

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

20 FEBRUARY 2019

AGENDA ITEM C12

COMMUNITY HOUSING POLICY E400

Purpose of Report

To inform Councillors of the proposed amendments to the Community Housing Policy E400.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

- 1. Receive the Community Housing Policy E400.*
- 2. Approve the Community Housing Policy E400.*
- 3. Agree the next review date should be February 2022.*

1. Executive Summary

The Community Housing Policy E400 is due for review in May 2019. It has been reviewed ahead of the due date by Council's Community Housing Working Party. It now needs approval by Council.

2. Background

During the Long Term Plan process it was agreed that Council should set up a Community Housing working party to review Council's housing portfolio involvement giving consideration to central government policy impacts on Council, ratepayers and community housing tenants.

The Terms of Reference of the Working Party are attached in Appendix 1.

The Working Party was tasked with the responsibility for reviewing Council's Community Housing Policy and make recommendations to Council on proposed changes.

This review has now been completed and recommendations considered by officers and the Audit and Risk Working party.

3. Summary

Council's Community Housing working party recommends the following changes to the Community Housing Policy:

To change the reference to "tribal trust" Maori land to "Maori freehold land in multiple ownership" to be consistent with the Rating Act terminology.

- Add reference in clause 3.1.4 to the Residential Tenancies Act.
- Amend the method of payment in clause 2.3 to Direct Debit instead of Automatic Payment to reduce the administrative burden on the tenant and Council at times of change in rentals, in light of the fact there are no longer any bank branches in the South Wairarapa district and many of the tenants in the community housing units will not have access to the internet to make changes to Automatic Payments online. The requirements to pay rent by direct debit and to pay four weeks bond apply to tenancies commencing on or after 1 March 2019, it is not intended these apply to current tenants.
- Add the requirement in clause 2.3 for new tenants to pay four weeks bond and for this to be forwarded to the Tenancy Tribunal as required by the Residential Tenancies Act.
- Add reference to tenants paying for the internet as well as other services in clause 3.4.2.
- Add reference in clause 3.4.3 that installations need to be carried out by and appropriately qualified tradesperson.
- Other minor wording changes throughout.

4. Conclusion

The Community Housing Policy E400 has been reviewed by the Community Housing working party, officers and by the members of the Audit and Risk working party.

It is now submitted to Council for their review and approval.

5. Appendices

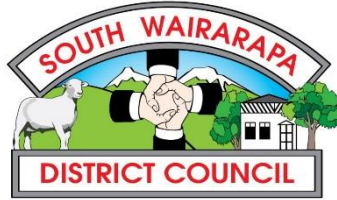
Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference of the Community Housing Working Party

Appendix 2 - Community Housing Policy E400

Contact Officer: Jennie Mitchell, Group Manager Corporate Support

Reviewed By: Paul Crimp, CEO

Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference of the Community Housing Working Party



SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY HOUSING WORKING PARTY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Purpose

To review Council's Community Housing Policy.

To review Council's housing portfolio involvement giving consideration to central government policy impacts on Council, ratepayers and community housing tenants.

2. Working Party Responsibilities

Council are aware of the importance of ensuring that housing is available to people on low incomes and to some of the more vulnerable members of our community.

The Working Party is tasked with the following responsibilities in order to achieve the best outcome possible for all stakeholders:

- To review Council's Community Housing Policy and make recommendations to Council on proposed changes.
- To make recommendations to Council on community housing funding as outlined in Council's Revenue and Financing Policy.
- To review Council's involvement with community housing and make recommendations for consultation or inclusion in the draft Long Term Plan 18/28 and Annual Plan 19/20.

3. Membership

Membership to be as follows:

- Five elected members; ensuring representation from each of the wards.
- Chair to be appointed by the Mayor.

Council officers are not members of the Working Party but may attend meetings as required.

4. Accountability and Reporting

- The Chair will provide reports via Council meetings.

- Recommendations will be by way of a report to Council.

5. Operating Model

5.1 Meetings

5.1.1. Timing and Frequency

As and when required in order to progress the purpose in a timely manner.

5.1.2. Convening of Meetings

The chair will convene the meetings.

5.1.3. Location

The meeting location is to be agreed by the Working Party or will be the Council building, Martinborough by default.

5.1.4. Quorum

Three members will constitute a quorum.

5.1.5. Duration of the Working Party

The working party will be discharged once specific responsibilities have been achieved.

Appendix 2 - Community Housing Policy E400



COMMUNITY HOUSING POLICY

1. ~~_____~~ Rationale

2. ~~_____~~ To provide clear guidelines for staff implementing this policy.

3.1. ~~_____~~ Purpose

To ~~provide~~ establish a policy for housing for ~~the~~ elderly and others in the community with special housing needs.

4.2. ~~_____~~ Council Housing Units Guidelines

4.12.1 Eligibility

~~23.1.1~~ Units are let only to persons being 65 years of age or over and in receipt of New Zealand Superannuation, or 55 years of age or over and in receipt of a benefit.

3.1.2 All such persons must have a housing need. i.e. an inability to afford market rentals. Income must be below the level set by Work and Income (or its successor agency) to qualify for social housing i.e. single people up to 1.5 x the net weekly rate of living alone rate of New Zealand Superannuation, and for couples up to 1.5 x the net weekly married rate of New Zealand Superannuation.

3.1.3 The value of the applicant's assets must not exceed the cash asset limit set by Work and Income to qualify for social housing, which is 10% of the national median house sales price. The following assets are excluded from the asset test :

- personal effects
- motor vehicle principally used by the client for private use
- funds held in KiwiSaver and other retirement scheme accounts (unless the person is able to withdraw them due to being aged over 65 years)
- Maori freehold land where the title is in ~~tribal trust~~ multiple ownership and individual ownership cannot be identified, the client cannot realise or readily convert the land into a cash asset.

3.1.4 The above qualifications do not apply to existing tenants; however, if officers believe on reasonable grounds that an existing tenant's circumstances have changed, they can initiate a review of the tenant's circumstances to ensure that they still meet the eligibility requirements that applied at the commencement of

their tenancy. If the existing tenant does not meet the eligibility requirements that applied at the commencement of their tenancy, they can be given notice to vacate in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 and any other relevant legislation. ~~if there are people meeting the eligibility requirements under 3.1.1 — 3.1.3 above on the waiting list.~~

3.1.4 Preference is given to those who are living or have lived in the South Wairarapa district. Factors to be considered include: ~~after due regard to the following residency criteria:~~

- a. *length of time resident in the district; or*
- b. *if from out of the district, the length of time immediate family ~~(children or those without children — brothers and sisters)~~ have lived in the district.*

3.1.5 Tenants must be able to live harmoniously and in a non-disruptive manner with other tenants and neighbours.

3.1.6 Tenants must be able to live independently or be receiving sufficient support e.g. housework, assisted showering, to enable them to live safely and maintain a reasonable standard of personal and household hygiene without modifications to the unit.

~~Units are generally allocated on a first come, first served basis. However, an applicant may be categorised as having immediate housing needs, and be moved to the top of the waiting list if they meet the eligibility criteria and are either currently homeless or have pending tenancy termination in less than 30 days.~~

3.1.7 In the event that there is no-one either on the waiting list or who has responded to advertising for the flats who meets the eligibility criteria, a flat may be rented to a person who is otherwise ineligible at full market rent for a fixed term of three months ~~one year~~. This may be renewed for a further three month terms ~~year~~ unless there are eligible people on the waiting list.

4.22.2 Applications

Applications for tenancy must be in writing on the Community Housing Application Form.

4.32.3 Rental

Rental is to be paid fortnightly in advance by ~~bank automatic payment~~ direct debit. A bond of four weeks rent shall apply which will be forwarded to the tenancy tribunal for the period of the tenancy. The requirements to pay rent by direct debit and to pay four weeks bond apply to tenancies commencing on or after 1 March 2019.

4.42.4 Tenant obligations and responsibilities

3.4.1 Tenants are to supply their own furniture and furnishings, appliances and services such as telephone, electricity and television.

- 3.4.2 Tenants are to pay for all services they use, including electricity, telephone, [internet](#) and television.
- 3.4.3 Tenants will supply any aerial or satellite dish required for their television service, [the installation of which shall be carried out by an appropriately qualified tradesperson](#). Existing aerials/satellite dishes and cabling left in place by previous tenants become the tenant's responsibility to maintain, unless they ask for them to be removed at the time of taking up the tenancy.
- 3.4.4 Tenants must keep their unit in a clean and tidy condition.
- 3.4.5 Tenants will advise Council immediately of any leaks, damage or maintenance issues.
- 3.4.6 Vacating tenants must leave their unit in a clean and tidy condition, with all rubbish removed from the premises.

[4.52.5](#) Council obligations and responsibilities

- 3.5.1 The Council supplies and maintains the wall and floor coverings, stove (including replacement elements), drapes, telephone jacks, and one built-in heater.
- 3.5.2 The Council is responsible for the maintenance of the units including electrical and plumbing systems.
- 3.5.3 Council officers will carry out flat inspections on a six-monthly basis to ensure that each tenant is meeting their obligations.

[4.62.6](#) Grounds

Lawns and gardens are maintained by Council. Tenants may have their own garden immediately adjacent to their own flat. If there is no existing garden, and a tenant wishes to create one, the location and size must be agreed with Council. Tenants must be able to maintain these themselves.

[4.72.7](#) Outbuildings

Where tenants finance the construction of carports or garden sheds, these buildings become the property of Council and will be maintained by the council. No additional rental will be payable as a result of the additions. Council reserves the right to remove additions where they become too expensive or difficult to maintain.

[4.82.8](#) Smoking

All units are smoke-free. Tenants may smoke in the exterior porch of their unit as long as this does not cause inconvenience to their neighbours.

[4.92.9](#) Animals

It is Council's preference that tenants do not keep pets due to the potential impact on other tenants on Council property.

In the past, ~~T~~tenants wishing to keep a pet such as a bird, cat or small dog ~~must~~ needed to seek Council permission in writing. Pets ~~awere~~ permitted provided they are well behaved, properly cared for, and ~~deid~~ not pose a nuisance to other tenants.

Current tTenants with pets will immediately repair at their own expense any damage to Council or other tenants' property caused by the animal.

Current tTenants with pets will arrange for the flat to be commercially cleaned at their expense on vacating the flat. A certificate for the work must be produced when handing in the keys and before getting the bond back.

4.102.10 Marketing and Usage

The Council will maintain a waiting list of prospective tenants which will be regularly reviewed and updated. If there are no waiting applicants, the Council will advertise and promote its community housing to ensure maximum usage.

4.112.11 Welfare

As a responsible landlord, Council ~~The Council acknowledges its role as landlord, and as such,~~ will be accessible and diligent towards the general welfare of its tenants. This will not extend to the provision of social services to tenants as these services are better provided by other professional service providers.

The Council will endeavour to provide its tenants with the contact information for professional service providers. Council staff will consult with health, social welfare and other professional service providers where tenant concerns or difficulties arise outside of the Council's expertise.

Policy Review

6.3. ~~This policy is reviewed during the Annual Plan process.~~
Units are to be self-supporting with no input from ratepayers.