

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

CABINET

27 AUGUST 2009

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO LEADER: HOUSING

LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN – CORNWALL HOUSE AND CHERRY TREE HOUSE REDEVELOPMENT
SCHEMES

KEY DECISION – YES

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider a local lettings plan for the initial allocation of dwellings in respect of the Cornwall House and Cherry Tree House redevelopment schemes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the local lettings plan for the initial allocation of dwellings in respect of the Cornwall House and Cherry Tree House redevelopment schemes, attached as Annex 2 is agreed.

3. Summary

- 3.1 The Cornwall House (Hednesford) and Cherry Tree House (Brereton) redevelopment schemes are now expected to be completed by the South Staffordshire Housing Association in September 2009.
- 3.2 The Council has 100% initial nomination rights in respect of the 20 houses which will be provided and it is suggested that these are made in accordance with a proposed Local Lettings Plan attached as Annex 2.
- 3.3 This suggests that nominations are prioritised in accordance with the Priority Bands as set out in the Council's Choice Based Lettings Guide "Somewhere to Live". However, in order to limit child density and reflect the potential for family growth maximum and minimum occupancy levels are proposed.

4. Details of Matters to be Considered

- 4.1 Cabinet on 13 March 2008 agreed the selection of the South Staffordshire Housing Association as the Council's development partner for the Cornwall House and Cherry Tree Road redevelopment schemes.
- 4.2 The sites are being developed with a total of 20 houses for social rent (by the South Staffordshire Housing Association) in accordance with the following mix of dwellings:-

(a) Cornwall House Redevelopment

- 1 x 4 bed house
- 4 x 3 bed house
- 3 x 2 bed house

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(b) Cherry Tree Redevelopment

- 1 x 4 bed house
- 6 x 3 bed house
- 5 x 2 bed house

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- 4.3 The schemes are nearing completion and it is now expected that the new houses will be available for letting in September 2009, in advance of the previously agreed target dates of October 2009 (Cornwall) and December 2009 (Cherry Tree).
- 4.4 Cabinet on 22 January 2009 agreed a Choice Based Lettings Scheme for the future allocation of social housing in the Cannock Chase area, which went "live" on 29 June 2009. The agreed scheme includes provision for Local Lettings Plans in respect of specific areas or schemes. These plans are to be time limited and have regard to "community stability" issues which may include child density, age and employment considerations.
- 4.5 Whilst the houses at the Cornwall House and Cherry Tree House schemes will be owned by the South Staffordshire Housing Association, the Council has 100% nomination rights in respect of initial lettings and 75% nomination rights in respect of subsequent vacancies. South Staffordshire Housing Association will also ensure that the remaining 25% of nominations will benefit local people.
- 4.6 It is therefore suggested that the initial nomination rights for the two schemes are made in accordance with a local lettings plan.
- 4.7 A proposed local lettings plan is attached as Annex 2. This suggests that nominations are prioritised in accordance with the Priority Bands as set out in the Council's Choice Based Lettings Guide "Somewhere to Live". However, in order to limit child density and reflect the potential for family growth maximum and minimum occupancy levels are proposed.
- 4.8 All nominations will be to households living in the Cannock Chase District area and in view of the current economic situation no account would be taken of employment.
- 4.9 The scheme will be advertised on the UChoosehomes website and in the local press, with applicants from the Housing Register being invited to request consideration, providing that they meet the eligibility criteria.

5. Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 This report presents a proposed Local Lettings Plan for the initial allocation of dwellings for the Cornwall House and Cherry Tree House Redevelopment Schemes.

6. **Other Options Considered**

- 6.1 Nominations for the two schemes could be made in accordance with the Council's Choice Based Lettings Scheme without a Local Lettings Plan. However, this would result in no control over child density.

7. **Report Author Details**

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SCHEDULE OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Section 1

Contribution to Council Priorities (i.e. CHASE, Corporate Plan)

The implementation of a Local Lettings Plan for the schemes will contribute to the Healthier Communities, Housing and Older People objective of CHASE.

Section 2

Contribution to Promoting Community Engagement

The Council's Choice Based Lettings Policy (which includes the provision for Local Lettings Plan) was subject to a consultation exercise with tenants, applicants and other stakeholders.

Section 3

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Section 4

Legal Implications

The Local Lettings Plan must be fair, open and transparent and be administered in accordance with its intended purpose.

The Plan is consistent with Council Policy and further assists the Council discharge its statutory housing function.

Section 5

Human Resource Implications

There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

Section 6

Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

The 20 houses built by the South Staffordshire Housing Association are "secure by design" which has positive implications for crime prevention.

Section 7

Human Rights Act Implications

Article 8 provides that:-

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.

2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

In considering a proposed Local Lettings Plan, the Council is complying with the legislation which empowers it to do so and at the same time is considering the needs of the residents of the District.

The Local Lettings Plan has a number of advantages for establishing community stability and for this reason the Council's actions are considered to be compatible with the Human Rights Act.

Section 8

Data Protection Act Implications

There are no identified implications in respect of the Data Protection Act arising from this report.

Section 9

Risk Management Implications

A comprehensive risk assessment in respect of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme (which includes the provision for Local Lettings Plans) was considered by Cabinet on 22 January 2009.

Section 10

Equality and Diversity Implications

The 20 houses are built to the "Lifetimes Home" standard which has positive implications for equality and diversity.

Section 11

List of Background Papers

None.

Section 12

Report History

Redevelopment of Land at the former Cornwall House and Cherry Tree House Sheltered Housing Schemes	Cabinet	13 March 2008
Choice Based Lettings Scheme	Cabinet	22 January 2009

Annexes

**LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN – CORNWALL HOUSE, HEDNESFORD AND CHERRY TREE HOUSE,
BRERETON REDEVELOPMENT SCHEMES**

1. Objective

1.1 To achieve a stable community in respect of the Cornwall House and Cherry Tree House schemes.

2. The Schemes

2.1 The schemes comprise 20 houses with the following dwelling mix:-

(a) Cornwall House Redevelopment

- 1 x 4 bed house
- 4 x 3 bed house
- 3 x 2 bed house

8

(b) Cherry Tree Redevelopment

- 1 x 4 bed house
- 6 x 3 bed house
- 5 x 2 bed house

12

3. Ownership and Nomination Rights

3.1 The dwellings will be owned by the South Staffordshire Housing Association.

3.2 The Council will have 100% nomination rights in respect of initial lettings and 75% nomination rights in respect of subsequent vacancies. South Staffordshire Housing Association will also ensure that the remaining 25% of nominations will also benefit local people.

3.3 The Local Lettings Plan relates to the nomination rights in respect of initial lettings.

4. Nomination Criteria

4.1 All nominations will be to households living in the Cannock Chase Council area.

4.2 Nominations will be prioritised in accordance with the Priority Bands as set out in the Council's Choice Based Lettings Guide "Somewhere to Live".

4.3 However, in order to limit child density and reflect the potential for family growth the following criteria will also be adopted:-

(a) Four Bedroom Houses – Nominations will be made in respect of households with a "four bedroom housing need" with preference being given to households with a maximum of four children.

(b) Three Bedroom Houses – Nominations will be made as follows:-

- (i) Cornwall House
 - 3 houses in respect of households with a “three bedroom housing need” and a maximum of 2 children.
 - 1 house in respect of a household with a “two bedroom housing need” and a maximum of 1 child.
- (ii) Cherry Tree House
 - 5 houses in respect of households with a “three bedroom housing need” and a maximum of 2 children.
 - 1 house in respect of a household with a “two bedroom housing need” and a maximum of one child.

(c) Two bedroom Houses – Nominations will be made as follows:-

- (i) Cornwall House
 - 2 houses in respect of households with a “two bedroom housing need” and a maximum of 2 children.
 - One house in respect of a household with a “two bedroom housing need” and one child.
- (ii) Cherry Tree House
 - 3 houses in respect of households with a “two bedroom housing need” and a maximum of 2 children.
 - 2 houses in respect of a household with a “two bedroom housing need” and one child.

4.4 No nominations will be made in respect of households without children unless they are expecting a child.

4.5 No account of employment will be taken in respect of nominations.

4.6 All nominations will be subject to tenancy checks by South Staffordshire Housing Association.

5. Advertising

5.1 The scheme will be advertised on the UChoosehomes website and in the local press.

5.2 Applicants from the Housing Register will be invited to request consideration for the houses subject to them meeting the eligibility criteria.

6. Duration

6.1 The Local Lettings Plan will operate for the duration of the initial lettings for the schemes.