

An aerial photograph of a city at night, viewed from a high angle. The city is illuminated by streetlights and building lights, creating a warm glow against the dark sky. The foreground shows a large, modern building complex with a curved facade and a parking lot. In the background, the city extends to the horizon, with hills visible in the distance. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter.

# Housing Allocations Policy Summary of Proposed Amendments



An aerial photograph of a city at night, with a semi-transparent purple overlay. The city lights are visible through the overlay, showing a dense urban area with various buildings, streets, and a river or canal in the foreground. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

# Proposed Amendments

## Section 1 – Policy Additions or Revisions



<p><b>Direct Allocations</b> Section 24.0</p>	<p><b>Revision: 24.0</b> A direct allocation allows the Council, at its absolute discretion, to allocate a suitable property directly to an applicant. A direct offer is not guaranteed and will be dependent on the facts of the individual case. The circumstances where the Council may directly allocate properties includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the event of a wide scale City Emergency (in such circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend the advertising of available properties).</li> <li>• Applicants owed the Full Homeless Duty but have not successfully secured permanent accommodation through the bidding process or have not actively bid for accommodation, after 56 days, such applicants may receive a “final” direct offer for a property that is considered suitable for an applicant’s needs and the Council will discharge the homeless duty.</li> <li>• Existing Council tenants whose homes are subject to major development or regeneration that requires the Council to obtain vacant possession, or where occupants need to be decanted for reasons of safety or where their homes are not fit for occupation, so that works can take place and to reduce the risk of homelessness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For existing Council tenants whose homes are subject to major development or regeneration, the Council reserves discretion to make one suitable and ‘final’ offer of a direct allocation, which will only be utilised after a suitable period of unsuccessful applicant bidding, and where a suitable alternative accommodation has been refused as part of the bidding process. Where tenants refuse the offer of suitable alternative accommodation, the Council reserves the right to issue notice to seek possession of the property to enable the development or regeneration scheme to progress to completion.</li> <li>• When an applicant needs a property with significant adaptations that cannot be met by the current available stock, this applies only to homes that are purpose built, significantly adapted, or suitable for adaptation for a specific customer with a disability, when it is not possible to find an existing suitably adapted property.</li> </ul> <p>For both, those applicants owed a Full Homeless Duty and existing Council tenants whose homes are subject to major development or regeneration, the discretion to offer a direct allocation will only be utilised after a suitable period of unsuccessful applicant, bidding, the period of which will be determined by the individual circumstances of the application.</p>	<p><b>Proposed Introduction of Direct Allocations for:</b></p> <p><b>Homeless Applicants Owed a Full Homeless Duty:</b> It is proposed that for applicants owed the Full Homeless Duty, the council may make a direct and final offer of suitable accommodation. This supports individuals/families to find suitable accommodation that meets their needs, helps individuals/families move out of temporary accommodation (TA), and ensures TA continues to be readily available for other vulnerable households.</p> <p><b>Tenants Affected by Regeneration/Redevelopment:</b> It is proposed direct allocations will be offered where appropriate to support existing tenants whose homes are impacted by major development or regeneration projects. This supports affected tenants in securing suitable housing, reduces the risk of homelessness, and enables the council to progress with regeneration and new housing developments, in turn improving and increasing housing stock across the city.</p> <p><b>Applicants Requiring Adapted Homes:</b> It is proposed for direct allocations to be used where appropriate for applicants needing significantly adapted properties. This ensures the best use of available housing stock and helps meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents.</p>
---------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Reference	Addition or Revision		Notes and Rationale
<p><b>Lesser Preference</b> Section 11.5</p>	<p><b>Revision:</b> Applicants who meet one or more of the following criteria will be given lesser preference. This means their application will be suspended until the affected criteria has been resolved or a repayment plan has been adhered to for at least 3 months and continuously thereafter prior to an offer being made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>anyone who owes debts of more than £400 to a Council or Registered Provider or more than £600 where Universal Credit is a contributing factor.</li> <li>tenants of the Council who have been in their property for less than one year;</li> <li>tenants of the Council whose property has failed a pre-leaving inspection;</li> <li>applicants who have been involved in unacceptable behaviour such as persistent non-payers, applicant or member of his or her household involved in anti-social behaviour but not serious enough to be excluded from the housing register.</li> </ul> <p>In relation to anyone who applies and owes a debt to a Council or Registered Provider the allocation of alternative accommodation will be dependent on:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the applicant making continuous agreed payments from the date payment arrangement was made until either the offer date or the debt being clear to show commitment to the repayment plan</li> <li>the applicant will be subject to a full income and expenditure exercise by/on behalf of their managing agent where a repayment plan will be agreed with the tenant; and</li> <li>the debt owed at the current property being transferred to the new tenancy and any agreement to discharge the remaining debt will become a condition of the new tenancy;</li> </ul> <p>Lesser preference does not apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants in the Emergency Plus or Emergency bands (excluding lodgers in possession)</li> <li>Current Council or Registered Provider tenants who are requesting a transfer to a smaller, more affordable property due to the financial hardships making their rent unaffordable and there is no possession order;</li> <li>Eligible homeless applicants that are not subject to a referral to another Local Authority AND they meet the Housing Act local connection criteria.</li> <li>When an applicant is being supported as they need to move due to domestic violence or those who qualify for Band 1 Social Grounds</li> </ul>	<p>Proposed amendment to wording to ensure it is clear that:</p> <p>a) Lesser Preference excludes ‘Lodgers in Possession’, <i>and</i></p> <p>b) Regarding the requirements for payments plans for rent arrears.</p>

Reference	Addition or Revision	Rationale
<p><b>Statement of Choice</b> Sections 21.2, 21.3 and 21.4</p>	<p><b>Revision: 21.2</b> Where this is the case, the Council retains the right to make direct bids on behalf of homeless applicants to help resolve their homelessness into suitable accommodation. This may include removing existing bids placed by applicants and replacing with more appropriate bids to provide a better chance of being rehoused.</p> <p><b>Addition: 21.3</b> The Council reserves the right to extend this provision to existing Council tenants housed within extensive redevelopment sites in order to reduce the risk of homelessness.</p> <p><b>Addition: 21.4</b> In both instances, the provision above will only be utilised after a suitable period of unsuccessful applicant bidding. The period of which will be determined by the individual circumstances of the application.</p>	<p>a) Proposed amendment to wording to make it clearer in respect of assisted bids.</p> <p>b) Proposed amendment to extend assisted bids to those in redevelopment / regeneration areas to support those tenants affected by schemes in rehousing and to reduce the risk of homelessness.</p>

Reference	Addition or Revision	Notes and Rationale
<b>Applicants with No Connection to Wolverhampton</b>	<b>Addition of bullet point 3:</b> Spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where the spouse or civil partner cease to be entitled to reside in Ministry of Defence (MOD) accommodation following a relationship breakdown. The Council will disregard local connection in instances of the first relocation of the spouse or civil partner from MOD accommodation providing evidence of a need to be closer to family and support networks is provided	Updated in line with Government recommendations.
<b>Table 1 – House Need Banding</b> Emergency Band	<b>Addition:</b> Existing Council tenants and/or any non-dependent members of the household wishing to live independently of the tenant (split households) required to vacate their property due to extensive estate/property redevelopment – subject to redevelopment site specific Local Lettings Plan.	Proposed that Emergency banding awarded to those affected tenants to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support with rehousing.</li> <li>• Reduce the risk of homelessness, <i>and</i></li> <li>• Ensures regeneration, redevelopment schemes can progress, and new homes where applicable can be built.</li> </ul>



An aerial photograph of a city at night, viewed from a high angle. The city is illuminated by streetlights and building lights, creating a warm glow against the dark sky. The foreground shows a large, modern building complex with a curved facade and a parking lot. In the background, a river or canal winds through the city, and a bridge is visible. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter.

# **Proposed Amendments**

## **Section 1- Minor Editorial Amendments**



Reference	Notes
Section 5.1	Minor amendment from Five to Four Managing Agents.
Section 8.1	Proposed revision to wording to ensure clear and concise.
Sections 9.5, 17.3, 23.0, and 31.05	Proposed minor amendments to wording to reflect current processes.
Section 26.4	Addition of direct nominations for Registered Provider properties aides to assist with objectives of Section 24 (Direct Allocations).
Section 30.2	Removal of Springfield Horseshoe HMC.
General	Minor amendments throughout including spelling, grammar, and format changes.