



Committee and Date
**Communities Overview
 Committee**
28 October 2020

Item

Public

Shropshire HomePoint

Responsible officer
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1.0	Summary
1.1	This report provides an overview of Shropshire HomePoint with some key statistics detailing need and workload.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Committee members to: Note the contents of the report especially the aspect of a Task and Finish Group to look at the review of Shropshire Allocations Policy.
3.0	Background
3.1	Shropshire HomePoint is a Choice Based Lettings Housing Register. Choice based lettings schemes allow you to bid for council and housing association properties that the council advertises. Existing tenants may be able to use the scheme if they want to transfer properties.
3.2	The scheme advertises most social / affordable housing in the county (excluding Telford and Wrekin) and also some private sector properties. Social housing is affordable housing allocated based on need at lower than market rate rents.
3.3	Once you are registered, you are able to make one bid of interest per week for affordable and social rented properties but can make as many bids as you like for mutual exchanges, low cost home ownership, private rented, house shares and private properties for sale.
3.4	Shropshire HomePoint operates as a back office for the Social landlords who advertise. We process the applications, band clients and issues shortlists. Shropshire HomePoint does not allocate properties; this is done by the landlord.
3.5	The waiting list operates using the Allocations Policy and different banding options. People deemed not to be in housing need are in Bronze banding with increasing needs being allocated via silver, gold and priority. Those who the Council have a duty to accommodate are in the priority banding.
3.6	Although the Allocations Policy is agreed by all the partners, some housing associations have their own lettings policies in addition to Shropshire HomePoint.

4.0	Workloads and Staffing Levels		
4.1	The number of households applying for housing via Shropshire HomePoint has been steadily increasing.		
	March/April 2020	01.08.2020	01.10.2020
	5,711	5,732	5,814
4.2	As of October 2020, we have the following numbers on the waiting list broken down by banding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Priority Banding = 257 o Gold Banding = 924 o Silver Banding = 2,143 o Bronze Banding = 2,490 		
4.3	Of those in priority banding 220 are owed a statutory homeless duty. These are the household to whom Shropshire Council has accepted a duty to rehouse. From 04.01.2019 – 31.03.2020 there were 1,241 applicants rehoused which equated to 137 statutory homeless households.		
4.4	Additional information regarding Shropshire HomePoint statistics can be found at Appendix 1 – the most recent Quarterly report shared with the Landlords.		
4.5	Workload within the Shropshire HomePoint Team has been increasing during Covid19 due to many people feeling as though they need to move into more affordable properties.		
4.6	The team consists of 1 senior and 4.5 FTE posts.		
4.7	Workloads for the team – per month		
		2020 to date	
	Online applications	440	
	Paper applications	65	
	Correspondence	175	
	Emails	1702	
	Verifications	267	
	Phone Calls	400	
4.8	Due to evictions being on hold, and now there being the introduction of a 6-month notice period, as well as a lull in the development of new schemes, the number of adverts issued each week has been decreasing.		
	January 2020	May 2020	October 2020
	Circa 55 p/week	Circa 13 per week	Circa 32 per week
4.9	The lull in adverts causes frustration with applicants who are keen to move into more suitable and affordable housing.		

5.0	Shropshire Affordable Housing Allocation Policy and Scheme
5.1	The Shropshire Affordable Housing Allocation Policy and Scheme was developed in 2014. It has not been reviewed in this time. Some aspects of the policy are now out of date. A review of the policy will require a consultation period with Landlords, Elected Members and the Public.
5.2	This report seeks to start a discussion regarding Shropshire HomePoint and a task and finish group to look at a review of the Allocations Policy.
5.3	A copy of the Shropshire Affordable Housing Allocation Policy and Scheme can be found at Appendix 2.

<p>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</p> <p>None</p>
<p>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)</p> <p>Cllr Robert Macey – Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning</p>
<p>Local Member</p> <p>All</p>
<p>Appendices</p> <p>Appendix 1 – Quarterly Reporting Appendix 2 – Shropshire Affordable Housing Allocation Policy and Scheme</p>