



Coventry City Council

Council Meeting

17th January 2012

Booklet 1

Recommendations

INDEX TO MINUTES

Cabinet, 3rd January 2012

CABINET

3rd January, 2012

Cabinet Members

Present: -

Councillor Mrs Bigham
Councillor Clifford
Councillor Duggins (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Harvard
Councillor A. Khan
Councillor J. Mutton (Chair)
Councillor O'Boyle
Councillor Skipper
Councillor Townshend

Non-Voting Opposition

Representatives present:- Councillor Blundell
Councillor Foster

Other Members present:-

Councillor Lakha
Councillor McNicholas
Councillor M Mutton
Councillor Noonan
Councillor Walsh
Councillor Welsh

Employees Present:-

P. Baggott (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
S. Bennett (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
S. Brake (Community Services Directorate)
J. Browne (Chief Executive's Directorate)
F. Collingham (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Evans (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
C. Green (Director of Children, Learning and Young People)
P. Helm (City Services and Development Directorate)
G. Holmes (Chief Executive's Directorate)
B. Messinger (Director of Customer and Workforce Services)
M. Morrissey (City Services and Development Directorate)
R. Nawaz (Chief Executive's Directorate)
A. Newland (City Services and Development Directorate)
D. Nuttall (City Services and Development Directorate)
J. Parry (Chief Executive's Directorate)
H. Peacocke (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
J. Pope (City Services and Development Directorate)
M. Reeves (Chief Executive)
A. Smith (Chief Executive's Directorate)
J. Venn (Chief Executive's Directorate)
B. Walsh (Director of Community Services)
C. West (Director of Finance and Legal Services)

Apologies

Councillor Kelly

RECOMMENDATIONS

Public business

98. **Coventry City Council's Response to Government Consultations on City Mayors**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive which indicated that the Government was committed to creating directly elected mayors in the twelve largest English cities outside London, subject to referendums. The Government was planning for referendums in eleven cities, including Coventry in May 2012. In cities where the vote was in favour of an elected mayor, the Government intended that mayoral elections would follow rapidly.

In November, 2011, the Government launched a consultation exercise in each of twelve English cities (the eleven cities due to hold a referendum, plus Leicester, which already has an elected mayor) on how best to give powers to an elected mayor and what powers should be transferred to a mayor if one were to be elected. A proposed City Council response to the consultation was appended to the report.

Due to the short eight week period of consultation, which straddled the Christmas period, it was recommended that the proposed response be approved by Cabinet and sent to the Government to meet the consultation deadline of 3rd January, 2012, subject to the approval of the City Council on 17th January, 2012. The results of the consultation would be used to inform the debate in Parliament on the secondary legislation required to specify which cities must hold a referendum on elected mayors in May 2012.

The report indicated that the Council's response had been informed by the views expressed by local people and local organisations and the debate that had taken place in Coventry on this issue. Local people and organisations were able to respond separately to Government on this consultation.

Whilst there was no specific cost attached to the consultation response, Cabinet noted that holding the referendum would cost in the region of £130k and that the Leader, Councillor Mutton, had written to the Government requesting that funding be provided for the cost of referendum.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Cabinet:-

- (1) Approves the response to the Government's consultation on city mayors as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and forwards that response to the Government in order to meet the deadline of 3rd January, 2012, with an indication that the response is subject to the approval of the City Council at its meeting on 17th January, 2012.**
- (2) Recommends that the City Council at its meeting on 17th January, 2012 approves the response to the Government's consultation on city mayors as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, with any amendments it considers**

necessary.

100. **Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services – Consultation Response**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People which detailed the City Council's proposed response to the Department for Education (DfE) Consultation on the Statutory Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services. A copy of the proposed response was appended to the report.

The DfE first issued Statutory Guidance on the roles of the Director of Children's Services (DCSs) and the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCSs) in 2005. The guidance was updated in 2009 so this was the third updating of the guidance. In part, the driver for the updating of the guidance was the recommendation in Professor Eileen Munro's Review of Child Protection that the Government should amend the statutory guidance to establish the principle that it should not be considered appropriate to give additional functions (that do not relate to children's services) to DCSs and LMCSs unless exceptional circumstances arise. Local Authorities should assure themselves that they have sufficiently robust arrangements for the discharge of Director of Children's Services and Lead Member of Children's Services responsibilities. The proposals aimed to meet that objective and had also sought to shorten the guidance and update it in relation to current Government policy priorities.

In response to the consultation the Council was expressing its concern about the prescriptive nature of aspects of the guidance. In particular, that the guidance was unnecessarily prescriptive in the way that the Lead Member role was to be undertaken and appeared to require the appointment of a single Lead Member for Children's Services who had responsibility for both Education and Children's Services. The City Council believed that these roles could be separated without reducing the required levels of accountability.

In addition, the guidance was prescriptive in suggesting that Lead Members and Directors of Children's Services should actively promote the development of Academy and Free Schools. This was contrary to Council policy and goes well beyond what one might expect in terms of the Council's discretion in how it will implement Government policy.

It was recommended that the proposed response be approved by Cabinet and sent to the DfE to meet the consultation deadline of 6th January, 2012, subject to the approval of the City Council on 17th January, 2012

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Cabinet:-

- (1) Approves the response to the DfE consultation on the statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and forwards that response to the DfE in order to meet the deadline of 6th January, 2012, with an indication that the response is subject to the approval of the City Council at its meeting on 17th January,**

2012.

(2) Recommends that the City Council at its meeting on 17th January, 2012 approves the response to the DfE consultation on the statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

101. Commissioning Proposal for Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services for Homeless Clients

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Community Services and the Director of Finance and Legal Services which outlined proposals for the future delivery of a Homeless Service for homeless clients in Coventry. A corresponding private report detailing financially confidential aspects of the proposal was also submitted to this meeting (Minute 104 below refers).

The report indicated that the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010 (CSR) announced in October 2010 heralded cuts to local government Formula Grant of 27% over four years and significant further cuts to specific grants. For Coventry this led to an overall reduction in resources of £38m for 2011/12 as well as further reductions in the coming three years. The impact of the economic recession and the need to reduce the deficit did not only have an impact on the City Council, but on the public sector more widely. Reductions in public spending were taking place in the context of increasing levels of homelessness in the city. The number of homelessness applications made to the City Council had increased over the last year to over 1700. The number of households that have been accepted as being owed the main homelessness duty had increased by 30% between 2009/10 and 2010/11, and had more than doubled since the low of 336 in 2006/07. The Council had also seen an increase in the number of non-statutory clients over the last few years from 468 in 2006/07 to over 1000 individuals in 2010/11.

Changes to Housing Benefit and the expected impacts of the Welfare Reform proposals and introduction of Universal Credit, as well as other economic factors, such as rising unemployment, would increase the pressure on the Council's housing service and lead to an increase in the number of people who are homeless.

Since 2010, the Government had instigated a series of legislative changes and launched a number of policy papers setting out their vision for a reformed public sector, including the Localism Act and the Open Public Services White Paper. The Localism Act 2011 aimed to strengthen the role of local government and give new rights and powers to local communities and organisations by decentralising power to the local level. As part of these changes, local authorities were required to consider an expression of interest from 'relevant bodies', such as voluntary or community bodies, who were interested in providing or assisting in providing a service on behalf of the Council.

In addition, revisions made to the Best Value Statutory Guidance in September 2011 placed a duty on local authorities to be responsive to the benefits and needs of voluntary and community sector organisations of all sizes and to have regard to the social value of its contracts.

The Open Public Services White Paper was published in July 2011 and argued that a centralised approach to public service delivery was broken, and that the alternatives are choice, fair access to a range of providers and decentralisation. This meant that public services no longer had to be run by the public sector and instead, increasing the diversity of public service provision, and thereby the range of choice that is available to individual service users, was key to improving services. The White Paper saw the private, the voluntary and community sectors, social enterprises and mutual organisations as playing a key role in this. These policy changes would have a significant impact on the way in which the Council commissions and procures goods and services in the future. It was in this context that the Council had been working with the voluntary sector in the City to explore new approaches to commissioning and opportunities for greater collaborative working.

In the current economic climate, the voluntary sector was experiencing very difficult times, both in Coventry and nationally as funding reduces but service demands increase. It was widely recognised in the sector that organisations would have to close, merge or co-operate with each other to ensure funding was not used on administration to support individual organisations, but was used to provide services for vulnerable residents.

In recognition of the challenging financial environment facing them, a number of voluntary sector organisations in Coventry had joined together to form a consortium, called Here 2 Help (H2H), so that they can work together to deliver their services and take part in either grant funded services or as a company in formal procurement exercises. H2H was a company limited by guarantee and was applying for registered charitable status. The aim of H2H was to "win significant resources to sustain and grow local, high quality voluntary and community sector provision in response to identified needs". H2H would provide a new way for local voluntary organisations to work with the Council and other statutory agencies to deliver cost-effective services for the people of Coventry. H2H would enable local voluntary organisations, including some of the smaller agencies, to work collaboratively together to compete more effectively against larger, national commercial organisations, thus helping to keep a strong local provider base in the city, close to Coventry's communities.

Preliminary discussions had taken place about how the Council could work differently with the sector through H2H to minimise the impact of the likely cuts in funding on the sector and service users. Discussions had continued around involving H2H and its members, where it was appropriate, in co-designing services, and where it might be appropriate, to look at how funding could be maximised by a cohesive joined up approach between H2H and its members to provide a more outcome focused service under a grant agreement.

The Council has been working with a number of voluntary sector providers, over the last few months, to design a better homeless service which would deliver more provision and an improved customer experience and outcomes. The Council was currently considering enabling the delivery of this new service through H2H via a new grant agreement.

Tackling homelessness was a priority of the Coventry Partnership and the Council due to the cost and the impact this had on residents in the city. The City Council was the lead agency for homelessness prevention in the city and currently committed £1,396,583 per annum for service provision. This was funded through Formula Grant, following the

abolition of the Supporting People grant funding stream.

Coventry currently had 13 homeless Supported Accommodation and Floating Support services provided by a range of organisations. This service provision had been in place since September 2009 and it was recognised that the current services did not meet current needs and were not responsive to the needs of the homeless population in the city.

During 2010 and early 2011 work had progressed with H2H, and the providers to understand the issues with the current service provision and to develop a model for the future service. A proposal was presented at the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group in August. From the review work undertaken by the Council and its partners, and taking account of the messages from stakeholders, including customers, the outcomes that the homelessness service would aim to deliver were as follows:

- To prevent homelessness, and to tackle the wider causes of homelessness;
- To prevent the cycle of repeat homelessness by providing more robust tenancy sustainability services;
- To secure accommodation for homeless people across a range of tenures, and to manage and reduce the use of temporary accommodation;
- To support vulnerable homeless people (including offenders, those with learning difficulties and those with mental health needs) to access settled homes and establish and sustain independent lives;
- Ensure the right service is received first time;
- Promote social inclusion; and
- To deliver high quality, value for money services.

The headline points of the proposed service were:

- 18 month grant agreement with H2H and a possible extension if the required outcomes are delivered, subject to agreement between parties. The number of service users supported and support hours will be reviewed quarterly and any significant changes will be dealt with as part of the quarterly review process;
- The service will cover both statutory and non-statutory homeless clients. These include single homeless men and women, pregnant women, families with dependent children, rough sleepers, and individuals with substance misuse issues and complex needs;
- A single point of access for service users, with a streamlined single referral process and a gateway assessment service;
- Tenancy sustainability service for all homeless clients;
- Floating support service to clients with 'tiers' of support relating to intensity of need
- Emergency Accommodation;
- Direct Access for Single Males and Females;
- Complex Needs Services;
- Rough sleeper engagement;
- Bond scheme.

The above list of services had been developed following a needs analysis, an analysis of the outcomes of consultation with service users and provider feedback which confirmed that the provision of supported accommodation and floating support services was vital for individuals who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. List of the grant service requirements were attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The management of service delivery through H2H had the potential to improve the level of service provided to users by putting in place a single point of access which would enable service users to access the right service first time, reduce duplication of effort between organisations and the double funding associated with this, and remove inconsistencies between service delivery that have arisen as a result of having separate service provision in place. By cutting back on administration for all agencies involved, it would enable the grant to go into services rather than back office support.

In future, this would mean that service users would have their needs assessed by a single person and would only need to provide their personal information once, rather than be assessed several times by different organisations, each with their own assessments. Based on their identified needs, service users would be referred to the most appropriate accommodation and support service, rather than placed with services on an ad hoc basis. The improved service would also be more responsive to the support needs of users by providing different levels of support and utilising a range of specialisms within a menu of services. This would help to reduce the incidence of repeat homelessness, as more successful outcomes are expected. In addition, there would be a greater focus on preventative services to support those individuals at risk of homelessness.

Delivering the service through a grant agreement would also provide the Council a more flexible framework to work within. A non-competitive approach would allow the Council to respond to changes in demand, client needs and outcomes and changes in national policy/legislation, without having to change fundamental contract arrangements or spot purchase services outside the scope of this project at costly rates, therefore preventing the Council from incurring significant additional costs. The model being proposed was new and innovative - a grant funded approach was intended to help strengthen the voluntary/community sector market and seek much better value and secure better outcomes by commissioning more intelligently. However, moving to this new model of service delivery exposed the Council to significant risks which were detailed in the private report.

This grant agreement would be based on an outcomes focused performance management framework. This approach would require H2H to measure and report on the needs of individuals and monitor their journey to independent living, allowing services to be more tailored, rather than reporting on outputs. This approach allowed the Council to capture and measure the wider impacts of its investment and respond to the Personalisation agenda and give individuals more choice and control over the services they receive.

The benefits of this approach were:

- A greater focus on the 'value' of public spending;
- Services are focused on delivering outcomes and not outputs;
- There is a clearer link between service level outcomes and wider social, economic

and environmental outcomes (e.g. service users are supported into education or employment)

- Levels the playing field for smaller providers by giving them a better chance of securing contracts/grants;
- Creates opportunities for cooperation and innovation between providers.

H2H would be required to deliver the outcomes identified through the grant agreement and payment would be made on the results achieved. H2H would also provide performance reports on a regular basis and would be subject to annual, six monthly and ad hoc monitoring to promote the maintenance of quality. Further details on the performance management arrangements were outlined in the List of Service Requirements attached at Appendix 1.

There were three service delivery options considered for the provision of this service which were detailed in the report. It was considered that commissioning a service through a grant funded approach with H2H (option B) would ensure the provision of a more flexible and joined up service that was responsive to changes in demand and user needs and reduces duplication. It would allow the Council to streamline its procurement and contract management costs and, through greater cooperation between the voluntary sector, would ensure that funding was put towards frontline service delivery. It did however carry greater risk.

The report outlined consultations undertaken with individuals directly using the service, as well as current service providers, details of which were contained in Appendix 1.

If approved, it was approved that the new service would start on 1st September 2012.

The Cabinet approved proposed amendments to the recommendations contained in the report made by the Leader, Councillor Mutton, in relation to the delegation of authority to officers and appropriate Cabinet Members to negotiate and complete a grant agreement with the H2H Consortium and in relation to a requirement to carry out a full evaluation of the service by September 2013.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Cabinet recommends that the City Council at its meeting on 17th January, 2012:-

- (1) Provide a grant to fund Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services for homeless clients, in preparation for a new service starting 1st September 2012 for an initial trial period of 18 months.
- (2) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Legal Services, the Director of Community Services and the Cabinet Members for Neighbourhood Action, Housing, Leisure and Culture and Strategic Finance and Resources to negotiate and complete a grant agreement with the H2H Consortium for a term from 1st September 2012 to 31st March 2014, with an option to extend.

- (3) Maintain funding at the current existing budget provision of £1,396, 583 per annum (pro rata first year and excluding any negotiated change). This is equivalent to a total cost of £2,094,875 over the term of the grant up to March 2014.
- (4) Require that a full evaluation of the service be undertaken by 1st September, 2013 to establish that the benefits outlined in the report were being achieved before any decision to extend was made.

Private business

104. Commissioning Proposal for Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services for Homeless Clients

Further to Minute 101 above, the Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Community Services and the Director of Finance and Legal Services, which detailed financially confidential information in relation to proposals for the future delivery of a Homeless Service for homeless clients in Coventry.

The Cabinet approved proposed amendments to the recommendations contained in the report made by the Leader, Councillor Mutton, in relation to the delegation of authority to officers and appropriate Cabinet Members to negotiate and complete a grant agreement with the H2H Consortium and in relation to a requirement to carry out an evaluation of the service by September 2013.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Cabinet recommends that the City Council at its meeting on 17th January, 2012:-

- (1) Provide a grant to fund Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services for homeless clients, in preparation for a new service starting 1st September 2012 for an initial trial period of 18 months.
- (2) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Legal Services, the Director of Community Services and the Cabinet Members for Neighbourhood Action, Housing, Leisure and Culture and Strategic Finance and Resources to negotiate and complete a grant agreement with the H2H Consortium for a term from 1st September 2012 to 31st March 2014, with an option to extend.
- (3) Maintain funding at the current existing budget provision of £1,396, 583 per annum (pro rata first year and excluding any negotiated change). This is equivalent to a total cost of £2,094,875 over the term of the grant up to March 2014.
- (4) Require that a full evaluation of the service be undertaken by 1st September, 2013 to establish that the benefits outlined in the report were being achieved before any decision to extend was made.

Cabinet
Council

3 January 2012
17 January 2012

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Policy and Governance) – Councillor J. Mutton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Chief Executive

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Coventry City Council's response to Government Consultation on City Mayors

Is this a key decision? No

Executive Summary:

The Government is committed to creating directly elected mayors in the twelve largest English cities outside London, subject to referendums. The Government is planning for referendums in eleven cities, including Coventry in May 2012. In cities where the vote is in favour of an elected mayor the Government intends that mayoral elections would follow rapidly.

In November the Government launched a consultation exercise in each of twelve English cities (the eleven cities due to hold a referendum plus Leicester which already has an elected mayor) on how best to give powers to an elected mayor and what powers should be transferred to a mayor if one were to be elected. Coventry City Council is a specified consultee for this consultation exercise and this report sets out a proposed Council response to Government.

Due to the short eight weeks period of consultation, which straddles the Christmas period, it is recommended that the proposed response is agreed by Cabinet and sent to Government to meet its deadline of 3 January 2012 subject to the approval of Full Council on 17 January 2012.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Agree the response to the Government's consultation on city mayors set out in appendix 1
- 2) Agree that the response should be forwarded to Government to meet the deadline of 3 January 2012 making it clear that this response is subject to the approval of Full Council.

Council is recommended to:

- 1) Consider any responses from Cabinet and to approve the response to the Government's consultation on city mayors set out in appendix 1, with any amendments considered necessary.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 – Proposed Council response to the Government's consultation on city mayors.

Other useful background papers:

"*What can a mayor do for your city? – A consultation*" by Department for Communities and Local Government, November 2011

"*Unlocking Growth in cities*" – HM Government, Cabinet Office, December 2011

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

Yes

17 January 2012

Report title:

Response to Government Consultation on City Mayors

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 provides for the introduction of directly elected mayors in the twelve largest cities in England¹ and specifically gives the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government the power to provide by Orders, subject to Parliamentary approval, for a mayoral referendum to be held in these cities.
- 1.2 The Government is planning for referendums to be held in eleven of these cities in May 2012 (Leicester already has an elected mayor) including Coventry. In cities where the vote in the referendum is in favour of an elected mayor the Government intends that elections for the first mayor will follow rapidly. There is some speculation that the Government aims for these to take place in November 2012 to coincide with the elections for the new Police and Crime Commissioners.
- 1.3 The Localism Act also gives the Secretary of State a power to transfer by Order, subject to Parliamentary approval, local public functions to prescribed local authorities (including Coventry) outside London as long as the function is likely to promote economic development or wealth creation or increase local accountability in relation to that function. The Secretary of State must consult before making such a transfer and the recipient authority must consent to it.
- 1.4 The Government launched a consultation in November 2011 in the twelve cities asking for local views on how to give powers to a directly elected mayor and initial views on which powers should be transferred to an elected mayor. The consultation seeks views from people who live and work in each city including from the business community, the Local Enterprise Partnership; the voluntary and community sector and from public sector bodies and agencies. The Government has said it welcomes views from City Councils in particular.
- 1.5 The consultation was launched just in advance of the Localism Bill being enacted. The consultation period is only eight weeks and straddles the Christmas and New Year period ending on Tuesday 3 January 2012. The results of the consultation will be published later in January 2012 when Parliament debates the secondary legislation needed to specify which cities will hold referendums in May 2012.
- 1.6 A proposed response from the City Council to this consultation is set out in appendix 1.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council responds to the Government's consultation on city mayors as set out in appendix 1. Although specifically designated a consultee, the Council could opt not to respond to the consultation at all but would not then have taken the opportunity to express the Council's position on directly elected mayors and its views on the powers that should be available at a local democratic level rather than at national level.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 This is a response from the City Council to Government and no specific consultation exercise to seek views of other local organisations or local communities has taken place. However, the Council's response has been informed by the views expressed by local

¹ *Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Coventry, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Sheffield, and Wakefield. NB Sunderland is not included as it held a mayoral referendum in 2001 when local people voted against a mayoral model.*

people and local organisations and the debate that has taken place in Coventry on this issue. Local people and organisations are able to respond separately to Government on this consultation.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The Council's response has to be submitted to Government by Tuesday 3 January 2012. The Government plans to make an initial announcement to respond to the representations it receives in January and then to publish its response to this consultation later in January when Parliament debates the secondary legislation needed to specify which cities will hold referendums in May 2012.
- 4.2 The Government currently plans that eleven cities (including Coventry) will hold referendums in May 2012 on whether to have a directly elected mayor. The Government intends that in cities where the referendum results in a vote for directly elected mayors, elections for the first mayors should follow rapidly.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

5.1 Financial implications

There is no specific cost attached to this consultation response. The City Council has allocated £50,000 of funding in 2012/13 rising to an ongoing £150,000 cost of a directly elected mayor in its pre-budget report and has allocated £315,000 for the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner and directly elected mayor in 2012/2013.

5.2 Legal implications

The Government is undertaking this consultation to meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 for the Secretary of State to consult on any transfer of powers to any local authority outside London. The results of the consultation will be used to inform the debate in Parliament on the secondary legislation required to specify which cities hold a referendum on elected mayors in May 2012.

There are no direct legal implications of submitting this response. If Coventry were to have a directly elected mayor there would be considerable legal implications which would require changes to the City Council's constitution. There would also likely to be legal implications from any additional powers allocated by Government to a directly elected mayor.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

The submission of the response will not directly contribute to the Council's objectives but the views expressed within it are in line with the Council's key objectives and corporate priorities.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There are no specific risks to the Council from submitting a consultation response. Any risks associated with moving to a directly elected mayor model of governance would need to be identified and addressed, including any risks associated with a transition period. There may be risks associated with other cities opting for the mayoral model if Coventry does not. All such risks would need to be identified and managed through the Council's corporate risk management processes.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

There is no direct impact from the submission of this response. Moving to a directly elected mayoral system of governance would have significant impact on the Council as an organisation – both for elected members and officers. The impact of any increase of powers to a local level on the Council as an organisation would depend on the level and type of powers that were to be extended. Any such powers are likely to be subject to negotiations with central government as "*licensed exceptions*" as set out in "*Unlocking Growth in Cities*" issued by HM Government in December 2011.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no direct implications for equality from responding to the consultation. There is no equality impact assessment included with the consultation. There are disproportionately fewer women, young people and people from minority ethnic communities elected as local councillors but there is no evidence that moving towards a directly elected mayoral model will improve this and there is a concern that there could be less diverse democratic representation as so far all directly elected mayors in the UK (with the exception of Tower Hamlets) have been white and all but two have been male.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

There is no direct impact on the environment from the submission of this consultation response.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

There are no direct implications for partner organisations from the submission of this consultation response. However changes to local government governance and powers would have implications for a wide range of partner organisations; both with Coventry itself; the Councils' partners in sub-regional working with Warwickshire and Solihull and the Councils' partners in the variety of arrangements for the West Midlands Metropolitan District Councils.

Report author(s):**Name and job title:**

Jenni Venn, Assistant Director, Policy, Partnership and Performance

Directorate:

Chief Executive's

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Helen Abraham	Assistant Director, Democratic Services	Customer and Workforce Services	1/12/11	6/12/11
Jos Parry	Assistant Chief Executive	Chief Executive's Directorate	1/12/11	8/12/11
Other members				
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Neil Chamberlain	Finance Manager	Finance & legal	1/12/11	5/12/11
Legal: Christine Forde	Assistant Director Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	Finance & legal	1/12/11	6/12/11
Director: Martin Reeves	Chief Executive		1/12/11	8/12/11
Members: Councillor John Mutton	Cabinet Member (Policy and Governance)		1/12/11	1/12/11

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www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

Appendix 1

Response from Coventry City Council to "*What can a mayor do for your city?*" a consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government

1 How best to give powers to a mayor?

- 1.1 Coventry City Council has found very little evidence that a change in local governance arrangements is high on the list of issues that are important to the people of Coventry. The issues raised with the Council by our residents are the things that really matter to them: local jobs; the pressures facing families including their squeezed incomes; ensuring a future for their children and grandchildren; the impact of public sector cuts in Coventry; the need for good schools and roads; and the provision of better shopping and sports and leisure facilities. The Council knows that people are excited about the Olympics coming to Coventry – something that the city has achieved without an elected mayor; by the Council ensuring that the old gas works site became the Ricoh Arena; through creating local jobs and through working with local partners from all sectors to maximise the potential benefits and legacy of the Olympics to the local people and local businesses.
- 1.2 Whilst there has been some local debate in the local media, the lack of appetite in Coventry for a change to its current political system was recognised by the recent report by the Institute for Government, which despite being pro-mayor noted that that in cities like Coventry the debate was "less advanced".
- 1.3 Like the other ten cities and city councils where referendums are planned Coventry City Council has not been consulted on whether or not a referendum should go ahead in May 2012 and has not had the opportunity to challenge the assumptions that are made about the benefits of directly elected mayors in this consultation document. The Council does not believe that it is only directly elected mayors who can provide visible leadership; focus on long-term strategic decisions or co-ordinate or and facilitate partnership working. Whilst it is true that some recent directly elected mayors may have fulfilled this role there are plenty of examples of other directly elected mayors that have not; with some forced to resign for a variety of reasons. Many local authorities with traditional governance arrangements have continued to achieve these aims.
- 1.4 Local government has developed in the United Kingdom over hundreds of years – just as Parliamentary democracy has done and, unlike the predominant European or US model, both UK political systems have not developed with directly elected Executives. The Council believes that, just as the Prime Minister benefits from continuing to be a local constituency MP, elected members on council Executives benefit from their continued role as neighbourhood councillors. The City Council also does not believe that directly elected mayors address issues of democratic deficit and that, in fact the role has the opposite affect by giving more power to just one democratically elected representative.
- 1.5 The Mayor of London is often cited as being an example of the positive benefits of executing local powers by directly elected mayors. In the Council's experience there is always a danger of using London as an exemplar to be used for the modelling of national policies and structures. London is a global city whose overall governance was stripped away with the GLC. Even now most services and powers in London continue to be exercised at a Borough level, with some Boroughs led by directly elected mayors. This is very different to the position in other large English cities where local authorities are not only able to plan; commission and deliver local services to meet their citizens' needs but are also able to make strategic decisions and provide civic leadership for their area.

- 1.6 So whilst there was an obvious need for some overall strategic direction and leadership for London as a whole, now provided by the Mayor of London and the GLA, this is just not the case for cities like Coventry which have unitary authorities in their own right with recognised boundaries and clear strategic responsibilities - when this is not being encroached upon by central government through its policies; allocation of finance and a plethora of agencies.
- 1.7 Furthermore there are some sub-regional structures outside London, including some related to the demise of the Metropolitan Counties, which would become more complicated with the introduction of elected mayors – even more so when there are separate talks underway with the larger Core cities about issues such as transport as set out in "*Unlocking Growth in Cities*" document issued by the Cabinet Office. It is very important that cities are able to make strategic decisions about transport and transport infrastructure – both locally and at a sub-regional and regional level.
- 1.8 The Council is also concerned that a range of policy changes being issued by different Government departments have been developed separately to the proposed introduction of directly elected mayors. Not only has the likely impact of these policies at a local level has not been considered either separately or together but where there are references to elected mayors these seem to be added as an afterthought. The reference to the Open Public Services White Paper in the consultation document stating that mayors are uniquely placed to be the appropriate level for the decentralisation for a wide range of services does not seem to chime with the contents of the White Paper itself or its concept of individual; neighbourhood and commissioned services.
- 1.9 The new Police and Crime Commissioner (a Home Office initiative) in the West Midlands could potentially need to work with two directly elected mayors as well as five council leaders – very different to the current position in London. The distribution and make up of Local Enterprise Partnerships (Department for Business Innovation and Skills) in the West Midlands is equally complex and does not fit well with the directly elected mayor model of governance.
- 1.10 Other initiatives from departments including the Cabinet Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government propose the setting up a range of additional alternative democratically accountable and non-accountable structures which could add to the bureaucracy and confusion of accountability at a local level. These include: neighbourhood or community councils (Cabinet Office through Open Public Services White Paper); Neighbourhood Forums (DCLG – Localism Act); Community First ward panels (Cabinet Office); GP Commissioning Groups and the Health and Well Being Board (DOH – NHS reform). It will be local authorities on the ground that have to make sense of these changes within their local context and make them work and Coventry City Council does not see the introduction of yet more change, particularly a change that ties up power in one individual, as helping this process.

2 What powers might you wish to see transferred to a mayor?

- 2.1 Coventry City Council supports the Government's commitment to decentralise power to the lowest appropriate level. Successive Governments have centralised and appropriated powers so that local government has been increasingly unable to make the strategic decisions and level of local investment that make cities great. The Council was pleased to see the reduction of inspection and target setting for local authorities by central government.
- 2.2 However, unlike the Government, the Council believes that when powers are better exercised at a local level this is as equally true for a local authority with other governance

arrangements as it is for a directly elected mayor – including Coventry City Council's own current Leader and Cabinet arrangements. This is particularly the case for large unitary authorities that have control over both strategic decision making and the delivery of vital local services in their area.

- 2.3 Coventry City Council did not need to have a directly elected mayor to rebuild the city after large parts of it was destroyed in the Second World War – it was work undertaken by dedicated local councillors working together who had the vision to plan a new city including commissioning the first pedestrian shopping centre in Western Europe; was able to take the strategic decisions needed to rebuild the local economy and had the resources necessary to build the new housing that was desperately needed and invest in education and skills.
- 2.4 In Coventry the City Council has continued to take its local leadership role seriously and, despite increasing centralisation, used its investments to help regenerate the city after the rapid decline of the local car industry in the city, working in partnership with the private sector and the Universities. Strong partnerships, led by the City Council, have continued to flourish and the city has a shared vision for Coventry's future and ambitious plans to create local jobs; continue to regenerate its city centre; develop a new low carbon economy and work closely with neighbouring local authorities through the development of the Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region and the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership.
- 2.5 And it's not just Coventry - other city councils that have continued to have the long term commitment and vision to develop their cities despite not having the financial advantages that London has benefitted from. Manchester has reshaped its economy and revitalised its image without an elected mayor and has a strong Greater Manchester partnership and Birmingham City Council transformed its city centre whilst taking difficult decisions about its spending priorities – all achieved without an elected mayor.
- 2.6 Coventry City Council welcomes the moving of the Public Health function back to local authorities. It was local communities working together in the 19th century to address wider public health issues that led to the development of local government as we know it today. The Council will continue to undertake its local leadership role and will look to use the new general power of competence given to local authorities by the Localism Act although remains concerned about the powers retained by the Secretary of State to alter the powers allocated to local authorities as he sees fit.
- 2.7 Conscious of the changes that are happening or are likely to happen to the functions and powers for a range of organisations both in and around Coventry, including other local authorities, the City Council is keen to ensure that it maintains or improves its own discretion and powers to promote and deliver economic development including access to investment for infrastructure including transport; and the ability to influence and direct the delivery of public transport.
- 2.8 Pragmatically, whilst local authorities can and do achieve much through working in partnership with other public agencies and the private sector, inevitably it is the ability to make financial decisions and allocate funds to local priorities that gives the greatest local access to power. Coventry City Council has a good record of using its resources to invest in the city to bring in jobs and regenerate the city and will continue to explore new innovative ways of accessing funding including access backed vehicles and social investment funding. Cities do not require directly elected mayors to help them grow and prosper but they all need adequate funding and it is the most disadvantaged cities facing the greatest challenges whose councils need it most.

Cabinet
Council

3 January 2012
17 January 2012

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Education) - Councillor Kelly
Cabinet Member (Children and Young People Services) - Councillor O'Boyle

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Children, Learning and Young People

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services – Consultation response

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

This report details the City Council's response to the Department for Education (DfE) Consultation on the Statutory Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services.

The DfE first issued Statutory Guidance on the roles of the Director of Children's Services (DCSs) and the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCSs) in 2005. The guidance was updated in 2009 so this is the third updating of the guidance. In part, the driver for the updating of the guidance is the recommendation in Professor Eileen Munro's Review of Child Protection that the Government should amend the statutory guidance to establish the principle that it should not be considered appropriate to give additional functions (that do not relate to children's services) to DCSs and LMCSs unless exceptional circumstances arise.

Local Authorities should assure themselves that they have sufficiently robust arrangements for the discharge of Director of Children's Services and Lead Member of Children's Services responsibilities.

The proposals aim to meet that objective and have also sought to shorten the guidance and update it in relation to current Government policy priorities.

In response to the consultation the Council is expressing its concern about the prescriptive nature of aspects of the guidance. In particular, that the guidance is unnecessarily prescriptive in the way that the Lead Member role is to be undertaken and appears to require the appointment of a single Lead Member for Children's Services who has responsibility for both Education and Children's Services. We believe these roles can be separated without reducing the required levels of accountability.

In addition, the guidance is prescriptive in suggesting that Lead Members and Directors of Children's Services should actively promote the development of Academy and Free Schools. This is contrary to Council policy and goes well beyond what one might expect in terms of the Council's discretion in how it will implement Government policy.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is requested to:-

1. Approve the proposed response for submission to the DfE by 6th January 2012, subject to confirmation by the Council.
2. Recommend to Council that they approve the proposed consultation response.

The Council is requested to approve the proposed consultation response.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 - The Consultation Response

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

Yes - 17th January 2012

Report title: Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services – Consultation response

1. Context (or background)

1.1 The Department for Education has issued a consultation on the Statutory Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services. The consultation has been put forward as the Department wants to amend the guidance in response to a recommendation in Professor Munro's review of child protection that the Government should amend the statutory guidance to establish the principle that it should not be considered appropriate to give additional functions (that do not relate to children's services) to DCSs and LMCSs unless exceptional circumstances arise. In addition, the DfE has taken the opportunity to put into the guidance some issues reflective of recent Government policy.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 There are two areas of the revised guidance with which we have concerns. These are i) the way in which the arrangements for Lead Member for Children's Service role are described, ii) the way in which the guidance asks the Lead Member and the Director of Children's Services to promote Academies and Free Schools.

2.2 The guidance says that it is for individual local authorities to determine their own organisational structures in the light of their local circumstances. However, it then goes on to say that Local Authorities must ensure that there is both a single Officer and a single Elected Member each responsible for both Education and Children's Social Care. This is not reflective of the arrangements in Coventry. The consultation response reflects our view that it is perfectly possible to have satisfactory and robust accountability and responsibility arrangements while having separate Lead Members for Education and Children and Young People Services. Indeed, splitting the role ensures that there is a strong focus from both Cabinet Members on the needs of children and young people in the City. It ensures that the corporate responsibilities of the Council to children and young people including the most vulnerable and for the children's education have a very strong focus within the Governance arrangements of the Council. Our response to the consultation reflects this view.

2.3 The guidance in a section headed Fair Access to Services says "the DCS and the Lead Member for Children's Services in their respective roles should actively promote a diverse supply of strong schools including by encouraging good schools to expand and the development of new Academies and Free Schools in order to meet local demand". This is contrary to the policy of the Council and is unnecessarily prescriptive about how Council's will take forward their responsibilities to ensure effective education for the children they are responsible for. Our response to the consultation reflects this view.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 The consultation response is from the City Council and therefore wider consultation has not been undertaken.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 Responses to the consultation are required by 6th January. It is expected that the DfE will issue a final version of the guidance early in 2012

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

5.1 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the consultation.

5.2 Legal implications

The Children Act 2004 requires every upper tier local authority to appoint a Director of Children's Services and designate a Lead Member for Children's Services with responsibility for discharging the local authority's education and children's social care functions. This was in response to Lord Laming's enquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié which recommended that there should be a clear and unambiguous line of accountability at local level for the well-being of vulnerable children. Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the DCS and LMCS was first issued in 2005 and revised in 2009.

The proposed guidance takes forward one of the recommendations in Professor Munro's review of child protection that the Government should amend the statutory guidance to establish the principle that it should not be considered appropriate to give additional functions (that do not relate to children's services) to DCSs and LMCSs unless exceptional circumstances arise.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

If the guidance is not amended to reflect our view its implementation literally by the Council could impede our achievement of Council objectives by diminishing the clarity of responsibilities from our existing Lead Members in Education and Children's Services.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There are no specific risks relating to the consultation response itself.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The consultation response itself will result in no specific impact on the organisation.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no equalities implications of the consultation response.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

There are no environmental implications of the consultation response.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The consultation response will result in no impact on partner organisations.

Report author(s):

Name and job title: Colin Green, Director

Directorate: Children, Learning and Young People

Tel and email contact: 7683 1500 colin.green@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Other members				
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Rachael Sugars		Finance & legal	30/11/11	1/12/11
Legal: Julie Newman		Finance & legal	30/11/11	1/12/11
Director: Colin Green	Director	CLYP	30/11/11	1/12/11
Members: Cllr J. O'Boyle	Cabinet Member (Children & Young People)		30/11/11	1/12/11
Cllr L. Kelly	Cabinet Member (Education)		30/11/11	1/12/11

This report is published on the council's website:
www.coventry.gov.uk/meetings

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Consultation Response Form

Revised Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services

Consultation Response

The closing date for this consultation is: 6 January
2012

Your comments must reach us by that date.

THIS FORM IS NOT INTERACTIVE. If you wish to respond electronically please use the online response facility available on the Department for Education e-consultation website (<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>).

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Reason for confidentiality:

Name

Organisation (if applicable)

Address:

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation, you can contact Alison Britton, Local Area Policy Unit by email: DCS-LMCS.CONSULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk or by telephone: 020 7340 8263.

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the CYPFD Team by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact Us'](#) page.

Please tick the box that best describes you as a respondent:

<input type="checkbox"/> Director of Children's Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lead Member for Children's Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Local authority officer (not DCS)
<input type="checkbox"/> Local authority elected member (not LMCS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Representative organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary/community organisation
<input type="checkbox"/> Headteacher/Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> School governor	<input type="checkbox"/> Other professional or practitioner
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

Please Specify:

General questions about the guidance

1 Did you find the revised guidance clear and easy to understand? If not, how could it be improved?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

2 Do you think the revised guidance provides useful advice for local authorities in fulfilling their statutory duties to have a Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services? If not, do you have any suggestions that might enhance its usefulness?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

We find the guidance on the role of the Lead Member unnecessarily prescriptive and contrary to the Local Government Act which makes it clear that each local council has the autonomy to determine its Cabinet portfolio and how this operates. It is contradictory to say that individual Local Authorities can determine their own organisational structures in the light of local circumstances and then to go onto prescribe that they must have a single Officer and a single Elected Member each responsible for both Education and Children's Social Care. Experience has shown that it is possible to have effective accountability and responsibility arrangements where the Education and Children's Social Care roles are shared between two Lead Members and where the Directors within the Authority work together to cover both Education and Children's Social Care responsibilities. These arrangements do not undermine the clear and

unambiguous line of local accountability.

We do agree that it is important that Local Authorities take note of the breadth and importance of Children's Services functions for both the DCS and the Lead Members and ensure that however the roles are organised that there is adequate time and focus to devote to all the functions within the roles. Indeed, this is an argument for why it can be helpful to have two Lead Members sharing responsibilities between Children's Services and Education Services.

3 Does the revised guidance give local authorities sufficient flexibility to determine how they discharge their functions for children and young people (within the existing legislation)? If not, how could the guidance be changed to achieve this?

Yes



No

Not Sure

Comments:

The guidance as commented above is unduly prescriptive in particularly in the way it sets out the Member responsibilities and does not provide the flexibility that Local Authorities require to determine how they discharge their functions. This is a matter to be determined for each Local Authority. Within this we do support the view that Local Authorities need to ensure clear lines of accountability and undertake local assurance checks.

4 How might we ensure that this revised guidance reaches the widest possible audience and is appropriately considered / implemented?

Comments:

No comment

Director of Children's Services (paras 5-6, 9, 17-28)

5 Does the guidance give the right advice about the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the Director of Children's Services? If not, how could it be improved?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure
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Comments:

Lead Member for Children's Services (paras 7-9, 17-28)

6 Does the guidance give the right advice about the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services? If not, how could it be improved?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure
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Comments:

As noted above we think the guidance is unnecessarily prescriptive about how Lead Member responsibilities are divided up within the whole portfolio of Children's Services. There can be significant strengths to having two Cabinet Members focussing on Children's Services and on Education Services. This can help reinforce the overall corporate responsibilities of the Cabinet and of Councillor's as a whole and does not detract from the accountability of either Member for the overall accountability of the Council for outcomes for children and young people.

We do not agree that the guidance should state that DCS's and Lead Members should actively promote the development of new Academies and Free Schools in order to meet local demand. This bullet point in paragraph 27 should stop after it says 'should actively promote a diverse supply of strong schools'. It is for Local Authorities to determine the best way to undertake their responsibilities to ensure the supply of good schools in their area and how they interpret the needs of their population in relation to Government policy.

Chief Executive and the Leader or Mayor (paras 6, 7 and 9)

7 Does the guidance address appropriately the corporate roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the Chief Executive and the Leader or Mayor in relation to improving outcomes for children? If not, what do you think the guidance should say?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Sure
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Comments:

Local assurance (paras 13-16)

8 Do you agree that local authorities should carry out assurance checks of their structures and organisational arrangements? If yes, do you have any suggestions about how local authorities should carry out their assurance checks? If no, do you think there should be any alternative arrangements and, if so, what?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

We support Local Authorities undertaking assurance tests for how they deliver their Director and Lead Member roles. We think this is much more useful than prescribing the particular arrangements for how those roles are carried out within the Authority.

9 Does the revised guidance give local authorities the right advice about the elements of their assurance checks? If not, how could it be improved?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

Any other comments

10 Please let us have any other comments on the revised guidance, including any further suggestions for how it could be improved.

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

Yes

No

All DfE public consultations are required to conform to the following criteria within the Government Code of Practice on Consultation:

Criterion 1: Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2: Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3: Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4: Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5: Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6: Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7: Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

If you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Carole Edge, DfE Consultation Co-ordinator, tel: 01928 738060 / email: carole.edge@education.gsi.gov.uk

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 6 January 2012

Send by post to: Alison Britton, Local Area Policy Unit, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, Westminster SW1P 3BT

Send by e-mail to: DCS-LMCS.CONSULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk

A separate report is submitted in the private part of the agenda in respect of this item, as it contains details of financial information required to be kept private in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The grounds for privacy are that it refers to the identity, financial and business affairs of an organisation and the amount of expenditure proposed to be incurred by the Council under a particular contract for the supply of goods or services.

Cabinet
Council

3rd January 2012
17th January 2012

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Neighbourhood Action, Housing, Leisure and Culture) – Councillor Skipper
Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) – Councillor Duggins

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Community Services and the Director of Finance and Legal Services

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title: Commissioning Proposal for Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services for Homeless Clients

Is this a key decision?

Yes

The proposals are likely to impact on the whole of the City and relate to expenditure of over £500k in one year.

Executive Summary:

This report is for Cabinet to make recommendations to Council on the proposals put forward for the future delivery of a Homeless Service for homeless clients in Coventry.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to recommend that Council:-

- (1) Provide a grant to fund Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services for homeless clients, in preparation for a new service starting 1st September 2012 for an initial trial period of 18 months.
- (2) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Legal Services and the Director of Community Services, in consultation with Cabinet Members for Neighbourhood Action, Housing, Leisure and Culture and Strategic Finance and Resources, to negotiate and

complete a grant agreement with the H2H Consortium for a term from 1st September 2012 to 31st March 2014, with an option to extend.

- (3) Maintain funding at the current existing budget provision of £1,396, 583 per annum (pro rata first year and excluding any negotiated change). This is equivalent to a total cost of £2,094,875 over the term of the grant up to March 2014.

Council is asked to consider any comments and to:-

- (1) Provide a grant to fund Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services for homeless clients, in preparation for a new service starting 1st September 2012 for an initial trial period of 18 months.
- (2) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Legal Services and the Director of Community Services, in consultation with Cabinet Members for Neighbourhood Action, Housing, Leisure and Culture and Strategic Finance and Resources, to negotiate and complete a grant agreement with the H2H Consortium for a term from 1st September 2012 to 31st March 2014, with an option to extend.
- (3) Maintain funding at the current existing budget provision of £1,396, 583 per annum (pro rata first year and excluding any negotiated change). This is equivalent to a total cost of £2,094,875 over the term of the grant up to March 2014.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1: Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 2: H2H Background Information

Appendix 3: Benefits and outcomes of moving to a new delivery model

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

Yes - 17th January 2012

Report title: Commissioning Proposal for Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services for Homeless Clients

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Comprehensive Spending Review 2010 (CSR) announced in October 2010 heralded cuts to local government Formula Grant of 27% over four years and significant further cuts to specific grants. For Coventry this led to an overall reduction in resources of £38m for 2011/12 as well as further reductions in the coming three years. The impact of the economic recession and the need to reduce the deficit does not only have an impact on the City Council, but on the public sector more widely.
- 1.2 Reductions in public spending are taking place in the context of increasing levels of homelessness in the city. The number of homelessness applications made to the Authority has increased over the last year to over 1700. The number of households that have been accepted as being owed the main homelessness duty has increased by 30% between 2009/10 and 2010/11, and has more than doubled since the low of 336 in 2006/07. The Council has also seen an increase in the number of non-statutory clients over the last few years from 468 in 2006/07 to over 1000 individuals in 2010/11.
- 1.3 Changes to Housing Benefit and the expected impacts of the Welfare Reform proposals and introduction of Universal Credit, as well as other economic factors, such as rising unemployment, will increase the pressure on the Council's Housing Service and lead to an increase in the number of people who are homeless.

2. National Policy context

- 2.1 The Coalition Government came to office committed to the reform of public services, particularly in terms of increasing the role of charities, social enterprises, mutuals and cooperatives in public service delivery. Since 2010, the Government has instigated a series of legislative changes and launched a number of policy papers setting out their vision for a reformed public sector, including the Localism Act and the Open Public Services White Paper
- 2.2 The Localism Act 2011 aims to strengthen the role of local government and give new rights and powers to local communities and organisations by decentralising power to the local level. As part of these changes, local authorities are required to consider an expression of interest from 'relevant bodies', such as voluntary or community bodies, who are interested in providing or assisting in providing a service on behalf of the Council.
- 2.3 In addition, revisions made to the Best Value Statutory Guidance in September 2011 place a duty on local authorities to be responsive to the benefits and needs of voluntary and community sector organisations of all sizes and to have regard to the social value of its contracts.
- 2.4 The Open Public Services White Paper was published in July 2011 and argues that a centralised approach to public service delivery is broken, and that the alternatives are choice, fair access to a range of providers and decentralisation. This means that public services no longer have to be run by the public sector and instead increasing the diversity of public service provision, and thereby the range of choice that is available to individual service users, is key to improving services. The White Paper sees the private, the voluntary and community sectors, social enterprises and mutual organisations as playing a key role in this.

2.5 These policy changes will have a significant impact on the way in which the Council commissions and procures goods and services in the future. It is in this context that the Council has been working with the voluntary sector in the city to explore new approaches to commissioning and opportunities for greater collaborative working.

3. Approach to Providing the Service

3.1 In the current economic climate, the voluntary sector is experiencing very difficult times, both in Coventry and nationally as funding reduces but service demands increase. It is widely recognised in the sector that organisations will have to close, merge or co-operate with each other to ensure funding is not used on administration to support individual organisations, but is used to provide services for vulnerable residents.

3.2 In recognition of the challenging financial environment facing them, a number of voluntary sector organisations in Coventry have joined together to form a consortium, called Here 2 Help (H2H), so that they can work together to deliver their services and take part in either grant funded services or as a company in formal procurement exercises. H2H is a company limited by guarantee and is applying for registered charitable status.

3.3 The aim of the consortium is to "win significant resources to sustain and grow local, high quality voluntary and community sector provision in response to identified needs". The consortium will provide a new way for local voluntary organisations to work with the Council and other statutory agencies to deliver cost-effective services for the people of Coventry. The consortium will enable local voluntary organisations, including some of the smaller agencies, to work collaboratively together to compete more effectively against larger, national commercial organisations, thus helping to keep a strong local provider base in the city, close to Coventry's communities.

3.4 Preliminary discussions have taken place about how the Council could work differently with the sector to minimise the impact of the likely cuts in funding on the sector and service users. Discussions have continued around involving the voluntary sector, where it is appropriate, in co-designing services, and where it might be appropriate, to look at how funding can be maximised by a cohesive joined up approach between organisations to provide a more outcome focused service under a grant agreement.

3.5 The Council has been working with a number of voluntary sector providers, over the last few months, to design a better homeless service which will deliver more provision and an improved customer experience and outcomes. The Council is currently considering enabling the delivery of this new service through H2H via a new grant agreement.

4. Current Homelessness Service Provision

4.1 Tackling homelessness is a priority of the Coventry Partnership and the Council due to the cost and the impact this has on residents in the city. Coventry City Council is the lead agency for homelessness prevention in the city and currently commits £1,396,583 per annum for service provision. This is funded through Formula Grant, following the abolition of the Supporting People grant funding stream.

4.2 Coventry currently has 13 homeless Supported Accommodation and Floating Support services provided by a range of organisations, including:

- Coventry Cyrenians
- Salvation Army
- Valley House
- Whitefriars
- Stonham

- Jesus Centre
- Central and Cecil.

4.3 This service provision has been in place since September 2009 and it is recognised that the current services do not meet current needs and are not responsive to the needs of the homeless population in the city.

5. Required Services

5.1 During 2010 and early 2011 work has progressed with H2H, and the providers to understand the issues with the current service provision and to develop a model for the future service. A proposal was presented at the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group in August.

5.2 From the review work undertaken by the Council and its partners, and taking account of the messages from stakeholders, including customers, the outcomes that the homelessness service will aim to deliver are as follows:

- To prevent homelessness, and to tackle the wider causes of homelessness;
- To prevent the cycle of repeat homelessness by providing more robust tenancy sustainability services;
- To secure accommodation for homeless people across a range of tenures, and to manage and reduce the use of temporary accommodation;
- To support vulnerable homeless people (including offenders, those with learning difficulties and those with mental health needs) to access settled homes and establish and sustain independent lives;
- Ensure the right service is received first time;
- Promote social inclusion; and
- To deliver high quality, value for money services.

5.3 The headline points of the proposed service are:

- 18 month grant agreement with H2H and a possible extension if the required outcomes are delivered, subject to agreement between parties. The number of service users supported and support hours will be reviewed quarterly and any significant changes will be dealt with as part of the quarterly review process;
- The service will cover both statutory and non-statutory homeless clients. These include single homeless men and women, pregnant women, families with dependent children, rough sleepers, and individuals with substance misuse issues and complex needs;
- A single point of access for service users, with a streamlined single referral process and a gateway assessment service;
- Tenancy sustainability service for all homeless clients;
- Floating support service to clients with 'tiers' of support relating to intensity of need
- Emergency Accommodation;
- Direct Access for Single Males and Females;
- Complex Needs Services;
- Rough sleeper engagement;
- Bond scheme.

5.4 The above list of services has been developed following a needs analysis, an analysis of the outcomes of consultation with service users and provider feedback which confirmed that the provision of supported accommodation and floating support services was vital for individuals who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. List of Service Requirements are attached at Appendix 1.

- 5.5 The management of service delivery through H2H has the potential to improve the level of service provided to users by putting in place a single point of access which will enable service users to access the right service first time, reduce duplication of effort between organisations and the double funding associated with this, and remove inconsistencies between service delivery that have arisen as a result of having separate service provision in place. By cutting back on administration for all agencies involved, it will enable the grant to go into services rather than back office support.
- 5.6 In future, this will mean that service users will have their needs assessed by a single person and will only need to provide their personal information once, rather than be assessed several times by different organisations, each with their own assessments. Based on their identified needs, service users will be referred to the most appropriate accommodation and support service, rather than placed with services on an ad hoc basis.
- 5.7 The improved service will also be more responsive to the support needs of users by providing different levels of support and utilising a range of specialisms within a menu of services. This will help to reduce the incidence of repeat homelessness, as more successful outcomes are expected. In addition, there will be a greater focus on preventative services to support those individuals at risk of homelessness.
- 5.8 Delivering the service through a grant agreement will also provide the Council a more flexible framework to work within. A non-competitive approach will allow the Council to respond to changes in demand, client needs and outcomes and changes in national policy/legislation, without having to change fundamental contract arrangements or spot purchase services outside the scope of this project at costly rates, therefore preventing the Council from incurring significant additional costs.
- 5.9 The model being proposed is new and innovative - a grant funded approach is intended to help strengthen the voluntary/community sector market and seek much better value and secure better outcomes by commissioning more intelligently. However, moving to this new model of service delivery exposes the Council to significant risks which are explored in section 8.

6. Performance Management Arrangements

- 6.1 This grant agreement will be based on an outcomes focused performance management framework. This approach will require H2H to measure and report on the needs of individuals and monitor their journey to independent living, allowing services to be more tailored, rather than reporting on outputs. This approach allows the Council to capture and measure the wider impacts of its investment and respond to the Personalisation agenda and give individuals more choice and control over the services they receive.
- 6.2 The benefits of this approach are:
- A greater focus on the 'value' of public spending;
 - Services are focused on delivering outcomes and not outputs;
 - There is a clearer link between service level outcomes and wider social, economic and environmental outcomes (e.g. service users are supported into education or employment)
 - Levels the playing field for smaller providers by giving them a better chance of securing contracts/grants;
 - Creates opportunities for cooperation and innovation between providers.
- 6.3 H2H will be required to deliver the outcomes identified through the grant agreement and payment will be made on the results achieved. H2H will also provide performance reports on a regular basis and will be subject to annual, six monthly and ad hoc monitoring to

promote the maintenance of quality. Further details on the performance management arrangements can be found in the List of Service Requirements attached at Appendix 1.

7. Options considered and recommended proposal

7.1 There are three service delivery options considered for the provision of this service:

- A. The Council procures these services through a traditional procurement approach, which would involve the Council in accordance with its rules for contracts undertaking a formal tender process which individual organisations or H2H could tender for.
- B. The Council commissions homeless services through a grant funded approach through H2H who enter into the grant agreement and then provide the service through its members and other organisations.
- C. The Council undertakes a formal tender process for a consortium to work in partnership with the Council and the voluntary sector, commencing January 2012 to enable a new service to be in place from September 2012.

7.2 Option A was explored and is not the preferred solution because this approach will not secure the desired service improvements.

7.3 It is considered that commissioning a service through a grant funded approach with H2H (option B) will ensure the provision of a more flexible and joined up service that is responsive to changes in demand and user needs and reduces duplication. It will allow the Council to streamline its procurement and contract management costs and, through greater cooperation between the voluntary sector, will ensure that funding is put towards frontline service delivery. It does however carry greater risk.

7.4 In exploring the feasibility of Option C, it was identified that there are not very many consortia in existence that have both, experience of working with homeless clients and of working with the voluntary sector. It is very likely that H2H, as a voluntary sector consortium with members experienced in delivering these types of services, will emerge as a key tenderer through this process. However, adopting a tendering approach to these services will make it difficult for the consortium to respond to the changing needs of service users without having to change fundamental contract arrangements or spot purchase services outside the scope of this project at costly rates.

8. Results of consultation undertaken

8.1 Consultation was undertaken with individuals directly using the service, as well as current service providers. Three focus groups were held over July and August 2010 to consult users about their experiences of the services they received currently and what they felt was needed in addition to this, or what could be changed.

8.2 Individual interviews were conducted with providers of homeless services over this period to ascertain: what services are currently being provided; how clients are dealt with; what improvements could be made; and what the gaps are.

8.3 Following the individual interviews with providers, an externally facilitated provider event was held to share the outcomes of the user and provider consultation. The aim of the event was to share the emerging issues, jointly agree what works well and what doesn't with regards to currently commissioned services and what could be improved/changed.

- 8.4 The results from the consultation exercise identified the need to:
- A. Raise awareness of the range of services available to Coventry residents and provide better information and advice;
 - B. Reduce duplication by streamlining processes and make it easier for customers to access homeless services;
 - C. Provide preventive services to help those at risk of becoming homelessness and provide post-tenancy support to help clients maintain their accommodation and prevent repeat homelessness;
 - D. Focus on improving the outcomes of service users to enable them to live more independently.
- 8.5 The results of the consultation are being embedded within the List of Required Services attached at Appendix 1.

9. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 9.1 If the recommendations are approved the new service will start 1st September 2012.

10. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

10.1 Financial implications

10.1.1 The funding for this service is contained within existing budget provision. Detailed finance implications are referred to in Private Report.

10.1.2 As outlined in the Private Report, the proposed option offers an opportunity to improve service provision but involves significant risk. Some of the key risks can be mitigated, through a voluntary OJEU notice, the holding of cash in escrow account which gives the Council some control, and the use of collateral warranties, which create a legally binding relationship between the Council and ultimate suppliers.

10.1.3 The initial trial period of 18 months will give an opportunity to prove the concept, and show that the benefits can be realised and the risks managed effectively. The agreement with H2H will be monitored closely, and will be placed on the Corporate Risk Register, so that any problems which may emerge can be dealt with swiftly and effectively.

10.2 Legal implications

10.2.1 Under the Local Government Act 2000, the Council can use the well being powers to grant fund a service. In order to ensure this is an open and transparent procedure the voluntary OJEU notice will ensure that organisations are aware of the procedure.

10.2.2 The duty to secure best value under the Local Government Act 1999 has been issued with revised statutory guidance in September 2011 and reaffirms the duty on local authorities to be responsive to the benefits and needs of voluntary and community sector organisations of all sizes and to have regard to the social value of its contracts.

10.2.3 The Localism Act 2011 came into effect on the 15th November but is subject to secondary legislation to bring it into force. It will require local authorities to consider an expression of interest from 'relevant bodies' who are interested in providing or assisting in providing a service on behalf of the Council. These 'relevant bodies' could include:

- A. A voluntary or community body;
- B. A body of persons or a trust which is established for charitable purposes only;
- C. A parish council;
- D. Two or more employees of the local authority.

10.2.4 In addition the well being power will be replaced by the General Power of Competence under the Localism Act. The Power is intended to encourage and support local authorities in being more innovative and make efficiency savings. The Power enables authorities to do anything that individuals generally may do provided that there is no legal restrictions to the contrary.

11. Other implications

11.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

11.1.1 This service supports the delivery of the vision and values set out within the Council Plan 2011-14, by ensuring that people are prevented from becoming homeless and supported if they do.

11.2 How is risk being managed?

11.2.1 The risks associated with this proposal are contained within the Private Report.

11.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

11.3.1 The existing set of services are currently provided through the voluntary sector and so there would not be a direct impact on staff, although there may be implications for those who manage contracts who may require training and support in managing this work in a different way.

11.4 Equalities / EIA

11.4.1 The public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 came into force on 5th April 2011. Decision makers must have ongoing due regard to avoid discrimination and advance opportunity for anyone with the relevant protected characteristics which are disabilities, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. "Due regard" requires more than just an awareness of the equality duty. It requires rigorous analysis by the public authority, beyond broad options.

11.4.2 A Phase 1 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken in advance of this report, and this has identified a need to address some equalities issues. Key actions are outlined in the Equality Action Plan included within the EIA attached at Appendix 2 to this report.

11.4.3 A second EIA will be conducted at the service design stage to ensure that any equalities issues have been addressed in the redesign of the service. In addition, the service will be required to collect and monitor equalities data and to respond to any equalities issues that are identified on an ongoing basis during the provision of this service.

11.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

11.6 Implications for partner organisations?

11.6.1 Existing suppliers are voluntary sector, therefore, the provisions of COMPACT will apply.

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

SERVICE FORM 2011-2012

Background/ Scope

Name of service	Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services for statutory and non-statutory homeless clients
Directorate	Community Services
Head of EIA Team	Robina Nawaz
Other members of the EIA team	Jaspal Mann Anthea Smith Ayaz Maqsood

1. Is this EIA being carried out on:

- An existing service
 A new service, or significantly changed service

2. Who are the stakeholders? Are there any other services, directorates, organisations or groups involved in the delivery of this service? Please list below.

- Current and potential service users.
- Current providers who are voluntary sector organisations
- The Council's Children, Learning and Young People's directorate

3. Briefly describe the purpose of this service.

The service provides accommodation and floating support services to a range of vulnerable client groups who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The aim of the service is to prevent homelessness in the first instance, but also support those who are homeless to find housing solutions that meet their individual outcomes.

4. Who does this service affect or benefit, and in what way? e.g., school children, all Coventry residents etc.

- Any Coventry resident who is homeless or at the risk of homelessness
- All current providers of homeless services

- Partner organisations who provide support to homeless individuals

5. What do you know about any equalities issues for this type of service both in Coventry and nationally?

As part of the service re-design, a needs analysis was conducted that sets out information on the current services and the users. It should be noted that there are data cleanliness issues with the service user data available and therefore client information is using approximates. The key information from the needs analysis is summarised below:

Age profile

Data on current service users shows that clients range in age from 16 to 89. However, the age profile of the people using these services is dominated by the 18-46 age group, with 78% of users in this age band.

According to the Mid-2010 ONS population estimates, there were 163,900 people in 2010 who fell into the 15-49 age group, which makes up 52% of Coventry's population. The age banding used (i.e. 15-49) reflects the age bandings used by the ONS. This shows that the 18-46 age category are over-represented in the number of people reporting as homeless.

Gender profile

The vast majority of clients using the current services were male – in 2010/11, female clients accounted for only 5% of the total visits. This is because currently, there is no provision of direct access accommodation for this client group.

ONS data shows that in 2010, Coventry's population was made up of 157,500 males and 158,200 females. This again highlights the disproportionately low number of females accessing homeless services in the city, compared to the number of women making up the city's population.

Ethnicity profile

The majority of users were from a White background (77%), whilst the second highest ethnic group to feature in this cohort is Black (14.5%). Interestingly, a review of the names of those users who indicated that they were from a Black background, showed that the majority of names were of Black African origin. A full breakdown is shown below:

Ethnic Origin	% services users	% Coventry population 2009
White	76.9%	79.2%
Black	14.5%	3.1%
Asian	5.0%	12.3%
Mixed	2.1%	2.4%
Chinese/Other	0.3%	3.0%
Unknown	1.2%	0%

Looking at the ethnicity profile of Coventry as a whole shows that some groups

are over-represented in the cohort of users accessing homeless services. Notable differences are people of Black ethnicity – this group makes up 14.5% of all clients, compared to Coventry's population from this ethnic group (3.1%).

Disability profile

The data collected by the service on disability is partial and does not include details of the nature of the disability. The information available has been used to give a picture of disabled clients using the service. It should be noted that disability in this case is self-declared and may not necessarily fall under the definition of the DDA.

197 people (7.1%) using the service between 2009/10-2010/11 indicated that they had a disability. This compares to the 18.6% of people in Coventry who declared that they had a limiting long term illness. Of those who declared they had a disability, the majority were in the 30-44 age band. In terms of ethnicity, people from a White British background were more likely to have a disability than any other ethnic group (78%).

Potential service users

Anecdotal evidence from providers shows that there is a cohort of individuals who are experiencing homelessness, but who do not access services and instead are 'sofa-surfing' and relying on friends and family members for support. The size and nature of this cohort is not possible to determine.

Additional protected characteristics

Under the 2010 Equality Act, decision makers must have ongoing due regard to avoid discrimination and advance opportunity for anyone with the relevant protected characteristics which are disabilities, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Currently, the service does not collect data on the following protected characteristics:

- Pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Processes have been put in place for this information to be collected on an ongoing basis. This additional information will be used to update the EIA and inform the design of the service.

Consultation

This section on consultation should be completed if this EIA relates to a new or significantly changed service- please see the guidance note on how to carry out consultation

6. Please state who you have consulted with about this service, how you have consulted, whether consultation responses have been received, plus any other relevant information.

As part of the work to re-design and improve the current services, consultation was undertaken with both users of the current service and all provider agencies.

Three focus groups were held over July and August 2010 to consult users about their experiences of the services they received currently and what they felt was needed in addition to this, or what could be changed.

Individual interviews were conducted with providers of homeless services over this period to ascertain: what services are currently being provided; how clients are dealt with; what improvements could be made; and what the gaps are.

Following the individual interviews with providers, an externally facilitated provider event was held to share the outcomes of the user and provider consultation. The aim of the event was to share the emerging issues, jointly agree what works well and what doesn't with regards to currently commissioned services and what could be improved/changed.

7. Please summarise the outcome of the consultation exercise.

The key points of feedback from service users were as follows:

- Most clients didn't know where to go/who to approach upon becoming homeless
- There was a lack of transparency/awareness of criteria for being accepted into hostel
- Issues with rent arrears
- Clients felt as if they were stuck – the current system doesn't encourage clients to get out
- There is no post-tenancy support
- Clients found it difficult to find private sector accommodation
- Clients do not receive a holistic support service - there are not always clear links between support services/agencies

The key points raised by providers were:

- Clients are assessed a number of times by more than one organisation before they can access services, and each organisation has its own assessment form
- Access to support services e.g. mental health is not always easy for clients
- Services are expected to help clients to make significant progress very quickly as part of Supporting People funding. This isn't easy with clients who have complex needs

Providers also proposed a number of solutions which would address the issues raised. These suggestions include:

- Developing a single point of access for services
- Having a robust referral process between the council and all agencies involved
- Put in place a single assessment process and share data
- Have a consistent set of service standards in place

- Update the homeless directory with all the agency information so that clients and providers know who is doing what.
- Create a recycle hub to help homeless clients with furnishing their homes.

Further details on the outcomes of the consultations are available on request.

Data collection

8. What is your data telling you about your service with regard to equalities?

Please consider issues relating to race, gender (including transgender), disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, poverty, looked after children, and any other issues that you consider to be relevant- inequality is disadvantage in all forms.

As per section 5 above, we can see that there are the following equalities issues:

There is an over-representation of the 18-46 age group in the number of homeless clients, when compared to the city's population. Information on the reason for homelessness is not captured currently, and so it is difficult to determine whether any specific preventative activities need to be carried out with this cohort.

The number of women accessing homelessness services in the city is low. This is because currently, there is no provision of direct access accommodation for this client group.

People of Black ethnicity are over-represented in the cohort of users accessing homeless services – this group makes up 14.5% of all clients, compared to Coventry's population from this ethnic group (3.1%). The data available does not allow us to determine:

- whether the number of black people accessing homeless service is actually an over representation, in relation to the total number of homeless people in the city
- the reason for homelessness and whether any specific preventative activities need to be carried out with this cohort

7.1% of service users reported that they had a disability, and of these the majority were in the 30-44 age band and were from a White British background.

Anecdotal evidence shows that there is a cohort of homeless individuals who do not access services and instead are reliant on friends and family members for support. Currently, there is no information available on the size or nature of this cohort, and therefore it is difficult to determine their needs.

Individuals who are homeless often face a range of challenges, including substance misuse and mental ill-health. The cohort of clients also includes ex-offenders and people with mild or borderline learning difficulties.

9. Is there any way in which you think you need to improve your monitoring systems, so that you can collect better equalities data for this service?

Please refer to the Council's Equality Monitoring Guidance for further information (available on the intranet or from your Directorate Equality Officer)

As the re-design of the service progresses, it is important that an accurate baseline is established to enable a clear comparison between the make up of service users before and after implementation. This will help to measure the impact of the changes and ensure that there is not an adverse impact on any particular groups of service users. This will also enable appropriate corrective actions to be put in place where deemed necessary.

Data could be improved by collecting additional data on disability (e.g. nature of disability) and by further breaking down information on ethnicity, so that it is line with the ONS ethnicity categories to enable us to look at which groups are using the services, and identify any interventions that may support different community groups.

Data on the particular groups highlighted by the 2010 Equality Act also needs to be collated. The following additional data about service users needs to be collated:

- Pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Data on potential users could also be collected. The feasibility of doing this needs to be considered.

Assessment

10. How does this service positively promote equality?

At the needs analysis and pre-commissioning stage, it is likely that the service re-design will have a positive equality impact. However, it is important that this EIA is revisited at the service design and post-implementations stages.

By bringing services together and having a single point of access for customers, the aim will be to ensure that customers receive the right service first time, and to streamline the referral and assessment process. It will also minimise any inconsistencies in service delivery, as there will be a single assessment process and all the service providers will be working to deliver the same specification.

By addressing the gaps in service provision for key groups, e.g. women, the service will promote greater equality.

The high level outcome of the service is to prevent homelessness in the first instance, and to support those who are homeless to access settled homes sustain independent lives. By helping vulnerable users, who are often affected by multiple problems, to improve their outcomes and become more independent,

the service will enable them to become more socially included.

11. How does this service contribute towards improving relationships between different communities?

Not applicable

12. Are there any areas of low or high take-up by different groups of people?

Yes No

If yes, please give details.

As stated in section 5, there is a high representation amongst the 18-46 age group and people of Black ethnicity, as compared to the population profile of the city. There is a low take up amongst women.

There is also an under-representation of disabled people, when compared to the Coventry figure as a whole.

In addition, anecdotal evidence shows that there is a cohort of homeless individuals who do not access services and instead are reliant on friends and family members for support.

13. Does analysis by ward or area show that there are different parts of the city that are particularly disadvantaged or excluded?

Yes No

If yes, please give details.

Not applicable- ward data is not collected.

14. Are there any barriers to equal access?

Yes No

If yes, please give details.

As stated in section 5, there is no direct access accommodation for women in the city. The new service will provide direct access accommodation for this client group, thereby removing some of the barriers to access.

15. Are there any barriers to equality of outcomes for different service users?

Yes No

If yes, please give details.

As the new service has not yet been implemented, the full impact is not yet known. However, it is important to be aware of the following potential barriers:

- The new service will rely on putting in place a single assessment process to ensure that customers are provided with the support they need. There is a risk that if all provider agencies do not adopt this approach, or if this is applied inconsistently across organisations, customers will receive a variable level and quality of service, thereby impacting on the quality of their outcomes.

16. Has there been any improvement?

As the service is at the needs analysis stage, it is not possible to assess any improvement at the current time. This EIA will need to be re-visited at the service design and post-implementation stages.

Summary

17. Please indicate which of the following best describes the outcome of your EIA. You may tick both the first two boxes if both are applicable.

- This service will have a positive equalities impact
- This service has identified a need to address some equalities issues
- There wasn't enough information to be able to draw any conclusions.
- This service is having no equalities impact

Developing equality actions

If this EIA has identified that this service needs to be improved in order to promote equality and diversity positively, please explain how you plan to do this.

You should develop equality actions and insert the key actions in the table below. Strategic equality actions should be embedded into operational plans.

Action	Timescales/ Milestones	Who will monitor this?	How/ where will this be embedded?
Collect information on protected characteristics identified through the 2010 Equality Act	Dec 2011 and ongoing	EIA team	Service specification and contract/agreement
Ensure direct access provision for women	As part of the commissioning process	Operational manager (Council) and Lead Provider	Service specification and contract/agreement
Revisit EIA at service design and post-implementation stages	As part of the commissioning process and when service has been implemented	Operational manager (Council) and Lead Provider and EIA team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service specification • contract/agreement • Reporting information from service
Analyse data collected to identify any trends and improve services provided	After service is implemented on an ongoing basis	Operational manager (Council) and Lead Provider and EIA team	Reporting information from service

Approval

This EIA has been completed by:

Signed (Head of EIA Team)

Name (please print) **Robina Nawaz**

Date: 24.11.11

Countersigned: Sara Roach (Assistant Director, Public Safety and Housing)

Date: 06.12.11

Please brief your Head of Service on the results of this EIA, as soon as possible.

It is essential that this EIA is also discussed by your Directorate Management Team, and remains readily available for inspection.

A copy of this signed review should then be forwarded to your Directorate Equality Officer.

APPENDIX 2: Here 2 Help (H2H) Background Information

1. Background/context

- 1.1 In the current economic climate, the voluntary sector is experiencing very difficult times, both in Coventry and nationally as funding reduces but service demands increase. It is widely recognised in the sector that organisations will need to be much more competitive and efficient to be able to survive, and that some organisations will have to close, merge or co-operate with each other to ensure funding is not used on administration to support individual organisations but is used to provide services for vulnerable residents.
- 1.2 In recognition of the challenging financial environment facing them, a number of voluntary sector organisations in Coventry have joined together to form the Here 2 Help consortium.

2. Aims/purpose

- 2.1 H2H is a consortium of a number of Coventry voluntary sector organisations who have joined together so that they can work together to deliver their services and take part in either grant funded services or as a company in formal procurement exercises. H2H is a membership owned company limited by guarantee and is applying for registered charitable status.
- 2.2 The aim of H2H is to 'win significant resources to sustain and grow local, high quality voluntary and community sector provision in response to identified needs'.
- 2.3 The consortium will provide a new way for local voluntary organisations to work with the Council and other statutory agencies to deliver cost-effective services for the people of Coventry. The consortium will enable local voluntary organisations, including some of the smaller agencies, to work collaboratively and tender together to compete more effectively against larger, national commercial organisations, thus helping to keep a strong local provider base in the city, close to Coventry's communities.
- 2.4 H2H will not be a provider in itself, and instead will focus on working with its members to tender for public service contracts and facilitate the delivery of these through its member organisations. This will avoid the duplication of effort, as individual member organisations will not have to submit separate tenders, but instead this will be managed by H2H and will ensure a coherent and consistent approach to a tender.

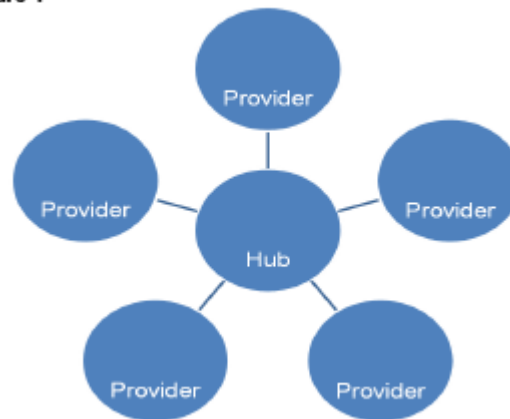
3. Governance Arrangements

- 3.1 H2H is governed by a Board of Trustees who are selected from the member organisations as well as individuals outside of the consortium membership with an interest in the delivery of public services by the VCS. Places on the board are the subject of an open contest on an annual basis through the Annual General Meeting, with trustees standing down after a three year period.
- 3.2 The board will meet on a regular basis, as befitting the business needs of H2H, and will be responsible for the strategic direction of the consortium and for overseeing day-to-day management issues. Accountability for H2H's work will rest wholly with the board.

4. Operating Structure

- 4.1 H2H will operate through a hub and spokes structure (the hub being the central infrastructure that acts as the executive engine of the consortium, including negotiating and sub-letting contracts, while the spokes are the various individual member organisations/providers – see figure 1).

Figure 1



- 4.2 Through the hub infrastructure H2H will be able to act as the key liaison point between its funders and regulatory bodies and the voluntary organisations providing frontline services.
- 4.3 The hub will provide a range of technical and secretariat duties such as: negotiation, tender writing, contract management, resource allocation, quality improvement and organisational capacity building (within the specific context of public service delivery). H2H will be responsible for carrying out fund/contract management and seeking out new opportunities on behalf of its members.
- 4.4 Through its work, H2H will enable more joint working and facilitate the sharing of expertise and good practice between providers. By taking on the functions associated with contract management and by pooling resources, H2H will free up provider agencies to spend their time and resources in delivering frontline services and ensure more money is spent on providing services to customers, rather than back office support.

5. Funding

- 5.1 The consortium hub will be paid for via a contract top slice mechanism. It will need to be sufficiently dynamic to expand and, if necessary, *contract* in line with fluctuations in the funding market, increasing and decreasing its capacity to balance with the inflow of cash.
- 5.2 A key underlying principle of the internal resource allocation ratio between hub and member organisations is that the vast majority of funding should be invested in service delivery, with more money as a result getting through to the individual client, and correspondingly less money being absorbed by bureaucracy and administration.

6. Membership

6.1 All voluntary sector organisations in the city can apply to be members of H2H. There will be two categories of consortium membership:

- Full membership – this will be for local VCS organisations that can demonstrate that they meet all of the membership eligibility criteria and that they are "contract-ready" (effectively, this means that by meeting all of the eligibility criteria a full member "pre-qualifies" to be considered for a sub-contract through H2H, though whether a sub-contract is actually awarded will depend on a range of additional factors relating to the overarching contract framework).
- Associate membership – this will be for local VCS organisations that are not currently able to meet all of the eligibility criteria, but which have the potential to convert to full membership and hence "contract readiness" in due course, with appropriate support and development.

7. Benefits of H2H

7.1 It is envisaged that H2H will generate a number of benefits for its member organisations. H2H will:

- Enable its member agencies to meet clients needs better by freeing up the capacity of providers and allowing them to focus on frontline service delivery;
- Encourage the sharing of expertise and good practice, leading to better, improved services;
- Facilitate the joint delivery of services and activities;
- Create a single, unified point of funding/contracting, and in so doing increase attractiveness to funders/contractors;
- Generate economies of scale and efficiency savings through the rationalisation of resources; and
- Establish more concerted and sustainable research, development and intelligence-gathering capacity, with greater resultant focus on innovation and new ways of working.

APPENDIX 3: Benefits & Outcomes of Moving to a New Delivery Model

1. Currently the Council holds multiple contracts with a wide range of providers across a number of services. Working differently with the voluntary sector is a part of a wider approach that the council takes to working successfully with providers (private, the voluntary and community sectors, social enterprises and mutual organisations) for the benefit of citizens.
2. New delivery models recognise that there is a significant amount of effort and resource that is required to contract/commission services including supporting the ongoing performance management and monitoring of outcomes/outputs and spend for both commissioners and providers. The approach seeks to reduce this burden whilst maintaining and improving services and cost-effectiveness.
3. The Here 2 Help Consortium provides the Council with a single point of entry to a number of voluntary sector providers and presents an opportunity to develop a single contract, based on outcomes.
4. This is beneficial for a number of reasons including:
 - Provides a vehicle that the Council can work with to co-design services;
 - Once the new service model is embedded the contract management effort currently required to manage multiple contracts will reduce;
 - Shared resources and infrastructure and sector taking responsibility for effective use of resources;
 - Enables the voluntary sector to influence the future shape and scope of services;
 - Ensures that future services are developed using sound evidence and knowledge of current weaknesses/gaps;
 - Enables existing services that are currently delivered through a number of different contracts to be developed more holistically;
 - Provides a focus on outcomes and not purely outputs;
 - Creates a more customer focused service;
 - More flexible use of resources across services;
 - Builds on the strengths in the local voluntary sector and supports local investment/growth.
 - Enables more effective management of voluntary sector providers through creating interdependency.
5. Delivering the service through a grant agreement will also provide the Council a more flexible framework to work within – a non-competitive approach allows the Council to respond to changes in demand, client needs and outcomes and changes in national policy/legislation, without having to change fundamental contract arrangements or spot purchase services outside the scope of this project at costly rates.
6. An outcome based grant agreement will focus on the needs of users and will enable services to be more tailored and responsive. It will also help the Council to capture and measure the wider impacts of its investment and respond to the Personalisation agenda and give individuals more choice and control over the services they receive.
7. The benefits of an outcome focused performance management approach are:
 - A greater focus on the 'value' of public spending;
 - Services are focused on delivering outcomes and not outputs;

- There is a clearer link between service level outcomes and wider social, economic and environmental outcomes (e.g. service users are supported into education or employment)
- Levels the playing field for smaller providers by giving them a better chance of securing contracts/grants;
- Creates opportunities for cooperation and innovation between providers.