

# Under Occupation Incentive Scheme

December 2018 (Version 5)

## 1. Objective

The aim of the Under Occupation Incentive Scheme is to offer an incentive payment to:

- x Support Council tenants that are affected by the removal of the spare room subsidy
- x Encourage Council tenants under occupying their home to downsize into a smaller property which meets their housing needs

The benefits of the scheme include;

- x Reducing the impact of a reduction in benefits which would result from a household under occupying their home.
- x Reduce the impact of tenants being unable to meet their rental payments and thereby reduce the likelihood of rent arrears.
- x Reduce the need for tenancy enforcement action as a result of rent arrears and the subsequent increase in homeless applications to Crawley Borough Council.
- x Make best use of the Council's housing stock by releasing larger, family sized accommodation which could then be reallocated to local families in housing need.

## 2. Other support

The current Housing Allocations Policy makes a provision to allow tenants downsizing to receive an offer of accommodation outside the Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Council tenants who wish to downsize will be assessed on the Housing Register as;

Band A+ - Any tenant wanting to downsize by at least three bedrooms.

Band A - Any tenant wanting to downsize by one or two bedrooms.

Applicants are invited to submit an application for Discretionary Housing Payments to help meet their rental obligations where they are affected by the removal of the spare room subsidy if they are seeking to downsize.

## 3. Eligibility criteria

In order to qualify for the scheme applicant(s) must meet the following criteria:

- 3.1 Hold a secure tenancy of their home with Crawley Borough Council. Applicants with an Insecure, Introductory or a 2 Year Flexible Tenancy will not qualify for the scheme
- 3.2 Under occupy their current home by at least one bedroom
- 3.3 Have a clear rent account (tenants in arrears will be considered for the scheme if the incentive payment is used to offset their arrears or any other debts to the council)
- 3.4 Leave their current home in a clean, well maintained condition (deductions will be applied for any recharges needed for works to the property once it has been vacated)
- 3.5 Not be subject to any legal proceedings for breach of tenancy conditions
- 3.6 Give vacant possession of their current home
- 3.7 Be moving into another Council property or social housing property in Crawley Borough (e.g. Housing Association)
- 3.8 Be a Council tenant under occupying that has exchanged properties with another Council tenant or social housing tenant in Crawley Borough where the exchange is a "perfect fit" i.e. where all parties involved in the exchange occupy a property they would qualify for under the Council's Allocations Policy. If multiple households involved in a multiple exchange are under occupying and the exchange achieves a "p

