



Report to: Housing and
Community Safety
Committee

Meeting Date: 24 June 2025

Report by: Depute Chief
Executive (Economy,
Environment and
Finance)

Report No: HPS021/25/DM

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Subject: Allocations Policy Annual Performance Report 2024/25

1. PURPOSE

☒ **For Decision** ☐ **For Information**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the performance of the Council's Allocations Policy during 2024/25.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (G) (11) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the preparation and implementation of strategic housing plans.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides an update on the performance of the Council's Allocations Policy during 2024/25 and seeks to set appropriate allocations quotas for 2025/26.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- i) considers and notes the performance identified within the report and detailed within Appendix I; and
- ii) agrees the allocations quotas for 2025/26 detailed at paragraph 5.11 of this report.

Daska Murray
Senior Housing Officer (Strategy)

4. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 4.1 The Communities Committee approved a revised Allocations Policy on 5 February 2019 (Paragraph 9 of the Minute refers) for implementation on 1 May 2019. On 13 February 2024, this Committee approved further changes to the Policy, but for implementation from 1 April 2024 (Paragraph 8 of the Minute refers).
- 4.2 The Communities Committee approved Moray's Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2019-2024 on 2 April 2019 (Paragraph 6 of the Minute refers). The LHS sets out the Council's approach to addressing housing need and homelessness, property condition and fuel poverty. The operation of the Allocations Policy is a key factor in the delivery of LHS outcomes.
- 4.3 Performance monitoring information on the operation of its Housing Allocations Policy has been considered annually by Committee since 2005. The most recent report was presented to this Committee on 25 June 2024 (Paragraph 9 of the Minute refers).

5. ALLOCATIONS POLICY PERFORMANCE

Analysis of Housing List Allocation and Demand Trends

- 5.1 Statistical information on the operation of the policy is presented in **Appendix I**. The statistics for 2021/22 should be viewed in the context of the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions in activity.
- 5.2 **Table 1** provides details of the housing list for the last 5 years. Since 2020/21, the housing list has reduced by 8.1%. This decrease should be considered within the context that the Grampian wide common housing register Apply4Homes disbanded in 2021. Applicants were invited to re-register on the Council's new online system if they still required housing. Since 2020/21, the number on the homeless and transfer lists have increased by 24%. Although there has been an overall decline in homelessness approaches over the past year, Table 1 shows an increase in the number of homeless applicants on the list at year end. This rise is attributed to efforts to accelerate decision making timescales on homelessness applications, which reduced from 20 days in 2023/24 to 17 days in 2024/25.
- 5.3 **Table 2** outlines the size and type of housing required by applicants on the housing list. Over the past five years, there has been increasing demand for amenity and accessible housing. The pressure on larger family homes seems to be stabilising, likely because of the positive impact from the affordable housing programme and the downsizing scheme.
- 5.4 **Table 3** summarises the first area of preference for current housing list applicants. This shows that the first area preference broadly aligns with the number of dwellings available (across all tenures) within each Housing Market Area, except for the Elgin Housing Market Area which has an 8% difference.
- 5.5 Applicants who apply for housing can select the areas where they want to live. This allows them the choice of any, or all, of the 63 lettings areas across Moray. These choices can be driven by urgency and availability, rather than the applicant's desire to live in a particular area. To support strategic planning for affordable housing, applicants are asked separately to state their first, second and third areas of preference (i.e. where they would ideally choose to live). This second strategic question is the source used to inform the Council's approach to delivery of new affordable housing across geographical areas and is reflected in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

5.6 **Table 4** provides details of the number of re-lets from Council stock in 2024/25. When compared with the housing list as at 31 March 2025, it shows that there were 8.2 applicants on the list per re-let (8.2:1) during 2024/25. However, this pressure varies greatly across house types and sizes:

- 1 bedroom general needs (23:1)
- 2 bedroom general needs (5:1)
- 3 bedroom general needs (7:1)
- 4 bedroom (25:1)

5.7 With 2020/21 excluded, **Table 5** shows reduced turnover for the past few years, although there was a small increase in 2024/25.

Allocations Policy and Quota for the Housing List

5.8 The housing list consists of three separate lists: Waiting, Transfer and Homeless. The Homeless List includes those assessed as statutorily homeless, the Waiting List contains applicants who are waiting for a Council house including current RSL tenants and the Transfer List which includes current Council tenants who need or want to move. The proportion of allocations made to each list is determined annually by the Committee.

5.9 **Table 6** shows the proportion of allocations made to applicants from the three housing lists over the past five years. This table includes new lets arising from the acquisition programme in addition to new builds let for the first time.

5.10 The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan aims to minimise the use of temporary accommodation and provide permanent housing options to homeless households as quickly as possible. The Homeless List quota proposed below is intended to strike an appropriate balance between the need to implement the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, and the need to minimise any unintended consequences of an increased quota i.e. that the Homeless List would be viewed by applicants as the quickest route into permanent housing and would significantly increase as a result.

5.11 Historically, this Committee has taken a pragmatic approach, agreeing quotas intended on striking an acceptable balance between all lists. Significant challenges lie ahead including implications associated with the increased cost of living, a reduced budget for affordable housing delivery and the declaration of a national housing emergency. Therefore, it is proposed that the quotas for 2025/26 remain unchanged from the 2024/25 targets, which are set out in the table below:

List	Target	Tolerance
Homeless List	50%	+/- 5%
Waiting List	30%	+/- 5%
Transfer List	20%	+/- 5%

5.12 A change to the Allocations Policy with the intention of improving access to housing for key workers was implemented on 1 April 2024. Despite the NHS seeking support with this issue, uptake has been lower than expected, with only one NHS worker housed in 2024/25. Those eligible for the points have expressed less interest when they realise tenancies are limited to 6 months (with potential for a maximum additional 6 months extension) but also because the property is unfurnished.

- 5.13 A further change, introduced at the same time and aimed at releasing high demand properties through the downsizing incentive scheme, has been notably successful. During 2024/25, 27 households were rehoused through the scheme, slightly exceeding the £72k allocated budget. This has been the highest uptake since the scheme was introduced in 2012/13 and is a significant increase compared with the previous year (19).

New Build Lettings Plan

- 5.14 The new build lettings plan was introduced in 2015. The Plan sets out how the Council will deviate from the Allocations Policy in identifying the first tenant in new build properties, with the aim of establishing successful, sustainable new communities, and this includes deviation from Housing List quotas.
- 5.15 **Table 7** shows there were 26 properties added to the Council's stock profile during 2024/25 from the Council's new build programme in the Keith Housing Market Area.
- 5.16 **Table 8** shows the proportions of allocations from each List, and that 38% of new lets for the Council's new build programme were allocated to Transfer List applicants and 42% to Waiting List applicants.

Trust Properties Letting Plan

- 5.17 On 28 January 2025, Corporate Committee formally approved an arrangement for vacant trust properties to be leased by the Housing Revenue Account, with a view to facilitating their refurbishment and returning them into residential use (Paragraph 6 of the Minute refers). **Table 9** details the number of lets for these trust properties during 2024/25.

6. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcome Improvement Plan)	✓	
Policy and Legal	✓	
Financial		✓
Risk		✓
Staffing		✓
Best Value and Transformation		✓
Property		✓
Information Communications Technology/Digital		✓
Equalities. Social Inclusion and Economic Impact		✓
Climate Change and Biodiversity Impact		✓

- 6.2 **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
Improved Collaborative Leadership, as part of continuous improvement through Best Value, will better enable the Council to fulfil the ambitions set out in its strategic plans.

- a) Links to Council Corporate Plan – The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:

- ☒ Tackle Poverty and Inequality.
- ☐ Build Stronger Greener Vibrant Economy.
- ☒ Build Thriving, resilient, empowered Communities.

- b) Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan – The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:

- ☒ Developing a diverse, inclusive, and sustainable economy
- ☐ Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray.
- ☐ Empowering and connecting communities.
- ☐ Improving wellbeing of our population

6.3 Policy and Legal

The primary legislation governing allocations of Council housing is contained within the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. This legislation provides the Council with the discretion to develop allocation and local letting policies in line with local priorities. The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out standards against which the Scottish Housing Regulator will assess local authorities as part of its inspection regime.

6.4 Financial

None arising from this report.

One off Costs:

Service Area	Budget	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Year	Virement From	Other Comments

Annually Recurring Costs:

Service Area	Budget	With Effect From	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if applicable)	Other Comments

6.5 Risk

None arising from this report.

6.6 Staffing

None arising from this report.

6.7 Best Value and Transformation

None arising from this report.

6.8 Property

None arising from this report.

6.9 Information Communications/Technology/Digital

None arising from this report.

6.10 Equalities, Social Inclusion and Economic Impact

None arising from this report as the purpose of the report is to inform Committee on performance.

6.11 Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

None arising from this report.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Head of Housing and Property Services, Housing Needs Manager, Housing Services Manager, Housing Strategy and Development Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Equal Opportunities Officer, G. Anderson, Senior Solicitor and L. Robinson, Committee Services Officer and any comments made have been incorporated into the report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 With author.

Table 1: No of applicants on the Housing List at year end

List	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Change since 2020/21 (No)	Change since 2020/21 (%)
Homeless List	101	97	114	103	125	24	23.8%
Housing Waiting List	2,425	2,754	2,278	2,633	2,519	94	3.9%
Transfer List	533	621	559	615	663	130	24.4%
Total	3,059	3,472	2,951	3,351	3,307	248	8.1%

Table 2: Size and type of property sought by applicants at year end

Property size and type	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Change since 2020/21 (No)	Change since 2020/21 (%)
1 bed general needs	1,180	1,347	1,132	1,323	1,254	74	6.3%
1 bed amenity/ wheelchair accessible	418	487	409	503	515	97	23.2%
2 bed general needs	590	682	597	644	659	69	11.7%
2 bed amenity/ wheelchair accessible	123	138	133	127	132	9	7.3%
3 bed general needs	442	466	367	394	393	-49	-11.1%
3 bed amenity/ wheelchair accessible	31	37	36	45	43	12	38.7%
4 bed general needs	168	195	153	176	188	20	11.9%
4 bed amenity/ wheelchair accessible	7	11	8	5	7	0	0.0%
5+ bed all types	48	68	64	69	65	17	35.4%
sheltered	52	41	52	65	51	-1	-1.9%
Total	3,059	3,472	2,951	3,351	3,307	248	

Table 3: Where applicants wish to live – 1st Area Preference as at 31 March 2025

List	Buckie HMA	Elgin HMA	Forres HMA	Keith HMA	Speyside HMA	CNP HMA	Total
Homeless List	18	85	16	3	3	0	125
Transfer List	110	370	92	51	38	2	663
Housing Waiting List	356	1,417	433	159	141	13	2,519
Total	484	1,872	541	213	182	15	3,307
	14.6%	56.6%	16.4%	6.4%	5.5%	0.5%	100%
% of dwellings (Source: HNDA 2023 Table 4.3c Housing Tenure Within HMAs)	16.5%	48.6%	17.5%	8.5%	7.0%	1.8%	100%

Table 4: Re-lets by property size and type in 2024/25 (secure tenancies only)

Property size and type	Buckie HMA	Elgin HMA	Forres HMA	Keith HMA	Speyside HMA	CNP HMA	Total	ratio/ relative pressure (lets vs demand)
Bedsit			1				1	
1 bed general needs	1	36	15	1	2		55	22.8
1 bed amenity/ wheelchair accessible	13	36	9	9	7		74	7.0
2 bed general needs	30	63	21	16	12		142	4.6
2 bed amenity/ wheelchair accessible	6	14	8	5	2		35	3.8
3 bed general needs	9	25	3	12	5	1	55	7.1
3 bed amenity/ wheelchair accessible	2		2	2			6	7.2
4 bed all types	4	1	3				8	24.5
5+ bed all types		1	0				1	65.0
sheltered	6	15	3				24	2.1
Total	71	191	65	45	28	1	401	8.2
	17.7%	47.6%	16.2%	11.2%	7.0%	0.2%	100%	
% of dwellings (Source: HNDA 2023 Table 4.3c Housing Tenure Within HMAs)	16.5%	48.6%	17.5%	8.5%	7.0%	1.8%	100%	

Table 5: Rate of relets to Council stock (turnover) (new lets excluded)

Council stock	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Change since 2020/21 (No)	Change since 2020/21 (%)
Council stock	6,250	6,297	6,342	6,380	6,410	160	2.6%
No of relets	340	445	457	387	394	54	15.9%
Rate of relets	5.4%	7.1%	7.2%	6.1%	6.1%		

Table 6: Allocations by Housing list (secure tenancies) (re-lets and new lets)

List	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Homeless List	212	49.2%	264	52.6%	236	50.8%	254	54.7%	223	51.5%
Housing Waiting List	127	29.5%	150	29.9%	151	32.5%	122	26.3%	126	29.1%
Transfer List	92	21.3%	88	17.5%	78	16.8%	88	19.0%	84	19.4%
Total	431	100%	502	100%	465	100%	464	100%	433	100%

Table 7: Moray Council new build completions during 2024/25

House type	Buckie HMA	Elgin HMA	Forres HMA	Keith HMA	Speyside HMA	CNP HMA	Total	
1 bed general needs				8			8	30.8%
2 bed general needs							0	0.0%
2 bed amenity/wheelchair accessible				10			10	38.5%
3 bed general needs				6			6	23.1%
3 bed amenity/wheelchair accessible							0	0.0%
4+ bed all types				2			2	7.7%
Total	0	0	0	26	0	0	26	100%

Table 8: Moray Council new lets (new build programme only)

List	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Homeless List	11	12.1%	10	17.5%	5	62.5%	5	11.9%	5	20.0%
Housing Waiting List	37	40.7%	27	47.4%	1	12.5%	23	54.8%	11	44.0%
Transfer List	43	47.2%	20	35.1%	2	25.0%	14	33.3%	10	36.0%
Total	91	100%	57	100%	8	100%	42	100%	25	100%

Table 9: Trust lets

Financial Year	Total
2024/25	1