

## Allocations Policy Consultation Feedback

The Council engaged in thorough consultation between the 7<sup>th</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> August.

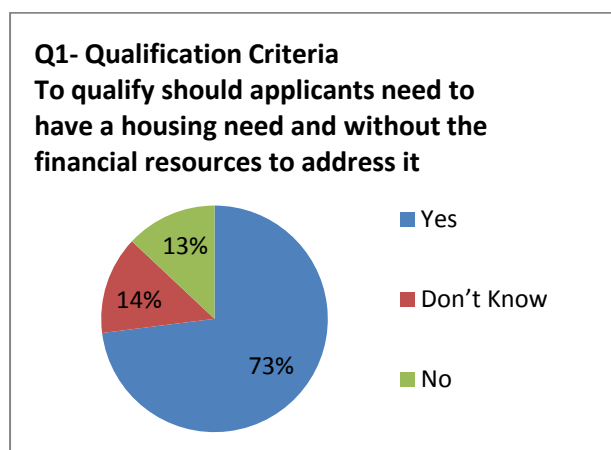
As part of the robust consultation postal questionnaires were sent to all applicants on the housing register by and those that joined the housing register during the course of the consultation. The information sent to those on the housing register was comprehensive including targeted letters explaining how they may be effected, questionnaires with prepaid envelopes and a detailed consultation booklet summarising the changes and containing FAQ's.

The council received 142 responses to the online questionnaire which equated to about 10% response rate. The consultation and all relevant documents was publicised on the website and press released were also done to gather further response.

The council consulted on 7 key proposed changed to the allocations policy. The key results from the consultation are as follows:

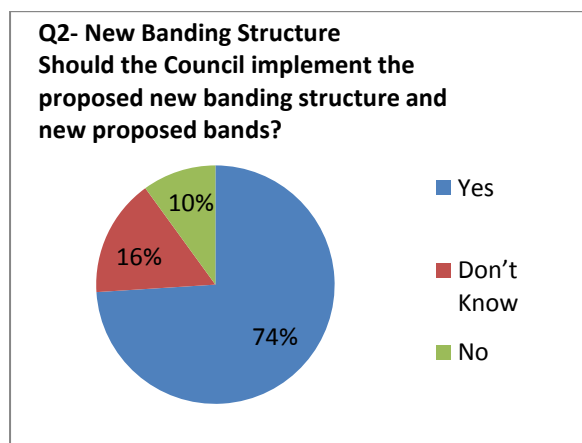
### Proposed Change 1 – Qualification Criteria

73% Agreed there should be a restriction for no housing need and for those with the resources



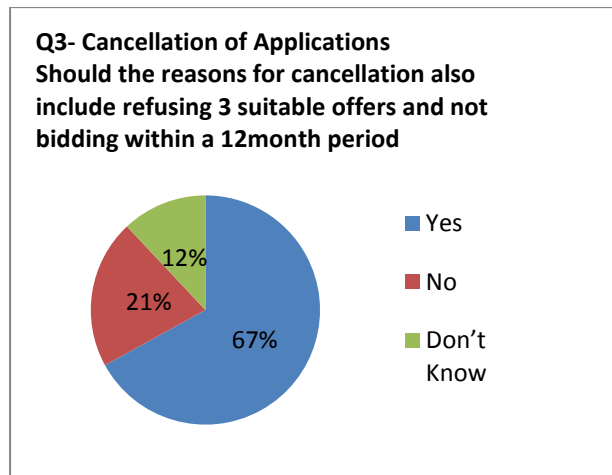
### Proposed Change 2 - Revised Banding Summary and changes to banding priorities

74% Agreed to the new banding summary and provision for the new bands wanting to be introduced



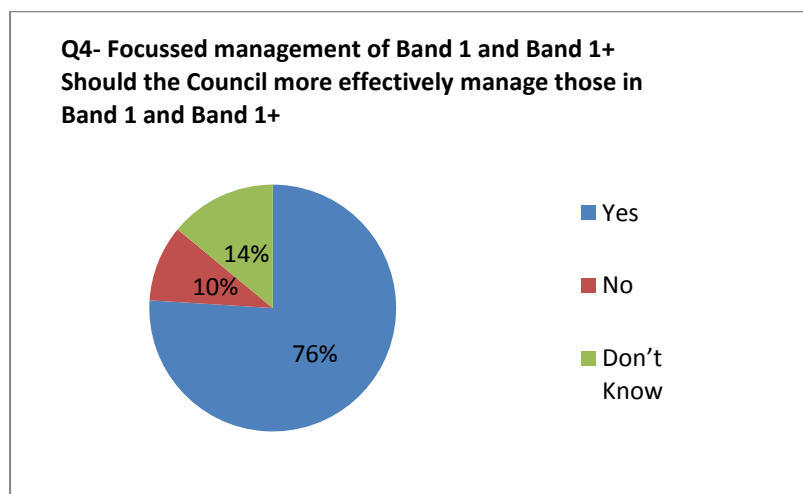
**Proposed Change 3 - Cancellation of applications**

67% Agreed applications should be cancelled for non-bidding and refusing more than 3 properties



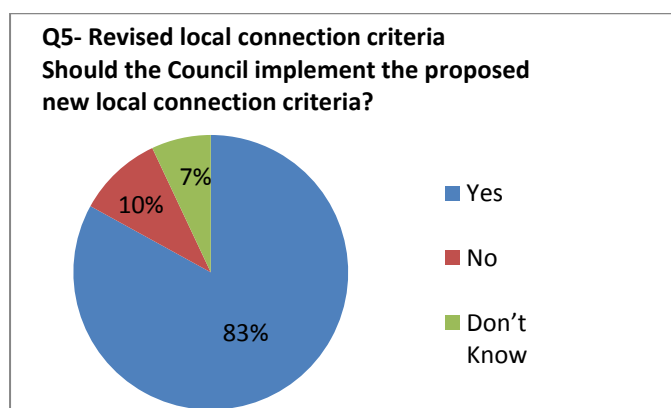
**Proposed Change 4 - Focussed management of Band 1 and Band 1+**

76% Agreed those in Band 1 and Band 1 should be more effectively managed



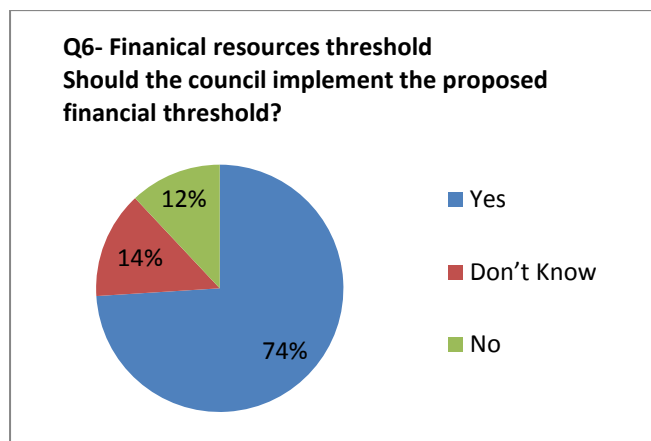
**Proposed Change 5 - Revised Local connection criteria**

83% Agreed with the new local connection criteria to provide greater protection for residents



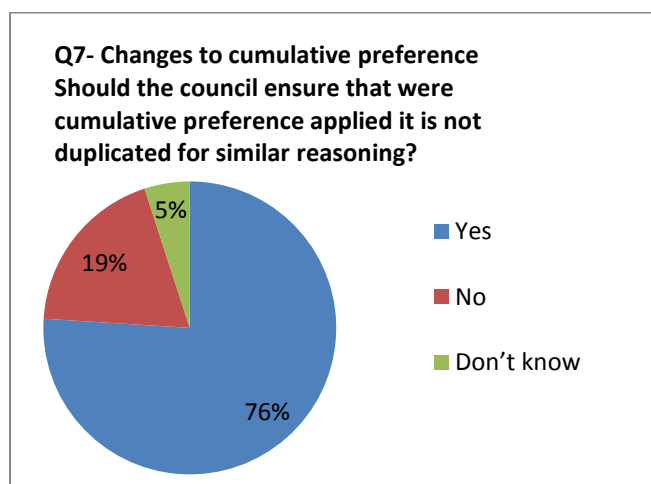
### **Proposed Change 6 - Financial resources threshold**

74% Agreed with the proposed financial resources restrictions



### **Proposed Change 7 - Changes to cumulative preference**

76% Agreed to restrict cumulative preference to avoid duplicate preference being awarded and to ensure those homeless and those injured through serving in the armed forces awarded ultimate priority



### **Registered Provider and Partner Agency consultation feedback**

As well as consulting with all those who were registered on the housing register the Council also undertook significant consultation through other sources. This included registered providers the Council has nomination rights to and a number of other statutory agencies and voluntary sector organisations. Additionally consultation was also undertaken through briefings with staff and also with the tenant consultative group as body to represent the interest of tenants of Tamworth Borough Council.

Positive feedback received from registered providers. Many Registered providers felt the changes would bring Tamworth into line with other Authorities and changes positive. A summary of some of the key feedback received through consulting with partners is as follows:

Feedback	Management Response
<p><b><u>Registered Providers</u></b></p> <p>Agreed to all questions posed within the consultation. Overall stating from an RP point of view this allocations policy is fair and will help to support balanced and sustainable communities in the Tamworth Borough.</p> <p>Positive feedback received from the questionnaire and commenting the changes falls in line with other LA Allocations Policies and ensures that housing is prioritised for those in housing need.</p> <p>Feel limiting the number of refusals is a useful tool to stop people bidding on properties that they are not really interested in viewing.</p> <p>Agree those identified in the highest priority should have time limited banding status so as to what is realistic to meet housing need balance demand and manage expectation</p> <p>More broadly MH may be withdrawing from homes direct and going more independent with its remaining allocations.</p> <p><b><u>Points to consider</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requested if any further support could be put in place for care leavers who are vulnerable client group to help sustain property.</li> <li>- Discussed exceptions around not bidding for 12 months, property maybe not come up in a rural location for example</li> <li>- Midland heart have £1000 FTA limit which they are considering lowering.</li> <li>- Bromford look at repayment plans for arrears and if kept for an</li> </ul>	<p>Positive feedback received from the largest registered provider within the area.</p> <p>Regarding care leavers a joint care leaver protocol is being developed between the County Council and all local authorities within Tamworth so this may form future discussions with a consideration as to what pilots Tamworth could consider going forward based on demand.</p> <p>The care leaver retains PA support until they are aged 25 so registered providers may want to document their details for any issues experienced.</p> <p>Additionally there is a current service arranged through TAM CAN for tenancy training which could be utilised.</p> <p>The Housing Solutions team have forged strong links with the Through care team to highlight particular individuals who may present concern and action plans are also devised.</p> <p>Additionally 2 new housing based PA's have also been employed by Staffs CC who's role is specifically targeting housing and homelessness issues with more specialised skills to aid in their transition from care to independent living.</p> <p>Whilst MH have a £1000 limit other RPs are more flexible and proposed changes may encompass those with higher debts as still other viable options for them.</p> <p>Given the proposals are largely in agreement with the position of other landlords stand in a good position form a consultative point of view regarding the proposed changes.</p>

<p>appreciable period of time before declining a nomination</p>	
<p><b><u>Staffordshire County Council- Through Care</u></b></p> <p>Positive feedback received from the proposed changes- and the new Band 1 banding that would be given to care leavers and the ability to join the register 6 months before 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.</p> <p><u>Points to consider</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are care leavers only going to be given the Band 1 priority from leaving care into independent living? What consideration for those who move into other accommodation and so not had this priority before could they be awarded it later? Are they only entitled to this banding award once?</li> <li>- Concerns were raised as to the suitability of temporary accommodation for homeless care leavers</li> </ul>	<p>Procedures will be adopted to ensure thorough process for those who get the Care leaving Band 1 priority. Care leavers would generally only be entitled to this priority once upon leaving care to enable a structured and considered transition from care into independence and in order to reduce homelessness. Exemptions may be considered where care leavers leave care into not settled accommodation and haven't then had their Band 1 priority.</p> <p>In terms of suitability of temporary accommodation the council is already making good use of alternative temporary accommodation to Bed and Breakfast, including pilot of council stock and private sector leasing. Thorough risk assessments are completed for any provisions and good partnership working between officer's care and leavers and their PA's. Bed and breakfast would only be utilised as a last resort and where it was required to fulfil a statutory obligation. Discussions are also ongoing with the through care team and Staffordshire County Council regarding alternative arrangements for care leavers who are engaging with the service as a homeless case.</p>
<p><b><u>Tamworth- Probation service</u></b></p> <p>Generally happy with the proposed changes.</p> <p><u>Points to consider</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Probation had some reservations as to whether some of their clients may be affected by local connection for those not in settled accommodation and where they had not satisfied employment provision.</li> </ul>	<p>Following recommendations by Andy Gale- further revisions will be made to the local connection exemptions to include provision those not in settled accommodation. This will also account for sofa surfers, rough sleepers, gypsy/travellers. In these cases further consideration would be condition to length of residency, nature of residency, another supporting factors and support networks within the area. Additional factors would be considered so as not to have lax criteria comparatively to other authorities.</p>

<p><b><u>Third sector organisations - Supported accommodation</u></b></p> <p>Feedback received was positive for the revised changes. Nothing specifically will affect them as still provision for move on within the revised policy.</p>	
<p><b><u>TCG</u></b></p> <p>Generally her feedback was quite positive from TCG.</p> <p><b><u>Points to consider</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concerns were given around the level of income thresholds being too high and too generous.</li> </ul>	<p>Response provided was to explain how the thresholds were determined and based on affordability and percentage of income to secure private accommodation and market rents and house prices within the area. This was generally more accepted when explained.</p>