1 bed flat, her kids want for nothing, and as far as she's concerned she's covered by TDC until her dying days. Due to the fact I have worked since I was 15 and don't have this lifestyle I find that attitude s hocking and it's the root of many painful arguements between us old friends. I also know of old school friends from the Newington Estate who have somehow been able to 'take over' the houses they grew up in just because their parents had the tenancy before them... What the hell is that all about? Needless to say most of them don't work either. Most of these people that I know of have no desire to work because they get more if they don't. It's a ridiculous system that needs completely overhauling. Make them work for it first!

This will impact upon clients who are presented with a need before they have lived in the area for three years, for example where they experience domestic abuse, become medically unwell or are evicted from their property by landlords for no fault of their own.

Keeps people in their place of origin. Stops poor people travelling to look for work. Makes people fleeing domestic violence return to the place of their abuse. Makes people with substance misuse problems moving away from their place of abuse, stay in the place where they got caught up and near the people they used with.

i disagree with this as in this day and age why put so many restrictions on how long you live in an area .it should be equal opportunities and to change areas when needed

I think 3 years is too long

I think that each application should be considered an individual case. Someone who has lived in Thanet for three years or more may not need housing as much as someone who has not.

As above. Those in the local refuge may not have originally made the choice to move to Thanet, it may have been the only available place of safety. However, when making an application to live in Thanet, they are making a choice to live in and contribute to the Thanet area. Likewise, those fleeing abuse, who have come to the Thanet area to be among a support network, have a connection to the area and yet will not be considered in the application

As answered in proposal 1, Would suggest an individual would have genuine reasons for applying for housing. They would be expected to be very genuine, given the uninviting employment scenario.

3. Unacceptable behaviour

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to provide specific guidance on excluding households who have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour?

141 (79.2%)	<i>Strongly agree</i>
23 (12.9%)	<i>Agree</i>
7 (3.9%)	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>
2 (1.1%)	<i>Disagree</i>
4 (2.2%)	<i>Strongly disagree</i>

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters
43 (24.2%)

Strongly Agree

Why should people with unacceptable behaviour be able to move.

Badly behaved neighbours can be a blight to people living near them, creating stress in their own home.

I believe that many social tenants in Thanet have got away with poor behaviour (particularly that of their children) for far too long and that the Council is just not tough enough on this poor behaviour.

With an appeals procedure if there are special circumstances, but it's a good approach

Any person committing ASB should be evicted not rehoused fined up to 5000 and given a 5 year prison sentence (no bail conditions). A zero tolerance approach is required. And the housing should implicate this to the residents when signing them on the tenancy they should be made to sign an agreement to that effect if broken they're out.

Anyone who has already been evicted or in prison should not be able just to move to get away from their past errors.

Long overdue.

Other councils particularly in London do exactly this. Thanet needs to send out a clear message. Tenants who behave badly should not be entitled to have council property.

Definitely. I don't want any undesirables taking up residence in my street!

WE ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE AND NOT BE AFRAID OF OUR NEIGHBOUR.SOME TENANTS DO NOT RESPECT THEIR NEIGHBOURS AND NOT ENOUGH IS DONE TO PROTECT THEM.

Anybody who has a criminal record or debts should not be given a home against somebody who has behaved, and who pays their tax every week.

It is hoped that this will help make people accountable for their behaviour and accepting that with rights, come responsibilities to others.

Be careful of refusing problem families as they will turn to a private landlord and in certain areas this will be detrimental. They should be sent back to the area they originate from. Pay their fare and inform their local council this would be cheaper in the long run. This includes Drug addicts, ex-prisoners and alcoholics who are sent here by their local council or prison, as we have the facilities to deal with them here.

If people abuse the system & cause upsets they should not be allowed a local authority houses

This is the right course. With no regulation of letting agents/estate agents,and too many uncaring landlords, it can effect a whole neighbourhood adversely with just ONE unsuitable tenant.

Another excellent improvement. I am impressed. Well done Thanet!

As an owner occupier in Cliftonville I and many other residents are sick to death of seeing rubbish thrown into gardens and the street from some of these in social housing.We have a single mother on benefits living next door to us who has loud late night parties most nights and a constant string of drug dealers going in and out. Social services and the council have done nothing to sort this problem out and we have all but given up trying, being constantly stonewalled by officialdom. Don't see why the council should take on problem people it only costs the taxpayer more money. This might make people pay their rent and sort their behaviour out. This is good, makes people responsible for their actions.

Wholly agree. You do not want to be raising children in the vicinity of such families if it can be avoided

any persons who behave badly wether residents or not should not be provided with any form of housing or benefits

strongly agree, as alot of people abuse their tenancy and have no respect for there homes or their nieghbours around them, so they dont desevre to be living there, sepecially when there are genuine people who are desperate to live in affordable housing!!!

Thanet needs strong emphasis to improve all social behaviour and this is a step in the right direction

It must be very hard for the law abiding residents to live adjacent to those who feel they are untouchable and behave unacceptably.

If any event is considered to have unacceptable behaviour then i totally agree. However if the event was a 'one off' and the household has not repeated the event or any other for a specific time, say 2 years then they should be re considered.

In previous decades having a local authority home was a proud sign and somewhere along the way that proud sign has been replaced by a job anti social culture who feel it is there right. A social housing estate should be a place of community once again, as it was in days gone by. This should also be extended to domestic violence victims who continue to bait their partners/ex partners which causes a blight on current residents.

It is far too easy to get away with inappropriate behaviour. Most of us are law abiding citizens so to live adjacent to a household who have no care or respect for themselves or their environment must be a nightmare. Life isnt easy for many but that doesnt mean they are exempt from sorting their own problems and responsibilities. They must be encouraged to prioritise their needs budgetary incomes and not depend on outside agencies to bail them out every time.

Benefits should help those in need and not cause hardship to anyone else as a result but it is long over due that people be held accountable for their actions.

They don't change

Why should the law abiding majority have their lives disrupted or live in fear because of some anti-social people who basicaly don't give a damn about others

Slums aren't built.... They are made. If you behaved badly in private accommodation you would be evicted and the landlord would not allow you another tenancy. Bad behaviour has a negative effect on so many people. I hope that with this being in place people will have to take responsibility for keeping a roof over there heads. Also gives other tenants reassurance that any people causing others nuisance will be dealt with.

If people are moved because of reasons given above, checks should be made to make sure they do not continue the same behaviour elsewhere. If rent arrears are due to unforeseen circumstances eg illness, redundancy, unemployment help should be given. If households were from out of area to begin with, they should be returned to there previous authority.

TDC needs to stop rewarding bad behaviour. It's not the responsibility of private tenants in the street to keep unruly neighbours under control, it's the responsibility of the council who keep handing everything to them on a plate regardless of their social behaviour.

its about time this sort of behaviour coming from council estates is controlled....the councils concerned can do something about this problema and they dont deserve a property if they dont know how to abide by the basic social rules

Continued social behaviour obviously contrary to the well being and comford of others, should be dealt with swiftly. anyone genuinely unfortunate enough to fall fowl of keeping up rents due should be extended consideration for a reasonable time in accordance with their circumstances.

Agree

In todays economic times I do not believe everyone should be automatically unable to apply for housing due to rent arrears. However nuisance neighbours etc should not be offered alternative housing by the council.

Continous episodes of anti-social begaviour need to be addressed seriously and not moved on elsewhere to make another council estate area become the next trouble spot - Also if rents for these people who persist with this unwanted behaviour increased maybe they would be less inclined to cause such issues and problems - make them pay for their own wrong doing.

depends on type of behaviour

Neither agree or disagree

WHAT DOES ONE CLASS AS UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR ?

Although I am aware that all people have a right to housing, it is a shame to move people who are guilty of unacceptable behaviour to a place where residents are not guilty of this. This often has a detrimental effect upon those residents who are not problematic. They will often, and rightly, complain about a noisy/bad tenant's behaviour which sometimes results in said tenant being shipped around. A vicious circle, as tenant is never settled...More adequate help could be provided in the form of support to help prevent bad behaviour reoccurring? Equally, there should not be a build up of 'problem' tenants in one area. A very tricky issue!

Disagree

It is unacceptable that Young People who are looked after by the local authority might be disadvantaged from securing their own accommodation via TDC on the basis of any current presenting behaviour. Young People often demonstrate developmentally delayed behaviour which given time and support will improve but to omit an application on the grounds cited under proposal 3 is discriminatory

Strongly Disagree

I strongly disagree that there should be an exclusion for household members who have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour/rent arrears within the tenancy as some applicants have lived within a household where there could have been in a violent/controlling/financial relationship and not been able to get away from the abuse.

The client's partner or child may have been guilty of the unacceptable behaviour and the client will be punished for this as well as having to deal with the behaviour and other consequences. The policy states that Where a person has previously been found not eligible due to unacceptable behaviour, but now believes this should no longer be held against him, the applicant can make a fresh application. The local authority can allow an application if they are satisfied that the person's behaviour has improved. This would be accepted, where an applicant had held a tenancy and a good tenancy reference was received or if specific satisfactory documentation was received upon Thanet District Council's request. What therefore happens to those clients who have been found ineligible based on the behaviour of their partner or behaviours forced upon them by an abusive partner. A good tenancy reference would not be available if the client has not been able to live independently of the perpetrator. This again furthers the abuse already suffered at the hands of a perpetrator

4. Additional bedrooms for children

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to provide additional bedrooms for families with two children of the opposite sex only where the eldest is over 10 years old?

79 (44.4%) *Strongly agree*
45 (25.3%) *Agree*
19 (10.7%) *Neither agree nor disagree*
19 (10.7%) *Disagree*
13 (7.3%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

39 (21.9%)

Strongly Agree

Why not indeed? When I was young we had no choice in cramped accomodation.

People in owner/occupier circumstances have to make do and live within their circumstances. The same should apply in the social rented sector.

Again; this makes perfect sense.

People are choosing to have more children even though they are not in a position to support them because it means they can get a bigger property.

grew up in the 70's and 80's in a 3 bedroom house with no central heating and with 2 parents and 3 siblings. We had to share bath water heated from saucepans on the gas cooker and 2 bedrooms between the 4 of us the entire time we were under our parents roof. It never affected us mentally and all of us work hard and appreciate everything we have. The truth of the matter is - if people want children then they should be able to pay for them before having them or acknowledge that things will be tight. It is not the responsibility of hard working people to compensate for others' inability to use birth control properly and to bow down to their demands of a bedroom for each child they pop out! Quite frankly they're lucky they get more than 1 bedroom for knock down rental prices at all. Again, it's all about society needing to be reminded that they don't automatically deserve money for nothing and that just because they have children it doesn't mean we all have to bend over bac kwards to accommodate them, especially when it's at the cost of the taxpayers.

Agree

Makes sense until there is more affordable housing stock on the market.

They still have to pay the rent and not get let off. To many families getting away with this issue.

Again it should be made clear to families at the time of signing the tenancy agreement.

but i do think size of bedrooms should be taken into consideration when allocating properties as even when sharing rooms a child still needs its own space.

Difficult because children of different sexes older than 10 need their own rooms but I ask what would people in the private sector/people with mortgages have to do..... make do!

This is ok for families with opposite sex children but there is no guidlaines for those who have same sex children as there should also be a limit on the age gap for these families, the age gap between the children should be taken into account not just the fact they are the same sex.

It is ideal for a family with children of different sexes to have their own private space

I don't see that this should cause any problems. Children if grown up sharing a bedroom probably don't see a problem.

I think given the shortage of larger housing this is a wise decision.

Neither agree or disagree

This is not a reason to allow some single parents to have a larger house when a new partners children move in.

Not sure of my views on this one

Unfortunately, having two children of the same sex I fall foul of this. My 14 year old son desperately needs his own room to do homework in. It's not fair on him.

This is a difficult one... But due to the empty bedroom reform I think that the council have to take some responsibility in making sure the family will be able to afford the property. Also many hard working families who have brought there homes are over crowded and do not have the luxury of there children having there own rooms.

I think that this might be too restrictive if the mix of sized accommodation available might allow the Council to allocate a larger dwelling to a family with children under 10 provided they understand that they will not get the max in terms of HB.

Disagree

Needs to remain at 8 years as schools will need to be considered for secondary education

if the oldest child is a girl i think 10 is to old, some hit puberty by then
Children develope at different ages and 8 years olds should have a different room.

Children mature more quickly these days and I do not feel it is appropriate for boys and girs to share. Certainly foster carers have to provide separate bedrooms over age of 7.

The children should be younger than 10 years old

I agree that it should be in line with HB, I feel that 8 is a more appropriate age.

I can see your point about housing benefit. But it is still not acceptable for only 10 years age children to have their own room. It should be younger It should remain at eight years old. You have allowed too many one and two bedroomed flats to be converted. Families, like everyone else need space and a garden!

beraing in mind that some people produce larger families so that they can get coucil funded accomodation at the tax payers expence

It is wrong to put a 10 year old boy in the same bedroom as an eight year old girl

Think this should be done on a case by case basis just to cover any issues over disabled children that may need a room for themselves.

Children mature much younger these days so I think 8 years old should be kept

This is an ill considered idea and the Housing Benefit criteria are at fault as well. This is a panic response to shortage of money. Ten year olds now, and particularly girls can fast be approaching puberty and should be able to expect privacy. their will most certainly be repercussions to this policy and they will include the social services, the police, child welfare and family breakdown. There will be circumstance where children are unable to share a bedroom of any age. Disability, illness or behavioural issues may result in a child needing a bedroom of their own. It should therefore be the choice of the parent to pay any additional costs, which may be financed using moneys granted for the purposes of supporting those with disability such as DLA.

Strongly Disagree

children need space I feel that 10 is too old for children of the opposite sex

This could be very distressing for children especially as some you girls start their menstruation earlier and earlier, nine years old is not uncommon .

Two children of different genders can perfectly easily share until the elder is 10. This needs to be more rigorously enforced as it would free up homes with more bedrooms for families who genuinely need the extra rooms.

It seems short sighted to me, those children will need rehousing after two years.

A child of ten is fully aware of their body and from my own experience should not have to share their bedroom with a sibling of the opposite sex. The younger sibling should not see their brother/sister naked, possibly in the early stages of puberty. Similarly a pair of same sex siblings with the eldest being in their teens should also not have to share with their younger sibling, for example, a 16 year old sharing with a 5 year old. I feel this is wrong.

Children are maturing at an earlier age, plus they are being taught sexual education in school from 5 years old in England, this means that they will have a greater awareness of differences between the sexes, therefore, the younger age should be maintained. We are all aware that this will impede on housing stocks within Thanet, but TDC need to weigh up housing against sexual abuse/incest. Do you take in to account a child with a disability I.E Autism where sharing a room would just not work.

i am in this situation now but yet NO HELP. this is a contradiction on the letter i received today. my eldest is 12 and my son 10, my youngest 7 but yet all in one bedroom..... the letter stated i will not be getting any help with my situation any time soon,(but yet im a WORKING MOTHER) and dont scrounge of the government

5. Additional bedrooms for carers

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce guidance on additional bedroom requests for carers in line with current Housing Benefit guidelines?

76 (42.7%) *Strongly agree*

51 (28.7%) *Agree*

35 (19.7%) *Neither agree nor disagree*

11 (6.2%) *Disagree*

3 (1.7%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

18 (10.1%)

Strongly Agree

i agree as it much be much more cost effective for a person needing care to be able to stay in there own home the alternative being a residential setting which is very expensive. Need to make sure you look after the people that need it but stop others from taking advantage of the system.

Rooms could be adapted for carers if family members. However there could be valid reasons why the carer may need their "own space" All applicants should be assessed on a case by case request I have a disabled daughter, and work with people with disabilities so qualified to comment on this.. I don't believe for a moment that many if not most are using this to their advantage! If over night is required the carer should not ideally be asleep. I have to get people to care for my daughter at times over I have to make use of what I have, usually involving my lounge! If constant over night care is required then maybe they need to approach other agencies. I think the currant criteria is open to abuse and should be changed.

We can't afford to house carers in these hard times.

Clear guidance will help those who need carers, enusring they have fair access to accommodation that meets thier needs, removing ambiguity and helping prevent abuse of the system from fraudulent attempts to under-occupy.

You should introduce an effective register of adaptated properties and consult with OT's regardibng allocation of these properties.

Again if the person with the disability was actually born in Thanet or have been here for more than five years they should have priority over those who come into the area from outside because we have cheap accommodation which is not always suitable.

But what will happen when the medical circumstances no longer apply?

Agree

as long as it is long term care needed

With the many cuts in social care, any prospect of assistance in some way, even in the form of the simple provision of an extra bedroom, is more than welcome!

Agree providing they relay are disabled in some way. I have lived all over the UK and have never seen so many so-called disabled people wandering around on crutches as I have in Cliftonville.

The new government assessments should hopefully sort this nonsense I and other taxpayers have to support.

Neither agree or disagree

Don't know enough about it.

This is for an independent body to decide not the council.

Disagree

What is the criteria for over 60's who are seriously ill and only have a 1 bedroom unit. Where's the carer gone sleep on the sofa. This needs more consideration given.

In a lot of cases, carers need their own room to be able to have proper rest. The bedroom of the person being care for may also have equipment in therefore less room and due to medical reasons the carer may not be able to share the same bedroom.

surely it depends on each persons needs

Strongly Disagree

My father has motor neurone disease and has been deteriorating for the past 2 years. There are occasions that his family have needed to stay at his flat and this is going to increase in the future. We sleep on his 2 seater sofa and spend an uncomfortable night and then pass to the next family member when we go to work. As an occasional measure this is of course fine but as this becomes a nightly issue someone will have to move in with him as he is adamant that he will not go into a home. Under those circumstances I feel that family members should be afforded the same consideration as paid carers particularly as we are not being paid but are acting out of love

6. Re-categorisation of Bands

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to re-categorise the housing bands?

88 (49.4%) *Strongly agree*

45 (25.3%) *Agree*

25 (14.0%) *Neither agree nor disagree*

9 (5.1%) *Disagree*

9 (5.1%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

53 (29.8%)

Strongly Agree

although i think it should only be for people who have lived here for a minimum three years.

However, I think the Council should go further. There are a lot of people sitting on the list living in suitable accommodation who just fancy a move and yet they are able to get Band B/C. If people are not bidding regularly then they should be removed from the list.

New applicants every week join bands A and B, and get homed before anybody in band C and D. Which effectively means people in bands C and D will never be homed. So what is the point in us applying for this? Completely agree with this, and this should be enforced as soon as possible and give people like myself in band C a better chance.

An obvious solution to stop people making themselves homeless to get a house.

I strongly agree if this makes it fairer for all, however, stringent checks should be made especially if out of area, to make sure applicants are telling the truth.

when i was assessed by housing benefit for the property i live in he said it was classed as one n half bedrooms.so why was i put in band d,which you rarely give a property to

I think it was made quite clear at our meeting with Vicky May on Friday 15th February.

band c gets housed probably 3 maybe 4 times in a year if lucky! 3yrs i been waiting in band c even thou i have children of 3yrs & 18yrs opposite sex. its to long

because of finacial situation and no family ireally do need help ihave lived in thanet fo nearly 40 years and iam on band d which is ridiculous i need help no wonder i havent had any response iam in the wrong band please hurry up and change this

I live in a house that is currently making my children ill.

i strongly agree with giving people in band c and d more of an opportunity to be housed as i have been on the waiting list in band d for 7 years and i am desperate to be re housed before i am forced into a shared or one bedroom property as i am a single working mother who is renting privately and i am really struggling to cope with my rent and other out goings, and i just want to be given a break and be able to give my son a better lifestyle of living.

i agree as being in band c there are several times after bidding that you are not even considered which makes you feel there is no point in bidding.

Fed up with people working the system by making themselves deliberately worse off. About time people were forced to try and look after themselves first rather than expecting the council/contry to do it for them. Think the services need looking after as when they are finished in their service to the country they need help think the Council is right to put these people above those that haven't done a thing for their country other than take.

Agree in principal. But would someone in band b because of medical needs automatically be upgrade to band a.

This may or may not work but the fact of the matter is every family is different and this should also be taken into account.

It does seem unfair that a single person who has been on a waiting list for a long time doesn't ever get to the top of the list because they don't have dependants. Girls who fall pregnant seem to get priority which doesn't always seem fair

I am still not sure if this will personally benefit me... But yes I agree that the old banding was unfair due to the reasons in question 1. Also the old banding which I have been on for 4 years means I will not be housed. I work hard, my eldest daughter works hard we both care for my youngest. I have to find £650pcm I do get a percentage paid by hb. The house is full of problems and not suitable for my youngest needs. But I won't be housed by tdc. If I had a decent affordable home it would make a huge difference to us as a family... I need help to cope. Sadly because I am not a alcoholic or my children haven't got social workers I have to struggle each week to pay such a high rent. Hopefully the new banding might help families like mine.

I believe that the people who are to be placed in Band D (intentionally homeless, those who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances and those homeless by another authority) should not be placed on the Thanet Housing List at all.

There is no reason to make things too easy. The council needs to think about its council tax payers - too many hard luck stories these days!

Appendix 2 (housing criteria) has accidentally omitted Armed Forces Personnel under category B. It is also good to see deterrants for people to make themselves intentionally homeless to get an unfair foot on the ladder.

seems a sensible idea

Band C, your referral to 'unsanitary' conditions could be interpreted as 'dirty' property, this should be clarified/brought in line with the HHSRS.

I am currently in a band C and on the website it says reason urgent medical need. So shouldn't I be a band A?

Agree

I think the Council should concentrate on Bands A, B and C and drop Band D altogether.

What is management transfer? And why is it banded urgent?

What about the people who can't afford to live in these homes who have to privately rent? what band would that come under?

Agree generally but not sure about the justification for prioritising Armed Forces personnel above other deserving categories. Also, does that mean only Armed Forces personnel who have a local connection? Whilst I think that Armed Forces personnel do an outstanding job, so do our police officers, doctors, nurses, and firemen. Should we therefore give priority just to Armed Forces personnel? I think on balance perhaps that should be removed. Clearly if the member of the armed forces personnel have been disabled out of the service, then they will presumably be in Band A under urgent medical needs anyway?

band d needs looking at as if someone has been made homeless by another local housing authority I do not see why we should have to house them at all

Members should not allow the Government to put pressure upon those in accommodation with under utilised bedrooms to take in immigrants or the homeless. Members should expand any scheme that allows existing tenants to move to accommodation with fewer bedrooms, previous schemes paid the elderly £500 to move out of family accommodation to single bed roomed units. provided the 3 year resident rule still applies

Agree generally but not sure about the justification for prioritising Armed Forces personnel above other deserving categories. Also, does that mean only Armed Forces personnel who have a local connection? Whilst I think that Armed Forces personnel do an outstanding job, so do our police officers, doctors, nurses, and firemen. Should we therefore give priority just to Armed Forces personnel? I think on balance perhaps that should be removed. Clearly if the members of the armed forces personnel have been disabled out of the service, then they will presumably be in Band A under urgent medical needs anyway?

band d needs looking at as if someone has been made homeless by another local housing authority i do not see why we should have to house them at all

Members should not allow the Government to put pressure upon those in accommodation with under utilised bedrooms to take in immigrants or the homeless. Members should expand any scheme that allows existing tenants to move to accommodation with fewer bedrooms, previous schemes paid the elderly £500 to move out of family accommodation to single bed roomed units.

Neither agree or disagree

Having been on the list for over 13 years, and with 3 children in a single bedroom (one Autistic, and one over 16), we believe we should be in a Band higher than C. However that is where we are placed. If the changes move us up then good, but looking at the information this doesn't look likely.

This is just playing with numbers as you well know. you will still have x amount of property and y number of applicants. All this will achieve is to move a large number of people into the lower bands. The end result will be that people in bands C and D will still have little or no prospect of being housed. the council has just increased it's ability to juggle. For example, "management transfer" is a totally neutral exercise so band A is actually just "urgent medical need" And how come "homeless" is not in Band A ? you can't get much more urgent than that !

There does not seem to be a mention of people who struggle financially to pay private rental costs. I have lived in Thanet for 31 of my 39 years and due to a disability which is not recognised by the benefits system, my family have to spend all available income on living costs. Very wrong I think

A start would telling some of the fifteen year old girls round here who deliberately get themselves pregnant to get a flat and all expenses paid for by we hard pressed tax payers that it is their responsibility and not ours.

im not sure how to answer this as i have been on the council housing for 14 years and if i agree i could go down the list as i live in a 2 bed flat with 3 children who are now teenagers and we struggle every day and i have lived in thanet my whole life it would be unfair for me to be put down the list after 14 years

Management transfers should be given only in very serious circumstances. Medical should be a priority Homeless by another authority stop them coming to Thanet. Peoples incomes need to be taken into consideration Im 60 live off a tiny private pension and have small hsg benefit I got told to move, how the hell can I up and move at 60, Ive no husband or kids and Im not living in a sub standard accommodation either.

Need to study this more - haven't got enough time now.

How can you define a person making themselves intentionally homeless? Each persons situation is very different & of course there are those that want to play the system but there are also those that try hard to but simply are unable to manage.

There does not appear to be any reference to people moving on from supported housing. If these households are not given sufficient priority on the housing register there may be lack of throughput in supported housing, negatively impacting the availability of such services to the district.

The assessment of the banding should be done more often by an independent body not on paper by form filling.

I don't agree with the Band D, as you have stated that you have to have lived in Thanet for 3 years to qualify for housing, but you have put that people who are homeless by another local authority will be able to apply and go on the housing register in Band D. How does this work? You have also put into the Band D group people who have made themselves intentionally homeless? they have obviously caused a problem whereby their Landlord has had to go through the trouble of getting them out of their property, yet you are rewarding these people with housing.

Disagree

People who are unintentionally homeless surely should be of higher priority than C. Surely those that are homeless from other authority areas wouldn't qualify for housing here as they are from outside Thanet. Seems contradictory.

I would like to see a policy that rewards those who have an excellent record in terms of payment of rent etc and who have maintained and even improved their accommodation. New or more desirable accommodation within the District should be allocated to those that have earned it. Social housing should be a ladder of opportunity not a lottery. To my mind it is scandalous that a newly arrived immigrant family can be allocated a very desirable property. This creates envy and a sense of injustice.

Band C 2) should be in Band B

People who are homeless or who need to move because of disability should be in a higher band. Also how is the criteria between unsatisfactory and very unsatisfactory made? Who makes these decisions?

Strongly Disagree

No changes made to facilitate current tenants mobility unless they have a spare bedroom.

Band D also contains Transfer Applications that do not have reasonable preference which means absolutely no chance have getting a move although we may be good , paying tenants with no ASB just wanting to move from a bad area to better our circumstances. Many probably like myself that were not given an option with choice based lettings and were put in this situation in the "take it or leave it" days.

There is no consideration for Young People who are looked after by the local authority who are already significantly disadvantaged. If this group are not considered as priority within bands A & B there will be a demonstrable increase in homelessness as the supported accommodation and local authority responsibility for supporting these young people ceases at 21.

I think each application should be taken on its own merit as everyone's circumstances are different and affect people differently and should then just be put in a set order on one list. Also in order of applying.

I feel that with applicants being placed into band C when they are homeless will mean that it will take longer to be rehoused. Even though applicants that are homeless are in need of housing ASAP.

Where are the provisions for victims of domestic abuse? Is this no longer a priority for the Council?

Band B serious housing need include those living in supported housing and needs to move as the support is no longer required. Will this apply to all clients living in the refuge who are being part funded by supporting people? Other allocations policies, including Kent policies, use a different assessment criteria for those suffering Domestic Abuse and, if appropriate, place clients in band A. Why the discrepancy within the Kent area alone? While appendix A suggests that a management transfer is an option for those suffering violence, living in social housing, as previously stated, historically this has rarely been an option for TDC clients. This is clearly not though an option for those not renting social housing. I fail to understand how being homeless can take less priority than any of those highlighted in band B. Over or undercrowding and those in the armed forces cannot reasonably be in a higher priority than those that are homeless surely.

Armed Forces personnel who have lived in Thanet for three years before being in the Forces should be top Band A, I would like to say I have no family in the Forces.

7. Armed Forces Forces

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce specific guidance around housing allocation for Armed Forces personnel?

71 (39.9%) *Strongly agree*

46 (25.8%) *Agree*

39 (21.9%) *Neither agree nor disagree*

10 (5.6%) *Disagree*

11 (6.2%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

33 (18.5%)

Strongly Agree

I agree with this it's about time the Army arrived in Thanet! However this policy should be for NCO's and other ranks. Officers should pay their own way.

Before my ex husband and myself came out of the army, we were allocated a council property in Margate, it was a relief to know we had somewhere to live, especially with all the other worries we had to face in civvy street, we were 22 years living army life, and was not prepared enough for civvy life. But that's another story

When i came back from military service I was informed that you did not have a military housing officer and informed that TDC did not need one. Due to your lack of understanding my and my partners needs, we were forced into renting in public sector. I now have a home where the landlord makes no repairs and has not done so for a year. We've been in accommodation where the heating has never worked and the landlord point blank to make repairs. My medical condition has now worsened as has my mental state.

as long as they have strong links to the area and have served the minimum four years. Priority should be given to those injured in combat. Perhaps band A.

Thanet should have done this long ago.

Armed Forces are having to deal with a lot of stress without the worry of housing allocations. So I think they should be given help in this area without discrimination.

See comment 6

We were ex army when we ended our tour. We were offered accomodation strait away. If it were not for TDC we would have been on the streets with a child.

Good to see the Council supporting service personnel and their families. Excellent example to set others.

Forces personnel should always have priority when it comes to housing needs

help our heroes they deserve it

Armed forces should receive additional priority as they make a huge contribution to the country.

Armed Forces should get additional priority for housing for their contribution to the country.

Armed Forces personnel who have lived in Thanet for three years before being in the Forces should be top Band A, I would like to say I have no family in the Forces.

Agree

are the armed forces discriminated against ? , the 3 year resident criteria should still apply For any injured personnel.

Armed forces personnel should not be discriminated against especially if they have family in the area

If the personnel are from Thanet, then they should have priority in Thanet, if not, the priority should be given by the Authority where they have a connection. Also priority should be awarded to those, for example, who have served on the frontline/served for 12 months or more. Just simply serving at some stage in some area should not give priority to any authority (Thanet)

Neither agree or disagree

Savings and investments should be used first in part where ever they come from.

I don't know enough personally to comment....

they should be treated the same as anyone applying for housing

Disagree

Tough one - i know that people are fighting for our country but surely the army should help these people not the council?

I am not sure about the justification for prioritising Armed Forces personnel above other deserving categories. Also, does that mean only Armed Forces personnel who have a local connection?

Whilst I think that Armed Forces personnel do an outstanding job, so do our police officers, doctors, nurses, and firemen. Should we therefore give priority just to Armed Forces personnel? I think on balance perhaps that should be removed. Clearly if the memner of the armed forces personnel have been disabled out of the service, then they will presumably be in Band A under urgent medical needs anyway?

I think the armed forces should house their own personnel.

I strongly respect and value the armed forces personnel. However, these men and women come from a home town or village, a family area, a place where they grew up and where their family and friends are. There is no logical reason why the residential criteria should not be applied, except of course that we must get rid of the 3 year nonsense which they clearly cannot satisfy. Yes, they should get help and their contribution to their country must be recognised. We should ensure that they get "fair access to housing" but it should still be in the area that they call home.

Strongly Disagree

This group should be treated the same as anyone else

i strongly disagree as im sure these make enough money over 16000 a year to be able to rent or buy

Why the special treatment? Were they being discriminated against?

I can see no reason why they get special attention, after all these people volunteer for the forces, not like after the second world war when people who had been called up forcibly came home.

I strongly disagree that members of the Armed Forces should be in Band B. they should have to meet the residential criteria rather than being placed directly into Band B. they should also be assessed regarding their financial situation the same as everyone else.

Why is this group being given a specific dispensation? Why not also local nurses, doctors etc?

Those made homeless because they are not able to continue their work in the armed forces need to be prioritised because they may be homeless, not because of their job or lack of it. We have many men and women who serve their country, such as police and medical staff, they are not afforded the same consideration. Applications need to be processed based on the level of need, Those who have lost their homes due to being medically discharged should surely be prioritised over those who have ended their tour or duty as predicted years before. They have had the time and opportunity to save and plan ahead for the future.

8. Former and current rent arrears

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce tighter guidelines on former and current rent arrears?

124 (69.7%) *Strongly agree*
32 (18.0%) *Agree*
11 (6.2%) *Neither agree nor disagree*
6 (3.4%) *Disagree*
3 (1.7%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

35 (19.7%)

Strongly Agree

If I miss a payment on my council tax the council will send the bailiffs after me. Why should they be any different?

Taking responsibility for our actions is something the majority do. Hopefully this proposal will deter those who feel there is always someone out there to sort out their mess but at the same time help those genuinely in trouble.

It's a ridiculous situation where debts have no consequences, unlike in the real world.

Increase rent arrears until rent arrears are cleared.

I am able to pay my rent and have always paid my rent. I fail to see why someone who refuses to pay and gets into arrears with their rent should be given housing!

Why should people who are in debt to the council have a home provided to them? There are lots of people who require social housing, but perhaps can't get one because these people with arrears are on a higher housing scale. Some people really appreciate that they have a home and never get into arrears.

Should this include deposit/bond debts. At present no responsibility is taken by the applicant & debts are accruing in their name, that they should still be responsible for.

Debts should not be written off and people should pay rent arrears back from their benefits automatically

We must ensure that our fellow resident accept responsibility for their actions and if they do not or have previously not paid their rent then that should be taken into consideration on all future applications. I would suggest that all former tenant arrears must have been cleared prior to an applicant being accepted onto the housing list.

The council have a duty to everyone to ensure that everyone pays what is due. Affordable housing is just that so not any excuse to get into arrears.

As I outlined in my comments for proposal 3, it is so important that those tenants who owe money, must be encouraged to budget their monies and spend it more appropriately.

as long as it is proved not their fault.

People with rent arrears should not be able to move until the arrears have been repaid.

Tighter guidelines should ensure support is given early on to nip any problems in the bud, thereby hopefully preventing higher debts, which will be of benefit to both applicants and council.

don't pay your way, don't get anything back is my view. Make people responsible for the choices they make, paying for fags, booze and staffordshire terriers isn't more important than keeping a roof over your head.

So pleasing to see that finally, people will be made accountable for their actions. Housing those with a history of rent arrears and non-payment only pushes the Council's debts up creating an unnecessary burden on the Council's resources and rule abiding tenants who pay every month. Hopefully people will start to learn that if you don't pay your way and prioritise other things over paying your rent that you will lose your home or right to access to social housing. It wouldn't be acceptable in the private sector! Also good to see unacceptable behaviour being addressed through these sanctions. Finally, some accountability!

This depends on whether the applicant has consistently refused to manage their affairs and if by paying back what they owe will keep them behind and unable to pay in the future. every effort should be made to ensure that accrued debts are paid within as short a time as possible and not moving just to avoid their obligations

Everyone else has to pay their way and pay their debts. As I've said already - too many people in this area think they deserve everything for free and get away with not paying their debts. We need to free up money to help those who truly need it, who find themselves suddenly in trouble because of ill health / family bereavement / redundancy etc.

Why should people who have not paid their rent previously have the same rights to housing as people who make the effort and pay their bills.

Agree

The council has a duty to ensure that they are able to collect monies owed, providing this does not place those who owe the money in a situation that would be detrimental to their well being.

A tougher line should also be taken upon tenants who do not look after the decor or gardens of their accommodation.

The system of informing tenants of their housing benefit and how much they need to pay needs to be set out clearer, that way those who owe money in arrears will have a better understanding of how much they actually owe. The amount of paper work and calculations that are sent out now are very confusing and not clear, especially to those with learning problems or the elderly.

to be applied with compassion but not softly so taken advantage

Agree with appropriate support

Neither agree or disagree

YOU CAN TIGHTEN GUIDELINES BUT IT STILL DOES NOT MEAN IT WILL SOLVE DEBT IT WILL JUST CAUSE MORE CONFUSION TOO MUCH IS HAPPENING TOO SOON AND A LOT OF PEOPLE DO NOT UNDERSTAND ANY OF IT ALSO ITS THE GENUINE PEOPLE THAT ALWAYS GET TARGETTED NOT THE ONES WHO DELIBERATELY GET THEMSELVES INTO DEBT

i think if its a small amount then evicting them is wrong cos everyone is struggling in this economy but if were talking thousands then yes

Disagree

There is a need to recognise that some Young People who are formerly looked after by the local authority are at high risk of being disadvantaged if their developmental delay impacts on their capacity to manage - there is a need to have specific policy aimed at engaging with the Young Person and their support network to negotiate in this area rather than disadvantage them further

Peoples incomes need to be taken into consideration Im 60 live off a small private pension retired have no husband or kids, I cant afford all the costs to move it cost me 7000 when I moved from London to Thanet 3 years ago, I dont have the money now Im lucky to have the heating on and get food let alone move to smaller units Im in a 1 bed flat got no rent arrears.

Debtors should not be able to escape payment by moving.

maybe if have outstanding arrears but unfair to penalise former arrears as everybody can get behind from time to time

This should not be given priority over the needs of the client

Strongly Disagree

Rent arrears should be look at and consideration taken into account. rent arrears are not always the applicants fault sometimes it is circumstances that are beyond the applicants control that cause rent arrears. every case should be looked at rather than a blanket policy

Those with Rent arrears and former tenancy debts may be deemed ineligible for housing on the housing register. Financial abuse is as much an issue for those suffering DA as physical abuse and this offers no opportunity for clients who are now in control of their own finances to be accepted on the housing register. Owner occupiers may, unless there is a substantial reason to move, will not be considered on the housing register. Does DA offer a substantial reason? Under the new Legal aid guidelines, funding for the application of Injunctions is less likely. The criteria for funding is far stricter, requiring specific proof of DA, excluding many from the right to apply. When the sale of a property is dependent on the cooperation of the perpetrator, it is likely that the sale will be jeopardised making the client homeless for prolonged periods of time. This is particularly unfair when the proceeds of the sale of the house may not secure further accomodation.

9. Savings and Assets

How strongly do you either agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce restrictions on income, savings and assets?

105 (59.0%)	<i>Strongly agree</i>
39 (21.9%)	<i>Agree</i>
14 (7.9%)	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>

11 (6.2%) *Disagree*

6 (3.4%) *Strongly disagree*

Any other comments - you have space to provide a response of up to 1,000 characters

39 (21.9%)

Strongly Agree

Social housing should be for those who need it most, and those who earn or possess assets in excess of 16,000 should, all things considered, be eligible to rent privately.

If you can pay for your own accommodation you should so. Don't expect the tax payer to fund your lifestyle.

As there aren't enough houses to go round I think this is important. Social housing should only ever be a temporary safety net and people need to move on. This will release housing continuously.

Oh absolutely. Why on earth would anyone with any decent income want to live in a Council House? They should be there for those of us who cannot afford decent housing.

we need to ensure: - people don't own other properties - receive income from other sources that aren't taxed e.g. fostering - what happens when circumstances change over time as people move into employment or gain savings

This seems to be common sense. Social Housing is clearly for those in most need. If applicants have savings, income or assets then they should seek housing in the private sector.

Social housing should be for people in genuine need. There are lots of schemes available if you have capital, homebuy ect. And can afford local rents with that income

Housing should be for the poorest.

i think the cap should be lower around £8,000

I think the cap is an excellent proposal, however i feel that 16,000 is still very high bearing in mind that with a 10% deposit on a mortgage that would mean that the applicant could potentially purchase a mortgage for 160,000. Could this not be lowered further? Also i think the salary cap is again too high, could this not be lowered? The higher rate tax band is for those earning 35,000+ so if you earn 34,000 (well above the national average) you can apply for a council house. Could this not be done on individual circumstances? As i would have thought an individual with no dependants who earns 20,000 per year would have enough of an income to afford to privately rent a house and therefore not need the authorities help.

There are a lot of people in Social Housing who are very well off, able to run two cars etc. This is grossly unfair to those in genuine need sitting on the list who can't get anything. There are also lots of people living in houses too big for them. They should be automatically moved.

If you can afford savings or have a good job, buy a house or rent privately, leave affordable rents for those on low pay.

Too many people are housed in council/housing assoc when they could easily afford to rent or buy in the private sector

I think the cap on assets should be much lower.

Would be good to see a stop to right to buy or at the very least people having to pay the market rate for their properties rather than enjoying unacceptable discounts that those in the private sector wouldn't.

I agree if people who earn a decent wage that would allow them to buy or pay a decent rent should do so. Be careful of pensioners who may have £16,000 or more in the bank as they are living longer and need a nest egg to pay for replacing goods and providing for their funeral. Living from 65 to 85 years, £16,000 is not a great amount to cover 20 years.

people I know who work cannot afford to get on the property ladder and also do not have savings anywhere near £16,000. These same people - if they had saved enough, wouldn't dream of applying for housing anyway as they would have too much pride for that so why should anyone else? I think it's bad enough that people earning upwards of £50k a year can claim benefits for children they have. Again, this country needs to be reminded that social housing / social funding is limited and should only be for those who need genuine help. Something like this would be a start to sorting out a big issue in this area - which is people sitting pretty in council houses they were awarded as young people on the dole with babies, who now have older children and are 2 working parents - but still reside in a rent controlled council house! If both parents are now working then they need to go private, not fill their council house parking spaces with new cars, their council house lounges with large screen tv's and their council house bedrooms with laptops and tv's for each child!

People who have the means to comfortably rent privately should not have access to social housing.

Seems to be mere common sense, like most of these proposals - who could possibly object? Ignore the bleatings of the do-gooders and install a fair and sensible system.

Agree

Where any existing tenant is proved to be an high earner or win or inherit a large sum of money he/she should be given time to move out. In all cases the needs of children must be considered, for example, finding suitable accommodation close to existing schools.

If you become aware of an existing tenant who has won a lot of money or are in the higher tax bracket you should consider all their housing/health needs before requiring them to move.

If you become aware of an existing tenant who has won a lot of money or are in the higher tax bracket you should consider all their housing/health needs before requiring them to move.

Older people who perhaps have savings but need warden control/supported living, shouldn't be excluded.

I agree in part, as I feel £16,000 is a very low figure, as when you think it won't even buy a car now days, £30,000 would be a more realistic amount,

I was very happy to have a council property for approx two years. It gave me the chance to save up for a deposit and buy my own home. However, I don't think people should be penalised for working. I don't think adult only families (not pensioners) who have not yet contributed via work to the local community should get priority. In fact I think families who do work but are on low incomes should be placed ahead of those who have been on long term benefits (except for those on long term disability benefits).

Does anybody earning £40,000 a year really need social housing?

savings should be taken into account in some cases but again every case needs to be assessed. applicants that are in a higher tax bracket should not be offered social housing.

Neither agree or disagree

I think there should be a restriction but care should be taken in some circumstances such as a break up of a marriage/partnership where one person may have assets over the cap rate but the other person may need housing and not have much in the way of finances or assets.

I don't agree with the saving part of this proposal. £16,000 is not a lot and people may have cut back on other things in order to save for a child to go to uni' funeral costs, family weddings etc while others just spend everything they get and expect the state/council to pay out all the benefits etc. I do agree if someone is earning about the 40% tax bracket they should not be placed on the register

Disagree

Its not just about money it can be situation especially in this situation of being in need of housing there are other factors to consider like guarantors needed money up front debt

The proposal for higher rate tax payers makes sense. To bar people with assets of £16000 is stupid and just shows how far removed our leaders are from real life. £16000 will go nowhere today. For the average family on no benefits it would maybe last about 8 months. I think the principle is a good one but the figure is too low.

no clarity on what will happen if the person has assets over £16k, but does not have income and their assets fall below £16k... higher rate tax payer through regular income, not one time event, and for two or more years out of 3 - if would be unfair to move a person out if one good years income pushes them to the higher rate band. But there is no reason why not to charge such a person a higher rent for the period whilst a higher rate tax payer also take into consideration household size

£16,000 savings isn't much. Higher limit.

not everyone's got the money to live in other types of accommodation. I had to rent off a private landlord because I'm retired I had to put 5000 up front and all these landlords are the same they won't have you unless you're working. I moved to Thanet for a better quality of life, where I lived in Greater London there was nothing but Anti Social Behaviour

I agree with this in principle, however there will always be clients who, due to domestic abuse, have moneys in their name, that they are unable to access because they are in joint names. As per the previous question, access to these funds may take years to access through the judicial process

Strongly Disagree

EITHER YOU WANT TENANTS TO HAVE NO DEBTS SO DOES IT MATTER WHAT THEY HAVE. THEY JUST MOST PROBABLY VERY CAREFUL WITH THEIR MONEY SO WHY SHOULD THEY SUFFER FOR SHIRKERS

Although somebody may be on a good wage, that doesn't necessarily mean they have that wage to budget every month. They may have debts or bills to pay e.g for a parent in care. Therefore I believe the wage should be higher than that, approximately £25,000 a year.

this is the same old story...if youve been bought up to take control of your own life and saved by working for the full 45yrs of your life then your not entitled to anything...people with savings over £16000 should have the same rights as people who just dont bother saving and expect everybody else to keep them in housing and benifits

Some housing and areas can still be unaffordable and cause debt to occur and eviction to take place. There needs to be a cap on private housing benefit to prevent people falling in to debt.

10. Other Comments

In all cases the needs of children must be put first.

The Council and its partners should return to the requirement that tenants should maintain their decor and gardens. Assistance should only be given to those elderly infirm, with special needs. Those who do not comply will sadly have to be advised that they could be moved on.

The Council and its partners should return to the requirement that tenants should maintain their decor and gardens. Assistance should only be given to those elderly infirm, with special needs. Those who do not comply will sadly have to be advised that they could be moved on.

Reading through your suggested policy changes it sounds like your aiming the changes aat locals on benefits with no chance of anyone else gaining a slight chance of a house

The checking of applicants should not be affected by social workers and charity organisations and prison bodies. Every property not occupied full time by the applicant must be taken back into the system.

Whilst I understand that there is greater demand than Thanet can accommodate, this new policy with further marginalise some of the most vulnerable clients in our community and will increase street homelessness and subsequent social problems in Thanet. If this were being introduced alongside other measures to build and buy more housing stock and to cap rent increases in the private sector it would not be as harmful as this policy clearly will be.

ive been bidding on the council register for nearly 3 years and I still havent got anywhere ive 4 children in a small crowded room but people with less children get housed bfore me I think the council need to prioritise whom they house and house the people who need it like me but the council wont listen

I feel that you need to either of been in thanet all your life or atleast a min of 3 years before being entitled to be housed in the area

I feel that these proposals begin to penalise those who have abused the social housing system in the past and to prevent an inflow from outside the District. Why not reward good existing tenants with better housing in terms of location and type of property? The biggest scandal in social housing is the allocation of housing to unmarried/unsupported young mothers. All single mothers under 23 years of age should be housed in Group homes. If they are cause of overcrowding in the parental home they should be expected to move to such accommodation or into the private sector and the parents should not be allocated a larger home because they are sheltering adult children of either sex.

I feel that this is a good idea and should be done

be 5 years minimum in the area or very strong links with priority to low income families but where they are working or only been on benefits for a short while. I do not think people who have recently arrived in the area should take priority over those with strong links to Thanet. I would like to see a system similar to the one I had for the short time I lived in Bromley. They gave you 10000 back in 1990 if you gave up your council home to buy your first house. It meant we could return to Thanet (where I had lived since the age of 4) and had money towards a deposit and fees. It was only if you actually bought the home and it was paid to your solicitor. I would also like to see a scheme where money is paid for people to down size their home perhaps 1000 plus removal costs when they have extra bedrooms. Also something for the pensioners. I would suggest give up your flat and move to more supportive/sheltered accomodation again 1000 plus removals. These schemes would help release more housing. I would also like to see more social housing for the single under 25s which is very hard to find without a guarantor. Even decent flatlets would be ideal perhaps from old buildings that are currently stood empty and could be purchased by the council.

Having been a council tenant for 16 years and on the transfer list for 10 years now. I do not feel that the new allocation policy does anything to help people such as myself desperate to move from an unpleasant area stuck in category D. The localism act addresses support for mobility of existing tenants and I do not feel that this allocation policy reflects that at all. Surely if transfers are included in the numbers of the housing register actioning more of these will reduce the list quicker as there is still a property to let at the end of a transfer. There is no consideration for good tenants, who look after their property, pay their rent on time, every time with a proven track record of good behaviour. Decent existing customers will be forgotten at the bottom of the list as they have been for so long already. Karen Ashington

I feel it is going to be harder to be housed in Thanet. It will also be harder for tenants to apply for a transfer. The bedroom tax only affects tenants under the age of 60. If tenants are not using all the bedrooms in their tenancy they should be offered smaller properties that will release more homes for applicants on the waiting list.

No good telling the public to move. A lot of people like myself are retired at 60 and don't have the money. I can't get a job at my age. I'm too old. The firms won't employ you and there's no work about in Thanet either. I live in private accommodation by the time I pay out I've got 60 to live off for the month. Who's going to pay all my moving fees and put 5000 up front for a private landlord again. The housing benefit people really need to do a lot more research and stop telling the public to move home. It's not an option in this current economic climate.

I think it will lead to areas in the community where nobody will want to go if the council housing is only available to low income families

Working at a women's refuge I am very aware how the new allocations policy may affect women looking to be housed in the local area. I believe you cannot have a black and white blanket policy and in the long run this will only increase homelessness and social problems.

has been being stated that those making a homeless application, will be considered under a different section of the act. However under present policy, those found homeless are placed on the housing register and able to bid on properties, how does this differ under the new allocations policy? It would seem that those homeless due to domestic abuse will now also be in band C, where they may have previously been in band A, making the time in temporary accommodation longer. The policy states that an offer of suitable accommodation in the private sector would discharge the duty to those that are homeless. Would this offer be the offer of the bond scheme? The availability of a crisis loan to support the 4 weeks rent in advance is becoming rare and is likely to be even rarer with the changes to the benefit system. Therefore the bond scheme is becoming less of an option. References and guarantors are also requested and again pose huge problems for many fleeing DV. What therefore an option for those suffering violence, living in social housing, as previously stated, historically this has rarely been an option for TDC clients. This is clearly not though an option for those not renting social housing.

Please use this space to provide any further comments or ...

There is no recognition within the draft policy that considers how Young People who were formerly looked after by the Local Authority will not be additionally disadvantaged by the proposed changes

Our main concern is how the local connection requirements will impact on residents of supported housing who may well have originated from outside of Thanet, and not been resident in the district for 3 years or more, particularly in the case of domestic abuse and offenders who may not be able to return to their originating area. Additionally, it is not detailed which level of priority people moving on from supported housing will be granted, which could lead to lack of throughput and poor use of supported housing resources in Thanet.

I think after waiting for 3 years & bidding every fortnight & being 1st bidder in every property you need to give a little more feedback instead of keep writing not in the first 20, I am always in the 1st 20 & you never prioritise me & never give me any decent feedback, I've seen the kind of provoke that are taking the homes that I'm bidding on & very rarely are they decent or English, think you need to give decent feedback to loyal people, you seem to just give houses to foreigners that don't work, why is that?

More emphasis should be placed on compulsory buying from absent landlords of empty/derelict properties. Any developments agreed with Housing Association etc should be for local people first. Consideration should also be given to the impact on the local area and thought given to adequate roads/transport/shops/schooling doctors and NHS dentists etc. Also provision for community centres and young people to keep them from getting into trouble. Little thought seems given to infrastructure or the impact of extra population on existing services and little or no thought for increasing GP's, dentists, patients or local hospital admissions. Please try and keep the open land farmland and the few trees we have left in Thanet. Also keep any crooks, drug addicts and troublemakers out of Thanet we do not have enough resources to cope.

More needs to be done to ensure the tenants once housed are keeping up with their contract agreement, very much like spot checks on the home or even on any benefits that are being claimed for, this would stop or even detract some families of committing fraud. Also there needs to be put in place a system where non-smoking families are not put into residential housing blocks next to those who smoke, it is still a health issue as smoke and its harmful substances are lingering about the air, even when the doors are closed.

my only argument is that you believe if one ,say of a married couple is working, then they can afford private renting, possibly so, claiming council tax and housing benefit ok.we are on the council list, and we would like a place where we can settle down and not have to move every 6 months or so, due to the owner selling up, i am 62 this year, my husband is 51 this year,we both are on medication,which is obviously keeping us alive,otherwise we wouldnt be taking it.so we dont need the stress of having to up sticks and move about. also we are not snobs, but there is a lot of anti social behaviour on many of the council estates, which i agree should be looked into ,and should be changed, they shoul be moved out, let them suffer like they have made the estates suffer. it would be nice to hear people say that is a nice council estate instead of the normal, no you dont want a move there, or buy a property there, and thats what we hear all the time I think it is about time and as a local resident who has lived here my whole life i strongly agree to this policy.

I am against the prospect of applications made by those outside of Thanet being declined. I think all applications should be looked into and considered on the basis of circumstances.

Nice to be asked an opinion. Hope it gets read and discussed and not just binned.

Some good ideas and it is a start. We tax payers are fed up with being taken for a ride by those who refuse to take responsibility for their 'lifestyle' choices.

Would like to see more updated information so customer can see progression and expectation of the bidding. Personalcontact at least once a year whilst on the list and hopes for allocation. I have been on list since 2007 with no contact or update of expectation.

I'm so pleased that the council has started to tackle the current grossly unfair system for allocating the scarce resources. It will make it much more difficult to abuse the provision of social housing and more people should be able to benefit.

feel that the changes will be very welcome in my eyes, because there are far too many people that know how to work the system ie; youngsters having babies and staying with mum and then they plead over crowding so they get re-housed and immigrants come into the area and plead they dont understand and then they have the support from representatives who also work the system to fight there corner so they are also housed quicker? so i feel that if a youngster is mature enough to have a baby then they can stand on their own two feet for a while and i feel that they should also wait 3years before they are housed becuse it is only then a baby really needs more space and immigrants should also wait there turn just as anyone else. Because i was a single mum at 29 and i was made homeless twice and i didnt have the help from family TO house me and i didnt get re-housed and was forced to find private housing?? and have been struggling ever since i have been on the waiting list for 7 years hoping i will be given a break in life and have an opportunity to life in affordable housing.

PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN IN PRISON FOR ASSAULT/VIOLENT CRIMES SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN COUNCIL HOMES.

Ive heard that when a property has been bidden on and the budding being closed thst the first 5 people with priority have the chance to have the property and if no one wants it then it goes back on for bidfing why is this? Is this true?

The policy needs to provide more shorter term tenancies for people so that they don't get a council home for life. You end up with older people living in family homes for years and years with no homes for people who need them. Please please look at offering more shorter term tenancies that help people for a shorter period of time such as 2-5 years. This means people can have their tenancy renewed if needed but people move on/out if they can. This could be a step up into buying a home and link in to the right to buy. Also please look at people 'who take advantage of the system' and kick their children out at 16 and they become homeless or have a baby to get higher points.

about changes in circumstances e.g. an applicant is on Benfeit when housed but subsequently enters paid employment? If they are earning a reasonable salary (above a certain threshold), should they continue to be entitled to social housing or should that be freed up for someone in more need. Essentially, should a council house be for life or only a stepping stone into the private housing market? Should tenancies be for fixed terms e.g. three to five years with the expectation that tenants should be moving on to the private sector once their circumstances improve?

Whilst it is almost certainly outside of your powers, I am opposed to the Right to Buy. I see no sense in selling off social housing stock when we have so little. Tenants benefit from subsidised rent below what they would pay in the private sector. Why should they then be able to buy the property at a discount? We already have insufficient housing stock, and accordingly it makes no sense to sell it off. Otherwise, I am almost wholly supportive of your proposals which I congratulate you for putting forward. Well done!

The current system is totally unfair to local families. Thanet will continue to spiral into poverty all the time the rest of the UK use it as a dumping ground. Without the option of automatic housing I believe that this will slow the growth of our problems. I know so many people like born here, raised our children here and get no support from our council when our need is genuinely high! I have watched brand affordable houses being wrecked by people walk into refuges, drug rehabs and into homes... And they haven't lived or contributed in any way to the local economy. where Thanet district council is concerned charity really should begin at home.... And there area will once again be great...

Brilliant Plan

Believe that people should only be in social housing whilst they are in need of it. Once they are able to afford private housing they should be moved on to allow the social housing to be available to more people. Rents should also be in line with private housing to discourage people from wanting to be in social housing purely for the lower rent.

a lot more help and advice should be given when applying for housing. and the housing team should be trained to treat everybody like they're all non working people on benefits.

There should be five year tenancies, as people's situations do change,(family size and income) and certainly no life tenancies which I understand is the case at present.

is now empowered to give some preference to applicants who are of working age and working or even volunteering in the community. That would ensure that we get a mix of tenants truly reflecting the population mix. This might improve estate environment and help reduce ASB. Circumstances change throughout life and TDC should take this into consideration to ensure recycling of housing - a precious commodity. Will there be various sorts of tenancy agreement? Are tenancies a mixture of short and long-term with specified review periods enabling TDC to reduce expectations of a "subsidised house for life"? If not, can TDC justify why tenants may have this preferred status at public expense for life? Family homes should have fixed-term agreements and regular review dates to ensure that new families can be placed in them, avoiding under-occupation in the future. High rise units should be carefully allocated to improve mix of tenants - but ensuring those with physical disabilities are not unsuitably housed there. Short-term tenancies for younger working people may be the answer here. Does the policy allow for this? Tackle antisocial behaviour better, it's a nightmare currently living with this kind of behaviour from the flat above. You also need to make better regulations for private sector landlords, such as repairs etc. I was forced into private housing and for the last year have battled with the landlords agents to make repairs but nothing has been done at all.

i think that O.A.P.S who are living in bedsits paying topup need more help in securing a home to live in

Its a shame the document does not reward those people who are working in this community. People who receive benefits, have their rent paid for them, and the government states how much they can live on. Those people who work hard and usually with 2 jobs as most of the jobs in this area are only part time, have difficulty in keeping up with their rent and bills, but manage, we have all spent money on our properties to make them our homes, only to receive our NTQ, then having to move out and find somewhere new to live again, plus keep the family together, and holding down a job

I think it is about time that restrictions were put on people who want and have social housing. They/we are lucky to have these properties which are maintained and affordable.

There needs to be a change as My Family have been on housing list Band D for 4 years and bid every time and never get a chance

Well done Thanet Council, you finally managed to pull your thumbs out of your collective arses and introduce decent policy for a change.

I found it helpful to complete this questionnaire as when i was telephoned to inform me my change in circumstances would make no difference to finding a home and almost certainly my band would not change and to rent in the private sector.i understand there is a large waiting list but i don't feel there was a need to be so cold and blunt i was upset for several days afterwards.

I think it is fair and takes action on people that behave badly or don't pay there way. there aren't many council houses left so they should go to people that really need them, not people that want them because theyare cheap and get maintained better than private rented places. Difficult times, right way to deal with them.

We are currently in a 3 bed property with stairs. Neither of us can now use stairs so the space upstairs is un used. We are worried that even though we are looking for a smaller place we would still be penalized by the bedroom tax. We know properties are well sought after but we are trying to do the right thing by leaving this place so a family can have it.

personally i think if you have rent arrears then you shouldnt get allocated another place till you have paid up,the changes to the banding dosnt matter as it dosnt mean a thing the truth be told i,e if you live else where in the country or further afield all you have to do is show up at the council office and you get a place befor people that have lived here all there lives one thing the council does need to do is put there residents first and all the houses that are borded up sort them out as there are too many in thanet that could be used that arnt

It with some thankfulness that the council has taken the oportunity to make theses changes. I'm concerned though, that immigrants from Eastern Europe who arrive here and cost the council a great deal in Housing benefit and maternity services, as well as taking up places in schools, will continue to do so.

I am pleased that TDC is at last addressing the ridiculous situation we have nationwide of over reliance on social housing, the ridiculous expectation that the council provides housing to all, and those who choose to produce child after child need to consider the consequences of their own actions and not expect the Council to give them larger accommodation. Perhaps they might think, do I earn enough to have another child, rather than what more can I get out the system if I have another child. Well done!

A sensible, fair and realistic approach to the environment we are now in. It is a shame this approach wasn't taken a few years ago.

Consult with OT's to ensure adapted properties are sensibly allocated and avoid theb wasteful practice of taking out expensive adaptations. Maintain a register od adapted properties.

A good move.

yes i believe people under 30 should be looked at more as these type of people can be the worse for loud music and late night party's and also drug and drink use to much of and i think thanet council needs to do more checks before willing to house people do checks like orbit does.if not check other council in the uk where they have set up a sister business where they own the stock but trade as a housing association it can be done i have done some research and aylesbury vale council as done that and they have hardly any trouble,

I also think that people who have more bedrooms than they actually need ie a couple whos family have now left home should be required to move within a specific timescale. There should be no 'rights' to stay in a three/four bedroomed property when there are only two of you or a single person.

an excellent set of new policy measures!

A very sensible piece of proposed legislation if it is enforced properly and maintained.

I think the whole 'shake up' is just what we need for you to be able to manage OUR Thanet Council better

The needs of children of school age should be the first consideration

parents both moved to Thanet in the 50's and 60's as it was the English Riviera and the place to be. It horrifies them that it has become what it has and that their children have been left to deal with a rotting area. Thanet District Council need to lay down the law to people who take this area for a ride, and by this I don't mean just the Thanet residents who take everything for granted - I also mean Kent County Council, various London borough councils who are trying to dump their unemployed residents down here and to an extent the UK Government and courts who are also trying to turn us into an urban grotto. This area deserves more and it's about time Thanet District Council stood up to be counted and a reform such as this one is a good start. If this goes the way it is hoped then maybe next you can start dealing with the increasing number of London visitors to Margate beach who are parking illegally all over the pavements and being abusive to the locals, and who not only are bringing their own food to the area and therefore not actually spending any money in the local shops - but are happily leaving a ton of rubbish on the beaches everyday! I look forward to seeing these proposals being implemented, I think that Thanet Council has finally woken up. I wish you the very best of luck with your proposals, it will be for the good of the Thanet community and Thanet Council that these proposals are implemented.

does not appear as though TDC has made any changes to increase mobility to Transfer Applications, I have been patiently waiting for this allocation policy to see if TDC will take advantage of the recommendations in the Housing Allocation Guidance for local authorities to help Transfer Applicants it appears you have chosen to completely ignore the ones below: "1.6 Transfers at the tenants request, where the authority is satisfied the tenant does not have reasonable preference, do not fall within Part 6 and housing authorities may set their own transfer policies in relation to these tenants. Authorities should consider how to make the best use of this flexibility. Providing tenants with greater opportunities to move within the social sector can help promote social and economic mobility and make the best use of social housing stock." "1.8 Housing authorities may decide to operate a separate allocation system for transferring tenants who are not in the reasonable preference bottom of the list because they do not need an additional bedroom or have an empty one to give up. I don't feel it is an unreasonable request after ten years of waiting to know why this is not enough for a transfer from an awful place!

I am very pleased to see this new mood of realism from our council. It has taken a long time, but this is a step in the right direction. I hope this spirit will spread to all other areas of council work. And I'm very glad that you have consulted the people of Thanet about these proposals - that is the true spirit of democracy, of which we have too little in this country! Well done and keep it up. I do stand with this new policy as I have 3 children living in a small damp flat with no heating and have been on the housing list for 14 yrs stuck on band C

The council should be offering homes to people across the bands, not just those in bands A and B every week. I have been on this list for almost a year and a half, and haven't even come close to obtaining a home. I think it is despicable the way the council offer homes to foreign people, and others whom move into the area suddenly. I have lived in Thanet my entire life, I pay my taxes and bills, and get absolutely nothing in return, especially from the council. Just because they have easy lives driving their Mercedes cars, others, such as myself, struggle with the collapse of our economy, and seek help from those who have life easy. Changes need to be made promptly, before serious repercussions take place.

Private housing - Private landlords need to be stopped from charging high rents - if the council can charge £100 per week so should private landlords instead of charging double. Also help should be provided for the private sector to gain properties easier as guarantors are not always easy to come by or in a position to be a guarantor, this then makes private housing very difficult to obtain also charges fees - deposits and rent in advance also makes finding properties difficult

and very hard to obtain.

The Thanet area is a wonderful place to live and work but we should not keep accepting that other councils from more affluent areas can just dispose of their social housing tenants because they can't afford to pay them housing benefit. We are all losers as we have to suffer the cutbacks the council has to impose because of this. Why are we taking these people from outside the area when there is very limited skilled jobs available, a lack of good school places and other amenities which are important to the social well being of the local residents. We should be promoting Thanet as a place to visit, by providing things such as good hotels, tourist attractions such as a Sea Life Centre or an Ice rink where people will come but go home again. This would encourage spending in the area, provide jobs and give Thanet back its place as a place to visit and enjoy.



Full Equality Impact Analysis

Title of review	Allocations Policy
Service	Housing Services, Community Services
Date of review	May 2013
Date of next review	July 2014
Lead officer, Job Title and Service	Victoria May, Housing Options Manager
Review team	Claire Grant, Business Services
Scope of the analysis	The Housing Options Service manages the housing register and has a statutory obligation to offer housing advice and options. One of the key areas is homeless intervention and prevention. The current Lettings Policy was adopted in October 2004 following publication of Allocations of Accommodation Code of Guidance. There is a statutory obligation for each local housing authority to publish how they will let their homes. The Allocations Policy should have a life of approximately 3-5 years however this is subject to change should there be any further new government policy or legislation.
Beneficiaries	The Allocations Policy is an important operational document that sets out how we will allocate social homes. Nine key areas have been identified to consult on which are the main changes to the document which will affect households on the housing register and new applicants.
Stakeholders	Stakeholders to the Allocations Policy include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents - Council Members - Council Staff - Public Sector Partners (e.g. Police, Kent County Council, Fire & Rescue and NHS) - Housing Associations - Community & Voluntary Organisations - Social tenants
Relevant data and research	Having reviewed the housing register it is at a record high with nearly 6000 households on the housing register of which over 2600 households are on the register with no re-housing need. There are 501 households on the housing register who live outside of the Thanet district.

	<p>Research and data is still emerging of households effected by bedroom tax and welfare changes and it is essential that the housing register has provision to address this issue to ensure accommodation is affordable.</p>
Access complaints	<p>No specific complaints have been received relating to the Draft Allocations Policy.</p>
Engagement	<p>The Allocations Policy has been developed over a number of months by the Housing Options Manager. The implementation of the Localism Act enabled local authorities to have more power in the way social homes are allocated.</p> <p>It was decided to hold member's workshops to obtain views of how they would like to see the policy shaped and written to ensure that potential powers enabled from the Localism Act were explored and key decision were heard to ensure the policy met the housing need within Thanet. These were held on the 25 September, 26 September and 1 October 2012.</p> <p>In addition the Housing Options Team were consulted on including the key messages from the members workshops and these were held on 16 October and 19 October 2012.</p> <p>On 31 October 2012 East Kent Housing were consulted on to ensure the draft document met their needs.</p> <p>SMT were presented with the Allocations Policy on 20 December 2012 and the key changes were discussed.</p> <p>A public consultation is due to run from Friday 25 January to Friday 1 March 2013 to give members of the public an opportunity to comment on the draft Allocations Policy. The consultation will be available to complete online and hard copy surveys will also be available upon request or to collect from local libraries and council offices. The consultation will be promoted through the local press, on the council's website, by posters in key public places and through social media channels. Key stakeholder and partner organisations will be contacted directly to ensure they have an opportunity to comment and to invite them to promote the consultation through their own communication channels to their customers. A link to the online survey will also be published on the Kent Homechoice website to residents currently bidding for a property.</p>
Results of Engagement	<p>The formal consultation has not yet commenced however the feedback and comments received from all workshops have helped to inform priorities for the Allocations policy and requests were made to have these clearly set out upon consultation. They are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed Housing Register - Applicants will be required to meet minimum three years residency criteria to qualify for the housing register. - Exclusion for households who have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour - Additional bedrooms for families with two children of the opposite sex where the eldest is over 10 years old - Additional bedroom requests for carers in line with Housing Benefit guidance - Homeless Households placed into Band C - Armed Forces Personnel prioritised and not effected by other criteria's

	<p>set out in policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tighter guidelines on former and current rent arrears taking into consideration of the changes to welfare reform. - A cap on assets and savings to the value of £16k inc exclusion for households earning a salary in the next tax bracket <p>A full report will be issued to SMT with the consultation outcome.</p>	
Relevance to the Duty:		
<p>1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination – harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;</p> <p>The policy aims to make long term improvements to the way in which social housing is allocated ensuring those most in need are considered and appropriately banded. It also aims to ensure that Thanet District Council makes best use of its housing stock enabling households to fully understand their housing options. The Housing Act outlines ‘Reasonable Preference’ categories that should be prioritised appropriately and this has been addressed within the policy ensuring consistency and fair treatment of this category of households.</p>		
<p>2. Advance equality of opportunity – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy seeks to have a consistent approach to disabled households who require additional rooms for carers to ensure that the criteria is clear and in line with housing benefits which will ensure any accommodation offered is affordable. Section 3.5 clearly states the criteria that applicants will be assessed against. • The policy seeks to prioritise households with medical difficulties appropriately to ensure that they are linked in with the relevant agencies for adequate support. Section 3.3 outlines Kent Agency Assessment which enables statutory agencies to assess health/support need and housing conditions to recommend appropriate level of priority. • The provision for extra care housing is outlined in the policy to enable elderly households who require a supported environment to be considered for re-housing. Section 5.2 outlines that support and care required will be assessed via a dedicated allocations panel. 		
<p>3. Foster good relations – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, by; tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people with a protected characteristic and others.</p> <p>The Allocations Policy contributes to this aim and raises the awareness of protected characteristics by outlining specific groups within the policy and making the verification criteria clear.</p>		
Equality impacts raised or identified:		
<p>The Allocations Policy provides a clear framework for households who wish to apply on the Thanet Housing Register and details how housing will be allocated.</p>		
Protected Characteristic	Commentary	
Age	Impact	The delivery of the Allocations Policy will have a positive impact of all ages ensuring accommodation offered is affordable and

		sustainable
	Mitigation	None needed
Gender	Impact	The delivery of the Allocations Policy will have a positive impact on both men and women
	Mitigation	None needed
Race	Impact	The Allocations policy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of their race. All EEA National households will be re-assessed at time of re-application to ensure they are eligible for housing.
	Mitigation	All EEA National households will be re-assessed at time of re-application to ensure they are eligible for housing.
Disability	Impact	The Allocations Policy will aim to ensure appropriate sized social housing is offered to households who require it.
	Mitigation	Direct lets on specific disabled accommodation will be an option to ensure disabled people can access appropriate adapted homes.
Religion or belief	Impact	The Allocation Policy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of their religion or belief.
	Mitigation	It seems there is little or no evidence in this area.
Gender reassignment	Impact	This Allocation Policy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of gender reassignment.
	Mitigation	It seems there is little or no evidence in this area.
Sexual Orientation	Impact	This Allocations policy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of their sexual orientation.
	Mitigation	It seems there is little or no evidence in this area.
<p>The Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and there is no reason to state at this time that the content of the Allocations Policy will negatively impact on any groups with protected characteristics. In fact the Allocations Policy focuses on prioritising local residents within Thanet and re-categorising the banding system to give a greater opportunity for lower banded households to obtain housing.</p> <p>Opportunities to further the aims of the duty will be investigated during equality impact analysis of individual projects such as online registration.</p>		
Actions arising from analysis:		
Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
To undertake equality impact analysis (EIA)'s yearly to assess the impact of the Allocations Policy where there is relevance to the Public Sector Equality Duty/protected characteristic(as defined within the Equality Act 2010)	Housing Options Manager	July 2014

Acceptance

Name and signature of assessing officer and date of assessment.

Name: **Position:**

Signed: **Date:**

What to do now:

- Attach the EIA as an annex to your report to Members. Members must have all of the information before them at the time of making the decision. Also remember to complete the Equalities section in the report template.
- Send a copy of the EIA to the clerk to the Equalities Group – claire.grant@thanet.gov.uk to enable the review date and any actions arising to be added to the Equality Objectives Plan which is monitored by the Corporate Equalities Group and reported to SMT.

Please be aware that this assessment will be published on the Council's web pages and must not contain any information that may identify individuals.

- Add your actions to your service plan.
- Report your outcomes to the clerk to the Equalities Group, we are keen to publicise our equalities work and ensure that success is captured and good practice shared.

This page is intentionally left blank

KENT LOCAL AUTHORITY MORTGAGE SCHEME (LAMS)

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Housing & Planning Services, Financial Services**

By: **Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All**

Summary: **To seek Council approval to the adoption of the Kent Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) to assist first-time buyers in Thanet accessing the local housing market.**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Council's adopted Housing Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to explore the opportunities for assisting first-time buyers and households on low-incomes to access the local housing market.
- 1.2 Inability to access the local housing market is a major concern for an increasing number of households in the district. Many lenders require purchasers to have a deposit of 20%-25% of the property value in place to enable them to take up a mortgage offer. A household looking to purchase a two bedroom family homes at a purchase price of £145,000 (the average price of a two-bed terrace in Thanet is £144,537) would therefore need to have deposit of between £29,000 and £36,250.
- 1.3 An increasing number of local authorities across the country are either looking to establish or have established a Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) to assist first-time buyers in their areas. There are already two live LAMS in Kent at Gravesham and Tunbridge Wells with a third at Shepway at an advanced stage. Much of the exploratory work around LAMS has been completed by Sector Treasury Services, an independent provider of capital financing, treasury and strategic advisory consulting services to UK public service organisations, In particular, Sector has obtained legal advice on the legality of local authorities establishing a LAMS.
- 1.4 One of the advantages of establishing a LAMS in Kent is the decision of Kent County Council (KCC) to enter into partnership agreements with participating Kent districts to match fund scheme contributions of between £500,000 and £2,000,000, Consequently, if the Council agrees to invests £500,000 in LAMS, KCC will provide a further £500,000 to assist first time buyers in Thanet.
- 1.5 The specific LAMS available under the KCC partnership arrangement is provided by the Lloyds TSB Group. Although other lenders are participating in LAMS nationally, Lloyds TSB is the biggest lender involved to date. The Lloyds TSB scheme is only available to help first-time buyers purchasing second-hand rather than new build properties. This differs from the Government's recently announced 'Help to Buy Scheme' which is not restricted to first time buyers and, unlike LAMS, is only available for the purchase of new build properties.

2. Funding Options

2.1 Sector has highlighted two potential models for delivering LAMS. The scheme can be used to provide mortgage indemnities either on a cash-backed or unfunded basis.

2.2 The table below summarises the key differences between the two LAMS models:-

Scheme	Cash backed LAMS Model	Unfunded LAMS Model
Investment	Requires a capital sum to be invested with the lender for the duration of the Requires a capital sum to be invested with the lender for the duration of the scheme (£500,000 from TDC)	No requirement to invest the capital sum with the lender.
Return on Investment	The cash-backed scheme will deliver a return on the capital sum invested – estimated to be in the region of 3% per annum.	No investment return is received as no funds are invested with the lender. The lender may pay a premium of £500 per mortgage guaranteed under the scheme (would be shared with KCC). TDC's share of premium would be approx £15k which could contribute towards a provision for possible mortgage default payments.
Funding any Mortgage default	The interest paid on the invested sum will be returned to the Council – the interest can also be used to fund any mortgage default payments to the lender	The Council would need to pay the cost of any mortgage defaults through existing revenue resources. It is not permitted to pay the lender any default indemnity out of capital resources.
Opportunity Costing	Requires a capital sum to be invested for the period of the LAMS scheme (i.e. for a 5 year period). This will prevent the resources from being invested in other Housing initiatives	No requirement for any investment to be made, allowing capital funds to be used for other projects. However, revenue funds will need to be made available to cover any mortgage default payments.
Match Funding	KCC will match fund a cash-backed LAMS initiative and have agreed to match fund the Council's £500,000 contribution.	KCC are unable to support the unfunded approach to LAMS at this time.
Existing LAMS	Sector recommends the Cash-backed LAMS model	Most local authorities establishing LAMS to date have followed the cash-backed model.

- 2.3 It is therefore recommended that the Council implement a cash-backed LAMS scheme, for the following reasons:
- 2.3.1 Unfunded LAMS would not generate sufficient revenue resources to cover the potential risks of mortgage default payments becoming payable by the Council.
 - 2.3.2 Alternative investment options would be unlikely to offer interest returns at the same enhanced rate available through the Scheme.
 - 2.3.3 Cash-backed LAMS would enable the recycling of the capital investment into other projects or further LAMS at the end of the investment period.
 - 2.3.4 KCC will match fund £500,000 for a cash-backed LAMS in Thanet.

3.0 How the Scheme will Operate

- 3.1 The Scheme available under the KCC partnership arrangement is aimed at helping those who can afford mortgage payments, but cannot raise the initial deposit, to get on to the property ladder. Under the Scheme the Council specifies the value of properties that can be purchased through it.
- 3.2 If a potential first-time buyer meets the strict credit criteria applied by the lender, and of equal importance, meets the criteria set out by the Council to qualify for a mortgage under the Scheme, then the KCC/TDC partnership (the Partnership) will provide a top-up indemnity. The indemnity will be for the value of the difference between the typical loan to value (LTV) mortgage; i.e. 75%, and a 95% LTV mortgage. The potential buyer will thereby obtain a 95% mortgage on similar terms to a 75% mortgage, but without the need to provide the substantial deposit usually required. For example, an eligible first-time buyer seeking to purchase a property in Thanet valued at £145,000 would have to find a deposit of £7,250 as opposed to a deposit of £36,250 - and it is this difference (£29,000) that KCC and TDC will jointly indemnify.
- 3.3 LAMS mortgage rates are priced at similar rates to 75% loan to value mortgages and at present the interest rates offered for these are in the region of 2.68 % to 3.99% Applicants will be able to access the same mortgage offers as other purchasers, including fixed rate mortgages. At the end of the LAMS period, applicants will also have access to the same range of mortgage products as other purchasers.
- 3.4 The indemnity will be in place for a fixed 5 year period for each mortgage granted under the Scheme, which may be extended for a further 2 years if a mortgage is in arrears in the last 6 months of the initial 5 year period.
- 3.5 The indemnity would only be called upon if a loss is crystallized by the lender. By way of example, if a property valued at £145,000 with a mortgage of £137,750 and with the Partnership indemnity of £29,000 was sold following repossession at £100,000 net of attributable costs, the full value of the £29,000 indemnity would be requested by the lender. If, however the property was sold at £130,000 net of costs, i.e. an actual loss of £7,250, then £7,250 would be requested from the Partnership. Any loss in excess of the value of the indemnity would be attributable to the lender. The lender would request payment from the Partnership, who would undertake to make payment within 30 days. Under the proposed Partnership with KCC, any losses would be shared equally by KCC and TDC.
- 3.6 The Partnership will be required to place a 5-year deposit at the start of the Scheme to the full value of the indemnity being offered (i.e. a deposit of £1m for the Thanet Scheme; £500,000 from TDC and £500,000 from KCC). The deposit will be in place for the term of the indemnity, i.e. 5 years (with the possibility of a further 2 year extension if the mortgage is in arrears at the end of the initial 5 years). At the end of the period the whole amount of the deposit will be returned in full to the Partnership. The Partnership will receive interest

on the monies deposited and it is anticipated that the interest received will be in the region of 3% per annum, based on current market predictions. Based on an interest rate of 3%, the £1million deposit will generate an overall return of £150k over the 5 years, which will be shared equally between KCC and the Council. The actual interest rate applicable is set when the deposit is placed with the lender and is fixed for the whole of the 5 year term.

3.7 The Council will also enter into a match-funding agreement with KCC prior to the launch of the Scheme.

3.8 If approved by Council, it is envisaged that the Thanet LAMS could be launched by September 2013. The Scheme will be launched with a joint TDC/KCC publicity campaign

4.0 TDC Eligibility Criteria

4.1 To ensure that the largest number of local first-time buyers benefit from the Scheme taking into account local housing market selling prices, it is recommended:-

4.1.1 that the maximum loan available under the Scheme is £137,750, i.e. 95% of the average price of a two bedroom terrace house in Thanet; and

4.1.2 that the Scheme is only available to first time buyers currently resident in the district in respect of the purchase of residential properties in the district to be achieved by the use of postcode restrictions.

4.2 In this way it is estimated that a Thanet Scheme established with initial combined resources of £1m will assist approximately 30 to 60 first-time buyer households in Thanet to access the local housing market (depending on property values). In addition to this, market intelligence from lenders suggests that each LAMS initiated property purchase will help to increase the level of property purchase activity in the wider Thanet housing market, by creating on average a further chain of three to four moves per LAMS purchase. This has the potential to provide a small but welcome boost to the local economy.

5.0 Consideration by Cabinet

5.1 Cabinet considered this report at its meeting held on 29 May 2013 and agreed to recommend to Council the recommendations set out at Paragraphs 8.1 to 8.5 of this report.

6.0 Options

6.1 To approve the adoption of a LAMS Scheme for Thanet with an investment of £500,000 match funded by KCC for the reasons given in paragraphs 2.3.1 to 2.3.4 above.

6.2 Not to approve the adoption of LAMS Scheme for Thanet.

7.0 Corporate Implications

7.1 Financial and VAT

7.1.1 A draw down of £500k from the New Homes Bonus will be required to support this Scheme. KCC have agreed to match fund this, meaning £1m will be available in total.

7.1.2 As each mortgage granted under the Scheme reaches the end of the 5 year initial period, the Council will have the relevant proportion of its cash-backed indemnity returned from the lender. The exact timing of the repayment of the total indemnity sum will be dependent upon the date that actual mortgages are agreed by the lender. In the intervening period the Council will receive annual interest on the total deposit made of

£500,000. Assuming an interest rate of 3%, this will be £15,000 per annum or £75,000 over the 5 year life of the scheme.

7.1.3 Market intelligence supplied by Sector indicates the average risk of default on a first-time buyer's mortgage is less than 0.5% (£2,500 for the £500,000 invested). However Sector suggests a more prudent provision for possible default is established for the LAMS scheme. A 4% provision for default equates to £20,000 for the £500,000 invested. It is anticipated the accrued interest on the deposit will be sufficient to cover any potential losses through mortgage default repossession. As any default would be a charge upon the General Fund it is proposed that all of the interest to be received from the Scheme is initially set aside in a ring-fenced revenue reserve to help mitigate this risk. This is reflected in the risk management matrix set out in **Annex 1**.

7.1.4 Although Lloyds TSB is a major UK financial institution it has required direct intervention from the government to prevent it suffering a potential collapse during the banking and financial crisis of 2008 and 2009. However, the Council currently view Lloyds TSB as a high quality counterparty for investment purposes because of the government support they currently receive. It is clearly in the government's interest to continue its support of Lloyds TSB to ensure it receives its (or the taxpayers) investment back. However, it has to be acknowledged that over the medium term there is a small risk the bank could fail jeopardising the return of the Council's £500,000 deposit. This is reflected in the risk management matrix set out in **Annex 1**.

7.2 **Legal**

7.2.1 The Monitoring Officer has seen the legal provided to Sector by Field Fisher Waterhouse and to Shepway by Eversheds and is satisfied that the Council has the power pursuant to Sections 435 and 442 of the Housing Act 1985 to enter into a cash-backed Local Authority Mortgage Scheme with Lloyds TSB. Moreover, for the reason given in this report it is considered that to do so would constitute a reasonable exercise of these powers.

7.2.2 Lloyds TSB requires the Council to enter into an Indemnity Agreement and Deposit Deed supported by an Opinion given by the Monitoring Officer that the Council has the necessary powers to enter into the Agreement and that all of the Council's internal procedural requirements have been complied with. As this will place the Monitoring Office under a personal liability to Lloyds TSB, the Council is also required to provide the Monitoring Officer with an express indemnity pursuant to the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Members and Officers) Indemnity Order 2004.

7.2.3 The Council will also enter into a match funding Agreement with KCC.

7.3 **Corporate**

7.3.1 As set out in the report.

7.4 **Equity and Equalities**

7.4.1 The Table below considers the Public Sector Equalities Duty. It is considered that there will be no adverse impacts to persons with protected characteristics as a result of the Council adopting a LAMS Scheme:

Public Sector Equalities Duty Impacts		
Question	Answer	Explanation
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this report have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate against persons with protected characteristics	No	The use of objective financial eligibility criteria by the lender or the recommendation the Council restrict the availability Scheme to first time buyers in Thanet does not directly or indirectly discriminate against, or disadvantage, persons with protected characteristics
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this report have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes	The provision of the guarantee should increase the accessibility of mortgages to those who would not otherwise be able to afford them and thus assist residents of the district to address their housing needs.
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?	N/A	

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 That the proposed Local Authority Mortgage Scheme for Thanet with eligibility being limited by post code to first time buyers living in the district for the purchase of properties in the district, be agreed.
- 8.2 That the Council's contribution to the proposed Local Authority Mortgage Scheme for Thanet of £500,000 be taken from the New Homes Bonus.
- 8.3 That based on the local housing market for first time buyers the maximum property loan be set at £137,750.
- 8.4 That the Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager in consultation with the Financial Services Manager be authorised to enter into Indemnity and Deposit Agreement with Lloyds TSB and a Match Funding Agreement with Kent County Council.
- 8.5 That the Monitoring Officer be personally indemnified against any potential losses incurred by Lloyds TSB as a result of mortgages provided through the proposed LAM for Thanet to enable him to provide the Opinion Letter required by Lloyds TSB.

9.0 Decision Making Process

- 9.1 This is a decision for Council.

Contact Officer:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager, ext 7005
Reporting to:	Dr Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive, ext, 7001

Annexes

Annex 1	Risk Matrix
---------	-------------

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin, Financial Service Manager
Legal	N/A
Community Services	Tanya Wenham, Housing Regeneration Manager
Communications	Justine Wingate, Corporate Information Manager

This page is intentionally left blank

Annex 1

KENT LAMS - RISK MATRIX

Perceived Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
Failure to address the housing needs of the local community- in particular the aspiration of potential first time buyers to access the local housing market – placing increased pressure on the social rented stock within the district and the Council's Housing Options Service	High	Medium	Introduce a LAMS Scheme for Thanet
Losses sustained as a result of Mortgage defaults. Prudently, a default rate of 4% equates to £20,000 on the Council's deposit of £500,000	High	Low	All interest received by the Council in respect of the deposit for this initiative will be specifically earmarked to cover any potential losses resulting from mortgage defaults. Any potential losses will be shared with KCC
The lender is unable to repay the deposit to the Council	High	Low	Lender is seen as currently viewed as high quality. The UK Government appears committed to supporting the part-nationalised banks to ensure their financial recovery and to protect the taxpayer's investment in them

This page is intentionally left blank

TRANSEUROPA OUTSTANDING DEBT

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Financial Services**

By: **Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All**

Summary: For Council to approve the use of the sources of funding identified within this report to cover the write off of the Transeuropa debt.

For Decision

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. Following the news of the termination of business by the ferry operator Transeuropa NV and its subsequent filing for insolvency, the council has reviewed its debt position with the company. The outstanding debt now stands at circa £3.4m, of which approximately £100k relates to the current financial year (2013/14). Given that the operator is no longer trading, it will now be necessary to make full provision for the debt of £3.3m within the 2012/13 statement of accounts (the element relating to 2013/14 will be addressed within the current financial year).
- 1.2 Cabinet discussed the proposed sources of funding to cover the provision at its meeting on 29 May 2013. Their recommendations are shown at paragraph 3.1 of this report, which Council are now asked to approve.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Detailed discussions began with Transeuropa about its financial viability back in November 2010. At this time the company advised the council that it wished to review the tariff agreement as escalating fuel prices were causing them financial difficulties. These discussions culminated in a meeting in Ostend in March 2011 with both Transeuropa and the council's Ostend counterparts. Transeuropa made it clear at this time that they needed temporary support from both the council and Ostend to ensure the ongoing future of the business. The company had started making substantial losses due to continued high fuel prices and to the price war being waged between the cross channel operators as a result of the French government's deficit funding for Sea France. At this time the company had also recently reduced to two vessels operating instead of the previous three. The council was keen to ensure the continuation of Transeuropa's business, whilst also protecting its own financial position. It therefore agreed to a three month deferral of fees which would be added to the existing debt. A payment plan for the existing debt was also agreed to 2014. At the same time, Ostend also agreed to waive an element of their charges. Through close contact with Ostend, officers were confident that the council's offer of credit was both necessary and reasonable.

- 2.2 Subsequent discussions with Transeuropa showed that they were in talks with potential investment partners to help secure their future. As a result of this, Transeuropa requested that the deferral of fees be extended until an investment partner was in place. Payments of around £80k per month in respect of the outstanding debt were received from July 2012 through to September 2012, which was seen as a positive sign that the position was improving.
- 2.3 Discussions with potential investors continued throughout 2012 and council officers had regular updates from Transeuropa on the progress of these discussions. Ultimately in November 2012, agreement was reached with an Italian investment company. It was hoped that this investment would secure the financial viability of the company, thereby ensuring the recovery of the council's outstanding debts. Indeed, a third vessel, the Ostend Spirit, commenced sailings in February 2013 which was taken as a positive sign that the company's fortunes had taken a turn for the better.
- 2.4 Throughout the negotiations, the course of action with regards to the management of the debt was shared with the Cabinet Leader and Finance Portfolio holder in administration at that time.
- 2.5 On 17 April 2013, to the council's great disappointment, the Ostend Spirit had to be returned to P&O in accordance with the charter arrangement as the promised funding had not been released to Transeuropa by the Italian investors. This was seen as a sign of the company's failing financial position by some of its creditors who took the opportunity to seize the company's two remaining cross channel vessels within Ostend Port, thereby causing them to cease operations and prompting insolvency proceedings.

3.0 The Current Position

- 3.1 The council has now reviewed its outstanding debt position with Transeuropa and can confirm that the debt relating to old years stands at circa £3.3m. Although the council has lodged its debt with the company administrators and intends to take whatever action it can to chase the debt, good accounting practice means that the council needs to provide for the debt in full within its 2012/13 statement of accounts. Cabinet at its meeting on 29 May 2013 recommended to use the following sources within 2012/13 to fund this debt:
- A sum of £1m has been identified in respect of prior year adjustments to housing benefit subsidy. This is a highly volatile budget due to the impact on the subsidy of increases in caseloads and errors in benefit calculations and so normally any underspend would be put into the Customer Services Reserve to mitigate any future overspends. However, the current balance in this reserve is considered appropriate for this purpose and therefore this budget underspend can be utilised to offset the Transeuropa debt position;
 - Unallocated unringfenced grants of £92k have been identified;
 - A balance of £43k remains on the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant reserve which is unallocated;
 - A sum of £1m will be drawn down from the New Homes Bonus;
 - Savings in the cremator project of £196k will be utilised;
 - Carry forward budgets of £257k from prior years have not been utilised and will therefore be taken to offset this debt;
 - A sum of £200k will be taken from the Priority Improvement Reserve which will still leave a balance of £405k to support invest to save and one-off initiatives;
 - A sum of £196k will be taken from the VAT Reserve;

- The bad debt provision has been reviewed and a sum of £200k can be taken to contribute towards this debt.

The above funding sources give a total of £3,186k. It is anticipated that there will be an underspend for 2012/13 over and above that already reported to Members and it is recommended that the balance required to offset the outstanding debt position be taken from any such underspend. The exact final figures, once known, will be recognised within the accounts for 2012/13 as part of the closure of accounts process.

4.0 Options

4.1 Members agree the proposed sources to fund the debt.

4.2 Members identify alternative sources of funding.

5.0 Next Steps

5.1 Officers will continue to make every effort to recover the outstanding debt.

5.2 Talks are progressing to identify a new ferry operator to mitigate the ongoing budget impact. In the meantime, significant day to day operational savings have already been made at the port and harbour and a wider moratorium on discretionary spending has been implemented to address the budget gap as a result of Transeuropa ceasing operations.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 Financial and VAT

6.1.1 A sum of circa £3.3m has had to be identified to offset the outstanding debt that has been accumulated as highlighted in paragraph 3.1 above. The exact final figure will be recognised within the accounts as part of the closure of accounts process.

6.1.2 Throughout the accumulation of the debt and up to the current time, officers have shared information with the council's external auditors to ensure proper accounting practice has been followed.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 The Legal team will endeavour to take whatever action is available to chase the outstanding debt.

6.3 Corporate

6.3.1 Corporate priorities can only be delivered with robust finances. This report has identified how the Transeuropa debt position can be addressed without impacting on the delivery of the council's priorities.

6.4 Equity and Equalities

6.4.1 There are no equity or equality issues arising directly from this report.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 That Members approve the sources identified in paragraph 3.1, as recommended by Cabinet, to fund the outstanding debt.

Contact Officer:	Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager
Reporting to:	Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive and S151 Officer

Annex List

None	
------	--

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	n/a
Legal	Harvey Patterson - Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager

**REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES – PROBITY AND REPUTATION -
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET AND REQUEST BY THE STANDARDS
COMMITTEE TO RE-ESTABLISH THE STANDARDS WORKING PARTY**

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Business, Corporate and Regulatory Services**

By: **Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Wards: **All**

Summary:

- 1. To consider the recommendations of Cabinet in relation to decisions taken in private session and rules concerning the audio and visual recording of Council meetings**
- 2. To consider Standards Committee’s request to re-establish the Standards Working Party**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 As part of its decision in relation to a review of policies and procedures affecting probity and the reputation of Council, Cabinet, at its meeting on 25 April 2013, agreed to recommend to Council:
- a) “THAT where a decision is made in private session, such decision is revisited after one year to determine if the decision can be published”;
 - b) “THAT the rules concerning the audio and visual recording of Council meetings be reviewed”.
- 1.2 On 6 June 2013, the Standards Committee approved the commencement of a review of the Members’ Code of Conduct and related processes and procedures on the terms set out in the Monitoring Officer’s report (*attached at Annex 1*) and agreed that full Council be requested to re-establish the Standards Working Party.

2.0 The Current Situation

Review of decisions made in private session

- 2.1 Council is asked to note that Cabinet resolved on 25 April 2013:

“That to strengthen transparency and accountability reports to Council, Cabinet or Committee that recommend the exclusion of the press and public from any part of a meeting to which the press and public would normally have access will in future describe the grounds of exclusion and set out why such a recommendations is in the public interest by reference to the factors that

favour inclusion and those that favour exclusion. Members will be advised that where a decision whether or not to exclude the press and public is finely balanced, doubts should be resolved in favour of not excluding the press and public.”

- 2.2 If Council adopts Cabinet’s recommendation (*referred to at Para 1.1 (a) above*) that a decision taken in private be revisited after one year, it is suggested that the matter be referred to the Constitutional Review Working Party in the first instance, to consider the options available for implementation.

Review of Rules concerning the audio and visual recording of Council meetings

- 2.2 Council’s current rules concerning the recording of Council meetings are as set out in Council Procedure Rule 34.2:

“No audio or visual recordings shall be made at meetings except for official recordings by the clerk or recordings agreed by the Chairman to be made by accredited media organisations.”

- 2.3 It is suggested that were Council to adopt Cabinet’s recommendation that a review of rules on recording of meetings takes place, the matter be referred for consideration by the Constitutional Review Working Party.

Establishment of the Standards Working Party

- 2.4 Following the Council meeting of 14 July 2011, an informal, cross-party Standards Working Party had been set up for the purpose of considering the development of a Voluntary (but subsequently Statutory) Code of Conduct for Members. The Standards Working Party’s recommendations were considered, in turn, by the Constitutional Review Working Party and Standards Committee, and culminated in Council’s adoption of a new Members’ Code of Conduct on 12 July 2012.
- 2.5 The composition of the Standards Working Party had been: two Members of the Labour Group; two Members of the Conservative Group; and one Member of the Independent Group.
- 2.6 Council is asked to re-establish the Standards Working Party, approve its draft terms of reference, as set out at Annex 2, agree its political composition and note nominations thereto from the Group Leaders.

3.0 Corporate Implications

3.1 Financial and VAT

- 3.1.1 None arising directly from this report

3.2 Legal

- 3.2.1 The review of the rules on recording of meetings will consider the Guide published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 14 June 2013: *“Your council’s cabinet: going to its meetings, seeing how it works – a guide for local people”*.

3.3 Corporate

3.3.1 The issues referred in this report affect the level of transparency and accountability of the Council's decision-making processes, the reputation of the Council and probity of Council Members.

3.4 Equity and Equalities

3.4.1 None arising directly from this report

4.0 Recommendations

4.1.1 THAT the Constitutional Review Working Party be requested to consider the options for revisiting a decision made in private session after one year to determine if the report or information on which the decision was made can be published.

4.1.2 THAT the Constitutional Review Working Party be requested to review the rules concerning the audio and visual recording of Council meetings.

4.3 THAT Council:

4.3.1 Re-establishes the Standards Working Party; and, if so:

4.3.2 Approves the terms of reference, as set out at Annex 2;

4.3.3 Agrees the political composition; and

4.3.4 Notes nominations from the Group Leaders.

5.0 Decision Making Process

5.1 Any matters requiring constitutional changes are normally referred to the Constitutional Review Working Party, which makes recommendations to Standards Committee, which in turn makes final recommendations to Council.

Future Meetings [for constitutional matters]

Constitutional Review Working Party	21 August 2013
Standards Committee	4 September 2013
Council	3 October 2013

Contact Officer:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer, ext 7005
Reporting to:	Dr Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive, ext 7002

Annex List

Annex 1	Monitoring Officer's report to Standards Committee, 6 June 2013
Annex 2	Draft Terms of Reference of the Standards Working Party (if re-established)

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
Department for Communities and Local Government Guide, published 14 June 2013: <i>“Your council’s cabinet: going to its meetings, seeing how it works – a guide for local people”</i> .	Published as a background paper to this report on TDC website, http://www.thanet.gov.uk/

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	n/a
Legal	n/a

Review of Members Code of Conduct - 6 June 2013

To: **Standards Committee**

By: **Monitoring Officer**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: **To approve a review of the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by Thanet District Council and by the majority of the Town & Parish Council's established in Thanet.**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction

1.1 It is nearly a year since the Council adopted a revised Member Code of Conduct based on the 'model' Kent Members Code of Conduct and it is considered appropriate that a review should now be conducted into the operation of the Code and related processes. This review should align with the officer level review of the Kent Model Code currently being undertaken by the Kent Secretaries Group.

2.0 Review - Scope

2.1 In terms of scope, it is recommended that the review considers both the precise terms of the Members' Code of Conduct and the related processes and procedures that support the enforcement of the Code.

2.2 Issues for the Members Code of Conduct are likely to include:-

- Consideration whether a 'treat others with respect' requirement should be re-introduced into the General Conduct Requirements;
- Whether the scope of the Register of Members Interests should be widened to include declarations in respect of e.g. non corporate tenancies with the Council, or membership of or a position of general control or management of charities or body directed to charitable purposes;
- Whether any extensions to the scope of the Register of Members Interests should apply to spouses/civil partners;
- The value at which the receipt of gifts and hospitality have to be declared;
- Whether 'one size fits all' should continue as e.g. amendments considered necessary or desirable for TDC may not be appropriate for a Parish Council.

2.3 Issues relating to the processes and procedures supporting the enforcement of the Members' Code of Conduct are likely to include:

- Whether TDC should conduct hearings in respect of Town and Parish councillors; and
- The apparent lack of effective sanctions

3.0 Review - Stakeholders

3.1 It is therefore recommended that the review consists of:-

- The re- establishment of, consultation with and receipt of feedback from the Standards Working Party;
- Consultation with and receipt of feedback from the Group Leaders and Group Whips
- Consultation with and receipt of feedback from the Town & Parish Council's established Thanet including the Town & Parish Council's Representatives on the Standards Committee;
- Consultation with and receipt of feedback from the Independent Members of the Standards Committee;
- Consultation with and receipt of feedback from the Independent Person and Nominated Substitute;
- Consultation with and receipt of feedback from the Kent Secretaries Group
- Consultation with and receipt of feedback from complainants who are members of the public;
- Consideration of all stakeholder feedback by the Constitutional Review Working Party prior to consideration by the Standards Committee;

3.2 The Standards Committee will then make recommendations to full Council.

4.0 Corporate Implications

4.1 Financial and VAT

There are no direct financial or VAT implications arising from this report.

4.2 Legal

TDC and the Town & Parish Council's established in Thanet have the power to amend their adopted Codes of Conduct provided they retain consistency with the five 'Nolan principles governing public life

4.3 Corporate

The Members Code underpins the high standard of ethical conduct expected of District, Town and Parish Councillors.

4.4 Equity and Equalities

None specific

5.0 Recommendation(s)

5.1 That the Standards Committee approves the commencement of a review of the Members Code of Conduct and related processes and procedures on the terms set out in the report of the Monitoring Officer.

5.2 That full Council be requested to re-establish the Standards Working Party.

5.3 That the review be concluded within a maximum period of five months

6.0 Decision Making Process

6.1 Stakeholder responses will be considered by the Constitutional Review Working Party prior to consideration by the Standards Committee who, in turn, will make recommendation to full Council

<i>Contact Officer:</i>	<i>Harvey Patterson, Monitoring Officer</i>
<i>Reporting to:</i>	<i>Sue McGonigal, - Chief Executive</i>

Annex List

<i>N/A</i>

Background Papers

<i>Title</i>	<i>Details of where to access copy</i>
<i>None</i>	

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

<i>Finance</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Legal</i>	<i>N/A</i>

This page is intentionally left blank

STANDARDS WORKING PARTY

General

A Standards Working Party established to review the Members' Code of Conduct and make recommendations thereon to the Constitutional Review Working Party.

Membership

Number of Members	Five 2 Conservatives, 2 Labour, 1 Independent
Substitute Members Permitted	Yes
Political Balance Rules Apply	No
Appointments/Removals from Office	By Group Leaders
Restrictions on Membership	None
Restrictions on Chairmanship	None
Quorum	Three
Number of meetings per Council year	Meetings will be called as required

Terms of Reference

1. To review the Members' Code of Conduct and related processes and make recommendations to the Constitutional Review Working Party

Delegations

None

This page is intentionally left blank

CALL-IN AND URGENCY – ANNUAL REPORT

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**

By: **Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **N/A**

Summary: **To note that no urgent decisions, not subject to call-in, were taken during the 2012/13 municipal year**

For Information

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1. Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15 (m) states that, “the operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency shall be monitored annually, and a report submitted to Council with proposals for review if necessary”.

2.0 The Current Situation

2.1 In the 2012/13 municipal year no executive decisions were processed as urgent in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15 (l).

3.0 Corporate Implications

3.1 Financial and VAT

3.1.1 None arising

3.2 Legal

3.2.1 Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15(m) requires the operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency to be monitored annually, and that a report is submitted to Council with proposals for review if necessary.

3.3 Corporate

3.3.1 None arising

3.4 Equity and Equalities

3.4.1 None arising

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 This report is for information only.

5.0 Decision Making Process

- 5.1 Given that there were no executive decisions processed as urgent during the 2012/13 Municipal Year where the call-in processes were excluded, officers consider that there is no need to review the operation of the call-in and urgency provisions. However, it is for Council to decide whether any such review is deemed necessary.

Contact Officer:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, ext 7187
Reporting to:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer, ext 7005

Annex List

None	
------	--

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	n/a
Legal	n/a

URGENT DECISION – LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

To: **Council - 11 July 2013**

Main Portfolio Area: **Business, Corporate and Regulatory Services**

By: **Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Wards: **All**

Summary: To inform Council of an urgent decision taken by Cabinet in relation to the Local Plan Consultation Document

For Information

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1. In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15 (L), any urgent decision, not subject to call-in, must be reported to the next available meeting of Council, together with the reasons for urgency.

2.0 The Current Situation

2.1 At its meeting on 29 May 2013, Cabinet took the following decision in relation to the Local Plan:

“To approve the consultation document and agree that public consultation takes place for 10 weeks”.

2.2 That decision was not subject to call-in for two reasons: firstly, a call-in by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel would potentially engender a six week delay which would seriously compromise adherence to the Local Plan adoption timetable; and, secondly, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel would, in fact, be a mandatory consultee at a later stage in the Local Plan adoption process.

2.3 Pursuant to Rule 15(L) of the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the (then) Chairman of Council, Councillor Clark, gave his written consent to the decision being exempt from “call-in” on the grounds that the delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council’s interest and the public interest.

2.5 The published decision notice is attached at Annex 1.

3.0 Corporate Implications

3.1 Financial and VAT

3.1.1 As detailed in the report to Cabinet, 29 May 2013

3.2 Legal

3.2.1 As detailed in the report to Cabinet, 29 May 2013

3.3 Corporate

3.3.1 As detailed in the report to Cabinet, 29 May 2013

3.4 Equity and Equalities

3.4.1 As detailed in the report to Cabinet, 29 May 2013

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 This report is for information only.

5.0 Decision Making Process

5.1 The decision was taken by Cabinet and the (then) Chairman of Council, Councillor Clark, has given his written consent to it being treated as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Rule 15 (L) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

Contact Officer:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer, Ext 7005
Reporting to:	Dr Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive and S.151 Officer, Ext 7002

Annex List

Annex 1	Record of urgent decision by Cabinet
---------	--------------------------------------

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	
Legal	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer, ext 7005

Ref:	Called in	Yes/No
------	-----------	--------

THE THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORD OF DECISION OF CABINET

Cabinet Member:	Councillor D. Green		
Relevant Portfolio:	Housing and Planning Services		
Date of Decision:	29 May 2013		
Subject:	Local Plan Consultation Document		
Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	In Forward Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

Brief summary of matter:

Thanet is producing a new Local Plan. This will form the Council's main planning policy document for the period to 2031, and will set out policies and proposals that will be used to guide decisions and investment on development and regeneration over the period to 2031. Public consultation on the new Local Plan is a statutory requirement and this decision considers whether to begin public consultation on the Issues and Options for the new Local Plan.

Decision made:

Cabinet approved the consultation document and agreed that public consultation takes place for 10 weeks.

Reasons for decision:

Public consultation is a statutory requirement when preparing a Local Plan. It is essential that we obtain early and meaningful engagement with the public and other key stakeholders in order to inform the Plan. The process and timetable for producing the Local Plan is set out in the Local Development Scheme, and this consultation forms part of that process.

Alternatives considered and why rejected:

Not to approve the consultation in the form set out in this report – Public consultation is a statutory requirement for producing a Local Plan and not agreeing to public consultation would result in the timetable in the Local Development Scheme not being met.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by any executive Member who has been consulted and of any dispensation granted by the Standards Committee:

None

Author of Officer Report:

Simon Thomas, Planning Manager

Background papers

Chairman of Council Exemption Consent Letter
Local Plan Issue and Options Consultation Cabinet Report FV
Annex 1 - Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Document
Annex 2 - Issues and Options Questionnaire FV

Statement if decision is an urgent one and therefore not subject to call-in:

This is an Urgent Decision that is exempt from call-in. In order to meet the timetable for the production of the Local Plan, as set out in the Local Development Scheme, consultation needs to commence in June. This decision was therefore exempt from call-in, as outlined in the Chairman's consent dated 14th May 2013 (Background Paper 1).

Last date for call in:

REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**

By: **Glenn Back, Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Wards affected: N/A

Summary: This report informs Council of the Cabinet's recommendations regarding the lists of outside bodies.

For Decision

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 It was agreed at the meeting of Council on 15 July 2010 that any list of outside bodies would be split in to two lists: those outside bodies that relate to an Executive function and hence appointments should be made by the Cabinet, and those for which appointments should be made by Council.
- 1.2 It is for Council to decide on those outside bodies it feels relate to an Executive function, but for Cabinet to agree the nominations to those outside bodies.
- 1.3 Cabinet will decide upon nominations to those outside bodies that Council feels relate to a Cabinet function at the first Cabinet meeting of the municipal year. Council will make the appointments to the non-Executive list of outside bodies.

2.0 Recommendations from Cabinet

- 2.1 At its meeting of the 20 June 2013 Cabinet made the following recommendations:
- a) That the Domestic Violence Forum be added to the Thanet District Council list of Executive appointed outside bodies and that one TDC Member be made a nominee to that outside body with an additional TDC Member being nominated to be an ex-officio to that Forum should that prove possible;
 - b) That South East Employers be removed from the Thanet District Council list of Executive appointed outside bodies.
- 2.2 As referred to above Council is the body that confirms the Executive list of Outside Bodies, therefore it is for decide whether to accept the recommendations from Cabinet.
- 2.3 Since the report to Cabinet was written The Council has been informed that South East Employers has a one year notice period to end membership. Therefore Council can agree to end the Membership of South East Employers; however this would only take effect from the 2013/14 financial year.

3.0 Other changes to Outside Bodies

- 3.1 In addition to the recommendations from Cabinet, the following changes are also put forward for consideration by Council.
- 3.2 Thanet Quality Bus Partnership is a long standing body which has requested a Councillor representative. It is therefore proposed to formalise this appointment and it is proposed to class it as an Executive appointed outside body.
- 3.3 Due to an oversight on behalf of Democratic Services, the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group was missed off the list of Executive appointed outside bodies. The LGA Coastal Special Interest Group was originally added to the list of Executive appointed outside bodies at Annual Council in May 2012.

4.0 Friends of Margate Cemetery

- 4.1 Since the last meeting of Council we have been in correspondence with the Chairman of the Friends of Margate Cemetery, he has informed us that Councillor Mrs and Mr Tomlinson were appointed as Trustees of the Friends of Margate Cemetery in May 2012 for a period of three years until May 2015. Furthermore he has also confirmed that he is not prepared to amend these trustees until the end of the three year period; therefore there are no vacant positions for trustees on the Friends of Margate Cemetery Board and so Council is unable to appoint Councillor Clark to the Friends of Margate Cemetery at the present time.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 Financial

- 5.1.1 Ending the Council's subscription to South East Employers (and thereby ceasing to make a nomination to that body) would save the Council £5,453.17 a year from its revenue budget; this saving will not materialise until 2014/15 and as a result can be removed as part of the Budget process.

5.2 Legal

- 5.2.1 None

5.3 Corporate

- 5.3.1 The Council appoints representatives to outside bodies in order to express the views of the Council to those bodies on the work they undertake, and to feed back to the Council issues emerging from those bodies that relate to Council activities.

5.4 Equity and Equalities

- 5.4.1 There are no specific equity and equality considerations that need to be addressed in this report.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Council agrees the following recommendations from Cabinet:

- a) That the Domestic Violence Forum be added to the Thanet District Council list of Executive appointed outside bodies and that one TDC Member be made a nominee to that outside body with an additional TDC Member being nominated to be an ex-officio to that Forum should that prove possible;
- b) That South East Employers be removed from the Thanet District Council list of Executive appointed outside bodies;

6.2 That Council agrees the following further changes to the list of Executive appointed outside bodies.

- a) That the Thanet Quality Bus Partnership is added to the list of Executive appointed outside bodies and that one TDC Member is made a nominee to that body.
- b) That the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group be re-added to the list of Executive appointed outside bodies and that one TDC Member is made nominee to that body.

7.0 Decision Making Process

7.1 Cabinet is the decision making body only for making nominations to existing Bodies agreed by Council. Any newly proposed Outside Bodies would need to be agreed at Full Council.

Contact Officer:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager, ext.7187
Reporting to:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager, ext 7005

Annex List

None	
------	--

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Matthew Sanham, Finance Manager (Service Support)
Legal	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager

This page is intentionally left blank

REPRESENTATION ON RAMSGATE CHARITIES

By: **Democratic Services Manager**

Main Portfolio Area: **Regulatory and Corporate Services**

To: **Council – 11 July 2013**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Wards: **All Ramsgate Wards**

Summary: To agree the appointment of a trustee to Ramsgate Charities
For decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Appointments to the Ramsgate Charities are made by Thanet District Council in accordance with the Scheme of the Charity.
- 1.2 The Ramsgate Charities are an amalgamation of several charities which are for the benefit of persons living in the Ramsgate area. The object of the Charity is the relief of poverty in elderly people and people with disabilities or special needs.
- 1.3 A letter has been received from Daniel & Edwards Solicitors stating that Mrs J.E Dale has retired as a representative of Ramsgate Charities. This letter is available at Annex 1.
- 1.4 At the last meeting of the Trustees of Ramsgate Charities a Mrs Catherine S. Griggs was nominated to the Charity to fill the vacancy left by Mrs J.E Dale and it was resolved by the trustees to put her name forward for appointment.
- 1.5 The Council has responsibility to formally make appointments of trustees.
- 1.6 The next meeting of the Ramsgate Charities is on 20th November 2013, if Council agree to make Mrs Griggs a representative trustee of Ramsgate Charities then it would be appropriate to start her four year term of office from this date.

2.0 Corporate Implications

2.1 Financial

- 2.1.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

2.2 Legal

- 2.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

2.3 Corporate

- 2.3.1 There are no corporate implications arising from this report.

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 That Council agrees the appointment of Mrs Catherine S. Griggs as a representative Trustee of Ramsgate Charities with a term of office starting on 20th November 2013 and expiring on 20th November 2017.

Contact Officer:	Nicholas Hughes, Democratic Services Manager , ext 7208
Reporting to:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, ext 7187

Annexes

Annex 1	Letter from Daniel and Edwards Solicitors.
----------------	--

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	N/A
Legal	Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager

DANIEL & EDWARDS
SOLICITORS

M. R. M. DANIEL
D. B. S. LAWRIE
DAVID COOK

44 & 46 QUEEN STREET
RAMSGATE
KENT CT11 9EG

Agenda Item 18

Annex 1

D: Dx 30602 Ramsgate

T: 01843 594651

F: 01843 580194

24th June 2013.

(RMD)JRW/7230.

OUR REF. Appointments to Ramsgate Charities.

YOUR REF.

Nicholas Hughes,
Democratic Services Manager,
Thanet District Council,
DX 30555 MARGATE.

Dear Mr. Hughes,

RAMSGATE CHARITIES.

Mrs J.E. Dale has retired as a Representative Trustee of the above.


At their last Meeting the Trustees of the Ramsgate Charities the nomination of Mrs Catherine Shirley Griggs was put forward and it was resolved that her name be recommended for appointment.

Under the schemes regulating these charities the appointment of representative trustees for a term of four years must be made by the District Council.

It would be appreciated if you would arrange for the matter to be referred to the appropriate Committee of the Council.

The next Meeting of the Trustees of Ramsgate Charities is scheduled for 20th November 2013. If the appointment of Mrs. Griggs is approved that would seem to be the ideal date for commencement.

Yours sincerely,



John R. Wood –
Assistant to Mr. M.R.M. Daniel
Clerk to the Trustees.



Community
Legal Service



Page 47

This page is intentionally left blank