
COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Government have asked all Local Authorities to review their policies in order to make the very best use of the scarce housing resources and this report is part of that initiative. A change in policy to gradually deregulate difficult to let properties would have strategic advantages to Rochford and would reduce rent loss through voids.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This item has been submitted to Members on two previous occasions. At the Housing Management Sub-Committee on the 14 September 2000, Members deferred their decision pending a site visit. This took place on the 10 March and the Head of Service now requests Members to consider allowing those first floor flats currently being let to people of pensionable age to be let to applicants who are below pensionable age.

None of the flats have the facility of a lift and the Council would not therefore be able to defend any Right to Buy application irrespective of the age of the tenant.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Due to tenants exercising their Right to Buy, the Council's Housing Stock is steadily reducing. 46 multi-bedroom properties were sold last year and to date 33 properties have been sold this year. The current stock, including the 12 Finchfield Bungalows is 1925. The stock is made up as follows:-

Temporary Accommodation	22)	
Multi Bedroom	977)	
1 Bedroom General Purpose	92)	1091
1 Bedroom Bungalow (A/P)	197)	
Sheltered Accommodation (A/P)	523)	834
1 Bedroom Non Sheltered (A/P)	114)	

- 3.2 43% of all housing is designated for people of pensionable age.
- 3.3 Of the 114 one bedroom flats designated for the elderly, 55 are above ground level. These are situated in the following areas:-

Hockley	10
Great Wakering	11
Rayleigh	4
Barling	4
Rochford	10
Stambridge	8

- 3.4 Of the non-aged person one bedroom flats, 55 are situated in Rayleigh, 31 in Rochford (Rochford Garden Way and Milbourne Court) and two in Barling. There are, therefore, several areas within the District where there is no provision for people under pensionable age who have one bedroom need.
- 3.5 Following the 2000 review of the Housing Register there are currently 157 applicants of pensionable age of which 98 have requested their application be deferred. Many of the remaining 59 applicants are very specific in what accommodation they will accept (i.e. Finchfield Bungalow only). There are 218 applicants on the General Register requesting one bedroom accommodation.
- 3.6 Vacant one bedroom pensioner designated flats have become difficult to let and have been allocated to applicants from outside the area on many occasions. This has resulted in loss of rent, which at Wk46 totalled £54,637. This would be reduced considerably if vacant properties were let to non-pensioners from the Housing Register.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Reduction in the number of properties remaining unoccupied to accord with the Governments "Empty Homes" Policy.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Reduction in rent loss due to properties remaining unoccupied.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RESOLVES**

That flats above ground floor be deregulated. (HRHM)

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Background Papers:

None

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