

**LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR POLICY**

DRAFT – Subject to approval by Mayor and Cabinet

Scope

- 1.1 This Private Rented Sector Discharge Policy will provide a framework for the way in which the London Borough of Lewisham ('the Council') will discharge the main housing duty under s.193 Housing Act 1996 ('the main housing duty') by arranging an offer of suitable accommodation in the private rented sector. The policy therefore applies to applicants for housing assistance under Part VII Housing Act 1996 ('HA 1996') and not allocations under Part VI HA 1996.
- 1.2 All PRSOs secured by the Council must satisfy the requirements as to suitability under the HA 1996 and delegated legislation (which includes affordability). In addition, the Council will apply the locational priorities set out in its Location Priority Policy to PRSOs.
- 1.3 When making decisions under this policy, in accordance with section 11(2) Children Act 2004, the Council will have regard to the principal needs of any children in the household, and the need to safeguard and promote the children's welfare. In particular, regard will be had to any disruption to schools, medical care, social work, and other key services and support.
- 1.4 The Council will also have regard to the circumstances of the entire household and will have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty ('PSED') under s.149 Equality Act 2010 when making decisions under this policy which affect those with a 'protected characteristic' as defined under the Act. This policy will be monitored and reviewed, as set out below.

When PRSOs will be arranged

- 2.1 The Council will normally seek to bring the main housing duty under Part VII to an end by arranging a PRSO, subject to the exceptions set out below, and provided that the Council can identify available accommodation which it is satisfied is suitable for the circumstances of the individual household.
- 2.2 A PRSO will not normally be offered where there are exceptional circumstances which make a PRSO inappropriate. Such cases may include the following:
 - (a) Where a household requires adaptations to meet health and disability related needs which it is not reasonably practicable to achieve in private rented sector accommodation.
 - (b) Where a household is unable to manage a tenancy in the private rented sector without a substantial level of tenancy related support.

Duty accepted before Pre-November 9th 2012

- 3.1 Where an applicant has applied to the Council for accommodation or for assistance in obtaining accommodation under Part VII HA 1996 Act; and the duty to secure that accommodation is available for the applicant's occupation under Part VII has arisen and not ceased, before 9th November 2012, no PRSO will be made.

Viewing and Offers

- 4.1 So far as is reasonably practicable, applicants will be given an opportunity to view a property proposed to be subject to a PRSO before deciding whether to accept or reject it. Where this is not reasonably practicable, an Information Pack will be provided.

Monitoring & Review of this Policy

- 5.1 The Council will monitor the application of this policy and it will be reviewed within 12 months of the date of its commencement.

Dated 22nd March 2017