

# Barnet Housing Forum



## Note of meeting - 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2012

### Welcome

Paul Shipway, Strategy & Performance Manager, Environment, Planning and Regeneration welcomed partners and staff to the Barnet Housing Forum.

The purpose of the morning was to update the forum on the local response to housing reform as well as the Government's national housing strategy and the Mayor of London's draft housing strategy.

The presentations made during the morning are available from [sue.tomlin@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:sue.tomlin@barnet.gov.uk) and/or [chloe.horner@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:chloe.horner@barnet.gov.uk).

### Housing Policy Update

Further changes to the tenancy strategy were outlined by Paul as well as the transfer of the housing Service to the Local Authority Trading Company.

The main points discussed were:

- Ensuring that the most vulnerable households in particular those on low incomes are not disadvantaged through the tenancy strategy – an equalities assessment has been completed to address this.
- Operation of the review process and continuation of 2 year tenancies for single people.
- The synergy between Barnet Homes and housing need and resources focusing on tenancy sustainment and avoiding homelessness.
- Options for multi-agency involvement in the review process for example making use of existing review mechanisms such as FIT team.
- RSLs are already allocating affordable rent units on 1 and 2 year fixed term tenancies, in general they are in alignment with the Council's tenancy strategy.
- Sheltered housing will not be let on flexible tenancies.

### Housing allocations scheme

Shaun Flook, Housing Needs Manager, outlined the findings of the allocations policy review and further changes following the review and the flexibilities granted through the Localism Act 2011.

The main points discussed were:

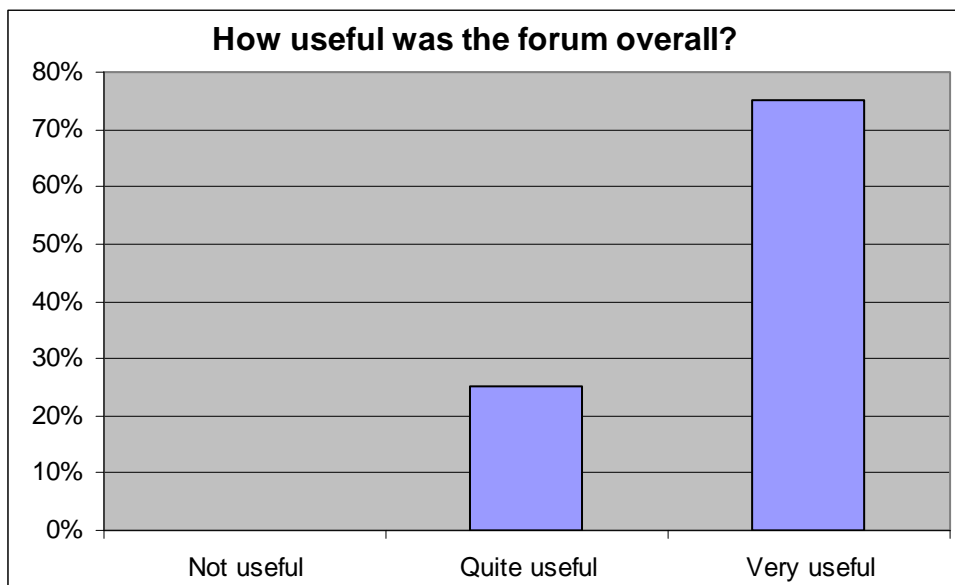
- Whether there should be discretion for parents with young children on the number of hours undertaking voluntary work – this had not been recorded as a significant issue but would be monitored.
- Clarification that the new local connection criteria are for Part VI applications – not homelessness.
- Where private sector tenancies are being secured (if outside of LBB) – as close to LBB as possible e.g. NE London, South Hertfordshire.
- The significance of refusing offers of accommodation and how we can jointly continue to ensure clients have very clear information on the implications.

Clarifications of the allocations scheme:

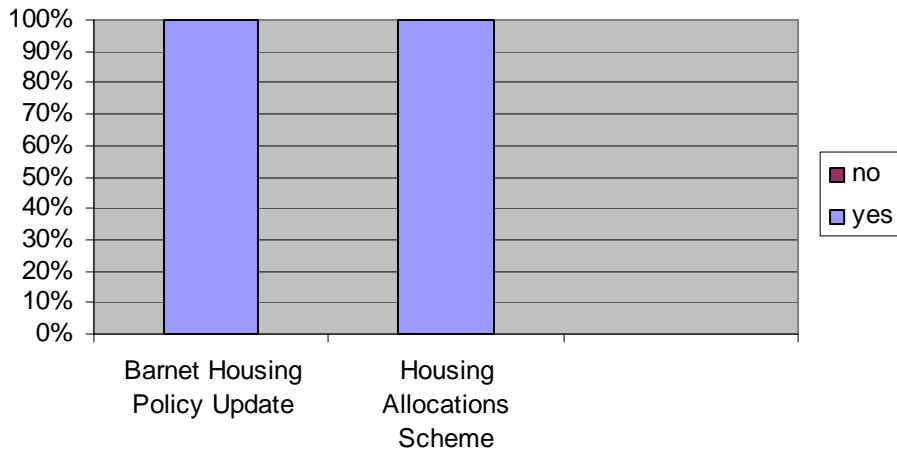
- Rent arrears - applies to current tenancy.
- Formal carers - includes young carers.

Following discussion about closer working with the private sector it was suggested that the private sector tenancy team from Environmental Health should be invited to attend the next meeting of the forum to discuss their tenancy relations work. A CLG consultation document on use of private sector properties is also anticipated.

### What you said about the forum



### Were the presentations useful and informative?



### Would you be interested in attending again?

