

Executive Summary of Agenda Item No.12



Report title: Prioritising victims of domestic violence and abuse for rehousing

Wards affected: city wide

Strategic Director: Alison Comley, Neighbourhoods

Report Author: Gillian Douglas, Housing Options

Recommendation for the Mayor's approval:

1. That the HomeChoice Bristol Allocations Scheme be amended so that victims of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) who are assessed as being at high risk by the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) are awarded band 1 status for 3-6 months (and potentially for an extended period on the recommendation of the MARAC) in order to facilitate rehousing.
2. That priority move on status be applied to vulnerable victims accommodated and referred by Nextlink (or other specialist providers that accommodate DVA victims from Bristol).

Key background / detail:

a. Purpose of report:

To set out proposed changes to Homechoice Bristol Allocations Scheme so that victims of domestic violence and abuse are given greater priority for social housing.

b. Key details:

Proposal 1. The change to the Scheme would mean that where MARAC identifies a high level of risk resulting in the need for urgent rehousing MARAC will make a recommendation to Housing Options that the household be placed in band 1. This band will apply for 3-6 months. Active bidding during the 3-6 month period will generally deliver a social rented property, taking in to account areas of the city that would be deemed unsafe for the household. Extension of the period in band 1 will be at the discretion of the Housing Supply Team Manager, on the recommendation of the MARAC

Proposal 2. In order to facilitate and speed up move on from refuges/safe houses it is proposed that Nextlink and other providers that accommodate Bristol DVA victims in supported accommodation will now be included in the council's Priority Move On Scheme (PMOS). This Scheme enables an accommodation provider to refer a client who is ready to move on directly in to Homechoice. The referred client is awarded band 2 with a 6 month backdating which puts them high up in band 2 with swifter move on times being achieved through bidding. PMOS also gives scope to identify a direct offer of social housing for the client which can be made if bidding does not deliver an outcome in the short term

