

**Time and Date**

2.00 pm on Tuesday, 10th March, 2020

**Place**

Committee Room 3 - Council House

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**Public business****1. Apologies****2. Declarations of Interest****3. Minutes** (Pages 5 - 22)

(a) To agree the minutes from the meetings of Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020

(b) Matters arising

**4. Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider whether to exclude the press and public for the item(s) of private business for the reasons shown in the report.

**5. 2020/21 Transportation and Highways Maintenance Capital Report**

(Pages 23 - 44)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

**6. Impact of European City of Sport 2019** (Pages 45 - 56)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

**7. Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy** (Pages 57 - 142)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People)

**8. Options to Improve the Provision of Temporary Accommodation for Single Homeless People Through Property Acquisition** (Pages 143 - 152)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People)

9. **Options to Increase the Supply of Affordable Permanent Housing for Households Living in Temporary Accommodation** (Pages 153 - 162)  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People)
10. **Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry - Investment Acquisitions** (Pages 163 - 174)  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)
11. **Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza, Upper Wells Street, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions** (Pages 175 - 184)  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)
12. **Outstanding Issues**  
There are no outstanding issues.
13. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

#### **Private business**

14. **Options to Improve the Provision of Temporary Accommodation for Single Homeless People Through Property Acquisition** (Pages 185 - 196)  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People)  
(Listing Officer: J Crawshaw, Tel: 024 7697 8258)
15. **Options to Increase the Supply of Affordable Permanent Housing for Households Living in Temporary Accommodation** (Pages 197 - 208)  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)  
(Listing Officer: M Arestidis, Tel: 024 7697 2924)
16. **Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry - Investment Acquisitions** (Pages 209 - 218)  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)  
(Listing officer: P Beesley, Tel: 024 7697 6746)
17. **Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza, Upper Wells Street, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions** (Pages 219 - 228)  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)  
(Listing officer: P Beesley, Tel: 024 7697 6746)

18. **Any other items of private business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

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Martin Yardley, Deputy Chief Executive (Place), Council House, Coventry

Monday, 2 March 2020

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Lara Knight / Michelle Salmon, Governance Services, Tel: 024 7697 2642 / 2643, Email: [lara.knight@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:lara.knight@coventry.gov.uk) / [michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk)

Cabinet Members:

Councillors K Caan, G Duggins (Chair), P Hetheron, A S Khan (Deputy Chair), T Khan, K Maton, J Mutton, M Mutton, J O'Boyle and P Seaman

Non-voting Deputy Cabinet Members:

Councillors P Akhtar, R Ali, B Gittins, G Lloyd and D Welsh

By invitation:

Councillors A Andrews and G Ridley (non-voting Opposition representatives)

Please note: a hearing loop is available in the committee rooms

If you require a British Sign Language interpreter for this meeting  
OR if you would like this information in another format or  
language please contact us.

**Lara Knight / Michelle Salmon, Governance Services,  
Tel: 024 7697 2642 / 2643, Email: [lara.knight@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:lara.knight@coventry.gov.uk) /  
[michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk)**

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## Coventry City Council

### Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.30 pm on Tuesday, 18 February 2020

Present:

Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)  
Councillor A Khan (Deputy Chair)  
Councillor K Caan  
Councillor P Hetherton  
Councillor J Mutton  
Councillor M Mutton  
Councillor J O'Boyle  
Councillor P Seaman

Deputy Cabinet Members: Councillor P Akhtar  
Councillor R Ali  
Councillor B Gittins  
Councillor G Lloyd  
Councillor D Welsh

Other Members: Councillor R Brown  
Councillor J Clifford

Non-Voting Opposition Members: Councillor A Andrews  
Councillor G Ridley

Employees (by Directorate):

Chief Executive's M Reeves (Chief Executive)  
People G Quinton (Deputy Chief Executive (People)),  
D Ashmore, J Crawshaw, O Chittem, N Hart,  
S Mills, K Nelson, G Smailes, G Tate  
Place B Hastie, P Jennings, J Newman, M Salmon

Apologies: Councillor T Khan  
Councillor K Maton  
Councillor R Lakha  
Councillor C Thomas

## **Public Business**

### **75. Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

### **76. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

**77. 2019/2020 Third Quarter Financial Monitoring Report (to December 2019)**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), that would also be considered by the Audit and Procurement Committee at their meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020, that advised of the forecast outturn position for revenue and capital expenditure and the Council's treasury management activity as at the end of December 2019.

Cabinet approved the City Council's revenue budget of £231.5m on the 19th February 2019 and a Directorate Capital Programme of £195.4m. The headline revenue forecast for 2019/20 was for a net underspend of £1.9m. At the same point in 2018/19 there was a projected underspend of £1.8m. The headline capital position reports £20.6m of expenditure rescheduled into 2020/21.

The largest areas of budget pressure were within services for Children and Young People and Housing and Homelessness which were projecting overspends of £2.6m and £3.2m respectively. These were offset by a significant underspend within central and contingency budgets.

The Council's capital spending was projected to be £215.9m, a reduction of £2.8m since the quarter 2 forecast, which included major scheme expenditure including investment in the A46 Link Road, Whitley South infrastructure and the National Battery Plant.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet:**

- 1) Approves the Council's revenue monitoring position.**
- 2) Approves the revised capital estimated outturn position for the year of £215.9m incorporating: £14m net increase in spending relating to approved/technical changes of and net rescheduling of expenditure into 2020/21 of £16.6m.**

**78. Coventry Homefinder Review (Social Housing Allocations Policy)**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) that detailed the Council's review of the social housing Allocations Policy and recommended changes to enable the city to best meet housing need within a backdrop of reduced turnover of Registered Provider (RP) stock. Coventry Homefinder was the Choice Based Letting system by which the majority of social housing in Coventry was allocated. Appendices to the report provided the Draft Coventry Homefinder Policy 2020, the Consultation Statement, the Equality and Consultation Analysis (parts 1 and 2) and the current and proposed banding system.

The Council committed to reviewing the Policy within the City's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019-2024. The revised Housing Allocations Policy was a key tool to support the delivery of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy. The

last review of the Coventry Homefinder Policy was undertaken in 2014, with minor amendments in 2018 as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

The Council no longer owned any housing following the large-scale voluntary transfer of all the former Council housing to Whitefriars Housing Group (now Citizen) in September 2000. However, the Local Authority was legally required to have a scheme that allocated social housing, with the aim was that those with the greatest need for housing were prioritised.

The report provided the context and evidence as to why the Allocations Policy needed to be reviewed, looking at how the turnover of social housing had reduced within a backdrop of increasing demand for affordable housing in the City.

The fundamental review undertaken (June 2019 to October 2019) had resulted in a new allocations scheme being developed and consulted upon. The key changes included:

- Changing how people apply for housing.
- Changing who can apply for housing (qualification criteria).
- Changing the Banding System (reasonable preference criteria) including the introduction of a reduced preference band.
- Reducing the number of refused offers allowed under the Policy.
- Changing how adapted properties are advertised and allocated.

A statutory and public consultation survey on the above proposals took place between 11th November 2019 and 3rd January 2020.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet:**

- 1) Notes that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) noted, welcomed and were supportive of the proposed changes to the Coventry Homefinder Policy and the consultation being undertaken.**
- 2) Notes the equality and consultation analysis and consultation responses received regarding proposals to change the Coventry Homefinder Policy (Housing Allocations Policy) and the summary report provided at Appendices B and C to the report.**
- 3) Approves a revised Coventry Homefinder Policy, attached as Appendix A to the report, with effect from Autumn 2020.**

**79. European Social Fund 2014-2020 - European Structural & Investment Funds (ESIF) - Coventry ESF Second Round Applications**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People), that would also be considered by the City Council at their meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020, which sought approval for European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) Programme applications that had been submitted under a new second round of funding. The report provided information on each of the new bids and requested approval for the city Council to act as accountable body guarantor and delivery partner for these funding programmes.

The 2014-2020 ESIF Programme was launched in March 2015 and would now run until 2023 in the UK. A report to the Cabinet on 26 November 2015 (minute 70/15 referred) approved successful projects from the first round of funding under the programme. In that report it was noted that further rounds of funding would be available, and that the Council would seek to apply in those rounds. The Council had a strong track record in securing European funds in recent years and had secured in excess of £65m from the European Structural Funds since 2007.

However, the current EU funded employability support Programmes were due to come to an end following an agreed extension (until 31 March 2020 for the Priority 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4 programmes and 31 December 2020 for the Priority 1.3 programme). The Employment and Skills Service had therefore submitted bids for Phase 2 programmes which would run from 1 April 2020, or on a date to be agreed as soon as Funding Agreements had been issued, until 31 December 2023. Across all the bids the amount of ESF Grant being bid for in the Phase 2 round was £11.38m.

The further Council led applications had been submitted in the new programme under the Active Inclusion (Priority 1.1), Access to Employment (Priority 1.4), Sustainable Integration of Young People (Priority 1.2) themes and under the Youth Employment Initiative (Priority 1.3). The total value of all applications (Grant plus Match Funding from the City Council and delivery partners) was £20.56m with nearly 55% of these costs being made available from the ESIF grants to support those applications.

The Council had already taken a leadership role by bringing partners together from across the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership area to develop projects and programmes that would lead to improved employment prospects across the City and the sub-region. The Council had an outstanding track record of securing, managing and delivering EU-funded employability support programmes.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet:**

- 1) Notes the success of European Funding through the European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF), in delivering the City's economic aspirations and continues to support the Council bidding for European Funds that are still available via the ESIF programme and which will support the objectives of the Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy 2018-2022.**
- 2) Recommends that the City Council:**
  - I. Approves (if successful) the drawdown of the European Structural Fund grant funding totalling up to 11.38m from the European Structural Investment Fund, to be utilised in delivering the City's priorities as set out in this report.**
  - II. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (People), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the City Solicitor, to negotiate final terms and approve entry into:**

- (a) The grant funding agreement to secure the European Structural Investment Fund funding with the City Council acting as the Accountable Body for the funding: and**
- (b) Back to back funding agreement with such delivery partners as deemed necessary to deliver the City's priorities as set out in the report.**

**80. Coventry One Strategic Plan and Education Capital Programme**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) that sought approval for the programme of work outlined within the proposed Coventry One Strategic Plan for Primary, Secondary Education and Special Educational Needs. Appendices to the report provided the One Strategic Plan 2019-2025, the Letter from Lord Agnew regarding Basic Need funding (Dated: 30/05/2018), the Letter from Lord Agnew regarding Basic Need funding (Dated: 23/09/2019), the School Organisation Regulations, and the alternative Options for Secondary Expansion.

Under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996, Coventry City Council had a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places and fair, appropriate access to education. It was the Council's role to plan, commission and organise school places in a way that raised standards, managed supply and demand and created a diverse infrastructure.

The Coventry One Strategic Plan, presented to the Cabinet 2nd October 2018 (minute 46/18 referred), set out pupil forecasts for special, primary and secondary pupils across education planning areas in response to rising or falling pupil cohorts across the city. It outlined the strategy proposed by the Local Authority and the Coventry Secondary Headteacher Partnership to meet the additional places required in secondary provision from 2019–2024. Work had also been undertaken to look at the Special School provision, primary estate in line with falling birth rates and how these factors would be mitigated.

It was proposed that this strategy would be flexible, able to adapt to shifting mechanisms of parental preference, unforeseen changes in supply and demand of school places, and future birth rates. To do this, the One Strategic Plan would be monitored and updated annually with presentation to the Elected Member with responsibility for the Council's Education Portfolio, and to the Cabinet, alongside a wider process of constant review of School Place Planning. In addition, the procuring of places would take place annually so as to not create an unstable number of school places.

A Memorandum of Understanding had been established to ensure partnership commitment between the Council and secondary schools (and would be rolled out to primary and special schools, subject to approval). These partnerships signified a commitment and co-operation between the Council, governing bodies and school leadership teams to meet the educational needs of children and young people in Coventry, ensure the sustainability of Coventry schools, and to enable the City Council to meet its statutory obligations.

This partnership commitment signified a statement of intent to collaborate and work in partnership to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Coventry, ensure the sustainability of Coventry schools, and to enable the City Council to meet its statutory obligations. As part of this process, numerous options had been discussed at both full partnership meetings, and the Secondary Headteacher Executive. The preferred option presented below had been approved by the partnership as being the best valid option keeping in line with statutory requirements as outlined by the DfE to:

- i. Spend capital funding efficiently
- ii. Safeguard the quality of places in the system
- iii. Manage down spare capacity in the estate where it exists.

Capital allocations to meet projected shortfalls in provision were provided by the Education Skills Funding Agency to all Local Authorities based on the data provided in the annual School Capacity return. Demand for places minus the supply of places was multiplied by a cost per pupil place to inform the final allocation. This return informed the Education Skills Funding Agency of the expected change in pupil numbers over the next few years, the current capacity of schools to meet those numbers and the planned changes to that capacity. There was currently a delay in the allocation to all councils for the capital allocations 2021/2022 likely to be announced later this year. The report therefore focussed upon need up to 2022.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet:**

- 1) Authorises the programme of work outlined within the proposed Coventry One Strategic Plan for Primary, Secondary Education and Special Educational Needs, subject to the funding being secured.**
- 2) Agrees to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (People) to agree the most appropriate procurement route for the works to be delivered and awarded.**

**81. Authority for Attendance at Conference**

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet gives retrospective approval of the Lord Mayor, Councillor L Bigham, and the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor AS Khan, attendance at the ‘Commemoration Events and International Congress on Cultures of Remembrance in Dresden’ that was held in Dresden, Germany from 12th to 15th February 2020.**

**82. Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

**83. Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.00 pm)

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 10.00 am on Tuesday, 25 February 2020**

Present:

Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)  
Councillor A Khan (Deputy Chair)  
Councillor K Caan  
Councillor P Hetherington  
Councillor K Maton  
Councillor J Mutton  
Councillor M Mutton  
Councillor J O'Boyle

Deputy Cabinet Members Councillor P Akhtar  
Councillor B Gittins  
Councillor G Lloyd  
Councillor D Welsh

Non-Voting Opposition Members: Councillor A Andrews  
Councillor G Ridley

Employees (by Directorate):

Chief Executive's M Reeves (Chief Executive)  
Place B Hastie, P Jennings, L Knight, J Newman, A Walster

Apologies: Councillors R Ali, K Maton and P Seaman

## **Public Business**

### **84. Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

### **85. Exclusion of Press And Public**

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet agrees to exclude the press and public under Sections 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to the private report in Minute 91 below headed "Acquisition of a Commercial Asset" on the grounds that the report involves the likely disclosure of information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as it contains information relating to the financial affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

86. **Council Acting as Charitable Trustees for War Memorial Park**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that sought the in principal agreement of the Cabinet, sitting as the Charitable Trustees for the War Memorial Park, to the introduction of parking charges in the area of the War Memorial Park.

The report indicated that by virtue of a conveyance dated 27<sup>th</sup> January 1921, the War Memorial Park is held on trust by the Council and therefore any decisions relating to it must be made on the basis of and acting in capacity as sole charitable trustee and what is in the best interests of the charity alone. Where the local authority is the sole trustee it is the corporate body (“authority itself”) which is the trustee and, as such, guidance from the Charity Commission states that responsibility for decision making and oversight rests with Councillors. In exercising the obligation as charity trustee, the decision makers must ensure that their decisions are only taken on the basis of what is in the interest of the charity and not what is in the best interest of the local authority.

The Cabinet noted that it had become apparent that the car park at the War Memorial Park was being used by persons who were not particularly visiting the park for the purposes of recreational activities, which is the basis upon which the park is held. This therefore presented an opportunity in the best interests of the War Memorial Park, for charges to be introduced to be applied to those persons who utilise the availability of parking spaces for purposes contrary to which the land is held. A plan of the parking areas affected was set out in an Appendix to the report.

The introduction of the car parking charges would not affect the ability of the Council acting in their capacity as Charitable Trustees to comply with the objectives stated in the Conveyance, as the charges would only seek to regulate the use of the car parks and not the use of the park itself. Furthermore, any consideration received as part of the introduction of the car parking charges from the War Memorial Park would be spent on furthering the objectives to which the land was entrusted to the Council, pursuant to the conveyance referred to above.

**RESOLVED that, the cabinet in its role as Charitable Trustee of the War Memorial Park:**

- 1. Agrees in principle to the introduction of parking charges in the area of the War Memorial Park identified in Appendix A of the report submitted.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Policing, to finalise the charging structure which shall include undertaking the appropriate due diligence and completion of any necessary legal processes.**

87. **Council Tax Setting Report 2020/21**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which calculated the Council Tax level for 2020/21 and made appropriate recommendations to Council, consistent with the Budget Report 2020/21.

The report indicated that some of the figures and information set out within the report were identified as provisional, as the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Fire and Rescue Authority precepts had not been confirmed at the time of publication. The Cabinet were advised by the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that confirmation had now been received in relation to these precepts and that the figures within the report were all confirmed as accurate.

The report incorporated the impact of the Council's gross expenditure and the level of income it would receive through Business Rates, grants, fees and charges. This resulted in a Council Tax requirement, as the amount that its expenditure exceeds all other sources of income.

The report included a calculation of the Band D Council Tax that would be needed to generate this Council Tax requirement, based on the City's approved Council Tax base. The 2020/21 Band D Council Tax that was calculated through this process had increased by £63.93 from the 2019/20 level.

Each year the Government determined the maximum Council Tax increase that local authorities could set without triggering a referendum. For 2020/21 the Secretary of State had published a report which proposed that the rise in Coventry City Council's Council Tax must be below 3% in 2020/21 to avoid triggering a referendum, comprising a 2% precept for expenditure on adult social care and a maximum of 2% for other expenditure. At the time of writing, the Secretary of State's report was subject to parliamentary approval. The recommendations within the Budget Report 2020/21 were based on a proposed increase in Council Tax of 3.9%, including a 2% Adult Social Care Precept.

It was noted that the recommendations followed the structure of resolutions drawn up by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, to ensure that legal requirements were fully adhered to in setting the tax. As a consequence the wording of the proposed resolutions was necessarily complex.

**RESOLVED that, the Cabinet recommend that Council:**

**1. Note the following Council Tax base amounts for the year 2020/21, as approved by Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020, in accordance with Regulations made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ("the Act"):**

- a) 83,905.5 being the amount calculated by the Council as its Council Tax base for the year for the whole Council area;**
- b)**

<b>Allesley</b>	<b>337.6</b>
<b>Finham</b>	<b>1,552.2</b>
<b>Keresley</b>	<b>239.7</b>

**being the amounts calculated by the Council as its Council Tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.**

2. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2020/21 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Act:

(a) £744,281,523 being the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates for the items set out in 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils (*Gross Expenditure and reserves required to be raised for estimated future expenditure*);

(b) £602,900,440 being the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act (*Gross Income including reserves to be used to meet the Gross Expenditure but excluding Council Tax income*);

(c) £141,381,083 being the amount by which the aggregate at 2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year;

(d) £1,685.00 
$$\frac{2(c)}{1(a)} = \frac{£141,381,083}{83,905.5}$$

being the amount of 2(c) above divided by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B of the ACT, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. (*Average Council Tax at Band D for the City including Parish Precepts*).

(e) £40,590 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act. (*Parish Precepts*);

(f) £1,684.52 
$$= \frac{2(d) - 2(e)}{1(a)} = £1,685.00 - \frac{£40,590}{83,905.5}$$

being the amount at 2(d) above, less the result given by dividing the amount at 2(e) above by the amounts at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of the area to which no special item relates. (*Council Tax at Band D for the City excluding Parish Precepts*);

(g)

<b>Coventry Unparished Area</b>	<b>£1,684.52</b>
<b>Allesley</b>	<b>£1,720.44</b>
<b>Finham</b>	<b>£1,698.27</b>
<b>Keresley</b>	<b>£1,714.22</b>

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 2(f) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate. (Council Taxes at Band D for the City and Parish).

(h)

<b>Valuation Band</b>	<b>Parts to which no special item relates</b>	<b>Parish of Allesley</b>	<b>Parish of Finham</b>	<b>Parish of Keresley</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>1,123.01</b>	<b>1,146.96</b>	<b>1,132.18</b>	<b>1,142.81</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>1,310.18</b>	<b>1,338.12</b>	<b>1,320.87</b>	<b>1,333.28</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>1,497.35</b>	<b>1,529.28</b>	<b>1,509.57</b>	<b>1,523.75</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>1,684.52</b>	<b>1,720.44</b>	<b>1,698.27</b>	<b>1,714.22</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>2,058.86</b>	<b>2,102.76</b>	<b>2,075.67</b>	<b>2,095.16</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>2,433.20</b>	<b>2,485.08</b>	<b>2,453.06</b>	<b>2,476.10</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>2,807.53</b>	<b>2,867.40</b>	<b>2,830.45</b>	<b>2,857.03</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>3,369.04</b>	<b>3,440.88</b>	<b>3,396.54</b>	<b>3,428.44</b>

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

3. To note that for the year 2020/21 the Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands and West Midlands Fire Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

<b>Valuation Band</b>	<b>Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands</b>	<b>West Midlands Fire Authority</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>108.37</b>	<b>41.20</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>126.43</b>	<b>48.07</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>144.49</b>	<b>54.93</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>162.55</b>	<b>61.81</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>198.67</b>	<b>75.54</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>234.79</b>	<b>89.27</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>270.92</b>	<b>103.01</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>325.10</b>	<b>123.61</b>

4. That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2(h) and 3 above, the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2020/21 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

<b>Valuation Band</b>	<b>Parts to which no special item relates</b>	<b>Parish of Allesley</b>	<b>Parish of Finham</b>	<b>Parish of Keresley</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>1,272.58</b>	<b>1,296.53</b>	<b>1,281.75</b>	<b>1,292.38</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>1,484.68</b>	<b>1,512.62</b>	<b>1,495.37</b>	<b>1,507.78</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>1,696.77</b>	<b>1,728.70</b>	<b>1,708.99</b>	<b>1,723.17</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>1,908.88</b>	<b>1,944.80</b>	<b>1,922.63</b>	<b>1,938.58</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>2,333.07</b>	<b>2,376.97</b>	<b>2,349.88</b>	<b>2,369.37</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>2,757.26</b>	<b>2,809.14</b>	<b>2,777.12</b>	<b>2,800.16</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>3,181.46</b>	<b>3,241.33</b>	<b>3,204.38</b>	<b>3,230.96</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>3,817.75</b>	<b>3,889.59</b>	<b>3,845.25</b>	<b>3,877.15</b>

5. That the Council determines that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2020/21 is not excessive in accordance with the principles set out in the Secretary of State's report, under Sections 52ZC and 52ZD of the Act.

#### 88. Budget Report 2020/21

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which set out the proposals for the Council's final revenue and capital budget for 2020/21.

The report followed on from the Pre-Budget Report approved by Cabinet on 19th November 2019 which had since been subject to a period of public consultation. The proposals within the report now formed the basis of the Council's final revenue and capital budget for 2020/21 incorporating the following details:

- Gross budgeted spend of £744m (no change from 2019/20).
- Net budgeted spend of £239m (£7m and 3% higher than 2019/20) funded from Council Tax and Business Rates less a tariff payment of £19.9m due to Government.
- A Council Tax Requirement of £141.4m (£6.2m and 4.6% higher than 2019/20), reflecting a City Council Tax increase of 3.9% detailed in the separate Council Tax Setting report on today's agenda.
- A number of new expenditure pressures, savings and income generation proposals within Council services.
- A Capital Strategy including a Capital Programme of £232.7m including expenditure funded by Prudential Borrowing of £33.1m.
- An updated Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Strategy and a Commercial Investments Strategy.

The financial position set out in the Budget Report was based on the Final 2020/21 Local Government Finance Settlement and incorporated a funding position which broadly matched that of 2019/20. This position contained significant uncertainty for the period after 2020/21 which would be subject to medium-term spending decisions by the new Government. Decisions were awaited on whether this would include a revised allocation model within the Local Government sector and a new national Business Rates retention model. As a result it was impossible to provide a robust financial forecast at this stage and the Council had included some prudent planning figures. Initial assumptions indicated the likelihood that there will be a substantial gap for the period following 2020/21. The view of the Council's Director of Finance and Corporate Services was that the Council should be planning for such a position.

2020/21 would see the Council continue, along with the other 6 West Midlands councils, to participate in a 100% Business Rates Pilot scheme. This would enable the Council to retain 99% of Business Rates income including any growth against an historic baseline which would otherwise have been returned to the Government. The financial model and assumptions that support the Pilot had been incorporated within the financial position included in the report.

The Pre-Budget Report was based on an increase in Council Tax of 3.9% and this position had been maintained for the final proposals in the report now submitted. This incorporated an increase of 1.9%, which was within the Government's limit of 2% and above which a referendum would need to be held, plus a further 2% relating to the Adult Social Care Precept. This proposed increase would be the equivalent of around 90p a week for a typical Coventry household.

In broad terms the Government Settlement had maintained the level of resources available to the Council to support its financial position through a combination of Council Tax and retained Business Rates less a tariff payable back to Government. Set against this was the need for the Council to reflect a range of inflationary pressures, the non-achievement of some savings plans and the emergence of new expenditure pressures, the bulk of which reflected socio-demographic trends across the country. This combination of results had left the Council needing to address a significant financial gap which had been balanced by additional Council Tax resources, lower costs in contingency budgets and a range of savings identified within services, many of them relating to additional income. All these proposals were set out in detail in Appendix 1 of the report. Where these

were different to the proposals that were included in the Pre-Budget Report, this had been indicated within the appendix.

The proposals did not provide the Council with a balanced medium term position beyond 2020/21. Local government still awaited the setting out of a medium term funding settlement from Government and the Council's current medium term bottom line incorporated a combination of future inflationary and service pressures, uncertain specific grant resources and potential resource reductions through the Fair Funding review. The current assumptions on future funding were purely speculative at this stage and the possibility remained that the position could be somewhat better than planned currently (with a lower probability that they could be worse). The Council would need to take stock through 2020 as Government thinking emerged on the changes to local government finance. The initial approach would however be dictated by a need to make significant further savings from or generate further income within Council services. The Council was developing a transformation programme under the banner of 'One Coventry' with key strands incorporating more commercialisation of services, an enhanced digital approach and Place Based services (how services were delivered across the city).

It was not yet clear on what basis any forthcoming national proposals for local government finance would be established but it was highly likely to continue to include a Business Rates retention model beyond 2020/21. This added further impetus to the need for the Council to continue to support the vibrancy and growth of the city to provide for a secure level of Business Rates income and move towards greater self-sufficiency. The recommended Capital Programme proposals were designed to help achieve this and amounted to £232.7m in 2020/21. The proposals reflected the Council's ambitions for the city and included the completion of the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre, extensive public realm works in the city centre, significant redevelopment of Coventry Railway Station, early works on two new buildings within the Friargate district of the city, progression of the extensive UK Central & Connectivity programme and continuation of the Whitley South Infrastructure projects. Over the next 5 years the Capital Programme was estimated to be £703m as part of on-going massive investment delivered by and through the City Council.

The annual Treasury Management Strategy, incorporating the Minimum Revenue Provision policy, and also the Commercial Investment Strategy were set out within the report. These covered the management of the Council's treasury and wider commercial investments, cash balances and borrowing requirements. These strategies and other relevant sections of the report reflected the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code and Prudential Code for Capital Finance, as well as statutory guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and Investments.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommend that Council:**

- 1. Approve the spending and savings proposals in Appendix 1.**
- 2. Approve the total 2020/21 revenue budget of £744m in Table 1 and Appendix 3, established in line with a 3.9% City Council Tax increase and the Council Tax Requirement recommended in the Council Tax Setting Report considered on today's agenda.**

3. **Note the Director of Finance and Corporate Services' comments confirming the adequacy of reserves and robustness of the budget in Section 5.1.2 and 5.1.3.**
4. **Approve the Capital Strategy incorporating the Capital Programme of £232.7m for 2020/21 and the future years' commitments arising from this programme of £703m between 2020/21 to 2024/25 detailed in Section 2.3 and Appendix 4.**
5. **Approve the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 and Minimum Revenue Provision Statement in Section 2.4, the Treasury Investment Strategy and Policy in Appendix 5 and the Prudential Indicators and limits described in Section 2.4.9 and detailed in Appendix 7a.**
6. **Approve the proposed Commercial Investment Strategy for 2020/21 in Section 2.5 and Appendix 6 and the Commercial Investment Indicators detailed in Appendix 7b.**
7. **Approve a new scheme within the Capital programme for the refurbishment of St Marys Guildhall at a total cost of £3m funded from Prudential Borrowing as outlined in paragraph 2.3.3.**

#### 89. **Acquisition of a Commercial Asset**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which set out proposals for the acquisition of a commercial asset.

A corresponding private report was also submitted to the meeting setting out the commercially confidential matters of the proposals. (Minute 91 below refers.)

The report indicated that officers had been exploring the commercial and financial viability of acquiring a commercial asset. The Council had entered into an exclusivity and confidentiality agreement to undertake due diligence to assess the commercial opportunities and business risks associated with acquiring the business.

The proposed acquisition presented several opportunities to add value to an internal service that could only be delivered from acquiring these shares. The current owners had expressed a preference to complete the transaction by the end of the financial year (10th March 2020). The estimated acquisition price would be adjusted for net debt within the business and working capital. The final value would not be known until the legal documents had been agreed and due diligence completed on the management accounts for the current financial year.

A share acquisition could only be financed over a maximum period of 20 years, which meant the capital financing costs for the business were higher than if it had been possible to spread this over a longer term. The current profit (2018/19 for group) was sufficient to service this level of investment costs and deliver dividends that could be attributed to the medium-term financial strategy. Based on this performance, it would be possible to extract dividends over and above the capital

financing costs without jeopardising the day to day operation of the business. There had been growth for the current financial year, which had shown an increase in profit for the first 6 months of the year (April to September 2019), strengthening this financial position.

As part of the due diligence, costs had been incurred with the Council's external financial advisors for financial due diligence, external legal advisors for legal due diligence and external environmental advisors for an environmental survey and due diligence. There would also be costs incurred to complete the transaction as part of the Sale and Purchase Agreement. Approval was being requested to incur these fees retrospectively for the due diligence work and going forward to enable the shares to be acquired within the company. Flexibility was requested to utilise the approved financial envelope to meet the acquisition costs and any transaction costs to complete the deal.

Environmental advisors were instructed to undertake an environmental survey for the sites operated by the commercial asset. The survey concluded there were a number of operational and environmental risks that could be mitigated through the Share Purchase Agreement and actions by the Company pre completion.

Proposed governance arrangements were set out within the report to manage this commercial investment: Creation of a Member Shareholder Panel with overall responsibility for the investment, approval of the business plan and the financial parameters within which the Board of Directors and Management team could take forward decisions. It was proposed this group would meet on a minimum bi-annual basis to set the budget and receive information about the performance of the business. The Shareholders Panel would be made up of three Members.

A Board of Directors, made up of officers, would meet on at least a quarterly basis to oversee the management of the business and monitor the performance against the approved business plan.

The Board of Directors would be supported by suitably qualified Non-Executive Directors to provide advice and challenge to the Board and the Management Team. It was proposed that the current owner would provide consultancy advice and support to the Company to ensure there was a suitable continuity, handover and oversight for the operation of the business for a period of 24 months. This could be in the form of a Non-Executive Director. The membership of the Board of Directors would be agreed in consultation with Cabinet Member for City Services.

**RESOLVED that, the Cabinet recommend that the Council:**

- 1. Approve the use of its powers under Section 12 of Local Government Act 2003 and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to acquire the shares in the company as a commercial investment for the maximum value as disclosed in the Private report (including transaction costs), subject to any adjustments detailed in the report.**
- 2. Approve the addition of the commercial investment as detailed in the Private report to the capital programme.**

3. **Delegate authority to the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services, Director of Finance and Corporate Services and City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to agree detailed terms of the transaction with the Commercial Asset.**
  4. **Delegate authority to the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services, Director of Finance and Corporate Services and City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction.**
  5. **Approve the implementation of the governance structure and associated terms of reference for the Shareholder Panel and Board of Directors, as detailed in section 2.14 of the report.**
  6. **Delegate authority to Leader of the Council to approve the appointment of three Members onto the Shareholders Panel to represent the Council as sole shareholder of the Company.**
90. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

There were no other items of public business.

91. **Acquisition of a Commercial Asset**

Further to Minute 89 above, the Cabinet considered a private report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), setting out the commercially confidential matters relating to the proposed acquisition of a commercial asset.

**RESOLVED that, the Cabinet recommend that the Council:**

1. **Approve the use of its powers under Section 12 of Local Government Act 2003 and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to acquire the shares in the company as a commercial investment for the maximum value set out within the report submitted (including transaction costs), subject to any adjustments detailed in the report.**
2. **Approve the addition of up to the sum set out within the report (or other figure as agreed under delegated authority) to the capital programme.**
3. **Delegate authority to the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services, Director of Finance and Corporate Services and City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to agree detailed terms of the transaction with the Company indicated within the report.**
4. **Delegate authority to the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services, Director of Finance and Corporate Services and City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction.**

5. **Approve the implementation of the governance structure and associated terms of reference for the Shareholder Panel and Board of Directors, as detailed in section 2.22 of the report**
  6. **Delegate authority to the Leader of the Council to approve the appointment of three Members onto the Shareholders Panel to represent the Council as sole shareholder of the Company.**
92. **Any other items of private business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

There were no other items of private business.

(Meeting closed at 10.10 am)



Cabinet

10 March 2020

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for City Services – Councillor P Hetherton

**Director approving the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

2020/21 Transportation and Highway Maintenance Capital Programme

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**Is this a key decision?**

Yes, as it affects all wards of the city

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**Executive summary:**

This report brings together a £10.9m integrated capital programme for the maintenance and enhancement of the City's highways and transport infrastructure. This programme is funded through annual government local transport funding, City Council resources and Citizen Housing Right to Buy receipts.

The basic principles for this year's maintenance and integrated transport programme are:

1. Continue the programme of rectifying damage and maintaining the City's roads, through a prioritised programme (worst first) based on the Council's Highways Asset Management plan.
2. Continue to invest in preventative/proactive maintenance.
3. Carry out packages of complementary schemes to support the continued growth of the city, such as road safety and traffic management schemes to complement public realm and connecting Coventry proposals.
4. Provide a programme of footway improvements funded from the Citizen Housing Group Investment Fund, as part of a £2.43m investment which will be delivered over the next financial year.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet is requested to:

1. Approve the 2020/21 programme of schemes marked 'A' in Table 4 of the report.

2. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Services, to approve a programme of scheme development, marked 'B' in Table 4 of the report.

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix 1 - Description of all Maintenance & Integrated Transport Schemes

Appendix 2 - Breakdown of the Road Maintenance Programme including verges

Appendix 3 – Breakdown of the Integrated Transport Programme

**Background papers:**

None

**Other Useful Documents:**

Budget Report 2020/21 (City Council)

<https://edemocracy.coventry.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=11937>

**Has it or will it be considered by scrutiny?**

No

**Has it, or will it be considered by any other council committee, advisory panel or other body?**

No

The City Council's five-year capital programme was approved by Full Council on 25th February 2020.

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

**Report title:  
2020/21 Transportation and Maintenance Capital Programme**

**1. Context (or background)**

1.1 This report sets out a detailed capital programme of all Highway Maintenance and Integrated Transport schemes which are due to be carried out during 2020/21. The report sets out individual allocations and the various sources of funding in Table 4 and sets out the specific details of each project in Appendices 1 to 3.

**2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

2.1 As part of the West Midlands Devolution Deal, HM Government agreed to devolve a consolidated local transport budget and provide a multi-year transport funding settlement, which comes under the control of the West Midlands Combined Authority Elected Mayor.

2.2 The devolved transport element of the pot is made up of the following funding streams and paid to the Combined Authority, with a firm commitment up to and including 2020/21.

- Integrated Transport Block (ITB)
- Highways Maintenance Block (not including PFI)
- Highways Maintenance Incentive Funding

2.3 Following the creation of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority and Centro were dissolved and replaced with a new Integrated Transport Authority (ITA); Transport for West Midlands (TfWM). TfWM continues the work of its predecessors.

2.4 The 2020/21 devolved transport grant for the WMCA is set out below, (the commitment for future years is still to be confirmed):

**Table 1 – Devolved Transport Grant for WMCA**

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>2020/21 £000's</b>
Bus Services Operating Grant (BSOG) Revenue	Revenue for tendered bus services - given to WMCA/TfWM	1,800
Integrated Transport Block Capital	Allocated to the WMCA but distributed to LA's and TfWM. LA's allocations based on population size, which is also used to calculate the WMCA Transport Levy	17,618
Highways Maintenance Block Capital**	Allocated to the WMCA but distributed straight to LA's via DfT calculated formula	13,112
Highways Maintenance Incentive Fund Capital	Currently allocated to the WMCA but distributed straight to LA's via DfT calculated formula.	2,731*
<b>Total</b>		<b>35,261</b>

\*indicative figures provided by DfT

\*\* Excludes Birmingham City Council due to their Highways PFI

- 2.5 The Highways Maintenance allocation is awarded via TfWM; Coventry's allocation for 2020/21, based on the DfT revised needs formula is £2.225m. TfWM has made it clear that these resources are released on the condition that they are spent on highway maintenance schemes in accordance with the authorities' Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) and the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programmes (HMEP). The Council has also given this undertaking to the DfT.
- 2.6 The Highways Maintenance Incentive Fund is dependent on the Authority's efficiency and approach to highways asset management. This fund is allocated based on an assessment of data provided by Local Authorities, which determines their band rating and subsequent percentage share of the available funding. Authorities fall into one of three bands, with band three authorities receiving maximum incentive funding over the following four years.
- 2.7 For 2018/19, DfT decided that authorities within a combined authority met the criteria for band three and on this basis, Coventry received maximum funding. It is anticipated that DfT will follow the same approach for 2020/21, this equates to £463k, which when added to the £2.225m Highways Maintenance allocation and £158k pot hole action fund, forms a total Highways Maintenance Block amount of £2.846m, as shown in table 3.
- 2.8 The total ITB allocation in 2020/21 for the West Midlands is £17.618m. This funding is split, as in previous years, on a percentage basis (after the Joint Initiatives Top Slice); 25% to TfWM and 75% to the Local Authorities, distributed via TfWM in proportion to the population of each Local Authority.
- 2.9 The Joint Initiatives Top Slice equates to £0.09m and is used by WMCA to support the West Midlands Transport Information Gateway (WMTIG) which has an ongoing commitment of £20k annually, with the remaining £70k allocated to specific strategic priorities as identified by the Strategic Transport Officers Group.

The distribution of the regional Integrated Transport budget is as follows:

**Table 2 – West Midlands funding allocation**

Budget Heading	2020/21 Allocation (£m's)	Notes
TfWM Allocation	4.382	25%
Local Authorities Allocation	13.146	£1.653m for Coventry
Joint Initiatives Top Slice	0.090	
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.618</b>	

- 2.10 Table 3 sets out the available capital resources for transport schemes (such as Corporate Capital Resources and Citizen Right to Buy Capital receipts).

**Table 3 – Coventry Capital Resources**

Funding Source	2020/21 (£m's)
Integrated Transport Block	1.653
Highways Maintenance Block	2.846
Corporate Capital Resources	2.572
<b>Subtotal of Core Funding</b>	<b>7.071</b>
Citizen Housing Group contribution	2.430
Transport for West Midlands	1.400
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.901</b>

- 2.11 In 2016, WMCA approved the 10-year West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan “Movement for Growth”; which set out plans to greatly improve the transport system supporting economic growth and regeneration. A key challenge was the ability to provide initial development funding for Local Authorities to undertake and develop feasibility and strategic business cases for emerging schemes. In order to facilitate this, 15% of the total ITB funding will be ring-fenced for scheme development. This ring fence will be applied up to and including 2020/21.
- 2.12 As a substantial proportion of the funding for this programme is received as part of the TfWM process, allocations received must therefore deliver schemes which contribute towards the objectives, outcomes and targets in the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan. TfWM will monitor and assess the types of schemes district authorities are planning and whether they meet the relevant objectives.
- 2.13 As with previous programmes, there is an emphasis on making the best use of existing infrastructure rather than creating new. The maintenance programme will focus on ensuring that the worst affected roads and pavements across the City are properly repaired and preventative maintenance is carried out. This is a key theme in the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan and is driven by the City Council's Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Policy and Strategy (January 2016).
- 2.14 Right to buy receipts (RTB) of £2.430m from the Citizen Housing Group (previously known as Whitefriars) will be used to carry out a comprehensive programme of highway improvements in and around Citizen estates across the City. This will be the seventh year of improvements funded from right to buy receipts.
- 2.15 In compiling the programmes contained within this report, an underlying principle has been to maximize value for money by looking for opportunities to integrate projects wherever possible. As well as saving money, this minimizes disruption to the travelling public, businesses and residents.
- 2.16 Table 4 sets out the proposed capital programme for Integrated Transport and maintenance schemes for 2020/21. Each line represents either a programme of works or an individual scheme. Specific details of these programmes and schemes are provided in Appendices 1 to 3 of this report.
- 2.17 In addition to making the best use of existing infrastructure, as outlined above, wherever possible we will seek to reduce ongoing revenue expenditure through the removal of unnecessary infrastructure. This achieves two objectives: decluttering to improve the look of the city and reducing the ongoing maintenance.
- 2.18 Safety schemes will continue to be utilised to try to address areas where injury collisions occur. All requests or concerns raised by the public, both from individuals or petitions will continue to be investigated to determine if a local safety scheme should be implemented. We continue to use moveable vehicle activated signs which can be rotated around sites of concern, and in addition, we continue to collaborate with local police and work with residents to encourage the use of community speed-watch to monitor the speed of vehicles.
- 2.19 An additional £300k has been allocated from corporate capital resources to fund an expansion of the successful average speed enforcement programme.
- 2.20 Approval is sought for those schemes and scheme programmes (as detailed in the appendices) marked with an A in Table 4 below:

Transportation & Maintenance Capital Programme 2020/21

Table 4

	Maintenance	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	Approval
		Corporate Capital Resources	Integrated Transport Block	Highways Maintenance Block	Citizen RTB	TfWM	TOTAL	
1	Planing and Patching	0	0	758	0	0	758	A
2	Resurfacing	0	0	1335	0	0	1335	A
3	Surface Treatments	247	0	753	0	0	1000	A
4	Footway Improvement Schemes	1000	0	0	2430	0	3430	A
5	Verges	125	0	0	0	0	125	A
6	Vehicle Safety Fence	50	0	0	0	0	50	A
7	Structures	350	0	0	0	0	350	A
8	Drainage Surveys / Maintenance	500	0	0	0	0	500	A
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2272</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2846</b>	<b>2430</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7548</b>	
	<b>Integrated Transport</b>							
9	UTMC	0	433	0	0	1400	1833	A
10	Safety Schemes	300	400	0	0	0	700	A
11	Vulnerable Users	0	250	0	0	0	250	A
12	Scheme Development	0	240	0	0	0	240	B
13	Traffic Management	0	330	0	0	0	330	A
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>1653</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>3353</b>	
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2572</b>	<b>1653</b>	<b>2846</b>	<b>2430</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>10901</b>	

Externally funded projects

- 2.21 Coventry has been very successful in developing and securing new funding for innovative transport solutions, in partnership with the WMCA, Universities and private sector partners. These projects use emerging technology to improve traffic management, influence road user behaviour and to encourage sustainable travel. The Council will continue to work with local partners and small and medium enterprises to support continued transport innovation and economic growth within the city.
- 2.22 In particular, the Council is working closely with the WMCA to deliver a range of Intelligent Mobility projects, including the Connected and Autonomous Vehicle Testbed and the Future Mobility Zone programme, which includes pilot projects within Coventry based on Mobility Credits and Demand Responsive Transport. The Council will continue to work with the WMCA and other partners to actively seek further funding for new transport

innovation projects where opportunities exist to develop and deliver such projects within the city, especially as we move towards UK City of Culture 2021.

- 2.23 Through partnership working with the Environment Agency (EA) and the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC), the City Council secured Local Levy and Grant in Aid funding to help deliver flood alleviation schemes at Butt Lane and Broad Lane. To enable these schemes to be brought forward, the Council agreed to top slice £250k per year from drainage programme budgets from 2018/19 to 2020/21. Schemes, including Natural Flood Management solutions, have been delivered and more are in development for delivery during the current financial year.
- 2.24 In the lead up to The Commonwealth Games, Transport for West Midlands have allocated additional funding for the upgrade of traffic signals on the key route network across the Combined Authority. The allocation for Coventry is £1.4m, proposed sites to be upgraded are listed in Appendix 3.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan 'Movement for Growth' replaced the Local Transport Plan (LTP 3). The then WM ITA consulted with the public and key stakeholders and adopted the plan in July 2015, it was approved by the WMCA in June 2016. In addition, many of the specific larger schemes within the programme have or will be consulted on widely as individual schemes.
- 3.2 In all cases, no scheme will be implemented without appropriate consultation being undertaken to ensure that all interested parties are involved in the process and that anticipated funding is secure.

### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 The programme of schemes will be implemented throughout the 2020/21 financial year. The exact timing of individual schemes will depend on how well developed they are, and feedback from consultation. It is anticipated that all budgets described in the programme will be spent by the end of March 2021.

### **5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

#### **5.1 Financial implications**

The core funding for the Transportation and Maintenance Capital Programme totalling £7.071m is set out in Table 3 and this was approved by Council on 25th February 2020. This programme is supplemented by additional funding from Citizen Right to Buy receipts. This report sets out a strategic integrated highways and transportation programme that explicitly recognises all sources of funding and implements a strong emphasis on robust project and programme management.

#### **5.2 Legal implications**

The Council is under various statutory duties relevant to this report which includes:

- (a) Maintaining the City's adopted highway network and associated structures;
- (b) Maintaining the City's traffic management infrastructure;
- (c) Managing the City's road network to secure the expeditious movement of traffic;
- (d) Promoting/encouraging safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services in conjunction with TfWM;
- (e) Investigating road accidents and introducing measures to reduce their recurrence;
- (f) Producing a definitive map recording all public rights of way in the City;

- (g) Acting as a 'risk management authority' in respect of highway drainage for the purposes of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010

The Council also has various statutory powers which allow it to improve or add to the existing highway/traffic management infrastructure.

Any major contracts will be procured and awarded to comply with EU/UK procurement rules and the Council's own Rules for Contracts.

The core funding for the Transportation and Maintenance Capital Programme is set out in Table 3 above and totals £7.071m. As indicated, this is complemented by other specific sources of funding.

## **6. Other implications**

### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?**

The programme will help to address Council Plan objectives such as poor air quality and climate change by encouraging more sustainable forms of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport, promoting the City Councils 'Age Friendly' aspirations

Schemes such as Public Realm works and the significant maintenance programme, will help to address the plan priority of making streets and open spaces more attractive and enjoyable places to be as well as the SCS transport priority of encouraging more walking and cycling.

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

For each programme/scheme, there are nominated project sponsors and managers who will be held accountable for delivery. The governance arrangement will be for the capital programme to be overseen by a board comprising the Director (Transport and Highways), service manager (project sponsor) and financial officers. The project managers collectively form the capital programme team which will ensure that the programme is delivered on time, to budget and to an appropriate standard. The findings and recommendations of the board will be reported to the responsible cabinet member/s via established briefing and reporting mechanisms as appropriate. In addition, summary updates are provided to Cabinet as part of the quarterly budgetary control process.

To manage physical risks, the Construction and Design Management (CDM) process is also used for all appropriate schemes (larger schemes which meet certain criteria) to ensure that risks are designed out and that construction takes place by an approved contractor in a safe way.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The programme will be delivered using existing resources where possible.

### **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

An equality impact assessment was carried out during the formulation of the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan.

## **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

The programme will have a beneficial impact on the environment as many schemes are designed to encourage sustainable forms of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport, as well as schemes to reduce congestion and improve the public realm.

## **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

The implementation of the programme will have a positive impact on businesses and the general population of the City through improvements to road maintenance and the wider transport network. The Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has identified transport as a high priority to support economic growth.

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This report is published on the council's website: [www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings)

## Description of Maintenance and Integrated Transport Schemes

### Highways Maintenance Block

As a result of the programme of permanent repairs and preventative maintenance undertaken over the last ten financial years, the deterioration of the road network has continued to reduce significantly and its resilience to the effects of winter weather is greatly improved.

The maintenance treatment programmes, as shown in table 4, are aimed at continuing the significant improvement to the classified and unclassified network. The opportunity will also be taken to link the implementation of road maintenance and integrated transport projects together to lower costs and minimise disruption.

This year we will continue with the successful footway slurry seal programmes, to complement the footway reconstruction programme. Slurry seal maximises value for money and acts as a preventative maintenance process for footways.

It is important to note that exact limits for the extended footway programme are not provided in this report, due to volume of extra preparation work. A summary of the treatments proposed for use over the 2020/21 financial year are listed in Appendix 2.

As discussed in the report there is also an extra £2,430m provided by Citizen Housing Group for footways and highway network improvements this year.

### Footway (Pavement) Treatments

**Footway Reconstruction:** A scheme of work which will often include excavation of kerb lines, relaying or renewing of kerbs, replacement of slabs or tarmac and supporting layers. This restores the treated area to 'as new' condition. Some footways can be 'overlaid', this is where a further layer of tarmac is laid over the top of the existing surface, adding strength to the footway.

**Footway Slurry Seal:** A process where a 'slurry' containing bitumen is spread across the existing tarmac. The process is thin, up to 10mm, so there are no problems meeting existing levels. This process is used on sites where early signs of deterioration are evident and hence is an excellent preventative maintenance treatment.

Footway treatments vary in cost from around £6 per square metre for slurry seal up to £95 per square metre for full reconstruction. Reconstruction is very labour intensive and involves lots of hand work, which results in higher costs relative to carriageway works.

## Carriageway (Road) Treatments

**Carriageway Planing and Patching:** This method of repair is best suited to those roads where there are larger (greater than 10 square metres) areas of deterioration, often at junctions and turning heads or where there are problems with old utility reinstatements. The process entails removing the top 40mm (or whatever is appropriate) and inlaying new material. Typical cost is £35.00 per square metre. This treatment has the added advantage of forming part of the preparation process for future preventative maintenance surface treatment schemes. Roads which have been planed and patched are very suitable for surface dressing or micro asphalt the following year. The sites listed for the Plane and Patch programme do not represent a full commitment to the budget allocated. This is because there is a reactive element to this operation, which provides the flexibility of carrying out large permanent repairs to roads which may deteriorate quickly for any reason.

**Carriageway Resurfacing:** This treatment is split into two types, inlay and overlay. Best value is achieved with overlay and, where possible, this is the preferred approach.

**Inlay:** This is an inherently expensive approach and will be used only where absolutely necessary, usually where there has been a structural failure in the base layers. It is recognised that there are a few locations where a deeper repair is essential. The costs of this approach can be over £42 per square metre.

**Overlay:** For roads where the deterioration is confined to the upper layers of the carriageway, a good solution is to overlay. Similarly, to footway overlay an extra layer of tarmac is laid over the existing surface. To maintain kerb height, it is usually necessary to plane out adjacent to the carriageway edges. The advantage of this approach is that it increases the thickness of tarmac, thereby strengthening the carriageway and reducing the amount of material that has to be taken away. For carriageways in poor repair, pre-patching is necessary. Typical costs are £35 per square metre.

**Surface Treatments:** All of the above processes extend the life of a carriageway by a number of years and this life can be extended further by the application of asphalt rejuvenation, surface dressing (tar and chips) or other thin layer systems such as a Micro Asphalt. The importance of surface treatments is that they provide waterproofing to the road surface and prevent the ingress of water. In winter, water significantly contributes to deterioration and can cause weaker surfaces to break up. Surface treatments help to prevent this process occurring.

This year will be the tenth year of the preventative maintenance programme, which has been very successful. The value of this approach can be seen from the fact that surface dressing costs around £6 per square metre and Micro Asphalt is typically £12 per square metre, compared to over £35 per square metre for resurfacing.

### Drainage Surveys/Maintenance

Capital maintenance schemes for drainage includes the renewal of piped systems including new gullies and connections to the main sewer and also can involve the laying of new highway drains. These works address capacity or damage issues which are usually evidenced by flooding on or adjacent to the Highway. The Council's annual CCTV programme surveys the Highway drainage network and helps to build our asset register.

### Flood Relief Schemes

The purpose of these schemes is to reduce the risk of flooding in known high risk areas. Such works are usually carried out in conjunction with the Environmental Agency (EA). Flood relief measures usually entail construction of storage areas on private land, e.g. ponds, swales and ditches. Other measures include impeding flows by constructing walls or pipes, or natural slowing using a technique known as natural flood management, where fallen trees and other natural obstacles are used to slow flows.

### Verges

This programme allows for the protection of verges, typically through the use of bollards in accordance with the adopted verge policy. It may also include provision of lay-bys or simply re soiling existing verges, if new protective measures are in place. Use of grass-grid type materials continues to be successful. These systems allow vehicle over-run whilst maintaining a green verge like appearance to the street scene.

### Vehicle Safety Fences

This allocation is used to maintain existing safety fences (Vehicle Restraint Systems) on the network and can include bridge parapets. The budget allows for the testing and replacement of lengths of fencing to meet modern standards.

### Structures

We will continue to provide a programme of capital maintenance across the city's 308 structures which comprise road bridges, culverts, footbridges, retaining walls, sign gantries and subways. Schemes cover a wide range of maintenance works, including strengthening, waterproofing, repair of structural elements, and replacement of movement joints. The programme also includes detailed structural inspections and assessments of substandard structures. It should be noted that all locations are subject to detailed investigation and possible delays caused by engineering difficulties/consultation issues.

## **Integrated Transport Block**

### Safety Schemes

This allocation will be used in the development and implementation of road safety schemes in areas where there is a high incidence of recorded personal injury collisions (at least six in three years). In addition, the allocation will be used to carry out route-based road safety studies and schemes with specific focus on locations with a disproportionate numbers of vulnerable road user casualties including pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists.

### Vulnerable Users

This allocation, which complements the safety schemes programme, will be used to carry out improvements for our most vulnerable road users including cyclists and pedestrians of all ages, such as 20mph speed limits/zones where appropriate.

As part of the initiative to make Coventry an 'Age Friendly City,' it will also fund pedestrian dropped kerbs, on-street advisory disabled bays and access protection markings. A contribution will be used to support the recording of the Rights of Way network and its maintenance.

### Traffic Management

This budget will be used to carry out changes to the public highway to reduce congestion and make more efficient use of existing road space and improve safety. Examples include Traffic Regulation Orders, residents parking schemes, signing and lining changes and other minor engineering works.

### Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC)

This allocation will be used to improve traffic control across the city. Areas of work will include improvements such as the introduction of pedestrian phases or crossing points to help address some road safety issues. This budget also allows for improvements to the communication system on the highway network, such as, integrating existing and new wireless communication and adding new traffic cameras to manage congested routes. It will also include works to replace vehicle detectors to improve operation of the traffic signals throughout the city.

### Intelligent Mobility and Innovation

The objective of this programme is to utilise Intelligent Transport Systems and various sources of travel information to develop the most efficient transport network within the city. These projects have significant future benefits for improving the impact of transport on air quality and the ability of people to travel more freely.

The Intelligent Mobility programme continues to engage industry partners, universities and local authorities to deliver a Smart City, inclusive of all user groups and modes of transport. The City Council is working closely with Transport for West Midlands and local user groups including an Air Quality Alliance and Transport Data Initiative aim to encourage the adoption of emerging technology that will benefit cities and support residents to travel with ease.

**Carriageway Plane and Patch**

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Ward</b>
The Greenfield	Various	Various	Lower Stoke
Sewall Highway	Various	Various	Upper Stoke/Wyken
Jobs Lane	Various	Various	Westwood/Woodlands
Leyland Road	Various	Various	Sherbourne
A45	Various	Various	Bablake/Woodlands/Whoberley/ Earlsdon/Wainbody
Park Road	Various	Various	St Michaels
Manor Road	Various	Various	St Michaels
Low Road	Various	Various	Holbrook/Bablake
Butt Lane	Various	Various	Bablake
Holland Road	Various	Various	Radford
Chadwick Close	Various	Various	Woodlands
Goldthorn Close	Various	Various	Woodlands
Ballingham Close	Various	Various	Westwood
Northfolk Terrace	Various	Various	Westwood
Sutton Avenue	Various	Various	Woodlands
Lyng Close	Various	Various	Woodlands
Chester Street	Various	Various	Sherbourne
Copsewood Terrace	Various	Various	Lower Stoke
Hartland Avenue	Various	Various	Upper Stoke
Burnaby Road	Various	Various	Holbrook/Radford
Bennetts Road	Various	Various	Bablake
Parkville Highway	Various	Various	Holbrook
Forfield Road	Various	Various	Sherbourne
Headington Avenue	Various	Various	Bablake
Miles Meadow	Various	Various	Longford
Clay Lane	Various	Various	Upper Stoke
B4106 Allesley Old Road	Various	Various	Whoberley
Hollyfast Road	Various	Various	Bablake/Sherbourne

**Carriageway Resurfacing**

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Ward</b>
Elm Tree Avenue	Beech Tree Avenue	Pine Tree Avenue	Westwood
B4113 Foleshill Road	Broad St	Lockhurst Lane	Foleshill
A444 Jimmy Hill Way - Outbound	Classic Drive	Winding House Lane	Holbrook
A444 Jimmy Hill Way - Inbound	Boundary	Winding House Lane	Longford
Grenville Avenue	Full Length		Lower Stoke
Olivier Way	Full Length		Henley
Gielgud Way	Full Length		Henley

B4110 London Road	Airport Retail Park Roundabout	Airport Retail Park Roundabout	Cheylesmore/Binley & Willenhall
A428 Brandon Road	Roundabout DIY Store	Roundabout DIY Store	Wyken/Binley & Willenhall
Diana Drive	Full Length		Henley
Dovedale Avenue	Full Length		Longford
A429 Warwick Road	Michaelmas Road	Kenilworth Road	Earlsdon/Cheylesmore
Prior Deram Walk	Queen Margarets Road	A45	Westwood
Glentworth Avenue	Full Length		Holbrook/Bablake

#### Surface Treatment - Carriageway Micro Asphalt \*

Road Name	From	To	Ward
Scarborough Way	Full Length		Westwood
Dalmeny Road	Full Length		Westwood
Osbaston Close	Full Length		Woodlands
Martin Close	Full Length		Woodlands
Barton Road	Full Length		Foleshill
Donegal Close	Full Length		Westwood
Oak Tree Avenue	Full Length		Earlsdon
Gregory Avenue	Full Length		Earlsdon
The Farmstead	Full Length		Lower Stoke
B4109 Hall Green Road	Full Length		Longford

\*The recent mild weather has given us the opportunity to accelerate the micro asphalt scheme listed. With the approval of the Cabinet Member these sites will be delivered in February/March 2020 resulting in a saving, which will allow additional works elsewhere to be added to the overall 20/21 maintenance programme.

#### Surface Treatment - Carriageway Surface Dressing

Road Name	From	To	Ward
Jobs Lane	Full Length		Woodlands/Westwood
Sewall Highway	Bell Green Road	Blackberry Lane	Upper Stoke/Longford
Sewall Highway	Tiverton Road	Blackberry Lane	Upper Stoke/Wyken
A45 - Fletchamstead Highway -Northbound	Sir Henry Parkes Road	Torrington Avenue	Westwood
Watery Lane	Hall Brook Road	Bennetts Road	Holbrook/Bablake
Washbrook Lane	Full Length		Bablake
Raven Cragg Road	Full Length		Earlsdon
Clay Lane	Full Length		Bablake
Burns Road	Full Length		Lower Stoke
Conway Avenue	Full Length		Westwood
A4600 Hinckley Road Inbound	Wigston Road	Hall Lane	Henley
A4600 Hinckley Road Inbound	City Boundary	Wigston Road	Henley

#### Surface Treatment - Carriageway Asphalt Preservation

Road Name	From	To	Ward
A45 - Kenpas Highway - Northbound	Leamington Road	Kenilworth Road	Wainbody
Binley Road	Hipswell Highway	Princethorpe Way	Binley & Willenhall/Wyken

### Surface Treatment - Carriageway Fibre Enhanced Surface Dressing

Road Name	From	To	Ward
A45 Fletchamstead Highway - Southbound	Sir Henry Parkes Road	Kenilworth Road	Earlsdon
A4600 Ansty Road - Inbound	Arch Road	Hocking Road	Wyken
A4600 Ansty Road - Inbound	Sewall Highway	Walsgrave Road	Lower Stoke
The Mount	Full Length		Cheylesmore
A45 Stonebridge Highway - Southbound	Leamington Road	Boundary - Festival Island	Earlsdon/Cheylesmore

### Surface Treatment - Carriageway Rejuvenation

Road Name	From	To	Ward
B4101 Ringway Rudge Anti Clockwise	J8	J7	St Michaels
B4101 Ringway Queens Anti-clockwise	J7	J6	St Michaels
A4053 Ringway St Johns Anti-clockwise	J6	J5	St Michaels

### Footway Improvement Schemes - Reconstruction / Overlay Schemes

Road Name	From	To	Ward
B4109 Aldermans Green Road	Tusses Bridge	Opposite numbers 358 to 376	Longford
Butts	Gordon Street	Upper York Street	St Michaels
Dewsbury Avenue	Leamington Road	Mantilla Drive (even numbers)	Wainbody
Exminster Road	Okehampton Road	Buckfast Close (even numbers)	Cheylesmore
Kingsbury Road	Holyhead Road	Newington Close (odd numbers)	Sherbourne
Lime Tree Avenue	Jobs Lane	Number 71 (odd numbers)	Westwood
Middlemarch Road	Owenford Road	Capmartin Road (odd numbers)	Radford
The Firs	Spur Road		Earlsdon
The Scotchill	Fraser Road	Keresley Green Road	Bablake
Ullswater Road/Windermere Avenue	Binley Road	Princethorpe Way (even numbers)	Binley & Willenhall
B4109 Stoney Stanton Road	Adjacent Swanswell Pool		St Michaels
Biggin Hall Crescent	Bull's Head Lane	Number 54 (even numbers)	Lower Stoke
Watersmeet Road	Dennis Road	Barton's Meadow	Upper Stoke
Arbury Avenue	Elmsdale Avenue	Evelyn Avenue	Foleshill
Winsford Avenue	Opposite Kendal Rise	Denham Avenue (including The Lee)	Whoberley
Wyken Croft	Ansty Road	Wyken Avenue (both sides)	Wyken

### Footway Improvement Schemes - Slurry Sealing

Road Name	From	To	Ward
Thirsk Road	Full Length		Earlsdon
Leyland Road	Full Length		Sherbourne
Baginton Road	Leamington Road	A45	Earlsdon
Maidavale Crescent	Full Length		Earlsdon
Duggins Lane	Station Avenue	City Boundary	Westwood
Butts	Albany Road	Regent Street	St Michaels
Hertford Place	Full Length		St Michaels
Sandpits Lane	Full Length		Bablake
Penny Park Lane	Bennetts Road South	Halford Lane	Holbrook/Bablake
Watery Lane	Bennetts Road South	Elphin Close	Holbrook
Foreland Way	Full Length		Holbrook
Eacott Close	Full Length		Holbrook
Paxmead Close	Full Length		Holbrook
Leacrest Road	Full Length		Holbrook
New Road	Full Length		Bablake
Waste Lane	Full Length		Bablake
Stennels Close	Full Length		Bablake

### Highway Structures Schemes

Road Name	Structure	Scope of works	Ward
Farcroft Avenue	Farcroft Culvert	Bridge Strengthening	Woodlands
A4053 Ringway Rudge	Ring Road Junction 8 Overbridges	Post Tension Inspection and Investigation	St Michaels/Sherbourne
A4053 Ringway Hill Cross	Hill Cross Flyover	Concrete Repairs Half Joint investigation and Repairs	Radford/St Michaels/ Sherbourne
A4053 Ringway Swanswell	Swanswell Viaduct	Concrete Repairs Structural Assessment of Steel Box Beam	St Michaels
A4053 Ringway Rudge	Moat Street Flyover	Expansion Joint Repairs	St Michaels/Sherbourne
A4053 Ringway St Johns	London Road Flyover	Concrete Repairs Post Tension Inspection and Investigation	St Michaels
A45	Various	Principal Inspection and Structural Reviews	Bablake/Whoberley/ Woodlands/ Wainbody/Earlsdon
Various	Sherbourne Culvert	Concrete Repairs	St Michaels
B4118 Lockhurst Lane / Holbrook Lane	Lockhurst Lane Viaduct	Expansion Joint Replacement and Concrete Repairs	Holbrook/Radford/Foleshill

## Drainage Schemes

Road	Description	Ward
B4109 Alderman's Green Road - Coventry Canal to Lenton's Lane	Replacement of existing pipework	Longford
Almond Tree Avenue - Northerly Junction with Honeysuckle Drive	New pipework	Longford
Byron Street - Full length	1 new manhole, 3 gullies and connections	Foleshill
B4113 Foleshill Road - The Moorings to Eagle Street	New gullies and connections	Radford/Foleshill
A4600 Hinckley Road (Phases 2 & 3) - Wigston Road to Eden Road	Investigations and pipe repair	Henley
Allesley Flood Alleviation Measures (Upper Sherbourne catchment)	Flood alleviation measures in partnership with Environment Agency & Regional Flood and Coastal Committee	Bablake
Broad Lane Flood Alleviation Measures (Upper Brookstray catchment)	Flood alleviation measures in partnership with Environment Agency & Regional Flood and Coastal Committee	Woodlands

## Proposed Verge Schemes

Location	Proposed Action
General	Repair and protection
<b>Tier 1 Roads</b>	
Holyhead Road (Evenlode Crescent to Grayswood Ave)	Combination - use of bollards and recycled materials
<b>Tier 2 Roads</b>	
Daventry Road (William Bristow Rd to Park Palings - south side)	Use of concrete grass grids
Abbey Road (odd numbers 85-189)	Use of concrete grass grids (to undertake in phases due to extents)
Beake Ave (Rylston Ave to Burnaby Road)	Combination use of concrete grass grids, bollards and recycled materials
Sewall Highway - 2 areas: Area 1 Dennis Rd to Blackberry Lane Area 2 South of roundabout with Tiverton Rd	Combination use of concrete grass grids, bollards and recycled materials

**Note:** All locations subject to investigation and possible delays due to engineering difficulties.

**Safety Schemes**

<b>List of Schemes</b>	<b>Description</b>
Old Church Rd	Traffic calming scheme already designed. with consultation and delivery in 2020/21
Radford Rd and Keresley Road	Vehicle Activated Signs and lining changes on roundabouts
Installation of Average Speed Enforcement sites	Extension of Ansty Road ASE scheme. Working with West Midlands Police to identify potential sites to be delivered this year
Lockhurst Lane (Foleshill Road to Durbar Avenue)	Refuges and junction Improvements to be designed, consulted and delivered this year
Scheme Development	To identify and develop designs for sites for the 2020/21 safety scheme programme.

**Traffic Management Schemes**

<b>Heading</b>	<b>Description</b>
General low cost action	General low cost traffic management measures such as road markings, traffic signs, bollards and minor remedial measures to improve safety/ease congestion.
Minor Traffic Management Schemes	Small scale schemes to address traffic management issues e.g. refuges
Traffic Regulation Orders	Advertisement and implementation on a quarterly basis of new and amended waiting restrictions
Resident Parking Schemes	Programme of new and amendments to existing resident parking schemes
Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) programme	Locations identified with VAS to be deployed to address speed concerns and to collect speed data.

**Vulnerable Users**

<b>Heading</b>	<b>Description</b>
General low cost action	Improvements for vulnerable road users including pedestrians and cyclists, installation of dropped kerbs and advisory disabled parking bays.
Rights of Way	Supporting recording the Rights of Way network and its maintenance
School gate parking issues	Using school keep clears and waiting restrictions, also piloting Car Free School Streets
School time advisory 20mph schemes	Investigation and implementation
20 mph zones	Investigation and implementation

**Note:** This does not include any of the Public Realm works currently underway in the city centre.

## Urban Traffic Management Control

Heading	Description
UTMC Fibre Communications	Contribution to ICT communication upgrade
General	Low cost works associated with UTMC
Pedestrian Crossing Upgrades	Upgrade of various pedestrian crossing installations throughout the city
Traffic Signals Review	<p>Funded by TfWM, upgrade and introduce adaptive control to junctions on the key route network. Proposed sites include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A444 Rowleys Green Roundabout</li> <li>Hen Lane / Keresley Link Road</li> <li>Phoenix Way / Bell Green Road Roundabout</li> <li>Allesley Old Road / Queensland Ave</li> <li>Binley Road / Brandon Road</li> <li>Binley Road / Hipswell Highway</li> <li>Binley Road / Princethorpe Way</li> <li>Sky Blue Way / Gulson Road</li> <li>London Road / Allard Way Island</li> <li>Sky Blue Way / Oxford Street</li> <li>London Road / Gulson Road Gyratory</li> <li>London Road / Ring Road</li> <li>Warwick Road / Spencer Road</li> <li>London Road / Quarry Field Lane</li> <li>Binley Road / Church Lane</li> <li>Warwick Road / Leamington Road</li> <li>Ansty Road / Norton Hill Drive</li> <li>Walsgrave Road / Dane Road</li> <li>Junction 5 Ring Road</li> <li>Longford Road / Tesco Access</li> <li>A444 Jimmy Hill Way / Cyan Park</li> <li>Allard Way / Second Avenue</li> </ul>

**Note:** None of the above schemes are in priority order.

All locations could be subject to change or possible delays due to engineering difficulties

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## Public report Cabinet Report

Cabinet  
Council

10 March 2020  
17 March 2020

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport – Councillor K Caan

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

**Ward(s) affected:**

All Wards

**Title:**

Impact of European City of Sport 2019

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

Coventry was awarded ACES European City of Sport (ECOS) 2019. The paper describes the activity programme, the impact of the title and the legacy of the year as European City of Sport 2019.

Coventry will have a defining 10-year period (2012-22) in relation to sport, physical activity and leisure. The ECOS award forms a significant part of that decade of change, during which Coventry will have been a host city for the Olympic Games, hosted numerous international sporting events, invested over £100 million in sports and leisure facilities, been the UK City of Culture 2021 and a host city for the 2022 Commonwealth Games. ECOS is a key milestone on this ten year journey, providing a catalyst for change and an umbrella for promotion. Celebrating the City's achievements is important and ensures we continue to learn in the build-up to the city's major cultural and sporting events in 2021 and 2022.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet is requested to recommend that the Council:

- 1) Recognise the impact of Coventry's European City of Sport 2019 in the build up to UK City Culture and Commonwealth Games 2022 and support the ongoing legacy of the title.

The Council is recommended to:

- 1) Recognise the impact of Coventry's European City of Sport 2019 in the build up to UK City Culture and Commonwealth Games 2022 and support the ongoing legacy of the title.

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix - Infographic of the key headlines of European City of Sport 2019

**Background papers:**

None

**Other useful documents:**

Cabinet Report: 13<sup>th</sup> February 2018

European City of Culture 2019 Bid

<https://edemocracy.coventry.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=124&MId=11480&Ver=4>

In addition to those papers incorporated within the Appendices above, the following useful papers are posted for reference on the Coventry City Council website ([www.coventry.gov.uk](http://www.coventry.gov.uk)) and the Coventry Sports Strategy website ([www.covsport.org.uk](http://www.covsport.org.uk)). In addition, the Coventry Cultural Strategy can be found at [www.covculture.com](http://www.covculture.com).

1. Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 Cabinet Paper (Coventry City Council, 5 August 2014)
2. Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024
3. Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017-27 Cabinet Report (Coventry City Council, 3 January 2017)  
Coventry City Council
4. Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017 – 2027

**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?**

No

**Report title:** Impact of European City of Sport 2019

**1. Context (or background)**

**Bidding Process**

- 1.1. ACES Europe is a non-profit association based in Brussels which assigns the European Capital, City, Community and Town of Sport on an annual basis since 2001.
- 1.2. Cities are invited to bid for the awards after being recommended by existing ACES Europe members / previous award winners. These recommendations are focused on cities that are recognised as placing sport and physical activity in high importance to local society.
- 1.3. In September 2017, following the approach from ACES Europe, the Chair of Coventry Sport Network approached the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport and the Lord Mayor of Coventry to seek approval for Coventry to express an interest to be considered as a European City of Sport in 2019.
- 1.4. At the Council's AGM in May 2018, the Leader of the Council officially announced that Coventry had been awarded the status of European City of Sport 2019.
- 1.5. The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport, council officers and partners from across the city started to plan for the year under the themes of Culture and Sport, Wellbeing and celebrate.
- 1.6. A local organising committee was established to ensure the year was collaboratively delivered with a range of partners from across the city.

**Outcomes of ECOS**

- 1.7. Over 180 events were delivered under the ECOS throughout the year, these events have ranged from local events i.e. Vodafone Community Festivals to major international events such as International Ice Hockey and Rugby Union.
- 1.8. The year has enabled over 170,000 people to get involved in a variety of events, projects and activities that have been organised to support the aim of getting more people moving and helping to reduce health inequalities.
- 1.9. To enable the year to be a success it was essential that volunteers supported the events programme. Over 500 volunteers supported ECOS with over 2,500 hours of volunteering supported by the Coventry Ambassadors. In addition, through the innovation funding "Coventry Young ambassadors" was launched and worked with over 34 schools to train over 300 young people to volunteer, with practical experience volunteering at ECOS events.
- 1.10. ECOS delivered 21 Vodafone Community festivals thanks to the financial support of Vodafone Gigafast Broadband. These ranged from large festivals like the Sports Fest in the city centre (where 14,000 people took part) and the Kabaddi festival at Stoke Heath park to other community festivals including at Woodlands community sports facilities and a festival organised by Tile Hill residents' association. These were a mixture of sporting and cultural activities.

- 1.11. Sport and Culture Innovation grants enabled groups from both sporting and physical activity backgrounds to collaborate with cultural organisations in readiness for 2021. There were four awarded grants that focussed on a variety of projects, such as “paddling light” which created a unique partnership between Ludic rooms and Mercia canoe club. This created a lighting installation in the canal and started new canoeing activity.
- 1.12. In January 2019, Coventry was awarded host city status for the Rugby League World Cup in 2021. ECOS enabled the City to bring the biggest team sport event on the major sports events calendar in the world to Coventry during the year as UK City of Culture and the only venue between London and the North of England.
- 1.13. Coventry was awarded Priority Place status by Sport England and they invested £500,000 to develop community projects in Canley, Willenhall, Stoke Aldermoor and Foleshill. The Go Canley Project started to work with local people to find ways to get people more physically active.
- 1.14. ECOS partnered with Free Radio Cash for Kids, to work with voluntary organisations to raise as much money as possible in a four-week period to help get people from disadvantaged background access to sporting activity / clubs. This enabled local sports clubs to get involved with the ECOS year and raised over £36,000 for local young people. One club, Coventrians FC, raised over £12,000. Due to the success in Coventry the same project has now been launched in Warwickshire.
- 1.15. Events were attracted to Coventry due to the ECOS status, such as European Corporate Games (With over 3,000 people taking part), Street Games national conference, and Velo West Midlands, which delivered a new 42 mile route that ended in the city centre, The Premier League Kicks National tournament with over 80 football league teams represented, international ice hockey was played at the sky dome whilst England Under 20s played Rugby Union against South Africa at the Butts Park Arena.
- 1.16. Existing city events took on the challenge to improve and make innovative changes. The Coventry Half Marathon became the Festival of Running which now incorporates the half marathon, a Go 5k fun run, a 2.5k wheelchair race and a children’s mile all held over a week period and saw over 7,500 people take part. As part of the year of wellbeing, joining in with the festival of running, Good Gym was launched, encouraging people to become active and do good community deeds like litter pick in community locations, develop open space at local schools or community projects.
- 1.17. One of the objectives of the year was to host a physical activity exhibition in one of the museums. The Move and Play exhibition were the City’s first cross over for culture and sport, an interactive exhibition that all could enjoy becoming physical active in the Coventry Transport Museum. Over 30,000 people attend the exhibition and tried out the interactive games.
- 1.18. The GO CV card was launched in March 2019 and encouraged sign up to a new resident discount card. GoCV enables those who pay their council tax to the city council to get reduced or free access to a number of leisure facilities including The Wave, Coventry Transport Museum and public leisure facilities such as the Xcel Leisure Centre, Alan Higgs Centre, Centre AT7.
- 1.19. Since the GO CV scheme was launched over 40,000 people have signed up to the card and a number of new partners are now providing discounts and flash offers.

- 1.20. Over the course of 2019, Coventry opened a number of state-of-the-art sports and leisure facilities within the city costing in excess of £100 million that transformed sporting and physical activities opportunities for the city's residents. These include:
- The Wave (Waterpark) – in Autumn 2019, the Council's new £36.5 million The Wave waterpark opened its doors in the heart of the city centre.
  - Alan Higgs Centre 50 Metre swimming pool – a new 50m, eight lane swimming pool in opened in February 2020, costing £13.5 million. The replacement of the indoor 3G sports pitch provision at the facility was opened in December 2018, whilst the new fitness suite opened in November 2019.
  - Walking and running routes in parks – the city installed over 60 walking and running routes in local parks and open spaces to inspire more people to become active.
  - University Of Warwick Sport and Wellness Hub – the University of Warwick opened a the Sport and Wellness Hub that includes a 25 metre 12 lane swimming pool; 16 court sports hall; event space with 1,000 seats; fitness facilities; 4G Astroturf pitch; a water based hockey pitch and a variety of campus based exercise facilities.
  - University of Warwick Athletics Track – the refurbishment of the existing athletics track at the University of Warwick, with a new state-of-the-art surface. The track is home to Coventry Godiva Harriers and is the training base for Godiva Wheelchair academy and European City of Sport ambassador, Paralympian Kare Adenegan.
  - 7 Artificial Cricket wickets and a 5 lane net facility – These have been spread over the city and were used throughout the summer. The net facility has seen significant use from local residents and has enabled more people to access Edgwick park.
  - Footgolf – War Memorial Park – The existing golf course has been transformed into a 18 hole footgolf course, and has seen good visitor numbers engage with facility.

### **The Legacy of ECOS**

- 1.21. With over £100 million of sports and physical activity facility investment delivered within Coventry and the continued development of additional facilities such as Indoor bowls provision, the European City of Sport 2019 created a landmark year to remember for sport, physical activity and leisure in the city.
- 1.22. A place-based approach has been developed in partnership with Sport England with the Priority Place funding allocated (£500k). The focus is on local communities within the City including Canley, Willenhall, Stoke Aldermoor and Foleshill which are developing a further understanding of our communities in order to get people more people physically active.
- 1.23. The City continues to enhance its reputation to host major sporting events, and the number of events secured as part of ECOS has helped to continue this. The year also enabled several other events to be secured for the future including The British Transplant games and Rugby League World Cup 2021.
- 1.24. The number of events that utilised the ECOS title to increase their momentum and be innovative about delivery to increase participation was clear through the year. The theme to blur the lines between culture and sport was also evident in the events this year as partners included cultural activity alongside sporting events this has helped to build further collaboration between sporting and cultural partners.

- 1.25. The Go CV card will be an ongoing legacy as the number of offers develop and the numbers of residents to sign up for the card continues to grow from the 40,000 that are currently members. The Go CV card will ensure local residents get a discount to use local leisure facilities, including the Wave which will continue to encourage more people to access the facilities.
- 1.26. There have been a number of community projects that were piloted during the year and will continue to be improved due to the access achieved through the year. Projects such as Sporting Memories, work developed by the Coventry Youth Partnership, City of Sport Satellite clubs, children's mile, Coventry smashes sport, inclusive dance festivals and Coventry Young Ambassadors.
- 1.27. Following from ECOS, the Cabinet member for Public Health and Sport, working with the city's Sports & Physical Activity Partnership is refreshing the Coventry Sports Strategy to increase the alignment between physical activity and sport, bringing the strategy into greater alignment with local priorities and changes in national policy.
- 1.28. The importance of a clear understanding of the learning and outcomes from the ECOS year is essential in the build up to the UK City of Culture 2021 and Commonwealth Games 2022. The year has created a clear link between Sport and Culture and has allowed the city to celebrate the success of a unique year for Sport, Physical Activity and Leisure.
2. Options considered and recommended proposal
  - 2.1. To acknowledge the impact of the European City of Sport title in 2019 set out in this report and to support the Cabinet Member to ensure ongoing programmes to build participation are integrated into Council plans. Council recently adopted a priority equality objective to improve participation in sport by people with disabilities (currently under-represented).
3. **Results of consultation undertaken**
  - 3.1. A full evaluation of the ECOS has been commissioned including consultation and feedback from key stakeholders and partners, the findings of this evaluation will be feedback to the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport and addressed in the revised Sport & Physical Activity Strategy currently being developed by the Sport & Physical Activity Network.
4. **Timetable for implementing this decision**
  - 4.1. Officers will continue to seek opportunities to improve participation in sport and physical activity, and to increase the impact of participation on population health and wellbeing.
5. **Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services**
  - 5.1. Financial implications
    - 5.1.1. None
  - 5.2. **Legal implications**
    - 5.2.1. None

## 6. Other implications

### 6.1. How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?

6.1.1. **A prosperous Coventry** – Vision Aim 5 of the Coventry Sports Strategy outlined the need “to provide a range of modern, accessible and high quality sports facilities in the city”. This is a key element to why the city bid to become European City of Sport 2019, and to celebrate the success of all the capital investment during 2019. The first Strategic Objective for this Vision Aim specifically concerned future city centre leisure provision and the need “to develop city centre sports and leisure facilities that are accessible, high-quality, sustainable and of significance to the Midlands”. The Sports Strategy thereby put leisure at the heart of city centre regeneration and promotes the city centre as a key regional destination for leisure activities and leisure tourism. The commercial success of The Wave, Alan Higgs Centre and University of Warwick Sports and wellness hub will continue to have an impact on the sector and workforce creating more jobs in the leisure industry. The European City of Sport award is already showcasing economic benefit to the city through both public and private sector funding; this included external funding through Sport England with £3.5 million invested as part of the capital and revenue programme.

6.1.2. **Healthier, independent lives** – The goals highlighted to achieve the European City of Sport to focus on enjoyment of exercise, willingness to achieve, sense of community, learning fair play and improvement of health. Public leisure and sports facilities play a vital role in addressing social challenges, promoting active lifestyles, increasing physical activity, reducing isolation and improving outcomes for individuals and communities, highlighting the synergy of the award. Vision Aim 1 of the Sports Strategy sets the ambition “to develop a more active, inclusive and vibrant Coventry through positive experiences in sport”. Through encouraging and supporting engagement in regular sport and/or active recreation, the Strategy aims to positively influence and contribute to the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the residents of Coventry. In particular, public leisure facilities and their operation have a key role to play in supporting the Council to deliver its public health objectives and delivering a sustainable legacy as part of ECOS 2019 and year of wellbeing.

6.1.3. **Ensuring that children and young people achieve and make a positive contribution** – The award celebrated young people in the city, a city that is 7 years younger than the national average and has two leading universities. We know Coventry continues to face significant challenges around childhood obesity (as highlighted in the Director of Public Health’s Annual Report – Shape Up Coventry.) The European City of Sport title was used to collaborate with partners through the year of wellbeing and develop / showcase innovative approaches such as the work around Childrens Mile.

### 6.2. How is risk being managed?

6.2.1. The risk for the ECOS year was managed in consultation with regular briefings with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport. The ECOS legacy will also be driven by both informal and formal Cabinet Member Briefings.

### 6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

6.3.1. The ongoing impact of ECOS 2019 will continue to support the delivery of sport and physical activity. The refresh of the Coventry Sport Strategy and Physical activity framework are essential in terms of progress to get more local people active and support the holistic approach to sport.

6.3.2. The learning developed from the ECOS year will help in preparation for UK City of culture and the Commonwealth games in 2022, by creating wider and stringer partnerships across the sporting, physical activity and cultural organisations. The work through ECOS has also supported the city in terms of its readiness governance for 2021.

#### 6.4. **Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA)**

6.4.1 Previous demographic, health, sport and leisure data and public survey responses highlighted the following considerations concerning protected groups under equalities legislation:

- The pattern of participation in the city mirrors the city's deprivation patterns, with lower participation rates to be found in the north and east of the city and higher participation rates to be found in the west and parts of the south
- Approximately 4.5% of the population of Coventry are economically inactive due to a long term illness or disability
- The proportion of disabled people taking part in the city is less than both the national and regional averages
- There is a correlation between age and inactivity rates which are the highest amongst those aged 55+ and lowest for young adults aged 16 -25 years
- Young people often struggle to participate in sport and active recreation as youth unemployment remains high and students and young earners are often under financial pressure
- In Coventry, female inactivity is significantly higher than the equivalent male rate
- In Coventry, the proportion of women regularly taking part in sport is less than half that of men

6.4.2 Other cities that have received the European City of Sport Award have seen increased participation in physical activities as well as increased funding opportunities to encourage, develop and sustain participation. The award could offer the potential to source external resources to focus on participation from protected characteristic groups.

#### 6.5. **Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

6.5.1. Environmental Management

N/A

#### 6.6. **Implications for partner organisations**

6.6.1. The refresh of the Coventry Sports Strategy will have a significant impact on partner organisations and will be essential that the Coventry Sport Network (partners) come together to define the next five years for both sport and physical activity for the city.

6.6.2. Year of Wellbeing across partners has also been significant in the success of ECOS, and will continue to enable partners from Sport, Physical Activity, Leisure and public health to continue to share and collaborate with resources going forward.

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**170,000+**  
people participate in  
CITY OF SPORT EVENTS

Secured host city  
RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP 2021

**£100M+**  
INVESTED IN  
SPORTS  
FACILITIES

**180+**  
EVENTS

**80+** FOOTBALL  
LEAGUE TEAMS  
took part in  
KICKS PREMIER LEAGUE  
TOURNAMENT

**350**  
PEOPLE  
took part in  
REFUGEE  
NATIONS CUP



**GO CANLEY**  
launched

**OVER 300**  
school children awarded  
RECOGNITION  
FOR ENGAGE  
VALUES  
*Engage!*



**7 NEW**  
CRICKET  
WICKETS  
AND NETS  
IN PARKS



Biggest EVER  
SPORTS FEST

**14K**  
PEOPLE  
ACTIVE

**THE WAVE** OPENED  
COSTING  
**£36.7M**

**7,500** took part in first ever  
FESTIVAL OF RUNNING

Europe  
Corporate Games  
**OVER 3,000**  
ACTIVE



**17**  
City of Sport  
satellite clubs  
launched

**OVER  
38K**

**go CV**  
card holders  
**ACTIVE**

**Free** RADIO **cashforkids**

CLUBS RAISED OVER  
**£36K** TO GET  
DISADVANTAGED  
KIDS ACTIVE



**34** SCHOOLS  
TRAINED  
IN 'YOUNG  
AMBASSADORS'  
VOLUNTEER  
PROGRAMME



UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK  
SPORT AND WELLNESS HUB  
OPENED



AVERAGE  
reach per day  
**164K**  
on TWITTER

**10,500** take  
part in  
**LET'S RIDE**



FIRST EVER  
INCLUSIVE  
DANCE  
FESTIVAL

**50M POOL  
AND GYM  
DEVELOPMENT  
@THE ALAN  
HIGGS CENTRE**

**NEW**  
ATHLETICS  
TRACK  
at University  
of Warwick

LORD MAYOR  
PRESENTS TROPHY TO WINNER  
OF CHAMPION OF  
CHAMPIONS SNOOKER  
LIVE ON ITV4 TO 1.4M PEOPLE



Delivered 21 VODAFONE  
COMMUNITY FESTIVALS

**NEW**  
FOOTGOLF  
COURSE  
WAR MEMORIAL PARK

**500+**  
VOLUNTEERS  
gave 2,500+ hours of  
VOLUNTEERING TIME

**4 SPORT  
AND CULTURE  
INNOVATION  
GRANTS**

Hosted  
CRICKET  
WORLD  
CUP  
TOUR



**VELO** WEST  
MIDLANDS  
bike ride finished  
IN COVENTRY

**GOODGYM**  
LAUNCHED



**30K+ ACTIVE AT**  
MOVE AND PLAY EXHIBITION

International Rugby  
**ENGLAND U20s**  
vs **SPRINGBOKS**  
Butts Park Arena



Hosted  
**TEAM  
GB ICE  
HOCKEY**

**COVENTRY  
EUROPEAN CITY  
OF SPORT  
2019**



**51K**  
SPECTATORS  
at European  
City of Sport  
EVENTS

**#COVENTRY  
SMASHES  
SPORT**

COVENTRY  
UNIVERSITY  
launched  
FUTURE  
HEALTH  
PROJECT

Coventry School Games  
**15,000 ACTIVE  
YOUNG PEOPLE**

**7K+ ACTIVE** in  
GODIVA FESTIVAL'S  
GO CV ZONE

**44 NEW**  
walking and  
running routes  
in parks



Secured  
**BRITISH  
TRANSPLANT  
GAMES 2020**



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Cabinet

10 March 2020

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Councillor T Khan

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (People)

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy

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**Is this a key decision?**

Yes - the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on residents or businesses in two or more electoral wards in the City.

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**Executive Summary:**

The Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2019-24) sets out Coventry's ambitious agenda and how through the four pillars of prevention, support for people, improved accommodation and greater housing supply, the council aims to tackle homelessness and continue to create a city fit for today and future generations.

Households placed into temporary accommodation (excluding hostels) who are not in receipt of housing benefit do not currently contribute towards rental costs. In addition to meeting the cost of the accommodation, the Council currently also meets the cost for utilities and council tax and the full cost of storing a households' furniture until they leave temporary accommodation.

In December 2019 permission was granted to undertake a public consultation on a draft Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy. The proposed policy contained the following elements:

1. **Utilities charges and Council Tax:** Making households in Temporary Accommodation responsible for the utilities (electricity, gas and water) they use and for paying their Council Tax.
2. **Storage:** Households in temporary accommodation will pay to store their belongings.
3. **Contributions to rent through a licence fee:** Households who are not entitled to full housing benefit because they work and/or have 'excess income' will be asked to make an affordable contribution towards the rent, through a licence fee.

The public consultation ran from Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019 until Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The results of the public consultation, including key suggestions and recommended changes to the draft policy, can be found in Appendix B and the Equalities Consultation Analysis can be found in Appendix C.

### **Recommendations:**

The Cabinet is requested to:

- 1) Approve the implementation of the Housing and Homelessness Service's Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy from April 2020. The policy includes making Households in Temporary Accommodation responsible for;
  - Utilities
  - Council Tax
  - Storage costs and;
  - For those not in receipt of full housing benefit, contribution to the rent on the property through a licence fee.
- 2) Approve the recommendation that the Council pays the first month of storage for every household in Temporary Accommodation who places their furniture and other belongings into Council arranged storage.
- 3) Note the working group established to explore the most financially viable methods for households in Temporary Accommodation to make utilities payments and reduce their energy bills.

### **List of Appendices included:**

Appendix A – Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy  
Appendix B – Consultation Report  
Appendix C – ECA

### **Background papers:**

There are no background papers listed.

### **Other useful documents**

[Coventry's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019-2024](#)

### **Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No – although the matter was considered by Scrutiny Board 4 on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 as part of the consultation process.

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

No – although the matter was considered by the Disability Equality Advisory Panel on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020 as part of the consultation process.

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

## Report title: Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy

### 1. Context (or background)

1.1 On 2nd February 2020 there were a total of 681 households living in Temporary Accommodation (TA) provided by Coventry City Council: 388 were families with dependent children (lone and two parent families) and 293 were single people, adults with no dependents or childless couples. Temporary accommodation used by the Council includes:

- Bed and Breakfast and Hotels
- Hostels, some of which provide specialist support services
- Private rented accommodation
- A small number of properties provided by a Housing Association

1.2 In 2019/20 it is forecast that the cost to the Council of households in temporary accommodation will be in excess of £9m. It is imperative that the service undertakes a range of activities to both reduce spend and increase income. The service has been working with TA providers to reduce the cost of the Temporary Accommodation and has been successful in reducing the full year costs by in excess of £1 million.

1.3 The Council has the power to require the payment of reasonable charges for accommodation in accordance with s206(2) Housing Act 1996.

1.4 Coventry does not currently have a Temporary Accommodation (TA) Charging Policy and therefore does not charge most households placed in Temporary Accommodation, this means:

- **Council Tax;** The majority of households living in TA do not pay for council tax, it is included in the cost met by CCC.
- **Utilities (Ineligibles);** The majority of households living in TA do not pay for utilities, it is included in the cost met by CCC. Utility costs for most households living in TA cost is estimated to cost in excess of £800K per annum.
- **Furniture storage;** The Council has a legal duty to provide access to storage of furniture for any household who become homeless to protect their belongings. No households in TA meet any of the costs of storing their furniture this is all paid for by CCC. The Council's forecast spend on storage charges is £163k during 2019/20.
- **Rental Charges:** No household makes a contribution to the rent on the property, including those in receipt of partial housing benefit, and those not eligible for housing benefit, due to excess income. Households with excess income living in TA is estimated to cost the Council in excess of £400k per annum.

1.5 Having researched other Councils practices regarding charging households living in TA it is evident that Coventry is unique in not currently charging households with excess income.

1.6 In addition, the Charity Shelter states on their advice pages; *"You have to pay rent in emergency housing, but it must be affordable for you"*; which demonstrates charging for Temporary Accommodation is standard practice. Similarly, many domestic abuse charities (such as Womensaid) who provide refuge accommodation charge for rent and other charges.

- 1.7 We currently have the highest number of households living in TA recorded in the city and this is contributing to a significant budgetary pressure. Whilst not charging households with excess income during times when there was low demand for temporary accommodation is understandable, this is something the city can no longer afford to do.
- 1.8 In addition to the economic case for change, households need to be able to demonstrate they are tenancy ready before securing permanent accommodation. During listening sessions, some third sector partners expressed the view that an unintended consequence of the Council currently not having a TA charging policy is that some homeless households are not developing the skills required to obtain and maintain permanent accommodation.
- 1.9 Therefore, if the policy is approved, a key outcome is that single people and families are tenancy ready by the time they move out of Temporary Accommodation and into Permanent Accommodation to ensure tenancy sustainability. To do this the Council will look to:
- i) Focus on independent living – single people and families will be able to manage their money effectively by the time they leave Temporary Accommodation
  - ii) Provide Appropriate Support - Where single people and families experience financial budgeting difficulties support will be provided through the recommissioned homeless support contracts
  - iii) Only charge proportionately - charging will be based upon what people can pay; the Council will not charge indiscriminately.

## 2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1.1 **Option 1 - Do Nothing:** This option would involve continuing with the situation as it currently stands where some households are not contributing to the council tax and utilities costs and no one is making a contribution towards the rental costs of their temporary accommodation or payment towards the cost of removals and storage of their belongings. As stated above it is imperative that the service increases income and reduces expenditure wherever possible to ensure that the service provides value for money. It is important that households pay their licence fee and utilities to ensure that when they secure permanent accommodation they are prepared to meet future rental and household costs. This is not the recommended option.
- 2.1.2 **Option 2 - Implement Policy:** This option would involve implementing the proposed Temporary Accommodation Policy. The constituents of the policy are:
- **Utilities and Council Tax:** Households in Temporary Accommodation will be responsible for the Council Tax and the utilities they use.
  - **Storage:** Where a household needs to place their belongings in storage, the Council will cover the first month's storage costs and then charge those households for the full cost of removals and storage costs after that point.
  - **Licence Fee:** Households who are not entitled to full housing benefit because they work and/or have 'excess income' will be asked to make an affordable contribution towards the rent, through a licence fee. The licence fee will be set at the Local Housing Allowance rate for the property they are temporarily accommodated in.
- 2.1.3 Option 2 is the recommended option.

## 2.2 Reasons for Recommended Proposal

- 2.2.1 We currently have the highest number of households living in Temporary Accommodation recorded in the city, rising from 156 households in 2015/16 to 681 households in February 2020. This increased demand is putting the Council under significant budgetary pressure and considerable spend over the Council's allocated budget for housing.
- 2.2.2 This increase in demand combined with the backdrop of public spending cuts means meeting future demands will become increasingly difficult. Therefore, whilst not having a Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy during times when there is low demand for temporary accommodation is understandable, this is something the city can no longer afford to do.
- 2.2.3 The policy is broken down into three elements – the benefits of each element of the policy are as follows:
- 2.2.4 **Utilities and Council Tax:** The Council does not have a consistent approach to who pays for utilities and Council Tax. People living in hostel accommodation, housing association and some private rented Temporary Accommodation currently pay their own utility bills. Most households in private rented Temporary Accommodation and all households in hotels and B&Bs do not pay for their utilities - Coventry City Council currently covers these costs. People in Hotels and B&Bs are not liable for Council Tax.
- 2.2.5 The policy will increase consistency between households living in private rented temporary accommodation, hostels and housing association properties. It is expected that the utilities element of the policy will save the council in excess of £400K per year.
- 2.2.6 **Storage:** Furniture removals and storage currently costs the Council over £163,000 each year. There is no limit set on how many items a household can put into storage. This means the Council pays no storage costs for some households and a considerable amount for others.
- 2.2.7 The policy proposal to charge households for the removal costs and cost of storage may encourage households to organise and prioritise the items they place into storage. The Council recognise, following feedback received during public consultation, that some households may struggle with these costs and therefore it is recommended that each households is not charged for the first month of storage. It is estimated that this element of the policy will save the Council approx. £140K each year.
- 2.2.8 **Licence Fee:** The Council currently pays the full cost of the rent that is not covered by housing benefit, for families with 'excess income' and this costs the City more than £400K per year. Public consultation revealed the 58.7% of respondents 'Strongly Agreed' or 'Agreed' with charging a licence fee and 70.3% of respondents favoured the Local Housing Allowance Rate. Only households with an excess income (currently 20% of households in temporary accommodation) would be required to pay a licence fee. This element of the policy would save the Council approximately £200K per year.
- 2.2.9 The Council has already undertaken a great deal of activity to reduce spend on Temporary Accommodation in other areas, and will continue to do so, including reducing the costs paid to providers and reducing the number of households living in Temporary Accommodation. However, this activity will not be enough to meet the shortfall – the introduction of the Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy will contribute to doing so.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

#### **3.1 Internal Stakeholders**

3.1.1 At their meeting on the 23rd January 2020, the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) considered the draft policy. The Board supported the proposals in the policy and in addition recommend that:

- 1) Consideration be given to options other than pre-payment meters for utilities payments for those in temporary accommodation
- 2) A report back be considered by the Board next municipal year following the implementation of the policy, should it be agreed by Cabinet

#### **3.2 External Stakeholders**

3.2.1 Listening Sessions took place during November 2019 with third sector organisations to help shape the development of the draft policy and the Council's approach to consultation.

3.2.2 Permission to Consult on the proposed policy was received early December 2019; consultation started on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and ended on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The full consultation report can be found in **Appendix C**.

##### **3.2.3 All Respondents**

3.2.4 The Stakeholders were able to complete the online Let's Talk survey. Of the 180 responses received Coventry Residents made up 43.9% of respondents, Council Employees made up 23.3% and Households in Temporary Accommodation made up 15% of respondents.

3.2.5 The public consultation revealed support for the Utilities and Council Tax Elements (with 62.8% and 52.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing with each element, respectively). The public were also supportive of the introduction of a licence fee - 58.7% of respondents 'Strongly Agreed' or 'Agreed' with charging a licence fee and 70.3% of respondents favoured the Local Housing Allowance Rate. The most divisive element was the introduction of charging for storage with 41.4% strongly agreeing or agreeing with this element and 37.4% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

##### **3.2.6 Households in Temporary Accommodation**

3.2.7 Households in temporary accommodation were informed of the consultation, in writing, on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019 in which they were given the option to have their say via an online survey through the 'Let's Talk' website. They were also given the option to attend a focus group to discuss the proposed policy and its implications.

3.2.8 Visiting Officers handed out 60 flyers and one survey to people living in Temporary Accommodation.

3.2.9 180 people completed the online survey – 15% of which were people living in Temporary Accommodation. Three of the people captured in the survey chose to attend a focus group and one person met an officer in person to complete the survey face-to-face, due to communication barriers.

3.2.10 People living in temporary accommodation were largely unsupportive of the policy - their strength of feeling towards each element was as follows:

3.2.11 Utilities and Council tax: 33.3% strongly agreed or agreed with paying for utilities, whilst 51.8% disagreed. Similarly, 25.9% strongly agreed or agreed with paying Council Tax whilst 22.2% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

3.2.12 Storage: 40.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed whilst only 14.7% agreed or strongly agreed.

3.2.13 Licence Fee: 22.2% of people in Temporary Accommodation agreed or strongly agreed whilst 40.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

#### 3.2.14 **Third Sector Organisations**

3.2.15 Third sector organisations were able to complete the online Let's Talk survey – 5% of respondents were from this sector. A meeting was also held with Coventry's Frontline Network where they were able to ask questions before submitting a collective response through the online platform.

3.2.16 Third sector organisations were largely in support of the policy, and its constituent elements, however some concerns and suggested changes were raised as follows:

3.2.17 Utilities: concerns were raised over the proposal to use Pre-Payment Meters for Temporary Accommodation due to them being more expensive than quarterly billing and the risk of self-disconnection. As such, a working group has been established between third sector organisations and the Council to work together to find the most appropriate method for utilities payments and to address other issues that may materialise.

3.2.18 Storage Costs: concerns were raised around affordability of storage. A suggestion was made by third sector organisations and other survey respondents that a capped contribution could be applied. After analysing this feedback it is recommended the Council provide the first month of storage free to provide households with the time to carry out budgeting and organise their affairs.

## 4. **Timetable for implementing this decision**

4.1 End of March 2020 - Letters to all households living in Temporary Accommodation to inform them of the cabinet decision

4.2 Mid-April 2020 - Licence Fee and Storage Payment module (ARA) installed

4.3 End of April/Beginning of May 2020 - Households living in Temporary Accommodation begin paying for their licence fee, council tax, utilities and storage charges.

## 5. **Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

### 5.1 **Financial implications**

5.1.1 The financial implications are included in the main body of the report. The cost of the storage, ineligible charges and excess income is estimated to cost the council in excess of £1.3M in 2020/21 if the policy is not implemented. By asking claimants to pay an affordable contribution to their accommodation costs, a proportion of this cost will be saved / avoided. For the purposes of financial planning we are assuming a reduction in cost of £740K

## **5.2 Legal implications**

- 5.2.1 The Council has the power to require the payment of reasonable charges for accommodation in accordance with s206(2) HA 1996. The Housing Act does not define what is reasonable and therefore, there is a discretion as to what is reasonable, considering the circumstances of the applicant.
- 5.2.2 The policy will need to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as discussed at 6.4.
- 5.2.3 With regards to the consultation period there is no set statutory timeline so when consulting the Council must observe basic rules of natural justice. Natural justice requires the decision-maker to give prior notice to persons affected by it and give them an opportunity to make representations. Therefore, a public authority usually has a broad discretion as to how a consultation exercise should be carried out. In formulating the consultation period, the Council should have regard to the principles outlined in *R v London Borough of Brent, ex p Gunning*; namely that the consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage; sufficient information must be provided and adequate time must be given for consideration and response.
- 5.2.4 The Council must take account of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and must not act in a way which interferes with human rights set out in Schedule 1, specifically in this case the Article 8 right to respect for private and family life. If it is found that the Council has interfered with this right this is only justified if the interference is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of the economic well-being of the country.
- 5.2.5 The 1996 Act contains an express power enabling the Council to arrange for housing accommodation to be provided by a third party. Section 74 of the 1989 Act does not state that housing accommodation secured from a third party must be accounted for in a housing revenue account. Consequently, it can be accounted for in the General Fund, without the need for a housing revenue account.

## **6. Other implications**

Any other specific implications

### **6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan ([www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/))?**

The introduction of a Charging Policy for Temporary Accommodation will help the council to meet one of its main aims of 'Delivering our priorities with Fewer Resources' detailed in the Council Plan.

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

- 6.2.1 There is a risk that there may be an increase in successful applications for Discretionary Housing Payments. Applications for DHPs due to licence fee or storage payments will be monitored on a regular basis.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The implementation of the policy will be managed within existing resources. A review of the impact of the policy and practice changes on the organisation will be carried out 3 months after implementation.

## 6.4 Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA)

6.4.1 A full Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) has been carried out. The full document (parts 1 and 2) is located in **Appendix C**.

6.4.2 The equalities analysis has indicated both potential positive and negative equality implications of implementing a temporary accommodation charging policy in Coventry. The consultation process identified the following **negative equality impacts** on people with the following protected characteristics:

- **Age:** Concerns were expressed that the levelling charges would impact on parent's ability to get children to school thus impacting on the child's educational attainment. Especially, under the circumstances when the Council places children in temporary accommodation far from their school.
- **Age and/or disability:** concerns were raised regarding the cost of utilities and the impact on people with higher energy needs (children and people with disabilities such as COPD). Especially if the temporary accommodation used by the Council is of low energy efficiency and if the Council choose to install (more expensive) pre-payment meters.
- **Disability:** Concerns were raised that charging for removals and storage could either cause or exacerbate mental health conditions, during what is already a difficult time.
- **Sex:** Some respondents expressed the view that the storage element could negatively impact people fleeing domestic violence (predominantly women) as they may not have support networks available to help store belongings whilst others' felt they were less likely to be impacted as they often leave without any belongings.

6.4.3 Respondents to the consultation mainly provided more generic positive and negative feedback on the proposals which could apply to all protected characteristics.

6.4.4 Some respondents to the consultation expressed concern that the proposed policy would negatively affect already vulnerable people and/or families; people/families who are already experiencing financial difficulties/poverty, people with physical and mental disabilities and discourage people wanting to leave domestic violence and abusive relationships.

6.4.5 **Positive equality impacts:** Some respondents to the consultation felt that the proposals provided a positive opportunity to support people living in temporary accommodation to develop or regain a sense of personal and financial responsibility for their day to day lives. The overarching benefit of the policy would be potentially increasing the sustainability of longer-term accommodation options for those who have experienced homelessness.

6.4.6 Some respondents expressed the view that the current situation could be widening inequality between people living in temporary accommodation and those who do not – they felt the money currently being spent would be better spent on in other areas, such as adult social care.

### 6.4.7 Mitigations

Following consultation analysis and discussions with third sector organisations the following mitigations are recommended:

6.4.8 **Storage Costs:** It is recommended a one-month grace period for every household placing furniture into storage is granted to allow households time to settle into temporary accommodation and carry out personal budgeting.

- 6.4.9 **Storage Costs:** A financial assessment will be carried out to ascertain how much a household can afford to pay. The repayment costs of storage will spread over a longer period of time taking into account the affordable amount.
- 6.4.10 **Utility Costs:** A working group has been established to explore the potential impact of charging for utilities on children, and other vulnerable groups. The working group will explore the best form of payment method, including the use of smart meters, with the intention of securing access to more affordable tariffs for households in TA.
- 6.4.11 **Travel Costs:** The Council will explore other financial support options for supporting households in temporary accommodation with children whose current school is not located near their current accommodation (e.g. prevention pot or funding via education service)
- 6.4.12 Households on low incomes can make an application for Council Tax Support, whilst households in receipt of full or partial housing benefit can apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment to help with housing and storage costs.
- 6.4.13 The newly commissioned support providers will also actively work with people and families in temporary accommodation to understand the policy, their responsibilities and support people with their budgeting skills in order to mitigate where possible any overall negative impacts.
- 6.4.14 A review of the revised policy will be undertaken one year after implementation which will include a review of actual ECA impact.

## **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

There are no known implications (or impact on) the environment.

## **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

- 6.6.1 Providers, such as the Salvation Army, currently have no way of charging households for temporary accommodation if they do not complete a housing benefit form. They therefore cover accommodation charges themselves. There are positive implications for providers in this situation.
- 6.6.2 If there is evidence following the implementation of the policy that there has been an impact on partner organisations (such as an increase in demand due to the implementation of the policy) the Council will discuss these implications with partners.
- 6.6.3 During implementation, negotiations will take place with partner organisations, and private sector landlords in particular, in order to realise the cost reductions through charging for utilities and council tax.

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## Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy

### 1. Scope

- 1.1 The Policy details the framework Coventry City Council proposes to use to charge a licence fee to homeless households living in Temporary Accommodation where they are not entitled to full housing benefit or have failed to make an application for housing benefit.
- 1.2 The Policy also details the framework Coventry City Council will use to charge for Council Tax, Utilities and any furniture the tenant has in storage.
- 1.3 An abbreviations and jargon buster can be located in Appendix 1

### 2. Introduction & Aims

- 2.1 The Council has the power to require the payment of reasonable charges in accordance with s206(2) Housing Act 1996. The charges are for the use and occupation of the accommodation and it is anticipated the majority of households will be entitled to either full or partial housing benefit.
- 2.2 In all housing tenures, housing providers set a standard expectation that rental payments are the responsibility of residents; either through direct payments from their salary/income and/or (where entitled) through the application and receipt of housing benefit. It is therefore imperative that the Council supports the development of the financial skills of those living in temporary accommodation, so they are not only able to secure more permanent accommodation but also sustain that accommodation.
- 2.3 The Council is committed to ensuring Temporary Accommodation charges are affordable for everyone and therefore any licence fee that households will be expected to pay will be capped at Coventry's Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.
- 2.4 The licence fee a household may be required to pay will not be the full rental cost of the property but is a reasonable charge to the household for use and occupation. The difference between the rental cost from the landlord and the household contribution (licence fee) will be met, at a cost, by the Council.
- 2.5 The Council also has a duty to provide storage for homeless households to place their furniture in if they become homeless and there would be a risk that their furniture would need to be disposed of. Local Authorities are legally allowed to charge households for this service at a level at which would be affordable for an individual household. Coventry City Council have not historically charged households any amount towards this cost but will do so in line with this policy, as outlined in section 10.

### 3. Objective of the Policy

- 3.1 The objective of the Policy is to ensure that the licence fee charged for temporary accommodation is affordable to all, meets the operational costs of temporary

accommodation provision or as much as it reasonably can, does not act as a disincentive for households to work while ensuring a fair charge to those who can afford to pay.

#### 4. Guiding Principles

4.1 The Council are proposing the following guiding principles:

- **Focus on independent living** – single people and families will be able to manage their money effectively by the time they leave Temporary Accommodation
- **Provide Appropriate Support** - Where single people and families experience financial budgeting difficulties support will be provided through the recommissioned homeless support service
- **Only charge proportionately** - charging will be based upon what people can pay; the Council will not charge indiscriminately.

#### 5. Legislative framework

5.1 The principles of the policy are in line with the City's Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2019-24) and is compliant with;

- Housing Act 1996 Part VII (as amended)
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (2018)
- Equality Act 2010

#### 6. Housing Benefit and the recovery of Licence Fee

6.1 All households entering Temporary Accommodation will be expected to complete a Housing Benefit application as some customers will be eligible for assistance towards the licence fee through housing benefit. The Council will provide support to households to ensure that a housing benefit claim is made.

6.2 Housing Benefit will be assessed on the full rental charge of the temporary accommodation.

6.3 The outcome of the housing benefit claim will determine what charges will apply as follows:

- Where the household is entitled to full housing benefit no licence fee will apply.
- If the household is not eligible for full housing benefit due to the amount of income they receive, the Council will apply a maximum licence fee equivalent to their reduction in housing benefit due to excess income up to a capped amount. The capped amount will be in line with the current Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate.
- Where households cannot reasonably afford the licence fee the Council will carry out a financial assessment to determine an affordable charge.
- If a household fails to apply for housing benefit the Council will expect them to pay the full licence fee however, where the household cannot afford this a financial assessment can be carried out to determine a reasonable charge. If a tenant is eligible for housing benefit or other welfare assistance such as Discretionary Housing Payments but does not apply or provide follow up information required for the claim they will be expected to pay the full charges for the temporary accommodation.

6.4 Coventry City Council recognises some people may be unable to pay the full amounts (for example they are subject to the Benefit Cap) and therefore an affordability assessment will be completed where appropriate.

6 Licence Fee Charges - Charges passed on to the Household (where applicable)

6.1 The licence fees for temporary accommodation are set to ensure every household has the same fee level regardless of income, or the location of the accommodation.

6.2 The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels are set nationally and are the maximum housing costs a household would receive through Housing Benefit/Universal Credit.

6.3 The levels of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) in Coventry as of April 2020 are set out below:

Property size	Weekly LHA Rate
Shared accommodation:	£70.83
1-bedroom accommodation:	£93.61
2-bedroom accommodation:	£116.77
3-bedroom accommodation:	£134.28
4-bedroom accommodation:	£178.78

6.4 The Council will review the fee levels annually and any variation will be based on property size, location, LHA rates and any potential impacts from welfare reform. All licences will receive a minimum 28 days written notification of any variation.

7 Other Charges

7.1 In addition to the licence fee, households living in temporary accommodation will be expected to pay other household bills, including Council Tax, Utilities (Gas, Water and Electricity) and where applicable the cost of storing furniture and other personal belongings.

8 Council Tax Charges

8.1 Council Tax Charges will vary, and it will be dependent on the size and location of the property. The amount of Council Tax charged will be based on the current council tax banding scheme.

[www.coventry.gov.uk/info/55/council\\_tax/2285/council\\_tax\\_bands\\_and\\_charges](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/55/council_tax/2285/council_tax_bands_and_charges)

## 9 Utility Charges

9.1 Gas, electricity and water charges will be the responsibility of the licensee. Payment methods will take into account the make-up of the household.

## 10. Storage Charges

10.1 The Council has a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent loss or prevent/mitigate damage to the personal property of the applicant and their household if the Council have reason to believe that there is a danger of loss or damage to the property and that there are no other suitable arrangements for the property. This duty applies whilst there is a risk of loss or damage.

10.2 All households will be expected wherever possible to make their own arrangements for the storage of their furniture and personal items.

10.3 Where the household has not been able to arrange this independently, the Council will arrange for furniture and personal items to be collected and stored by their preferred contractors. The Act makes provision for reasonable charges to be made for this under s211 (4) Housing Act 1996.

10.4 Households will be expected to pay the full storage costs (minus the first month's storage costs) including collection of the items, storage and delivery from storage to the follow-on destination.

10.5 The Council will cover the first month's storage costs to allow the household time to carry out household budgeting. The Council will not cover the collection of the items and delivery from storage to follow-on destination (removal costs).

10.6 If the household cannot afford to pay upfront, they will be able to pay in instalments. They will be asked to sign an agreement which requires them to pay instalments on a regular basis. This will be a condition of the storage contract.

10.7 If the cost is not met or the instalments not maintained the items in storage may be disposed of. Where the household is unable to meet the cost of furniture storage, and the household is in receipt of full or partial housing benefit, they may be eligible for help from the Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme (DHP). Applications for DHP will be subject to a financial assessment (See section 12).

10.8 If items in storage (arranged by the Council on behalf of the applicant) are not removed within the requisite notice period of 28 days (Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1982), the items will be disposed of (following relevant regulations) and the full cost of the storage and disposal will be charged to the owner.

10.9 People in temporary accommodation can apply to the Community Support Grant for essential items however if it is deemed that a household has had essential items disposed of when they could afford storage costs then it is possible a community support grant will not be awarded.

10.10 When storage is arranged by the Council, but the items to be stored are refused by the storage provider (for example, where there is evidence of infestation which may affect other storage areas or items), the household will have to arrange alternative storage as it would require the Council to take unreasonable steps in seeking alternative arrangements.

11 Responsibilities of the Licensee

- 11.1 All licensees will be provided with and be required to sign a condition of occupancy agreement (licence). The licence fee is part of the licence agreement and conditions of occupancy.
- 11.2 The licensee is responsible for applying and pursuing their housing benefit claim, including providing any relevant documentation to support their claim.
- 11.3 The licensee is responsible for applying and pursuing any other relevant welfare benefit, such as but not limited to Discretionary Housing Payment including providing any relevant documentation to support their claim.
- 11.4 The licensee must pay the licence fee on time.
- 11.5 The licensee must inform the Council's Housing and Homelessness Service of any changes that will affect either their ability to pay the licence fee and/or the amount of housing benefit they receive.
- 11.6 The licensee will also be responsible for the payment of Council Tax, Utility charges (gas, water and electricity) and furniture storage (where this is has been provided).

12. Discretionary Housing Payments

- 12.1 Households who are in temporary accommodation, in receipt of partial housing benefit and are not able to pay the remaining licence fee due to financial difficulties, can apply for help through the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme. If eligible, payments can be awarded up to the licence fee.
- 12.2 Households who are in temporary accommodation, in receipt of full or partial housing benefit and are not able to pay the full costs of furniture storage can apply for help through the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme.
- 12.3 Individuals will need to make an on-line application to the Benefit Service and meet the requirements of the scheme to qualify.

13. Arrears

- 13.1 The Council intends for Licensees to be informed of any arrears in a prompt and timely manner with a view that early intervention can help tenants with arrears.
- 13.2 Arrears will be recovered following the Council's Housing and Homelessness Service arrears escalation procedure, the ethos is for early intervention and will involve officers making contact with customers, assisting with benefit claims, sending arrears reminder letters and setting up payment plans as customers with high arrears will be given the option to pay in instalments.
- 13.3 Eviction proceedings through legal action will be the final option available to the Council and will only be used once the Council is satisfied no further routes for recovery exist. This process will involve customers being issued a Notice to Quit giving 28 days to vacate the property, the Council will seek to recover costs incurred because of legal proceedings.
- 13.4 Any potential notice will be subject to a case review and sign off from an officer who is senior to the officer intending to serve notice.

## Appendix 1

### 14. Former Arrears

14.1 If a Licensee leaves temporary accommodation owing a debt, these outstanding charges are called former arrears and will follow a separate recovery process. Action will be taken to recover these arrears and households will be pursued for outstanding debts.

### 15. Complaints

15.1 Coventry Council operates a complaints procedure that is open to all residents including tenants in temporary accommodation. A copy of the complaint procedure can be accessed at:

[www.coventry.gov.uk/info/5/contact\\_the\\_council/545/comments\\_compliments\\_and\\_complaints/3](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/5/contact_the_council/545/comments_compliments_and_complaints/3)

### 16. Performance

16.1 The service intends to monitor;

- Total income due
- Total income collected
- Total arrears current
- Total arrears former debt

16.2 Other performance reports and statistics will be collected for management purposes.

## Appendix 1

### **Abbreviations / Jargon**

Tenants – Licence holders within temporary accommodation, assured shorthold tenancies are never used for temporary accommodation.

Licence / Occupancy agreement – An agreement signed by the tenant, it will clearly set out responsibilities for the tenant and Council.

Licence fee – A fee charged for the use and occupation of the property. The licence fee is equivalent to the household's reduction in housing benefit due to excess income up to a capped amount. The capped amount will be in line with the current Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.

LHA / Local Housing Allowance – This is used to work out how much Housing Benefit that can be paid as rent.

TA – Temporary Accommodation, Accommodation used to house customers who are homeless and owed a statutory duty under s188 or s193 of the Housing Act 1996.

Subsidy gap – the limit the Government will pay through Housing benefit towards the cost of Temporary Accommodation, any difference or gap is covered by the Council.

DHP – a discretionary housing payment is subject to eligibility criteria and can be awarded to help with housing costs. You can only get DHP if you are eligible to claim either Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit.

Section 41 - S41 Local Government Act 1982 entitles the authority to give notice in writing requiring the collection of property, if this is not done the property will vest in the Local Authority.

Provider charge – The cost the Council pays to private sector providers of temporary accommodation.

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# Consultation Report – Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy

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## 1) Executive Summary

The Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy Consulted upon would introduce charging for households who are in temporary accommodation. Coventry City Council use a range of temporary accommodation solutions which has led to an inconsistent approach to utilities payments. Some people living in temporary accommodation already pay for the utilities they use whilst many don't.

The Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy is made up of the following constituent elements:

1. **Utilities charges and Council Tax:** Making households in Temporary Accommodation responsible for the utilities (electricity, gas and water) they use and for paying their Council Tax.
2. **Storage:** Households in temporary accommodation will pay to store their belongings.
3. **Contributions to rent through a licence fee:** Households who are not entitled to full housing benefit because they work and/or have 'excess income' will be asked to make an affordable contribution towards the rent, through a licence fee.

The draft Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy was published for consultation on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and it ran until Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

This document provides a summary of the consultation responses received and how they have affected the review of the draft Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy. The analysis is broken down by general public feedback and feedback received from people living in Temporary Accommodation, and or those who may soon enter temporary accommodation, and therefore will be directly impacted by the introduction of a charging policy.

## 2) Consultation Approach

The development of a draft Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy began in the Autumn of 2019. Engagement sessions with third sector organisations took place during this time to help the Council understand the advantages and disadvantages of developing, and implementing, a Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy, what elements the policy could include and how best to reach those who would be most impacted by the policy, if permission to consult was granted.

Existing forums, such as the Homelessness Forum and Frontline Network were asked to input their feedback as the consultation progressed – their feedback was submitted via the online Let's Talk Platform.

### Activities to raise awareness of the consultation survey

**Coventry City Council Website** – Information about the consultation survey and proposed key changes was available on the front page of the Council website.

#### Specific Communication to people living in Temporary Accommodation:

1. Households in temporary accommodation were informed of the consultation, in writing on the 13th December 2019 in which they were given the option to have their say via an online survey through the 'Let's Talk' website. They were also given the option to attend a focus group to discuss the proposed policy and its implications. Three of the people captured in the survey chose to attend a focus group and one person met an officer in person to complete the survey face-to-face, due to communication barriers.
2. Direct emails were also sent to all people living in Temporary Accommodation that the Council held email addresses for (over 400)
3. Translated material was sent to one person living in Temporary Accommodation at their request.
4. Visiting Officers handed out 60 flyers and one survey to people living in Temporary Accommodation.

**Social Media:** via the Council's govdelivery Coventry City Council consultation list, which has 4000 people signed up, Let's Talk Council Facebook and Twitter accounts. Over 23,000 people saw the Facebook posts and 450,000 people saw content through Twitter.

<b>Facebook</b>	
<b>Reach</b> The number of people that have seen the content within a certain period	23,665
<b>Impressions</b> The number of times a post from the page is displayed	23,882
<b>Shares</b> When a piece of content is shared with a Facebook user's friends	7
<b>Likes</b> When a user shows their support for the content	9
<b>Comments</b> When a user submits a comment on a piece of content	13
<b>Clicks</b> When a link has been clicked by a user	140

<b>Twitter</b>	
<b>Reach</b> The number of people that have seen the content within a certain period	454,699
<b>Impressions</b> The number of times the content is displayed	10,092
<b>Retweets</b> When a user re-posts a Tweet	0
<b>Likes</b> When a user shows their appreciation for a Tweet	0
<b>Clicks</b> When a user clicks on hashtag(s) in a Tweet	27

**Internal Council Communications** – The Council also publicised the consultation via the Council intranet, email ‘intranet roundup’, ‘Yammer’ and weekly news bulletin. Information was also circulated to specific employee networks.

**Targeted face to face briefings and/or email circulation** – The Council has also used existing forums or networks to raise awareness of the consultation. Face to face briefings have been held with:

- Disability Equality Action Partnership (DEAP)
- Coventry Homelessness Forum
- Front line network (network of frontline staff working in the housing and homelessness Sector)
- Specific Staff within the Council have been briefed
- Housing and Homelessness Service and staff from Family Hubs
- Email circulation to Homelessness Forum and Third Sector Organisations when consultation survey published.

### 3) Consultation Responses

For ease of reference, consultation responses from (a) the online platform, (b) face-to-face engagement and (c) Direct invitations to respond are separate out below:

#### a) Let’s Talk Coventry online engagement platform

Let’s Talk Coventry is Coventry City Council’s new online engagement platform. The platform allows members of the public to become knowledgeable about proposed changes, as well as to respond to consultations. The engagement platform contained a public survey as well as a Q+A forum for the public to ask questions about the strategy. The Q+A forum also allowed officers to respond to members of the public in a way which would clarify the scope and proposals in the consultation. There were 554 visits to the site and 180 responses/comments, as well as 2 questions.

After the consultation concluded, Council analysts identified key themes within the responses. This was accomplished through reading through all of the responses, and then categorising them. Sometimes, consultation responses touched on a number of themes.

## Online Questions

The table below shows the **questions** received from Let's Talk engagement platform, and officer comments made in response. Each of the questions has been classified into one of the above themes.

Question	Officer response and proposed change (if relevant)
Can you give me an example of why a Family is placed into TA ? out of the 413 Families is there a common reason why they are in TA?	Thank you for your question. There are many reasons why families are placed into temporary accommodation but the most common are: Family or Friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (22%), End of private rented tenancy – assured shorthold tenancy (20%) and domestic abuse (15%).
Have the Council put systems in place to help those individuals that are depress and stress using these temporary accommodation not developing any mental health by the said policy?	If someone living in temporary accommodation does disclose that they experiencing difficulties with their mental health there is an expectation that the officer will discuss the support options available. Options available will be dependent on the individual's circumstances - it may be through a self-referral to the NHS Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service, the person's GP or third sector organisation.
How will a household of four individuals be evaluate if only one or two are employed?	An application for housing benefits will be submitted for every adult, or couple, living in temporary accommodation. If the household is entitled to full housing benefit then the household will not be required to make a payments towards the licence fee. If the household have an excess income the Council will calculate the amount the household will have to pay. The maximum amount the households will have to pay will be the lower of 65% of the households excess income or one of the two options that are being consulted upon (the local housing allowance rate or the median rent rate).
Will this temporary policy not be another projects that will delay individuals for moving forward?	No. The policy is independent of the processes involved in allocating permanent accommodation.
Individuals consider to be earning excess incomes, what is the time frame they will spend in these temporary	The time spent living in temporary accommodation is dependent upon a number of factors, such as the household's specific needs including the size of the property they require. There is both a local and national shortage of

accommodation before be allocated a property?

larger family homes (of 3 bedrooms or more) therefore larger families have to wait longer for suitable properties to become available than smaller households.

## Online Consultation Survey Responses:

The survey on the Let's Talk Coventry platform posed 5 multiple-choice questions to gauge the strength of public opinion in relation to each policy element. There were also free-text responses to allow respondents to gather in-depth information about respondents' underlying reasoning and motivations with regards to each policy element, and the policy as a whole.

A copy of the paper survey can be found in Appendix 1.

Owing to the lengthy and sensitive nature of free-text responses, full and unabridged responses will be provided to decision makers with the cabinet report.

The survey also contained an additional 12 equalities questions.

### Respondent Demographics

Questions 1 to 5 were designed to establish respondent demographics in order to gauge the strength of feelings, opinions and emerging themes of each group. There were 180 responses broken down into the following demographics:

#### Question 1: "Which one of these categories best describes you?"

Demographic	% of Respondents
Coventry Resident	43.9%
Coventry City Council Employee	23.3%
Coventry Resident Currently living in Temporary Accommodation	15.0%
Other	5.6%
Voluntary or Community Sector Organisation	5.0%
Member of the Public – not a Coventry Resident	2.8%
Private Landlord	1.7%
Local Housing Association – Registered Provider	1.7%
Coventry City Council Elected Member	1.1%

#### Question 2: "If you are responding as a Local Housing Association please state the name of your organisation"

There were three responses from housing associations: one from Embrace Property Ltd and two from Citizen.

#### Question 3: "If you have chosen 'other' please state how you are responding"

There were 11 responses to this question which included attendees from two focus group sessions.

Two responses were from a focus group session which took place at the Coventry Haven. Four responses were from asylum seekers at a focus group session with Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre. One response was from the homeless

charity Crisis. The remaining four responses identified themselves as TA provider, Embrace Property Lettings and Investments, Victim and homeowner.

**Question 4: “If you are responding as a voluntary or community sector organisation please state the name of your organisation”**

There were seven responses to this question. These are listed as Coventry Cyrenians, Coventry Jesus Centre, St Basils, Change Grow Live (CGL), St Laurence’s Church, Coventry Citizens Advice and Coventry Frontline Network.

**Question 5: “If you are responding as a Private Landlord please state the name of your business”**

There were two responses to this question: one from Stamp Accommodation Services and one from Embrace Property Ltd.

### Element 1 – Utilities and Council Tax

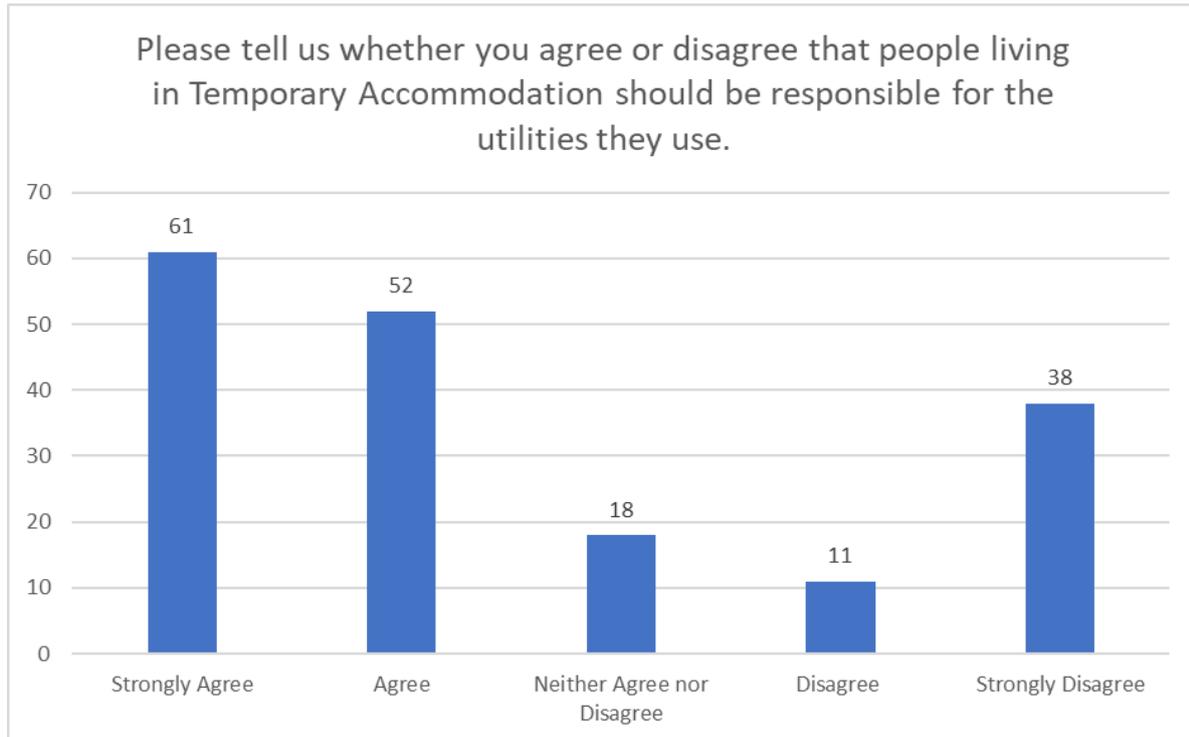
Questions 6 – 8 of the survey were designed to establish respondent’s strength of feeling towards the utilities and council tax element of the policy. The final free-flow question (8) provides more detailed insight into the reasons behind these strengths of feeling.

**Question 6: “Please tell us whether you agree or disagree that people living in Temporary Accommodation should be responsible for the utilities they use.”**

This was a multiple response question, where respondents could choose Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don’t Know. In total, 180 people responded to this question, of whom:

- 62.8% indicated Agree or Strongly Agree with people in TA paying utilities (33.3% of people in Temporary Accommodation)
- 27.2% indicated Disagree or Strongly Disagree (51.8% of people in Temporary Accommodation)

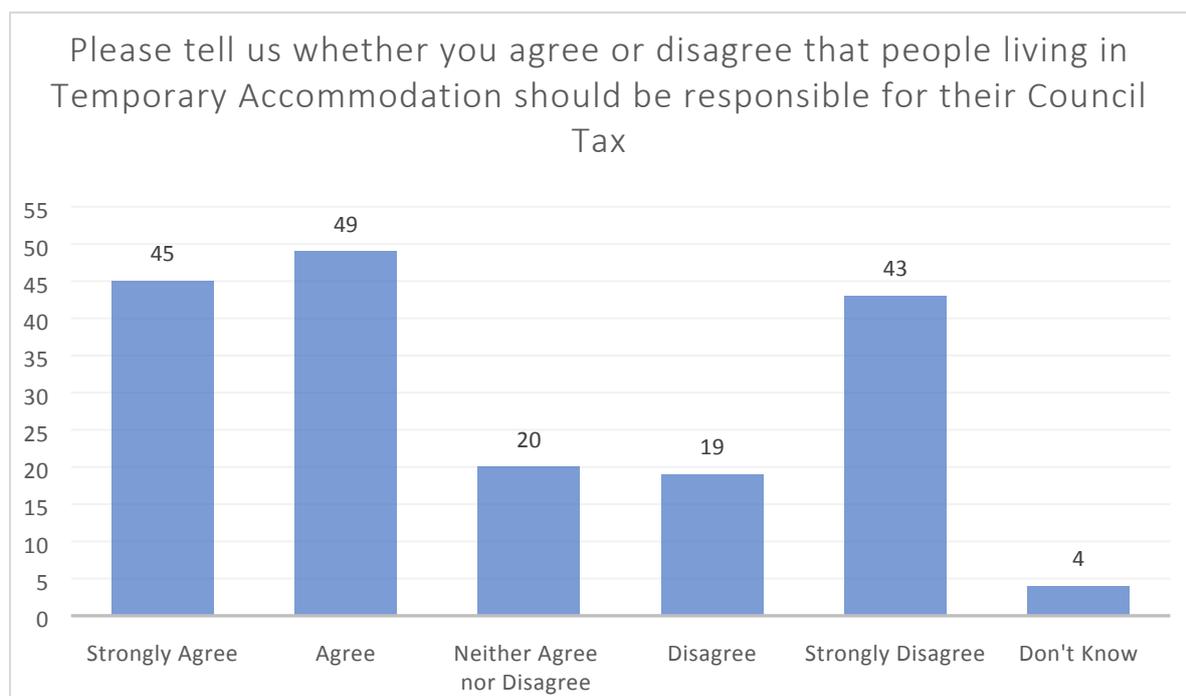
The graph below shows the full count of responses in each category:



Question 7: “Please tell us whether you agree or disagree that people living in Temporary Accommodation should be responsible for their **Council Tax?**”

This was a multiple response question, where respondents could choose Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don't Know. In total, 180 people responded to this question, of whom:

- 52.2% Strongly Agree or Agree (25.9% of people living in temporary accommodation)
- 34.5% Strongly disagree or disagree (22.2% of people living in temporary accommodation)



**Question 8: “If you have any comments about **utilities and council tax** please state below.”**

Question 8 was a free-text question. In total, 95 people left a comment. About as many people were generally supportive of the proposals as were concerned that the changes would cause hardship. There was a strong concern to do with ensuring that the charges were affordable, but many felt that paying a contribution could help encourage budgeting skills. The responses to this question aligned with one or more of the below themes:

**Affordability:** A number of people were concerned about whether the additional charges will be affordable.

*‘Not affordable for all households. Especially those on universal credit that are under 25 years of age.’*

**Encourages Budgeting/ Responsibility:** Some respondents were in favour of the proposals because they felt charges would help people with skills that are needed outside of temporary accommodation.

*‘Paying for the real costs of living helps people learn to budget, avoid debt and properly manage their finances. It is less of a shock when moving into permanent accommodation if people understand the real cost of living a maintaining a property’*

**Will cause further hardship:** Some respondents were concerned that the changes would cause further hardship to a group who are already badly-off and vulnerable. Many were particularly concerned about the impact upon debt.

*‘To charge for Utilities and Council Tax to these individuals would further penalise those in greatest need.’*

**Supportive of Charging:** Responses in this theme were those which were supportive of some form of charging, whether that was for Council Tax or utilities. This category was further subdivided into:

**Those Who can Afford Should Pay:** These responses were focussed around a moral principle that those who can afford to pay charges ought to make an affordable contribution.

*'Only if they are able to pay should they be charged.'*

**Some Costs Should be Payable:** There were some responses where respondents felt that only particular charges ought to be payable by those in TA. In particular, some felt that they ought to pay utilities, but not Council Tax.

*'If they are only there for a short time why should they be made to pay council tax. By all means charge them for the utilities they use'*

In addition to these two, there were also some who were fully supportive of the proposals without any alterations.

**Harder to Move on from TA:** Some respondents felt that charging those in TA would mean they would find it more difficult to move on to permanent housing, such as a private rent.

*'The Council will need to provide less to them in the long run if they are able to find accomodation sooner, in the private sector. This will take longer if they are not able to save for a deposit.'*

**Increase Social Housing:** Responses in this theme attributed the need for TA as being due to a lack of social housing.

*'This is only necessary because the council doesnt have enough housing to rent out as council accomodation'*

**Mental Health:** These responses focussed on how the changes would cause living in TA to be a more stressful experience, which might harm those with Mental Health needs.

*'I strongly object to yet more stress being piled onto poor, vulnerable & disadvantaged low income individuals and families.'*

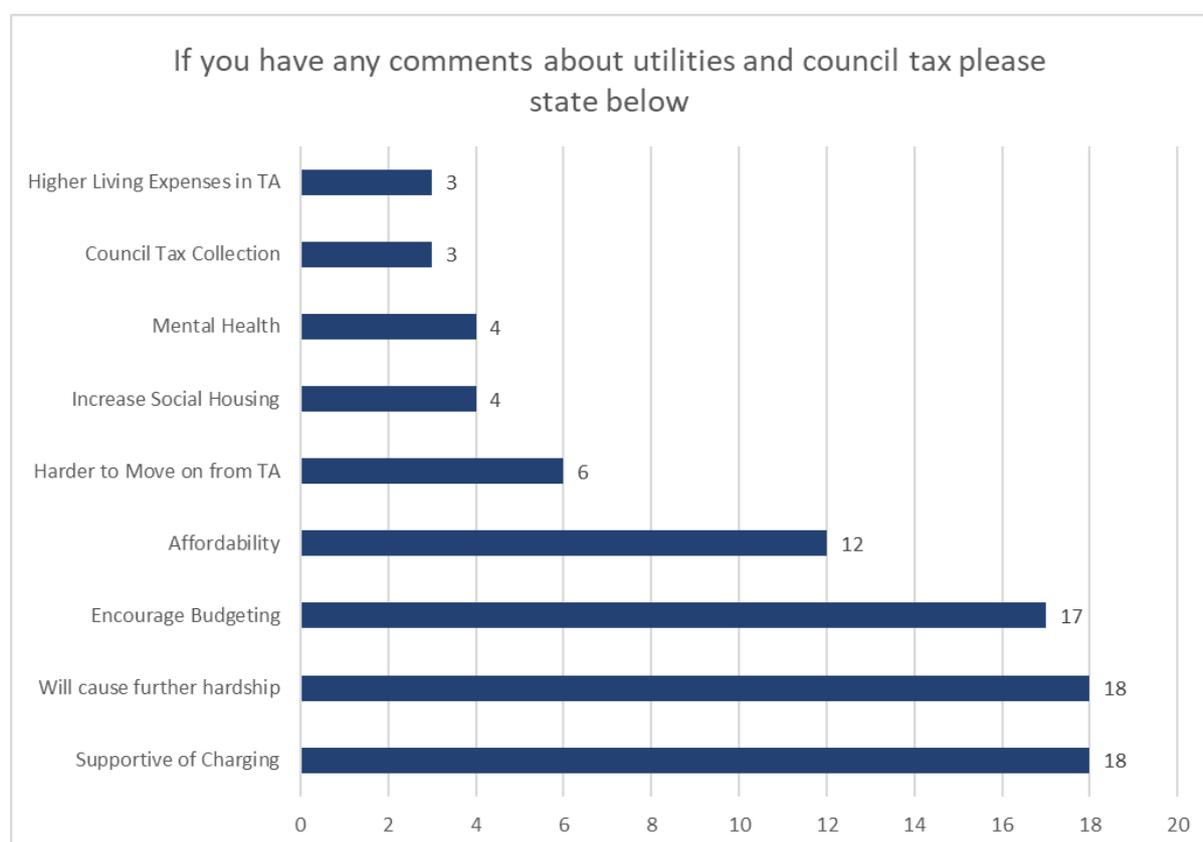
**Council Tax Collection:** Some respondents were concerned that collecting Council Tax from those whose income is variable and who often remain in TA for a short time would be difficult, and that the revenue acquired by Local Authority might be offset by increased staff time and struggles with collection.

*'Unless the council has powerful, reliable evidence from the authorities, which currently make these charges, that they cover their costs (ie staff time, collection expenses etc), I strongly object'*

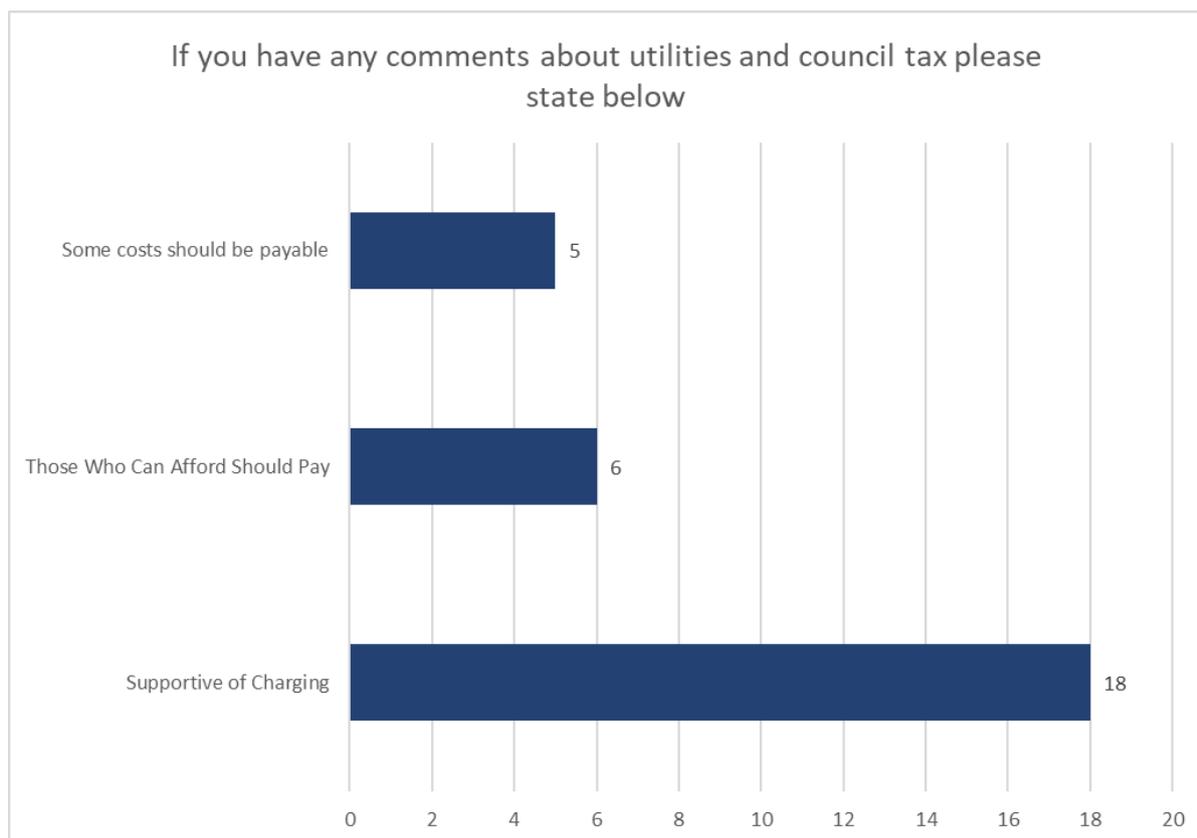
**Higher Living Expenses in TA:** A number of respondents were concerned that people in temporary accommodation have little choice over the energy provider they use, as well as sometimes having difficulty accessing kitchen facilities. These can all lead to a higher cost of living for those in TA. There were also concerns regarding the sorts of energy meter and issues with disconnection. Responses mention that young children, families, and those with chronic health conditions could be especially affected by this.

*‘Tenants will have little choice in their energy supplier, especially if in HMOs, and little choice over the use of a pre-payment meter.’*

The following graph shows the relative prevalence of these themes:



The below graph shows the breakdown of those who are supportive of charging:



### Frontline Responses:

Frontline workers from the energy sector submitted information about certain requirements and restrictions, some of which include:

#### High Costs and Energy Efficiency

We are concerned that households in TA could face higher than average costs as they have little choice about what accommodation they are placed in.

They will face higher costs if the property does not have good energy efficiency.

- Poor energy efficiency will cause a more significant problem during the winter months.
- We believe some social landlords use a set energy provider, who may not always be the cheapest. This may need further mitigation.

#### High Costs and Lack of Choice

Coventry's Frontline Network, alongside other respondents, have raised concerns that households in Temporary Accommodation may end up paying above average utility costs through no fault of their own if:

- Inefficient heating methods are used (e.g. storage heaters).
- They are placed on a high Tariff (e.g. Economy 7)

- The household cannot choose their supplier(s) or payment methods (pre-payment vs credit).

There may also be particular restrictions on switching supplier and the use of prepayment meters in Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs).

Concerns have been raised around “any drive to force tenants to use prepayment meters (PPMs)”. Whilst the Frontline Networks acknowledged PPM uses for managing consumption and budgeting they raised the concerns that customers can be cut off if not kept in credit (self-disconnection) that standing charges still apply if no energy is used, and PPM costs are higher per unit than other options.

### **High Costs and Inequality**

Actual energy usage and costs will depend on the household make-up: health issues, children in the family, whether residents are working or at home in the day.

There is therefore the risk that some people will be disproportionately impacted by this element of the policy. Especially if their income does not reflect their needs (e.g. they are awaiting a decision on a Personal Independent Payment)

The Energy UK PPM Principles for prepayment meters highlights, in their vulnerability checklist, people who would be classed as at serious risk to health from self-disconnection, including people with health conditions, such as COPD, and young children.

Whilst not their preferred solution, Coventry’s Frontline Network suggested that if PPMs were used, they would support the adherence to the Energy UK PPM Principles for prepayment meters, providing extra support for vulnerable consumers.

### **Suggested Policy Changes**

Respondents to the survey have suggested the following policy changes:

- Households in Temporary Accommodation should have choice over their energy supplier and payment method if being asked to pay for their usage. Switching suppliers and payment methods can save users a lot of money and help them control their usage.
- Residents to be referred to energy advice. This could also identify whether the household is eligible for other support such as the Priority Services Register.
- Collective switching might lower bills for multiple properties used for Temporary Accommodation.
- If PPMs are used adherence to the Energy UK PPM Principles for prepayment meters, providing extra support for vulnerable consumers. This includes restrictions on the installation of PPMs such as:
  - A customer must be able to understand and operate the PPM and visit top-up points to add more credit and must not live ‘quite a distance’ from a top-up point
  - must not require a continuous supply for medical/health reasons such as medical equipment.
  - PPMs must be accessible so users can operate the meter. It must be situated inside and in a room to which they have continuous access.
  - Physical or mental disabilities may make PPMs unsuitable.

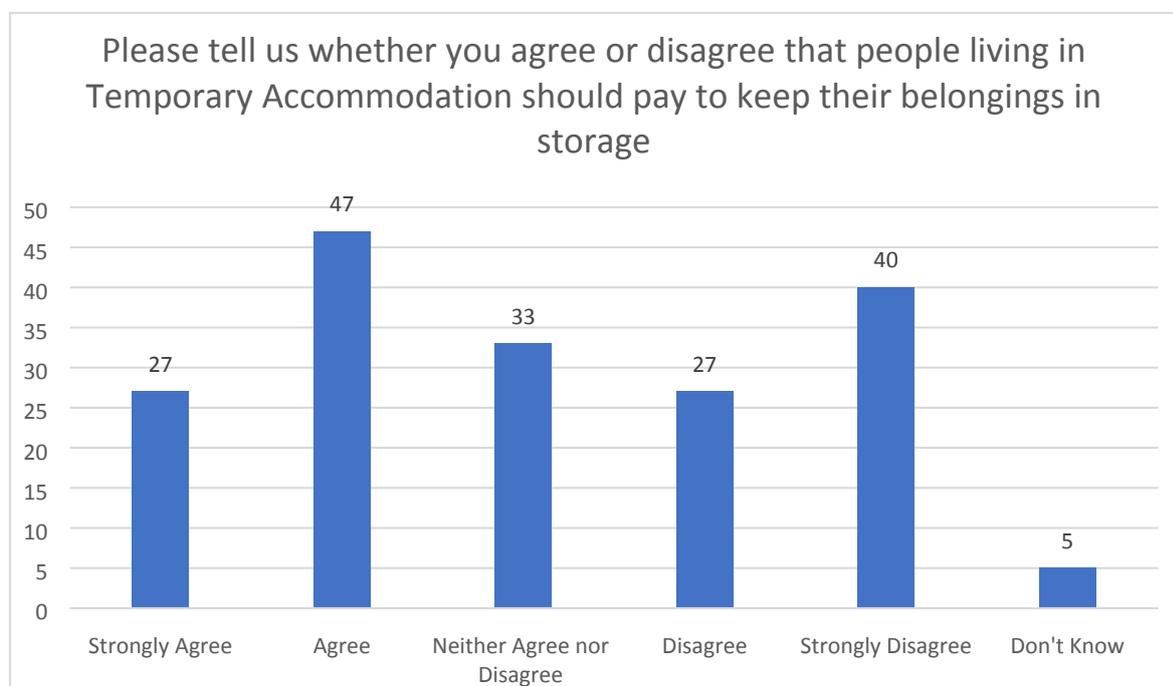
## Element 2 – Storage

Questions 9-10 of the survey were designed to establish respondent’s strength of feeling towards the storage element of the policy. The final free-flow question (10) provides more detailed insight into the reasons behind these strengths of feeling.

**Question 9** “Please tell us whether you agree or disagree that people living in Temporary Accommodation should pay to keep their belongings in storage.”

This was a multiple response question, where respondents could choose Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don’t Know. In total, 180 people responded to this question, of whom:

- 41.4% Strongly Agree or Agree (14.8% of people living in temporary accommodation)
- 37.4% Strongly Disagree or Disagree (40.7% of people living in temporary accommodation)



**Question 10:** “If you have any comments about storage costs and charging please state below”

Question 10 was a free-text question. In total, 83 people left a comment to this question and there were eight specific comments about whether the council should charge for storage and/or removals when responding to other survey questions.

About as many people were generally supportive of the proposals as were concerned that the changes would cause hardship. There was a strong concern to do with ensuring that the charges were affordable, but many felt that paying a contribution could help encourage responsibility to declutter household items.

Of those against applying a charge, a proportion of respondents felt that it was unreasonable to charge because it was not a household's fault that they had found themselves in temporary accommodation.

Of those in favour of charging, several respondents stated that there should be a capped contribution – either by allowing a period of time before charging or by charging a 'reasonable' or 'nominal' amount. Some of the responses in favour of a cap on storage costs were because it was acknowledged that people could be in temporary accommodation for a long time.

A number of responses felt that the cost of storage should be shared between the resident and the council.

The responses to this question aligned with one or more of the below themes:

**Affordability:** A number of people were concerned about whether the additional charges will be affordable.

*'I think it depends on the circumstances. But people in temporary accommodation provided by the council probably won't have the means to pay for storage'*

**Encourages Responsibility:** Some respondents were in favour of the proposals because they felt charges would incentivise people to de-clutter and reduce the amount of items they take into TA.

*'A charge may deter people from taking advantage of a very expensive service they don't need'*

*'There also needs to be a way of discouraging occupants from bringing all their possessions into TA properties. Sometimes this introduces fire risk, makes for a poor living environment and makes it difficult for people to move quickly when they are vacating the property'*

*'Normally if you are homeless, surely your priority would be to sell the furniture etc to get some money to pay for the essentials in life (roof over your head / food) not get the council to pay for storage of these items'*

**Will cause further hardship:** Several respondents were concerned that the changes would cause further hardship to a group who are already badly-off and vulnerable. Some were particularly concerned about increased debt and the likely emotional impact.

*'This will trap families into a cycle of unbreakable debt that will cause future homelessness'*

*'For someone that has to leave their home is a stressful time as it is. Especially if they have been evicted. So by charging them full price on removal and storage will add to this stress and trauma'*

**Supportive of Charging:** Responses in this theme were those which were supportive of some form of charging for storage and some were focussed around a moral principle that those who can afford to pay charges ought to make an affordable contribution.

*'Some costs should be payable this should not be free'*

*'I think people should pay towards the storage of their belongings if they can afford it'*

**Harder to Move on from TA:** Some respondents felt that charging those in TA would mean they would find it more difficult to move on to permanent housing, such as a private rent.

*'Again, this will make the amount of time families are not self sufficient longer, as they will not be able to save for a deposit for a home'*

**Not the Household's Fault:** Some respondents felt that it was unfair to charge when some people had ended up in TA through no fault of their own.

*'Many of those made homeless have not asked to be made homeless and are already struggling. Losing their possessions if they are unable to afford the storage fees will just add insult to injury'*

**Shared Responsibility for Storage:** Responses in this theme suggested the both TA households and the council had responsibilities to alleviate the issue of storage.

*'I believe both sides should brunt the payment in regards to storage'*

*'I would like to see the council possibly helping to move furniture and such to a friend's house or anywhere the person in temporary accommodation might also have available'*

**Capped Contribution:** Several respondents thought that there should be a grace period before applying a charge, while others suggested a reasonable or nominal amount.

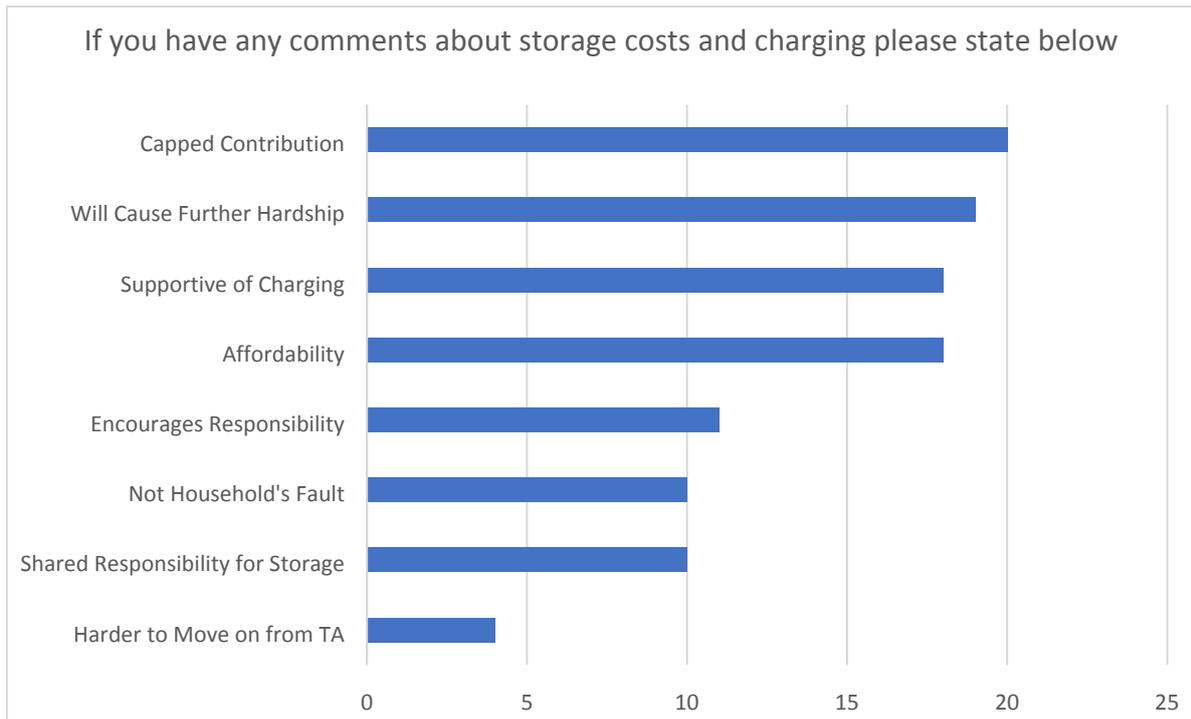
*'I think a contribution should be made but it should be capped to reduce debts increasing whilst people are in an already stressful situation'*

*'Maybe a reasonable contribution would be a better solution than the whole cost'*

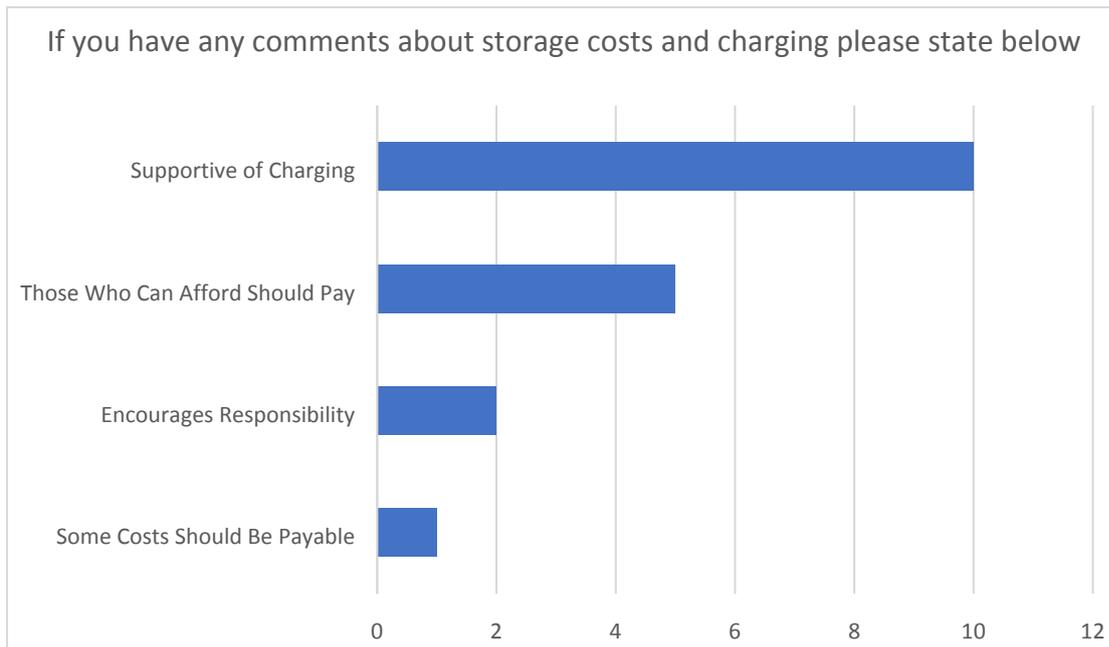
*'Allow 1 month free for people to sort out their own storage, then charge'*

*'To have a limited time what is free to store first 30 days free after must pay if not sell it and use this money as distribution to the costs'*

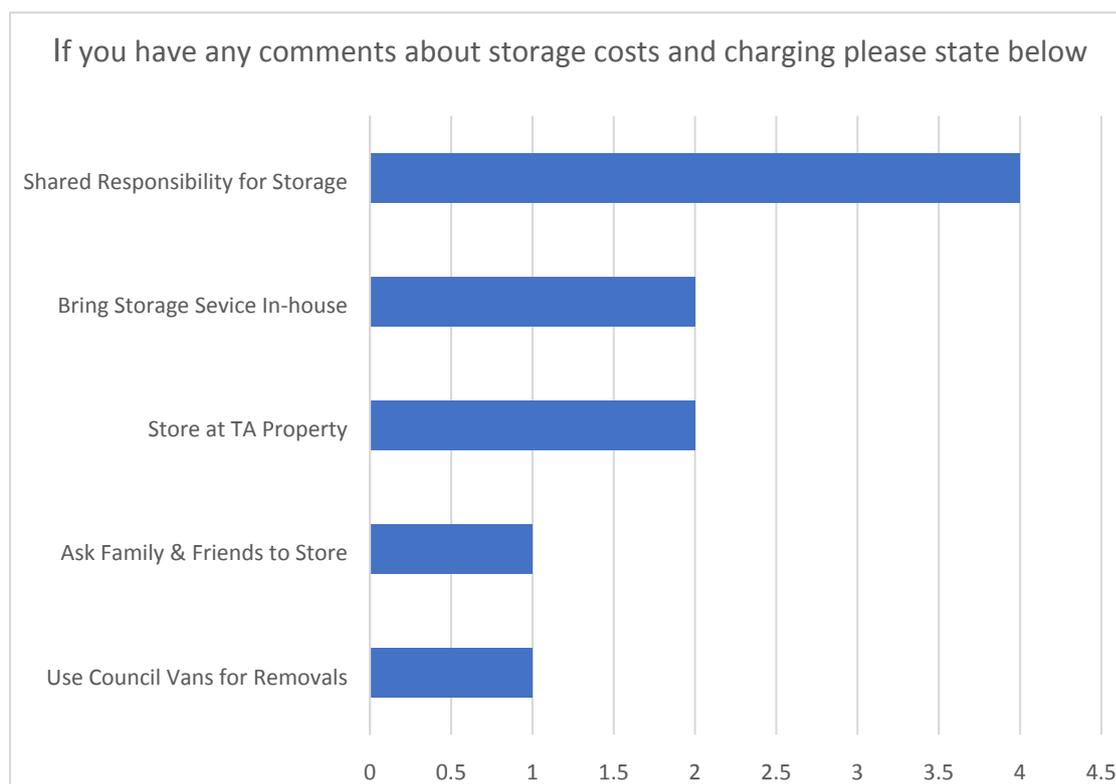
The following graph shows the relative prevalence of these themes:



The below graph shows the breakdown of those who are supportive of charging:



The below graph shows the breakdown of those who feel that the responsibility for storage should be shared:



## Suggested Policy Changes

1. Some of the respondents suggested a change to the proposed policy, with regards to the storage element. The most popular suggestion was that of a capped contribution. Solutions included:
  - a. First month or first 30 days free to allow people time to organise their belongings (four people suggested a time limit)
  - b. A set amount of items could be stored for free and a charge incurred for any extra items
  - c. A charge should be made for non-essential items only
  - d. A reduced rate for people on certain benefits such as PIP and Pension Credit
2. Coventry's Frontline Network pointed out that the draft policy does not make it clear whether people who are not in receipt of housing benefit can make a claim towards storage costs under Direct Housing Payments. Direct Housing Payments can only be made to people in receipt of housing benefit. The policy will be changed to reflect this.
3. Coventry's Frontline Network raised concerns that high costs for storage could lead to households failing to store their belongings and getting rid of them instead, or falling behind on storage payments, leading to their belongings being disposed of. They stated that at a later date, this could lead to yet further pressure on DHP or the Community Support Grant, as households struggle to furnish any new tenancy (likely to be unfurnished) and access these funds to help. This could delay them moving on from Temporary Accommodation to stable tenancies. Discussions with internal Council departments has revealed that people in temporary accommodation can apply to the Community Support Grant for essential items however if it is deemed

that people disposed of items when they could afford storage costs then it is possible a community support grant will not be awarded.

### Element 3 – Licence Fee

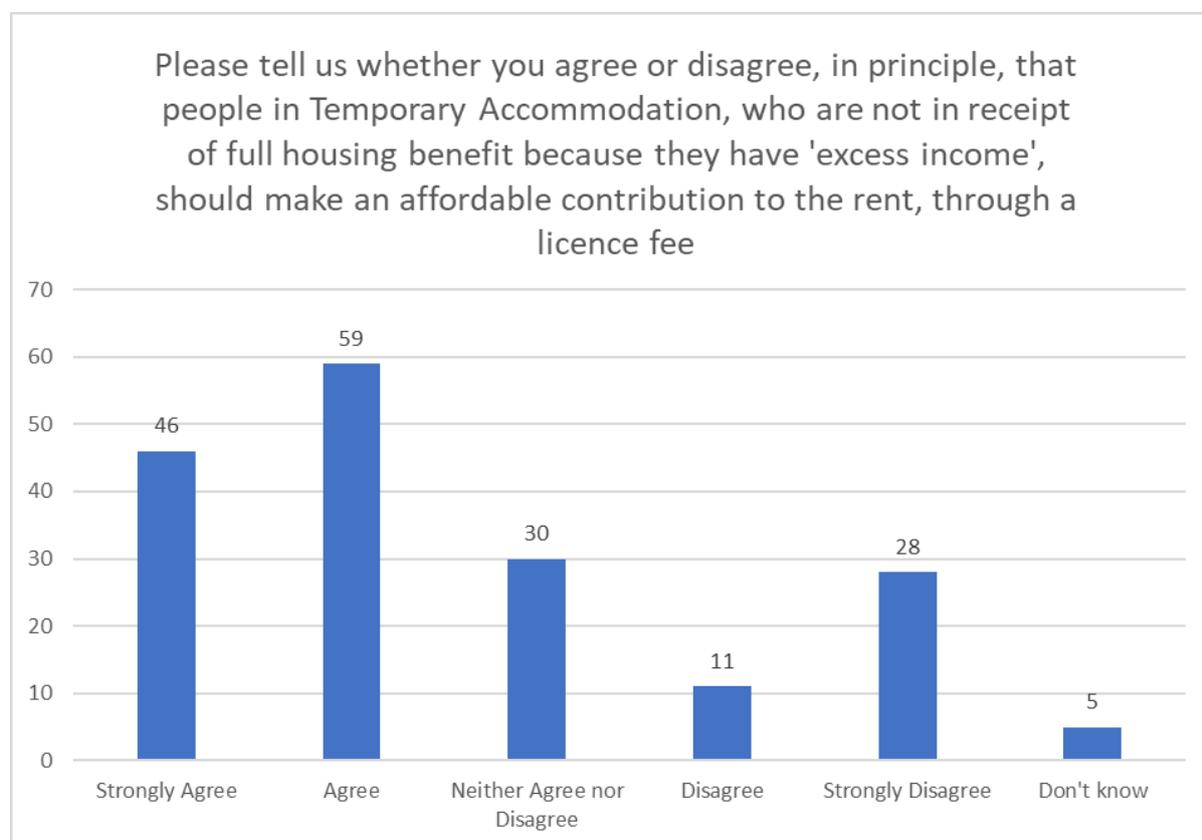
Question 11 of the survey was designed to establish respondent’s strength of feeling towards the Licence fee element of the policy, whilst Question 12 asked the respondents to choose their preferred. The final free-flow question (12) provides more detailed insight into the reasons behind these strengths of feeling.

**Question 11: “Please tell us whether you agree or disagree, in principle, that people in Temporary Accommodation, who are not in receipt of full housing benefit because they have 'excess income', should make an affordable contribution to the rent, through a licence fee?”**

This was a multiple response question, where respondents could choose Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don’t Know. In total, 179 people responded to this question, of whom:

- 58.7% Agree or Strongly Agree with people paying a rent contribution through a licence fee (22.2% of people in Temporary Accommodation)
- 21.7% disagree or strongly disagree (40.7% of people in Temporary Accommodation)

The following graph shows the count of responses for each option:



Question 12: “If you have any comments about the Council's proposal for households not entitled to full housing benefit because they work and/or have ‘excess income’ to make an affordable contribution towards the rent, please state below.”

Question 12 was a free-text question. In total, 75 people left a comment. A common thread linking many comments was that they wished the system to be sensitive to the needs of individuals. In particular, many respondents wished for affordability to be fairly assessed on a case-by-case basis. Public responses tended to align with one or more of the below themes:

**Affordability:** A number of people were concerned that this will greatly impact on those of low income, and make it unaffordable for them, leading to people out of work and into full housing benefit.

*“Residents who work may get excess income but they also have more to pay for out of their own pocket. When someone receives full housing benefit, any money they receive from the council (Universal Credit) they can keep and use towards other bills, yet people who work are expected to pay for their full or partial rent and bills on top leaving them with less money than people who don't work, claim UC and have full housing benefit.”*

**Supportive of charging:** A number of people agree that those in TA ought to contribute towards their rent, on the assurance that they can afford the cost. Respondents felt that affordability checks should be made first, and families assessed on a case by case basis.

*“Agreed if a fair method of means testing is used to determine amounts a household can afford, taking into accounts all current debt commitments.”*

**Will cause further hardship:** Some respondents were concerned that introducing rent contributions could cause further hardship to a group who are already badly-off and vulnerable. Many were particularly concerned about the impact upon debt.

*“People in temporary accommodation are the most vulnerable in the city and often at the most chaotic time of their lives. To pass on the responsibility for these costs to this cohort of people is reckless and risks making their situation even worse. Many of those housed temporarily do not have the skills to ensure these costs are met, yet there is no mention of what support here would be to budget and ensure these costs are met.”*

**Disincentive to Work:** Some respondents felt that seeking rent contribution from those who work would discourage employment and into full housing benefits, as they are being given a financial penalty for being employed.

*“This is a further disincentive for people to be in paid employment because their “excess income” as it now attracts a further penalty in the form of a “licence fee”.*

*“You are simply looking for more creative ways to take money off the poorest sector of society. You may be saving the Council money here by doing this*

*but you will push up the cost of other services and possibly crime too, by inflicting such hardship. I am very concerned by the sharp increase in the use of Food banks in Coventry in the last year alone.”*

**Encourages Budgeting and Responsibility:** Some respondents feel that introducing a rent contribution will be a positive way of encouraging people to responsibility of their everyday needs and budget their finances accordingly. But others felt that those housed temporarily do not have the skills to ensure costs are met and would require support and guidance first to help manage their finances effectively.

*“If they were in their own housing they would have to pay so why not in temporary? I have seen first-hand how the homeless spend their money at the shop by mine, alcohol, cigarettes and scratchcards (£50 in one go) If they had to take responsibility for some of their needs I hope they would not be wasting it on such luxuries.”*

*“People in temporary accommodation are the most vulnerable in the city and often at the most chaotic time of their lives. To pass on the responsibility for these costs to this cohort of people is reckless and risks making their situation even worse. Many of those housed temporarily do not have the skills to ensure these costs are met, yet there is no mention of what support here would be to budget and ensure these costs are met.”*

**Higher Living Expenses in TA:** Some respondents felt that the cost of living in TA can be higher due to a lack of choice. Respondents were keen that any contributions were small and bases on a fair case-by-case assessment.

*“If the charge is affordable then there is no issue as they would need to contribute to rent when move on to permanent accommodation. Sometimes the cost of TA can be excessive e.g. If in a hotel so a contribution based o. Income is not unreasonable”*

**Children Affected:** Some were concerned that this would impact on those with children and that the council should evaluate each application separately to ensure that this ‘excess income’ wasn’t needed towards dependants.

*“I agree about the contribution ut need consider the situation of each individual, for example they may be earning enough but as an example a single mum with a child should be taken in account transportation costs out of school childcare costs to be able to work,etc.”*

**Domestic Violence:** Some feel that this change could impact those fleeing from Domestic Violence.

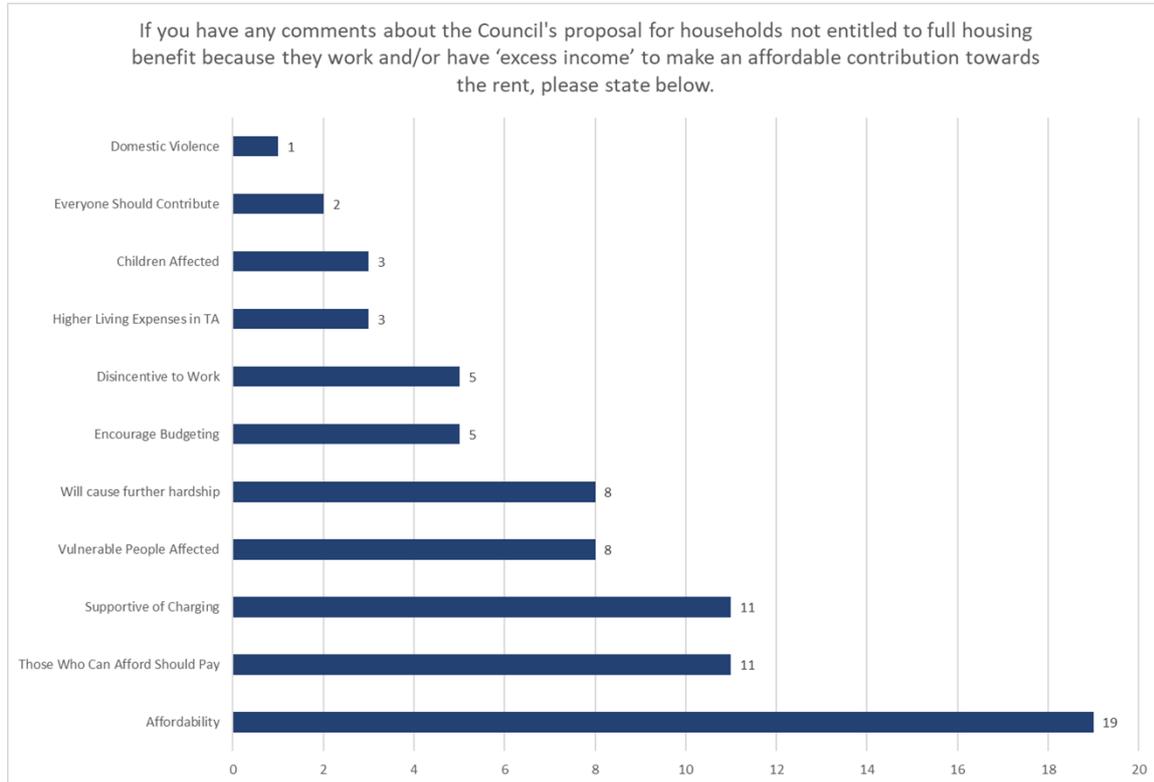
*“Additionally the Council need to remember those seeking temporary acc are vulnerable, usually escaping DV or financial crises' putting a cost on aid is a dangerous move for the Council as a whole.”*

**Everyone Should Contribute:** Some felt that everyone should have to contribute towards their own living costs.

*“I have to pay a mortgage and live next door to temporary accommodation/housing association.*

*they get their house at a massive reduced rate whilst I have to pay the full amount. plus my tax contributes to their allowance etc. if you live in a house you should pay towards it”*

The following graph displays the relative prevalence of these themes:

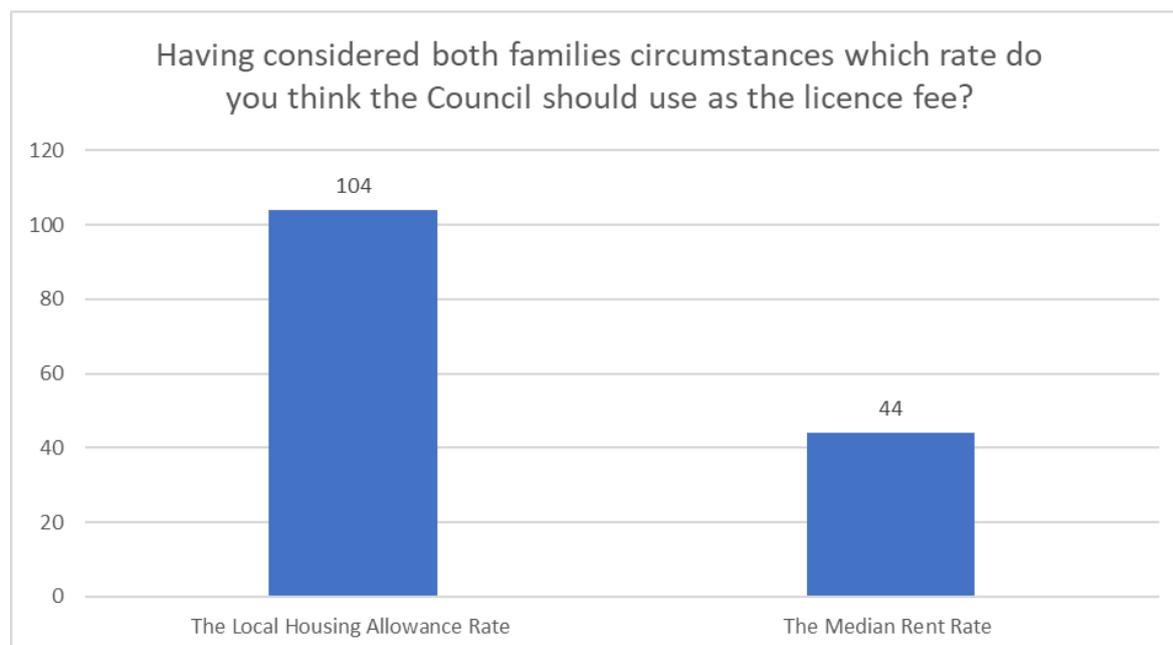


**Question 13: Having considered both families circumstances which rate do you think the Council should use as the licence fee?**

This was a multiple response question, where respondents could choose either the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) or Median Rent rate as their preferred option. In total, 148 people responded to this question, of whom:

- 70.3% favoured the LHA rate (72.7% of people in Temporary Accommodation)
- 29.7% favoured the Median Rent rate (27.3% of people in Temporary Accommodation)

The following graph displays the total count of responses:



#### Question 14: Please explain your answer...

Question 14 was a free-text question. In total, 100 people left a comment. There was broad support for the LHA rate since many felt that it was more affordable. Affordability and fairness were the primary concerns of respondents. As in other questions, respondents were keen that calculations of affordability were sensitive to the real lives of people. Public responses tended to align with one or more of the below themes:

**LHA rate is more affordable:** A large number of respondents felt that the LHA rate was the most affordable and that it would have a reduced impact on households relative to the Median Rent option.

*“The temporary accommodation is unlikely to be ‘ideal’, so not necessarily housing that the family would have chosen in different/better circumstances. I therefore believe that families should contribute, but the LHA seems a more reasonable compromise.”*

**LHA rate appropriate as used for HB:** A number of respondents felt that the the LHA rate was more appropriate and the fairest option since it is used as a basis for Housing Benefit calculations.

*‘As the LHA rate is used to assess those claiming Housing Benefit, I do not see why a different rate should be used for those who do not qualify for that benefit.’*

**Licence fee:** Some respondents were concerned about both of the options and think that introducing this fee will push families into further financial struggle and potentially out of employment.

*“Neither. Why isn't there a drop down option for neither? this is clearly biased. You are asking which is the least worst option, without the option to record those like myself who do not think it is ethical to reduce someones income by 25%. or more like 33% if you take into account additional charges such as storage. You are pushing these people further into poverty and removing any incentive to work. Certainly as a mother myself, I would rather stay at home and look after them if i was Emma (above) than pay these additional fees.”*

**Supportive of charging:** Responses in this theme were generally supportive of the charges, with many feeling that it was reasonable or fair. However, respondents were keen that the charges were sensitive to individual cases.

*“This is fair for the people in temporary accommodation and fair for all who have to pay their council tax”*

*“When it comes to talking money - it's difficult as each case is unique. People should be charged something as it will encourage them to find alternative solutions asap. When they pay nothing what incentive is this to help themselves. Factors about why they are in this situation should also be taken into account as things are not always this Black & White”*

**Affordability:** A number of respondents were concerned about the affordability of charges. Some were concerned that many already struggle and that both of the scenarios did not take into account all of the factors which could affect the affordability of charges for families.

*“Emma has 3 children, all older. Meaning she would have to pay Childcare, including higher rate on school holidays. She will have to pay uniform, school meals, travel and other school expense for EACH child. This is dis-including her own travel costs and lunches at work. Same with Michael and Sarah, looking at income as a basic rate as well as minimal on expenses (and child expenses are not optional, you have to pay for travel, you have to feed them) whilst having a baby is an option this should not be limited due to their local Council looking to save money.*

*Personally I think the figures are unrealistic and incorrect, even down to the benefits they receive - who can work full time and still get over £1000 benefits? no one... and if anyone is getting that much money a month, accommodation wouldn't be an issue, you'd just go private, you'd have the bond/depo.”*

**Those who can afford should pay:** Responses in this theme felt that those who are on higher incomes ought to contribute. Some respondents, however, were concerned that charges could be set at too high a level and that there ought to be an amount of money left over after charging which families can use for emergencies as well incentivising employment.

*“I do think all households should contribute towards these costs and a licence fee, however, I do think it more fair for there to be an allowance for families*

*that do work harder/earn more to not have to pay more than others do... i worry a little this may demotivate them to keep working/earning more”*

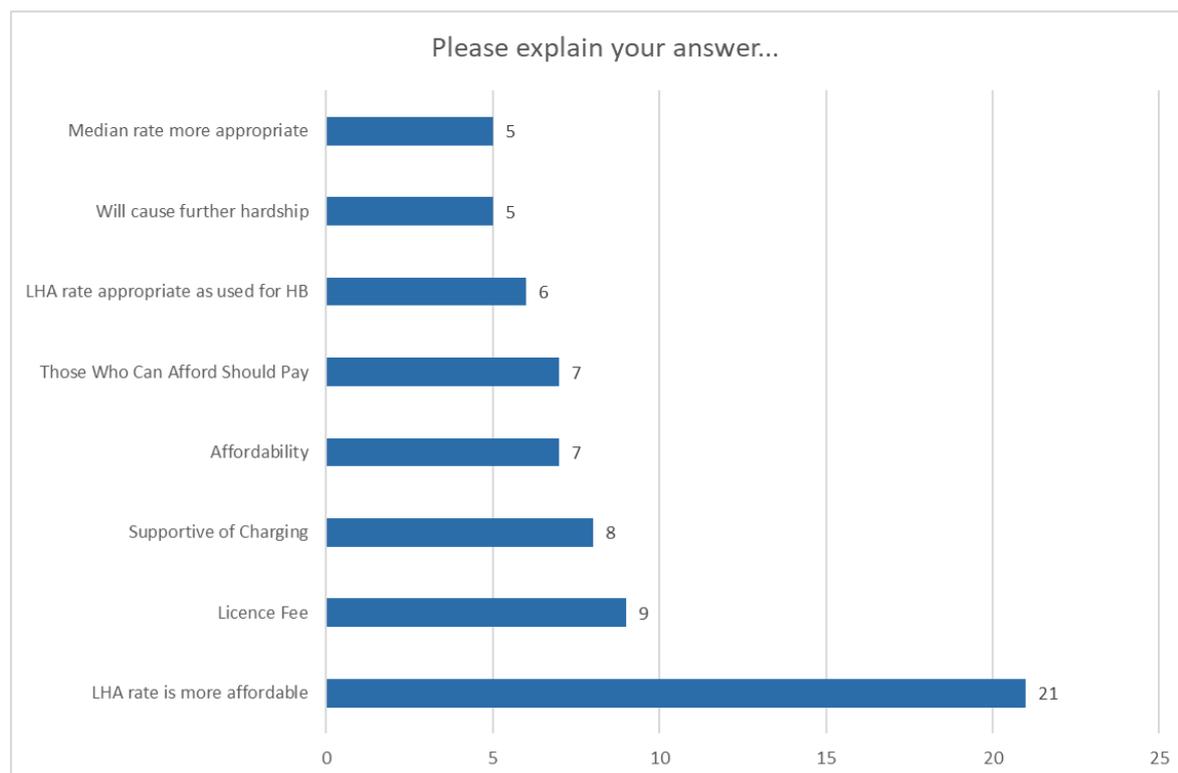
**Will cause further hardship:** Responses in this them were concerned that these charges would further disadvantage people who are experiencing hardship.

*“I do not agree with any of the costs until you are put in a house that is your permanent house. The charges are excessive and how anybody expects a family to have the amount shown above free each week is beyond me. Putting calculations on paper is nothing like the reality of life. On paper I may be seen to have 200 a week extra income but the reality is i live week to week. I work hard for my income so I can provide for my family I was made homeless through no fault of my own. I don't see or understand why I should be made to go into debt or be broke and struggling because of the charges of the rental prices. Vacant properties is not our issues. It is an understanding surely that properties are not always filled and the owners of the properties should not be allowed to have the tenants suffer when they know what they are doing when offering the property as temporary. The word temporary is self explanatory.”*

**Median rate more appropriate:** Some respondents feel that the Median rate is more appropriate, as it more greatly reflected private sector rent levels and therefore would create a realistic expectation.

*“If people are to be encouraged to rent within the private sector from homelessness, then the charges need to reflect actual rents. This was there is no real/huge financial advantage to 'waiting for a council house”*

The following graph shows the relative prevalence of these themes:



### Suggested Policy Changes

Respondents to this question, for the most part did not suggest any particular policy changes outside of the comments already mentioned. The one concrete suggestion was for a grace period before charges applied:

*'With vulnerable tenants being asked to bear the risk of not being able to make designated payments, in the form of potential eviction, we have a concern that means assessment - a difficult task at the best of times - is likely to exacerbate the pre-existing lack of financial resilience among tenants; especially where tenants' circumstances are subject to regular change... other than abandoning this proposal, there are no easy solutions to this issue either. As a result we would, again, recommend a grace period be considered for these tenants (those on low incomes/in receipt of/entitled to local housing allowance payments).'*

**Question 15: If there is anything else you would like to tell us regarding the proposed Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy please state below.**

This was a free-text response question which encouraged respondents to mention anything else to do with the policy which they had not yet mentioned. The majority of the responses went over themes which have already been explored in other questions. However, a number of responses mentioned some alternative suggestions for the policy.

**Alternate Ways to Save Money:** Some respondents suggested other ways that Local Authority could save money.

One respondent suggested that Local Authority ought to invest less in redeveloping the city centre:

*'I think there is areas the Council could look at in savings instead of emergency housing... All the money we have put into student accommodation, city developments that are pointless (such as those GIANT cement balls in town and relocating escalators for an open environment) due to the city of culture'*

One respondent was perhaps suggesting rent controls:

*'Easy solution*

*Reduce hotel rates down to maximum average 65 to 50-45*

*Shared accommodation to 35-40*

*And you will make much more money without anything*

*Average person need to reduced 4 £ a day*

*These can be optaiond simply reducing rent paid out or taken out from benefits.*

*Absolutely can be made more than 1 million £ savings this way.'*

Another respondent suggested that increasing speed at which Homefinder works might reduce costs for TA:

*'Yes of course one of the solutions example one of my friends , Homefinder was offer him a house is been 5 weeks since the offer but still he is waiting without any good reason. If the the Homefinder give the house for them even the one months rent I'll be save which £2300 a month.'*

**Alternative Suggestions for Implementation:** A number of responses focussed on different ways of carrying out the policy.

One respondent suggested that instead of charging for utilities from different suppliers, the Council could impose a service charge contribution:

*'I do not think charging for utilities, at different tariffs and from different suppliers is fair to customers. I think a service charge would be a better and fairer way to charge people.'*

Another respondent noted that charges could come as a shock to those entering TA and that there ought to be a breathing space before they kick in:

*'We have recommended, across the board, the consideration of a grace period to both give tenants a breathing space to organise their affairs and an*

*incentive to resolve their homelessness problems before fees and liabilities kick in. Here, we would like to add for consideration the option of a 'breathing space' - in effect, a suspension of payments - after payments have commenced to reflect particular tenant hardship (whether accumulated or issue driven).'*

Another respondent suggested that charges could be combined and paid before benefits payments arrive:

*'if you really were concerned about tenancy ready issues, any individual that may struggle could have their utilities/combined by yourself and automated to leave tax etc their DWP benefits and contributions before received by that person'*

## **b) Face-to-Face Consultations**

Consultation feedback was also received through the use of the focus groups which were set up in partnership with third sector organisations whom deliver services to, or advocate on behalf of, people who will, or may be, directly impacted directly by the implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Policy.

- i. A Focus Group with survivors of domestic abuse – during the initial Equalities and Consultation Analysis women, and women fleeing doestic abuse in particular, were identified as potentially being disproportionately impacted by the policy.
- ii. A Focus Group with people currently living in Temporary Accommodation
- iii. Two Focus Groups with service users of Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre

### **i. Focus Group with Women who have experienced Domestic Abuse**

A focus group, facilitated by Coventry Haven Women's Aid, was attended by two women who have experienced domestic violence and/or abuse on Thursday 23rd January 2020.

Coventry Haven, a fully accredited member of Women's Aid, provide temporary fully supported refuge accommodation to women and their children who have experienced domestic violence and/or abuse. Refuge accommodation provided by the Haven is not included in the Council's Temporary Accommodation case load, and therefore statistics.

Historically, women and children temporarily accommodated by the Haven often moved onto permanent accommodation, bid for through Coventry Homefinder. It is now however becoming increasingly common for women and children to enter Temporary Accommodation provided by Coventry City Council as they come to the end of their support plan because of the shortage of social housing in the City.

The women who took part in the focus group may therefore soon enter into temporary accommodation provided by the City and will therefore be directly impacted by the proposed policy, if it is implemented.

### **Utilities and Council Tax**

Women who live in Haven accommodation pay a £13.00 service charge per week – it is presumed this includes a contribution towards utility costs and Council Tax. In light of the contribution they make both women stated that they ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the proposal to charge people living in Temporary Accommodation for the utilities they use. When asked about charges for Council Tax, one strongly agreed with the proposal to charge for Council Tax whilst the other stated that she ‘agreed’.

### **Belongings in Storage**

Opinions on the charging were divided with one attendee ‘strongly agreeing’ with the proposal to charge for storage and the other stating that she ‘neither agreed nor disagreed’. The latter expressed the view that the decision to charge for storage and removals should be made on a case by case basis. If, for example, the household has to leave the property in an emergency (e.g. through domestic violence) and they cannot make their own arrangements for their belongings than a charge should not apply. However, if the household is made homeless through their own actions (e.g. through non-payment of rent) then they should be made to pay.

### **Licence Fee**

The room was equally divided over licence fee charges with one person stating that a licence fee should not have to be paid if the household is homeless through no fault of their own. Both attendees stated that the LHA rate is their preferred licence fee rate because it is the lower of the two.

## **ii. Focus Group with people living in Temporary Accommodation**

A letter informing people living in temporary accommodation of the consultation and how they can have their say was sent out on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The letter included the offer of attending a focus group however no interest was expressed. A reminder email was then sent after Christmas which resulted in 6 people asking to attend a focus group. The focus group was held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020 with 3 people who live in temporary accommodation being in attendance.

The session began with an introduction to the proposed policy and each element before questions were answered. The session then moved on to include a discussion around each element individually to understand participants thoughts, feelings and ideas.

### **Utilities and Council Tax**

Respondents stated that ‘paying for utilities is normal’ and that ‘they want to pay as they have responsibilities’. They therefore agreed in principle with people living in Temporary Accommodation paying for their utilities and Council Tax but only as long as the bills are affordable. All attendees stated that the quality of the temporary

accommodation they were being provided did not provide the Council with Value for Money.

One person accommodated at Caradoc Hall who is already paying for their own utilities stated that the property, with storage heaters, is expensive to heat – costing over £400 per month. They expressed concern for families who do not work that are placed into cold properties.

### **Storage**

Two of the attendees currently have belongings in storage. They were undecided on the storage element of the policy. Similar to the utilities charges, they want to live up to their responsibilities but they feel the charges are unaffordable. They also raised the following concerns:

- There was a lack of information at the point of being allocated temporary accommodation. They did not know at the time how long it would take to be housed. They have been waiting over a year for an offer of accommodation, paying storage for this length of time.
- They are not allowed to enter the storage facilities to retrieve items which not only makes reducing the amount they have in storage difficult it also means they cannot access important documents, such as birth certificates.
- If they had known at the point of being offered temporary accommodation how long it would take, and the likely cost, they would have sold some of their furniture.

They did suggest the Council use alternative forms of storage, such as garages, but it was explained that the Council do not own any empty garages and that they would not provide the level of security required to keep their items safe.

### **Licence Fee**

Attendees again agreed in principle with the proposal to charge a licence fee but so long as it is affordable. The following concerns were raised:

- One attendee raised a concern that the introduction of the licence fee and council tax charges will disincentivise working.
- The cumulative impact of paying utilities (on a property with a low EPC rating), council tax, storage charges and licence fee could result in financial hardship and them being forced to choose which payments they could make.
- People will be placed into a difficult predicament as they will not be able to save money to pay for carpets and furniture that they will need once they are offered permanent accommodation.

### **Other comments**

The households wanted to raise issues around the quality of temporary accommodation provided. In addition to the issues around energy efficiency of properties, one person stated that they had been struggling with repairs not being completed by their private landlord. The toilet in the property has been leaking for some time and they were struggling to resolve a mice infestation. They wanted to

raise the matter because they feel “*The Council is being robbed*” especially in light of the high rents charged by private landlords for temporary accommodation.

One attendee also asked if we could consider combining all charges to make it easier to pay.

### **iii. Focus Group with people who are, or have been, refugees or asylum seekers**

Two focus groups, facilitated by Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre, were attended by eight people who are, or have been, refugees or asylum seekers on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020.

The first session was conducted with four attendees, all of which were Arabic speakers. The online survey questions were read out to the attendees in Arabic using the in-built translation software.

The second session was conducted with four attendees whose native language was Tigrinya. This language was not available on the translation software, so a translator was used.

The sessions began with an introduction to the proposed policy and each element before questions were answered. The session then moved on to include a discussion around each element individually to understand participants thoughts, feelings and ideas.

#### **Utilities and Council Tax**

The respondents stated that they felt that if you had a home you should expect to pay bills. They added, however, that they would not be able to afford to pay bills. One reason given was that, as they were asylum seekers, they received an income which was less than standard benefits. Another comment was that they could afford to pay bills if they were working but unable to afford it if they were not.

#### **Storage**

Overall, the attendees disagreed with the proposal to charge for storage. No specific reasons were given other than they wouldn't be able to afford a charge as they were on low incomes.

#### **Licence Fee**

There was an overall agreement from the attendees that they would be able to pay a licence fee if they were working, but unable to pay if they were not in work.

#### **Other Comments**

One attendee commented on an additional expense incurred by them due to living in temporary accommodation:

*“School is far away and bus pass is expensive and sometimes I cannot afford it”*

This comment suggests that the person concerned has, on occasions, not been able to send their child(ren) to school due to distance from where they live.

### c) Direct invitations to Respond

A meeting with DEAP (Disability Equality Action Partnership) took place on 6th February. The Disability Equality Action Partnership (DEAP) is chaired by Councillor Thomas and meets three times a year. The partnership is attended by persons with disability within a diverse cross section of Coventry residents, charities/voluntary organisations and service users.

The meeting involved the Head of Housing, Jim Crawshaw, explaining the reasons the Council are considering a Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy and the elements that we are consulting upon. Rather than run through each element separately the meeting involved a more general discussion around the policy proposals as a whole and the experiences of people with disabilities.

The partnership fed back that they feel the current situation does not teach people to manage their finances and debts and they could not understand why we are not already charging for rent, utilities, council tax and storage. They stated that the money that has been spent so far could have been spent on other areas such as adult's social care. One attendee also expressed the view that it does not provide people in temporary accommodation with an incentive to improve their situation, they said; *"It's the same as the rich getting richer and poor getting poorer"*, which pointed towards a positive equalities impact with regards to fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, given people with protected characteristics are often over-represented within Temporary Accommodation.

The discussion moved onto utilities – one attendee with a disability stated that they prefer pre-payment meters as they don't want to run up a debt. However, it was acknowledged that some people with disabilities (such as COPD) have higher energy usage and this form of payment may not be suitable for them.

One attendee requested someone with a disability help with assessing finances in order to help decide what is fair and also to advocate for service users. A utilities working group was discussed and it was suggested that someone with lived experience of disability is involved in the working group and looking at utility payment solutions. They also suggested we connect with 'Hope into Action' around homelessness in general.

## Key suggestions from consultation on the Policy

### **Element 1 – Utilities and Council Tax**

Key suggestions for change	Council Response
Households in Temporary Accommodation should have choice over their energy supplier and payment method if being asked to pay for their usage. Switching suppliers and payment methods can save users a lot of money and help them control their usage.	A working group has been set up to establish the best way of paying for utilities and to develop guidelines for staff and households in temporary accommodation.
Residents to be referred to energy advice. This could also identify whether the household is eligible for other support such as the Priority Services Register.	A working group has been set up to establish the best way of paying for utilities and to develop guidelines for staff and households in temporary accommodation.
Collective switching might lower bills for multiple properties used for Temporary Accommodation.	A working group has been set up to establish the best way of paying for utilities and to develop guidelines for staff and households in temporary accommodation.
<p>If PPMs are used adherence to the Energy UK PPM Principles for prepayment meters, providing extra support for vulnerable consumers. This includes restrictions on the installation of PPMs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A customer must be able to understand and operate the PPM and visit top-up points to add more credit and must not live 'quite a distance' from a top-up point</li> <li>• must not require a continuous supply for medical/health reasons such as medical equipment.</li> <li>• PPMs must be accessible so users can operate the meter. It must be situated inside and in a room to which they have continuous access.</li> <li>• Physical or mental disabilities may make PPMs unsuitable.</li> </ul>	A working group has been set up to establish the best way of paying for utilities and to develop guidelines for staff and households in temporary accommodation.
Instead of charging for utilities from different suppliers, the Council could impose a service charge contribution.	A working group has been set up to establish the best way of paying for utilities and to develop guidelines for staff and households in temporary accommodation.

Charges could be combined and paid before benefits payments are given to people in TA.	Benefits are issued by the Department for Works and Pensions and not the Council therefore it is not possible to implement this suggestion.
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## **Element 2 - Storage.**

<b>Key suggestions for change</b>	<b>Council Response</b>
Discretionary Housing Payments can only be made to people in receipt of housing benefit – not those who are working and not in receipt of housing benefit.	The policy was changed to reflect this. Changes can be found in paragraph 10.7 of the Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy.
Discussions with internal Council departments has revealed that people in temporary accommodation can apply to the Community Support Grant for essential items however if it is deemed that people disposed of items when they could afford storage costs then it is possible a community support grant will not be awarded.	The policy has been changed to reflect this feedback. Changes can be found in paragraph 10.9 of the Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy.
Some of the respondents suggested a change to the proposed policy, with regards to the storage element. The most popular suggestion was that of a capped contribution and seven respondents suggested a time limit before charging. Solutions included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. First month or first 30 days free to allow people time to organise their belongings</li> <li>b. Three months grace period before charging</li> <li>c. 56 days grace period (based on period of relief duty) before charging</li> <li>d. A set amount of items could be stored for free and a charge incurred for any extra items</li> <li>e. A charge should be made for non-essential items only</li> <li>f. A reduced rate for people on certain benefits such as PIP and Pension Credit</li> </ul>	The policy has been changed, (with additions to paragraph 10.4 and 10.5) to include a grace period of one month before a charge for storage will apply.

**Element 3 – Licence Fee**

<b>Key suggestions for change</b>	<b>Council Response</b>
Respondents to the consultation chose the LHA rate as the preferred licence fee rate.	Paragraphs 6.2 – 6.4 and the abbreviations/jargon section of the Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy have been changed accordingly.
A grace period prior to the application of charges to those in TA to minimise hardship.	All households currently living in TA will receive 28 days' notice regarding charging. All new households entering TA will be required to meet the cost from day one as they would if they moved into any other form of rented accommodation
Increasing the speed that Homefinder works could reduce the costs of TA.	There is a shortage of social housing both locally and nationally. The service will be working to utilise the private rented sector to assist in meeting homeless duties and moving households out of TA.
The cost of hotel rates and shared accommodation could be reduced.	The Service is working hard to reduce the costs of temporary accommodation and has reduced costs by over £1million p.a. during 2019/20

**Other Suggestions:**

<b>Key suggestions for change</b>	<b>Council Response</b>
Money could be saved elsewhere instead of charging for TA by reducing expenditure on city centre redevelopment projects.	All of the city centre redevelopment projects are largely funded from capital and ring-fenced grant funding. Therefore, we could not use this resource to fund temporary accommodation expenditure.
More social housing could be built.	The Council is working with housing associations in the city to increase the amount of social housing being developed.

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

*In line with the principles of decision making outlined in the City Council Constitution, the Council will ensure that its decision making is open and transparent, and that due regard is given to the Council's obligations and desire to promote equality of opportunity and equal treatment.*

### Form 1

***This part must be completed and before formal consultation is undertaken and must be available during the consultation stage.***

**Author of this document: Samantha Richardson**

**Name of ECA and Service: Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy: Housing and Homelessness Service**

**Head of Service: Jim Crawshaw**

**Date of completion: 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

#### ***Background to the planned changes***

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#### **1. What is the background to the planned changes? Why is this change being considered?**

At the end of October 2019 there were a total of 619 households living in temporary accommodation (TA) provided by CCC; 383 were families and 236 were single people. Temporary accommodation used includes:

- Bed and Breakfast and Hotels
- Hostels, some of which provide specialist support services
- Private rented accommodation
- A small number of properties provided by a Housing Association

The service reported an overspend of £3M in 2018/19, despite an additional £2.7M of resource. In 19/20 the additional resource rises to £6.1M, which reduces in 2020/21 by £1M. It is imperative that the service undertakes a range of activities to both reduce spend and increase income.

#### **Current Position**

Coventry does not currently charge households placed in Temporary Accommodation (TA), this means:

- **Council Tax;** The majority of households living in TA do not pay for council tax, it is included in the cost met by CCC
- **Utilities;** The majority of households living in TA do not pay for utilities, it is included in the cost met by CCC
- **Furniture storage;** No households in TA meet any of the costs of storing their furniture this is all paid for by CCC

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

- **Rental Charges:** No household makes a contribution to the rent on the property, including those in receipt of partial housing benefit, and those not eligible for housing benefit, due to excess income

### Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy

The Council has the power to require the payment of reasonable charges for accommodation in accordance with s206(2) Housing Act 1996. In order to address the financial pressures the Council are looking to consult on the implementation of a Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy. The policy will have four elements – rent, utilities, storage and council tax.

The current costs and potential savings from each element are as follows:

#### Rent - Excess income:

Households with excess income living in TA cost in excess of £400k per annum, and CCC will meet this cost for all households from April 2020 when the responsibility for TA for single people will transfer to the Council. This charging policy, if implemented, would allow a proportion of these costs to be recovered. The Council expect to make £200k savings through rental income.

#### Ineligibles (Utilities):

Utility costs for most households living in TA cost in excess of £800K per annum\*, and as above CCC will meet for all households from April 2020. By allowing these charges to be passed onto households in TA, and negotiation with landlords, it is expected that a large proportion of these costs could be saved. The Council expect to make an annual saving of £400k through households paying for the utilities they use.

#### Storage:

The Council's forecast spend on storage charges is £163k for the 2019/20 financial year. This cost would expect to reduce to near zero following the implementation of the policy. Households may still be entitled to DHP support, however. The Council expect to make an annual saving of £163k.

#### Council tax:

By making tenants, instead of landlords, liable for Council Tax it is expected that nightly TA rates would be reduced. However, many households will be entitled to Council Tax support which would offset a large proportion of the benefits. Further work is currently being undertaken to establish the overall financial impact to the Council.

In addition to the economic case for change, a key policy outcome is that single people and families are tenancy ready by the time they move out of Temporary Accommodation and into Permanent Accommodation to ensure tenancy sustainability. To do this the Council will look to:

- **Focus on independent living** – single people and families will be able to manage their money effectively by the time they leave Temporary Accommodation
- **Provide Appropriate Support** - Where single people and families experience financial budgeting difficulties support will be provided through the recommissioned homeless support service

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

- **Only charge proportionately** - charging will be based upon what people can pay; the Council will not charge indiscriminately.

### 2. Who do you need to consider as part of this ECA? *\*stakeholder analysis*

- People currently living in temporary accommodation, who have lived in temporary accommodation or are at risk of homelessness
- Coventry's Homelessness Forum
- Third Sector Organisations, in particular:
  - Specialists in housing and benefits advice
  - Agencies who support women who have experienced domestic violence or abuse
  - Agencies who support the BAMER community
  - LGBT+ organisations
  - Agencies who support children impacted by homelessness
  - Agencies who support and advice people with disabilities

### *Pre-Consultation Engagement*

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*This section refers to any activities that took place (such as briefings, meetings, workshops, scoping exercises etc) with stakeholders before the formal consultation period.*

### 3. What engagement activities took place prior to formal consultation and what feedback (if any) was received in relation to equality issues?

#### *Analysis of Impact*

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In this section please ensure that you consider the three aims of the general duty as they affect **protected groups**. These groups are:

Age  
Disability  
Gender reassignment  
Marriage/Civil Partnership  
Pregnancy/Maternity  
Race  
Religion/Belief  
Sex  
Sexual Orientation

The **three aims of the general duty** require that a public authority, in the exercise of its functions, must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

#### **4. Outline below how this proposal/review could impact on protected groups positively or negatively, and what steps/mitigations (if any) could be taken to reduce any negative impact that has been identified.**

An Equalities Impact assessment has been completed using housing and homelessness and housing benefits data for the period April – October 2019. The data set includes equalities information on the 930 main applicants temporarily accommodated during this time. In addition, data on the sex (gender) and age of all people in the households was also obtainable – a total of 1925 people, including children.

The Council's housing and homelessness service does not currently capture data on gender recognition therefore it is not possible to capture potential impact at this time. The impact will be explored during consultation.

#### **Utilities, Council Tax and Storage**

The range and variety of temporary accommodation currently utilised by the Council has resulted in inconsistent approaches to payment of utilities – some households already pay for their utilities and council tax whilst the majority do not. This is particularly true for people living in supported accommodation, and in receipt of full housing benefit of which will not cover utilities.

Similarly, the vast majority of adults regardless of housing tenure are required to pay for their utility usage including those in receipt of welfare benefits because the cost of utilities is included as part of payments for daily living expenses.

It is currently assumed therefore that there will be no negative equalities impact, based on any protected characteristic. Nonetheless, the impact of these elements will be explored during consultation.

The equalities impact of the rental element of the policy is explored, in detail, below.

## AGE

The proportions of each age group have stayed relatively stable over the past five years. Younger adults make up 24% of main homelessness applicants whilst 57% are aged 26-45. Adults over the age of 45 are far less likely to approach the Council for support for homelessness and be awarded main homelessness duty.

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

Table 1 - Age of Main Applicant	Sum of Count	% of Grand Total
<16 or (blank)	2	0%
16-25	222	24%
26-35	314	34%
36-45	218	23%
46-55	120	13%
56-65	42	5%
66-75	11	1%
76-85	1	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>100%</b>

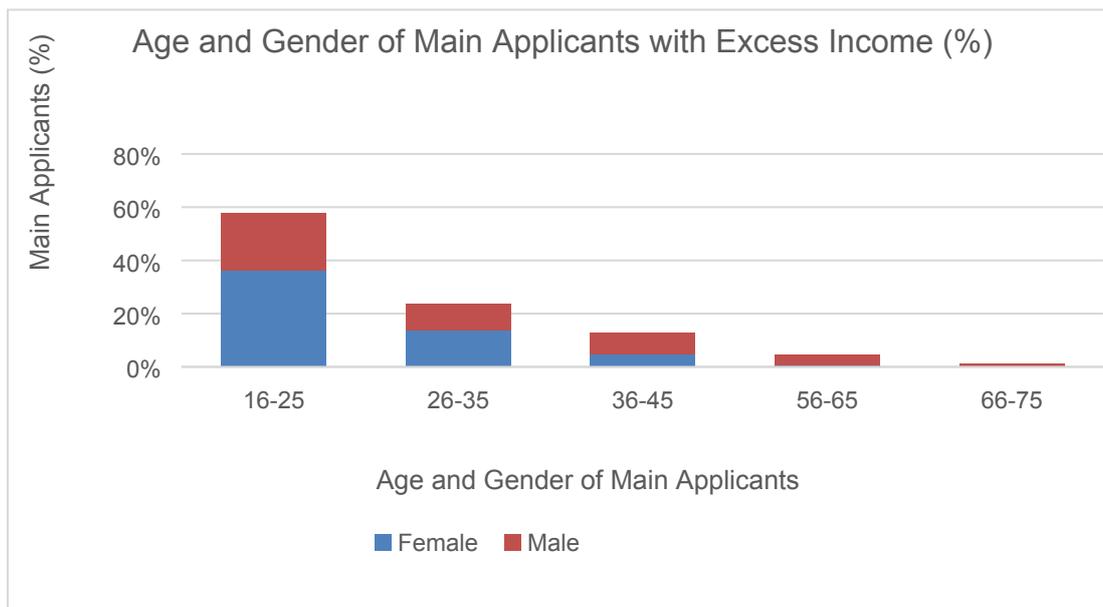
**All family members**  
Exploring impact on

Table 2 – Age of all Household Members	Count of Case Id	% of Grand Total
<18	793	41%
18-27	383	20%
28-37	366	20%
38-47	244	12%
48-57	92	5%
58-67	36	2%
68-77	10	1%
78-87	1	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1925</b>	<b>100%</b>

the wider family unit reveals 41% of those living in temporary accommodation are children under the age of 18. This accords with national data in that the majority of statutory homeless households are families/parents with dependent children.

### Adults – Rental Element

Younger adults (16-25) make up just over half (56%) of the lead housing benefit applications for those households deemed to have an excess income whilst those aged 26-35 make up a further 25% of those in receipt of partial housing benefit.



Housing is less affordable for young people because they earn less than older age groups. In addition, single people under 35-years old without children can only claim housing benefit on the cost of one room in shared accommodation. The impact of the rental element on young single adults has been explored – 48% of households in receipt of partial housing benefits are aged 18-35 years olds and the lead applicant of a family unit; 34% of main applicants are recorded as being a single person 35 and under.

Whilst there is the potential for nearly a third of those who would be required to make a contribution towards their rent being impacted by the one-room rent rate it is not usual practice to place a homeless single person in under-occupied temporary accommodation. Therefore, in circumstances where a young person is deemed to be earning excess income it is extremely unlikely that they will

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

be asked to make a contribution towards the licence fee/rent on any other room in the property. The impact of the rental element of the policy is therefore likely to be minimal.

### Children – Rental Element

Exploring the impact of the rental element of the policy on children reveals 50% of households who will be expected to make a contribution towards their rent have one or more children. The data also reveals:

- 23% of those who will be expected to make a contribution are young lone parents (aged 16-25)
- 7% are members of a two-adult household with children where the main applicant is a young person

Research into the social development and educational attainment of homeless children has demonstrated negative impact; the causes can range from practical challenges including keeping track of their school uniform and having no quiet place to do homework, to severe emotional trauma, distress and aggression in older children. Research by Shelter found *“Children housed in temporary accommodation outside their school’s borough, arrived at school late and/or extremely tired and often missed out on school activities as a result.”* They also state; *“Peer relations can be undermined by parents’ inability to pay for activities such as discos due to financial struggles and as a result of children feeling ashamed or uncomfortable to invite friends home after school”*<sup>1</sup>.

### Equalities Impact

Young people and young people with children living in temporary accommodation may be disproportionately impacted through the implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy due to their over-representation in temporary accommodation.

Children make up 41% of the people living in temporary accommodation. Research into the social development and educational attainment of homeless children has demonstrated negative impact, in part due to their families’ financial struggle.

During consultation the Council will explore any equalities impact on young people and children and seek out solutions and mitigations to any impact found.

### DISABILITY

In 2017/18 the ‘reason for priority need’ found 8% of households had a priority need due to a mental illness or disability, and 9% due to a physical disability. Similarly, between April and October 2019 18.2% of main applicants had disclosed a disability.

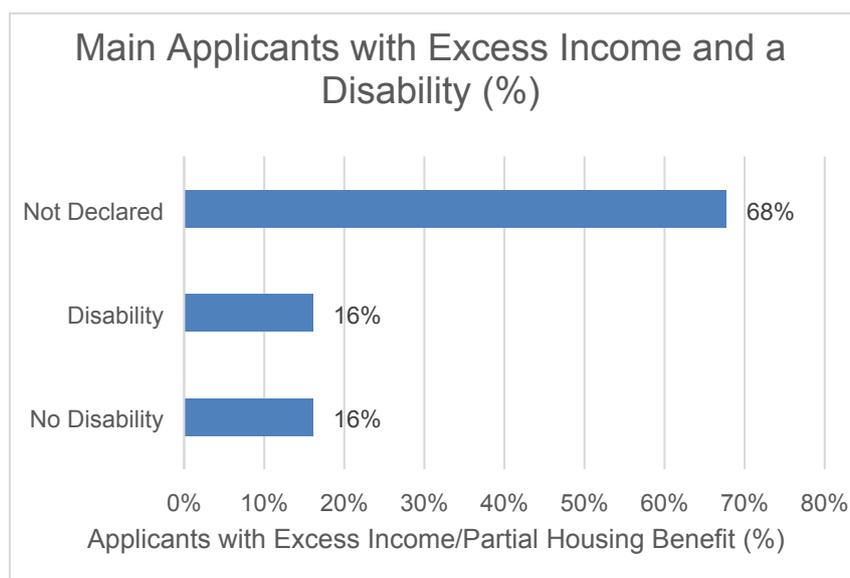
### Disability – Rental element

In 16% of the cases where the household is deemed to have excess income the main applicant has declared a disability. However, disability status has not been recorded in 68% of cases therefore prevalence could be higher.

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<sup>1</sup> Shelter (2017) Impacts of homelessness on children – research with teachers  
([https://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/1474652/2017\\_12\\_20\\_Homelessness\\_and\\_School\\_Children.pdf](https://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1474652/2017_12_20_Homelessness_and_School_Children.pdf))

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There is a severe shortage of accessible housing across all tenures: in England only 7% of homes have accessibility features – people with physical disabilities face added challenges when looking for suitable accommodation that will fit their right to independent living. Whilst disabled people are considered ‘priority need’ in homelessness applications, it can be difficult to find accessible social housing to move them into. This may mean that people with physical disabilities will spend longer in temporary accommodation and will therefore be impacted above and beyond others in Temporary Accommodation.

This impact has been explored and the current data suggests that there will be no impact on people with physical disabilities waiting for properties with suitable adaptations, albeit this may change. There does, however, appear to be an over-representation of people with mental health conditions who have an excess income when compared with all households in temporary accommodation. This will require further exploration during consultation.

### MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

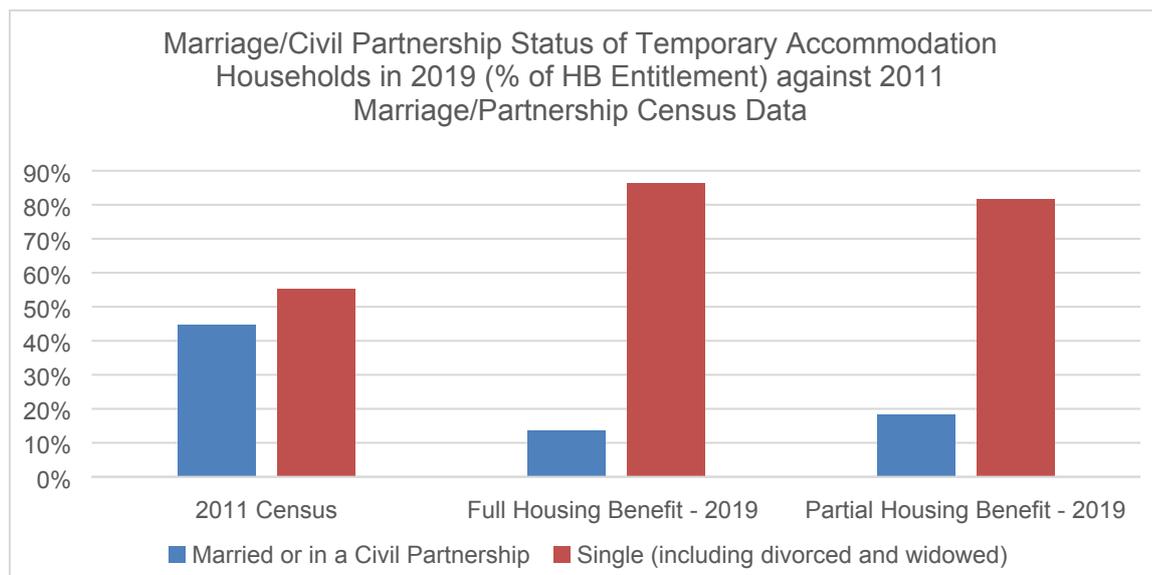
Single people are significantly over represented in Temporary Accommodation when compared with Coventry’s 2011 Census Data of 55%. Single people (not married or in a civil partnership) make up 85% of main applicants in Temporary Accommodation in Coventry.

The data does not account for people who are cohabiting; in 20% of cases there are two adults or more in the household.

Between April and October 2019, 14% of the people living in temporary accommodation and claiming full housing benefit were recorded as married or in a civil partnership this rose to 18% for households with excess income, and therefore in receipt of partial housing benefits.

Number of Adults in Household	HB Entitlement		Grand Total
	Full	Partial	
<b>1</b>	<b>64.7%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>80.4%</b>
Female	37.9%	9.2%	47.1%
Male	26.8%	6.5%	33.3%
<b>2</b>	<b>13.4%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>18.5%</b>
Female	7.4%	3.1%	10.5%
Male	6.0%	2.0%	8.0%
<b>3</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
Female	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
Male	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>79.2%</b>	<b>20.8%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form



Whilst this demonstrates an over representation, when compared with the marital status of all households in TA, increased household earnings are to be expected in dual-income families. It therefore follows that people who are married or in a civil partnership will be more likely to meet the excess income threshold.

In addition, homeless people living in hostel accommodation (who are usually single people) are required to pay their ineligible costs (utilities and council tax) - the vast majority of people in temporary accommodation do not pay these charges. It could be argued therefore that the introduction of this policy will decrease inequalities between single people in TA and families in TA.

It is assumed that there will be no equalities impact based on marriage/civil partnership as a protected characteristic in itself however, it should not be assumed that a couple with excess income will not be impacted or face financial hardship if the policy is implemented.

### **PREGNANCY/MATERNITY**

Pregnant women make up 2% of main applicants temporarily accommodated by the Council with the main reasons for homelessness amongst pregnant women being families no longer or willing to accommodate (28% of cases), domestic abuse and end of social rented tenancy (22% respectively). Pregnant women are under-represented when compared with ONS data on conception rates for 2016 7.7%. None of the pregnant women between April 2019 and November 2019 would have had to make a contribution towards their rent through excess income therefore it is assumed that there will be minimal to no equalities impact through pregnancy or maternity.

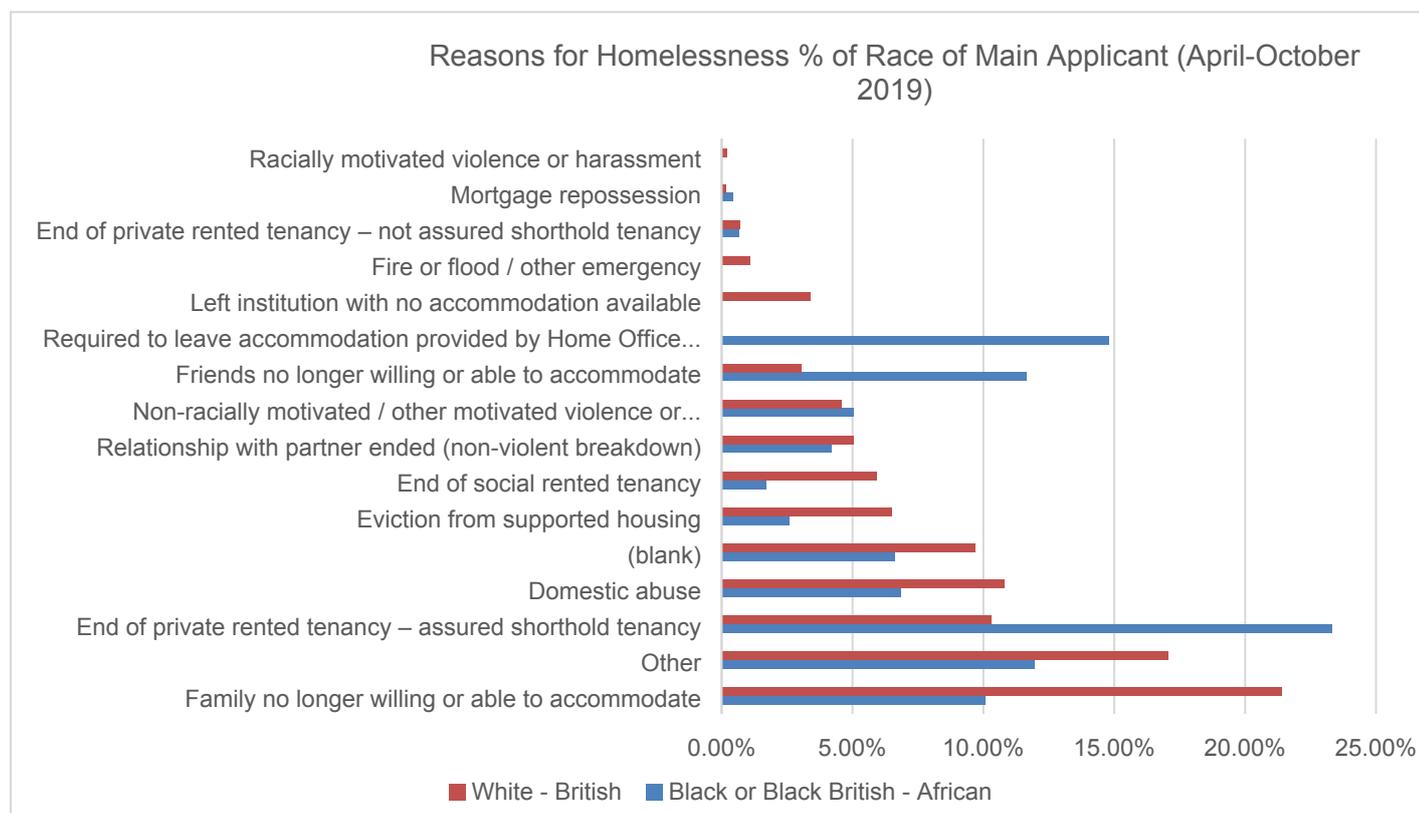
### **RACE**

The proportion of statutory homeless households recorded as 'White' has varied slightly between 62% and 67% over the past five years. Between April and October 2019, 60.7% of homeless people in TA were recorded as White British; a further 5.7% were recorded as White 'other', which includes 'White Other Kurdish' (0.2%), 'White Other Irish traveller' (0.3%) and 'White Other Gypsy/Roma' (0.1%).

The proportion of Asian applicants, 7.0% between April and October 2019 is consistently lower than the proportion of the overall population who are Asian (15.1% in the 2011 Census). This is a long-term trend.

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Conversely, the proportion of applicants recorded as Black (15%-23% over the last 5 years) is consistently higher than the proportion of the overall Coventry population who are Black (5.5% in the 2011 Census). Between April and October 2019, 16.3% of homeless households living in TA were recorded as Black, the vast majority of which (13.6%) were recorded as 'Black or Black British – African'.

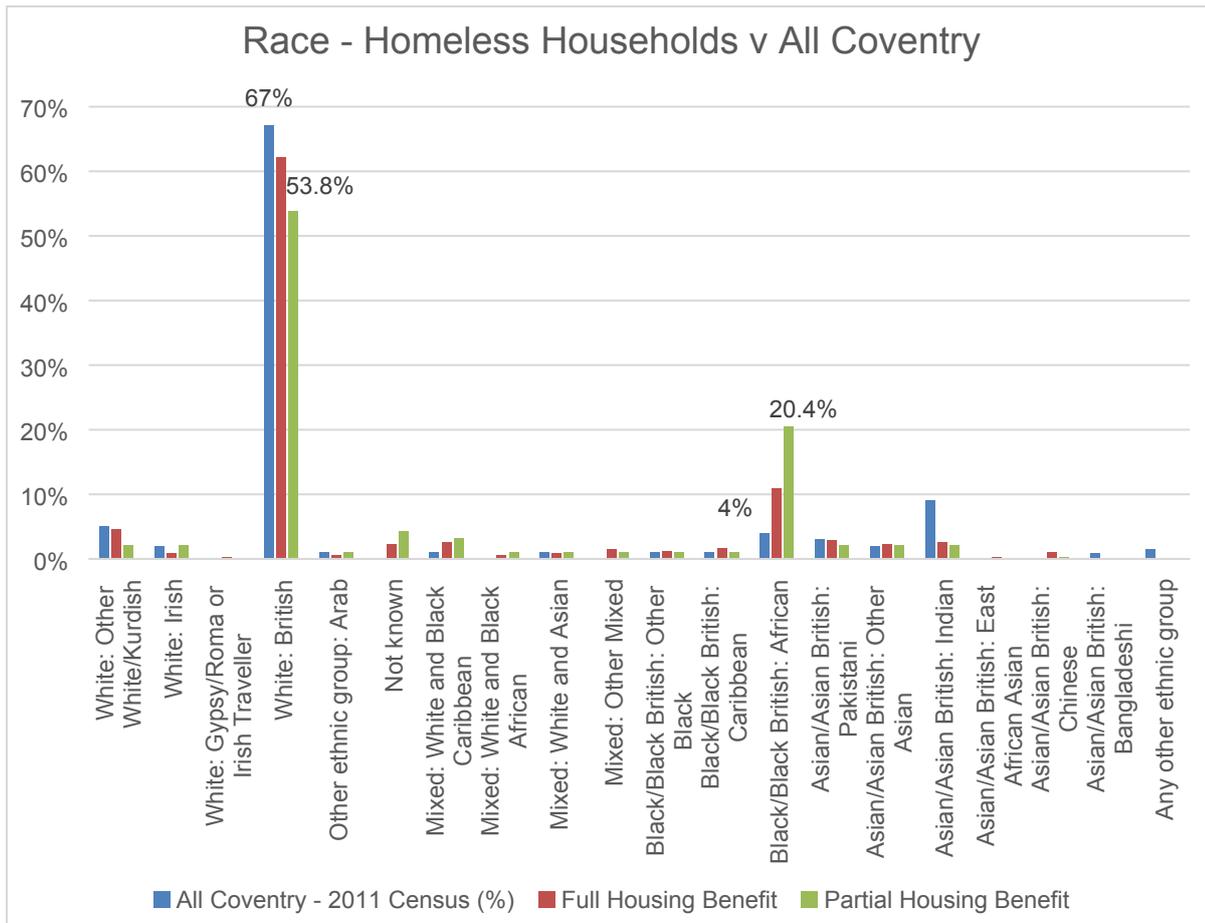


End of Private Rented Tenancy appears to be largest cause of homelessness (23%) in Black African families alongside being required to leave accommodation provided by the Home Office (15%) and friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (12%).

### Race – Rental Element

Exploring the equality impact of the rental element of the policy reveals a disproportionate impact on Black families. The 2011 Coventry population census recorded 5.5% of people living in Coventry as black however the housing benefit and housing data found that 23% of those families deemed as having excess income and therefore able to contribute to the rent/lease on the property as Black or Black British – African (20%), Caribbean (1%) or 'Other Black (1%).

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This is a much wider problem and a natural consequence of structural barriers for black households to access good quality rented housing and to be in the financial position to be homeowners. Home ownership in black families has fallen quite significantly over the last decade, and national figures also show that 48% live in social housing and 21% in the private rented sector. It may be reasonable to assume that there is a substantial number of black households who are earning but on lower incomes and therefore able to make a contribution to their TA costs under the proposed charging policy.

Asian people make up 15% of Coventry's population according to the 2011 census whilst 6.7% of those households who are deemed as being able to afford to pay are recorded as Asian, which would indicate no equality impact. However, when compared with the proportion of all Asian households living in temporary accommodation (7%) it appears that a disproportionate number of Asian households will be required to contribute to the rent/lease than their non-Asian homeless counterparts.

Whilst national research points to structural barriers as a reason for the disproportionate representation of non-white households in temporary accommodation, during consultation the Council will seek to explore:

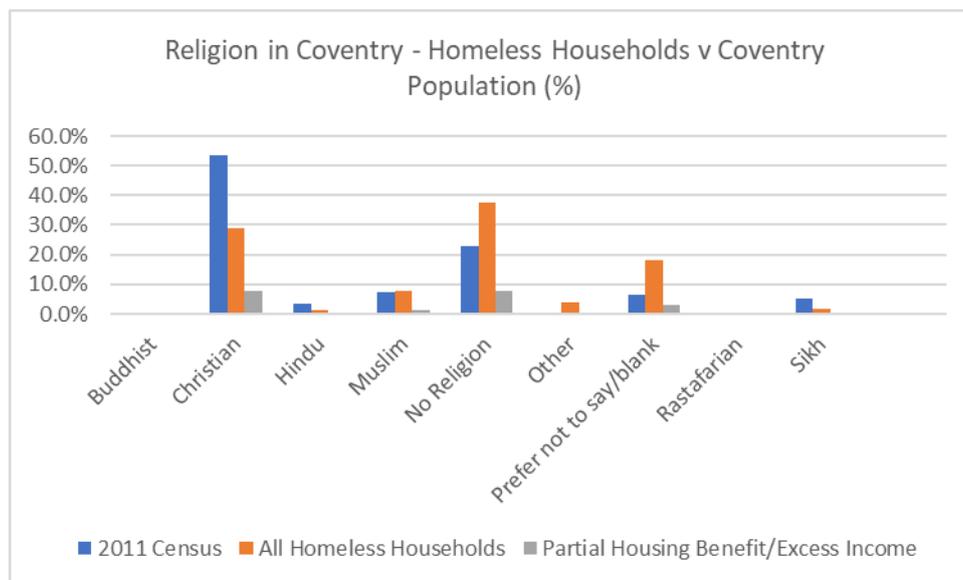
- Whether BAMER households may experience an equality impact as a direct result of the implementation of a TA Charging Policy
- The cause of impact (would the impact occur through the application of one element of the policy, or as cumulation of all elements)
- Potential mitigations where an impact is identified

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

### RELIGION

Temporary accommodation data for the period April-October 2019 shows an over-representation of people with no religion (37.6% of the proportion of people in TA) when compared with the 2011 Census data for Coventry (23% of Coventry residents identify as having no religion). There is also an over representation of people who prefer not to disclose their religion (18.3%) when compared with the 2011 census (6.4%).

Christian households are far less represented within homelessness figures with 29% of people living in temporary accommodation recorded as Christian despite 53.7% of Coventry's residents identifying as Christian in the 2011 census.



### Religion – Rental Element

Households of Christian faith are more likely to be expected to contribute towards the rent in the property because they have excess income (36.6% of people in receipt of partial housing benefit are Christian) when compared with all homeless households who do not need to contribute (27% of those claiming full housing benefit are Christian).

However, when compared with Coventry's Population data (2011 census data reports 53.7% of people are Christian) this does not suggest an equality impact upon Christian people as a result of them being asked to contribute towards their rent. The council will nonetheless explore any equality impact on individuals or groups, because of their religion, should the policy be implemented.

### SEX

In Coventry 55% of main applicants (and 54% of all people including children) living in temporary accommodation are women; 55% of main applicants (and 56% of all People in TA) and men.

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

### Rental Element

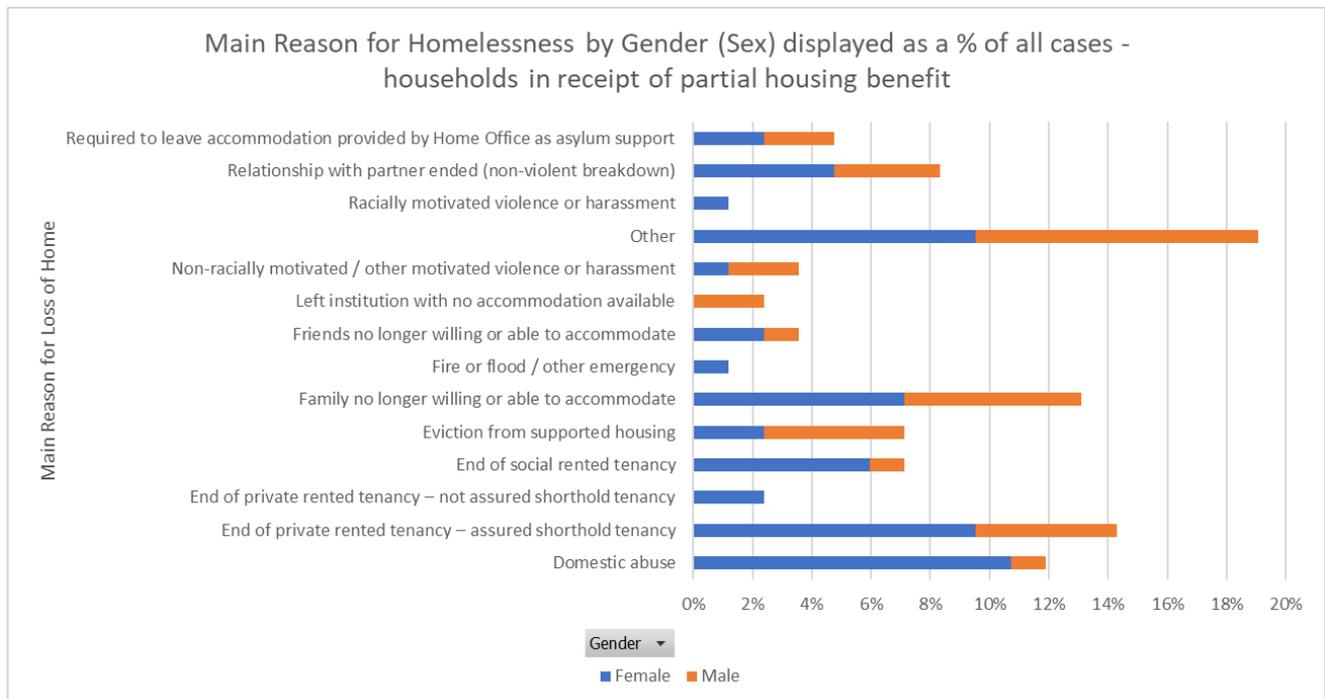
The impact of the rental element on households in receipt of partial housing benefit, due to having an ‘excess income’ based on the main applicant’s sex (gender) has been explored. It has been found:

- 41% of lead applicants are male (76% of male lead applicants are single or in a couple without children - 24% are part of a household with Children)
- 59% are female (33% are single or in a relationship with no children and 68% are part of a household with children).
- Single women with children are disproportionately impacted – 68% of single women are lone parents compared with 3% of single men

Women fleeing DVA may be particularly impacted by the policy change due to the financial element of DVA. Banks, mortgage providers and estate agents are often not familiar with financial abuse, how it manifests and how to prevent it. Joint mortgages can be used for financial abuse, as the perpetrator refuses to contribute leading to repossession - they are difficult to break. Similarly, a woman may have rent arrears as a result of financial abuse which she may be forced to pay off before securing another social housing property. These debts may not be picked up during the initial homelessness application, or they may materialise after the application has been made.

Exploring Coventry’s homelessness data for those in receipt of partial housing benefit demonstrates domestic violence is the leading cause of homelessness in women in receipt of partial housing benefit (11% of all households), closely followed by ‘other’ and ‘end of private rented - assured shorthold tenancy’ (at 10% each).

The leading cause of homelessness in men in receipt of housing benefit is ‘other’ (10% of all households) followed by ‘family no longer willing or able to accommodate’ (6%).



## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

Coventry's homelessness data backs national research therefore it will be important during consultation to understand how the financial aspect of domestic violence may impact a survivor's ability to meet the charges set out in the policy alongside what mitigations can be applied.

### Equalities Impact

Women living in temporary accommodation may be disproportionately impacted through the implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy due to:

- women's over-representation in temporary accommodation
- the higher proportion of women as lone parents
- the financial element of domestic violence and abuse

The Council will explore this potential impact during consultation and engage partner organisations working with homeless women including Valley House, Panaghar and Relate to understand the impact of the policy (if any) and possible mitigations.

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER REASSIGNMENT

The proportion of people in TA recorded as 'LGBO - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or other' (5%) is more than double the proportion of the overall West Midlands area (2.2%) and UK population (2.0%), as recorded in the 2017 annual population survey<sup>2</sup>. The Council does not currently collect data on Gender Reassignment.

The Albert Kennedy Trust carried out research into LGBT+ youth Homelessness and found that young LGBT+ people are overrepresented in the young homelessness population (24%) and in the vast majority of cases (69%) abuse and estrangement from family is expressed as being the biggest cause.<sup>3</sup>

These findings are not reproduced, to the same extent, in Coventry's homelessness data – 5% of young homeless people (16-25) identify as being LGBO. However, the data does reveal 78% of homeless LGBO people in Coventry are aged 16-25, 9% are in the 26-35 age bracket and the remaining 12% are aged between 36 and 75.

Similarly, Coventry's data neither confirms or opposes the Albert Kennedy Trust's findings on the causes of homelessness in young LGBT+ people. The reason for homelessness in LGBO young people (16-25) in Coventry has been left blank in 36% of cases, 'other' was the reason stated in 25% of cases followed by 'Family no longer willing or able to accommodate' (12%) and 'Relationship with partner ended (non-violent)' at 12%.

Given the high number of 'blank' and 'other' responses on Homelessness Applications and in light of the findings of the Albert Kennedy Trust, the impact of all elements of the policy on LGBT+ people, and younger people in particular, will require exploration during consultation.

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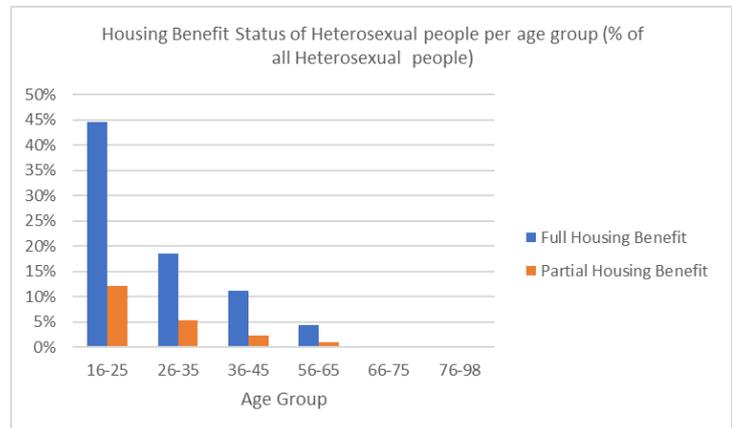
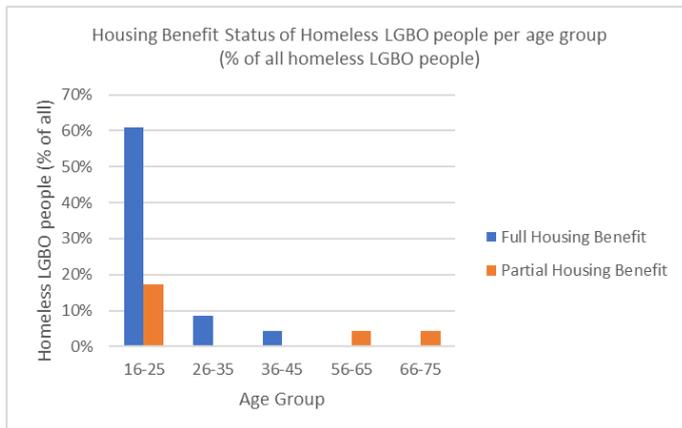
<sup>2</sup> ONS (2019) Sexual Orientation, UK:2017 (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualidentityuk/2017>)

<sup>3</sup> Albert Kennedy Trust (2015) *LGBT Youth Homelessness: A UK National Scoping of Cause, Prevalence, Response & Outcome* (<http://bit.ly/2IXFuhR>)

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

### Rental Element

The impact of the rental element of the policy on homeless LGBT+ people has been explored and it demonstrates that nearly two thirds (74%) of homeless people will not be impacted because they will be in receipt of housing benefit; 26% of LGBT+ people will be asked to make a contribution towards their rent. Young LGBT+ will be making the largest contribution - 17% are in the 16-25 age bracket.



Homelessness data reveals that not only are LGBO people disproportionately represented within Temporary Accommodation data but a higher percentage will be expected to make a contribution towards their rent. Nearly four fifths (79%) of heterosexual people are in receipt of housing benefits. Similar to their LGBO counterparts, young people will be making the largest contribution (when compared with all heterosexual people) - 12% are in the 16-25 age bracket.

### Equalities Impact

The Council's homelessness data reveals LGBO people are disproportionately represented within Temporary Accommodation and the vast majority of those people are in the 16-25 age bracket. Housing affordability can be a particular issue for younger people therefore there could be a cumulative impact on young homeless LGBO people. The Council will reach out to the LGBT+ community; service users and LGBT+ groups such as 'Prism LGBTQ+' and Coventry Pride throughout consultation.

**Are there any other vulnerable groups that could be affected?** i.e. deprivation, looked after children, carers.

Also include any information about the health inequalities/Marmot implications of this proposal. Contact Caroline Ryder ([caroline.ryder@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.ryder@coventry.gov.uk)) or Hannah Watts ([hannah.watts@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:hannah.watts@coventry.gov.uk)) in Public Health for more information.

The policy will inevitably impact the most vulnerable who are already at a severe disadvantage suffering multiple disadvantage and is therefore likely to increase the health inequalities gap in the City.

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There may also be a risk that this could exacerbate child poverty as the largest group of affected individuals are lone parents with dependent children. Over 70% of households which are statutory homeless have children which would be affected.

### **5. What are the gaps in evidence? Can this be addressed during the consultation stage?**

The Council's housing and housing benefit systems do not appear to capture information on gender reassignment and therefore it is not currently possible to identify the impact on this group.

The Council will reach out to the LGBT+ community; service users and LGBT+ groups such as 'Prism LGBTQ+' and Coventry Pride throughout consultation to understand more about any potential impact and mitigations.

### **6. What are the likely impacts of this project/review on staff from protected groups?**

This policy should impact customers/tenants only.

Coventry City Council  
Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

## Form 2

*This section should be completed AFTER any consultation has been concluded.*

**Author of this document: Samantha Richardson**

**Date of completion: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

### *Potential Impacts – further information*

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**8. Referring to the information detailed in question 4 of ECA Form 1, state if the potential impacts have been confirmed. Also detail below any additional information about potential impacts that has been highlighted during any consultation.**

### Age

In part 1 of this ECA, young people and young people with children living in temporary accommodation were identified as potentially being disproportionately impacted through the implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy due to their over-representation in temporary accommodation.

Children make up 41% of the people living in temporary accommodation. Research into the social development and educational attainment of homeless children has demonstrated negative impact, in part due to their families' financial struggles.

This potential impact was explored during consultation, through the survey and focus groups. Of those who responded and currently living in temporary accommodation 20% were aged 16-24, 32% were aged 25-34 and 24% were aged 35-44. However, younger adults were not as well represented amongst 'All Respondents' with only 5.3% of respondents aged 16-24 and 21.3% aged 25-34.

Age	All Respondents (%)	Respondents in TA (%)
Under 16	0	0
16-24	5.3	20
25-34	21.3	32
35-44	27.2	24
45-54	25.4	16
55-64	16.0	4
65-74	4.1	4
75-84	0.6	0
85 or over	0	0

### Consultation Responses

In-line with the desktop research carried out in part 1, concerns were raised during consultation regarding the cost of utilities and the impact on children, in particular if the temporary

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

accommodation used by the Council is of low energy efficiency and if the Council choose to install (more expensive) pre-payment meters:

*“We would support fuel poverty being taken into account when placing households in TA and asking them to pay utilities costs. This is particularly relevant for those with young children or illnesses, who have higher energy needs.”*

During the consultation with Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre service users one attendee stated that the cost of travel her son was so high that some weeks she had to make a choice between buying food and sending her son to school. This supports the analysis in part 1 of this ECA that being placed into temporary accommodation that is not near to a child’s school can have a **negative equality impact** on a child’s educational attainment – especially if a parent cannot afford to send their child to school.

One person also stated that utilities and council tax would not be affordable to young adults (under 25) in receipt of universal credit.

*“Not affordable for all households. Especially those on universal credit that are under 25 years of age.”*

The Universal Credit personal allowance for people under the age of 25 is set through local government legislation regardless of housing tenure therefore people within this age range will be expected to pay their utilities and council tax costs once permanently accommodated. Therefore, no evidence has been found of an equalities impact on young adults as a direct result of implementing this policy.

### Mitigations

- 1) **Utility Costs:** A working group has been established to explore the potential impact of charging for utilities on children, and other vulnerable groups, alongside mitigations. The working group will explore the best form of payment method (bills or pre-payment meters or a mix of the two) alongside other advice, support and/or mitigations.
- 2) **Travel Costs:** Explore other financial support options for supporting households in temporary accommodation with children whose current school is not located near their current accommodation (e.g. prevention pot or funding via education service)

### Disability

In part 1 of this ECA there appeared to be an over-representation of people with mental health conditions with an excess income when compared with all households in temporary accommodation. In order to explore this impact further a meeting was held with the Disability Equalities Action Partnership, where collective feedback was given. In addition, survey responses captured equalities feedback.

Of 180 people who responded to the survey, 166 answered the disability question - 14.5% reported having a disability whilst 20% of those living in temporary accommodation stated they had a disability.

Disability	All Respondents (%)	Respondents in TA (%)
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Yes	14.5	20
No	85.5	80

Of all those who disclosed the nature of their disability 11 reported having a long-standing illness health condition (2 of which lived in temporary accommodation), 10 reported a mobility impairment and 6 reported a mental health condition (3 lived in Temporary Accommodation).

Impairment	All Respondents (Number of People)	Respondents in TA (Number of People)
Mental Health Condition	6	3
Long-standing Illness or Health Condition	11	2
Hearing Impairment	1	0
Mobility Impairment	10	0
Reduced Physical Capacity	4	0
Visual Impairment not Correct by Spectacles of Contact Lenses	1	0
Learning Disability	1	0
Neurological Condition	5	0
Sensory Impairment	0	0
Learning Difficulties	1	0
Speech Impairment	0	0
Physical Co-ordination Difficulties	0	0
Mental Illness	1	0
Physical Impairment	5	0
Prefer not to say	2	0
Other	1	0

For the most part, there were levels of support for each proposal with respect to disabled and non-disabled people. However, the responses to Q7 and Q11 differed. Whilst both groups indicated strong support for the proposals, on Q7 disabled people were markedly less enthusiastic (45.8% agreement, 31.7% disagreement against 54.9% agreement, 35.2% disagreement amongst non-disabled people). This trend continued for Q11 (54.2% agreement, 29.4% disagreement against 61.8% agreement, 22.0% disagreement amongst non-disabled people). Disabled people who responded to the online consultation were therefore less enthusiastic (but nonetheless supportive) of paying Council Tax or making an affordable contribution to rent.

### Consultation Responses

Text analysis revealed concerns that charging for removals and storage could either cause or exacerbate mental health conditions, during what is already a difficult time, and potentially lead to repeat homelessness:

*“This will further place already vulnerable families in more debt, depression, depravity and these people will become a revolving door into the vicious circle of homelessness. So in other words, no penny will be saved.”*

Similarly, some respondents also leant towards the charging for utilities and council tax exacerbating the difficulties experienced by people with health conditions:

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*“Reasons for requiring temporary accommodation are complex, but can often be linked to health poverty, loss of income, domestic abuse, all of which have financial implications that are difficult to get out of even when living in a stable home. There should continue to be a compassionate and generous offer towards those in crisis, otherwise we are at risk of increasing the burden onto families themselves, or onto the work of the charitable sector who are already overwhelmed in many areas.”*

There was particular resistance to the Council’s proposal to using Pre-Payment Meters due to some people with disabilities requiring constant access to electricity (for example Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease – COPD) and the danger of disconnection:

*“the proposed move to base utility charging on tenants using prepayment meters means they are likely to be paying more for their energy - as PPM users have fewer choices on competitive tariffs than others - and be more prone to 'self-disconnection' because they don't have the money to put in the meter. This will be particularly true for larger families or families with disabilities which require higher levels of energy use.”*

The Disability Equalities Action Partnership (DEAP) fed back that they feel the current situation does not teach people to manage their finances and debts and they could not understand why we are not already charging for rent, utilities, council tax and storage. They stated that the money that has been spent so far could have been spent on other areas such as adult’s social care. One attendee also expressed the view that it does not provide people in temporary accommodation with an incentive to improve their situation, they said; *“It’s the same as the rich getting richer and poor getting poorer”*, which pointed towards a **positive equalities impact** with regards to fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, given people with protected characteristics are often over-represented within Temporary Accommodation.

### Mitigations

**Utility Costs:** A working group has been established to explore the potential impact of charging for utilities on children, and other vulnerable groups, alongside mitigations. The working group will explore the best form of payment method (bills or pre-payment meters or a mix of the two) alongside other advice, support and/or mitigations.

### Gender Reassignment

Data regarding gender reassignment within the housing service at the point of completion was missing and therefore potential impact was difficult to analyse however 3.8% of survey respondents stated that their gender is different than the gender they were assigned at birth. Similarly, 4% of people living in TA stated that their gender is different to the gender assigned at birth.

Gender Reassignment	All Respondents	Respondents in TA (%)
Yes	3.8	4
No	87.5	88
Prefer not to say	8.8	8

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Comments received from these respondents were both positive and negative – 83.3% either strongly agreed or agreed that people living in temporary accommodation should pay for the utilities they use and 66.7% strongly agreed or agreed with charging for Council Tax. However, 66.7% strongly disagreed or disagreed with charging for removals and storage.

The reasons stated for not being supportive of the storage element of the policy were in-line with other respondents – concerns that it will cause further hardship rather than being related to gender reassignment. No positive or negative impact has been identified.

### Marriage or Civil Partnership

Part 1 of the ECA did not identify any equalities impact based on marriage or civil partnership and argued that the introduction of the policy could decrease inequalities between single people in TA and families in TA.

Analysis of the survey responses found that 44% of those living in temporary accommodation, who responded to the survey, were single (never married and never registered a civil partnership) whilst 32% were married.

<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership Status</b>	<b>All Respondents (%)</b>	<b>Respondents in TA (%)</b>
Never Married and Never Registered a Civil Partnership	29.5	44
Married	38.0	32
Separated but still legally married	2.4	8
Divorced	12.7	4
Prefer not to say	15.7	12
Widowed	1.2	0
In a registered civil partnership	0.6	0
Separated but still legally in a civil partnership	0	0
Formally in a civil partnership which is not legally dissolved	0	0
Surviving Partner from a civil partnership	0	0

Analysis of the consultation findings has been carried out based on marriage and civil partnership and no positive or negative equality impact has been identified, based on this protected characteristic.

### Religion

Prior to consultation desktop analysis found no known equalities impact based on religion. Analysis of the data found 48% of those living in temporary accommodation were of Christian faith – a group identified as being more likely to have to make a contribution to the rent through a licence fee than other groups in Temporary Accommodation.

<b>Religion</b>	<b>All Respondents (%)</b>	<b>Respondents in TA (%)</b>
Christian	41.9	48
Muslim	7.8	28
No Religion	19.2	8

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

Prefer not to say	13.2	8
Atheist	10.2	4
Other	7.8	4
Buddhist	0	0
Hindu	0	0
Jewish	0	0
Sikh	0	0

When filtering responses based on faith positive and negative comments were made regarding each element of the policy however none of them were faith related. Therefore, no positive or negative equalities impact has been identified.

### Pregnancy/Maternity

Prior to consultation (in form 1) initial research indicated that there would be minimal to no equalities impact through pregnancy or maternity. Analysis of the consultation survey has revealed that 4% of all respondents were pregnant, 2% had a baby in the last 6 months and 3% were breastfeeding.

The proportion of pregnant, recently pregnant or breast-feeding people rose however when filtering responses for people in Temporary accommodation – 11.5% of respondents in TA were pregnant, 3.8% had a baby in the last 6 months and 7.7% were breastfeeding.

<b>Pregnancy/Maternity</b>	<b>All Respondents (%)</b>	<b>Respondents in TA (%)</b>
Pregnant	4	11.5
Had a baby in the last six months	2	3.8
Breastfeeding	3	7.7
No	121	57.7
Not Applicable	36	19.2

Analysis of this group has found that they are generally unsupportive of the utilities element of the policy with 37.5% strongly disagreeing compared with 25% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Similarly, 50% strongly disagreed with charging Council Tax compared with 25% who agreed and 37.5% disagreed with charging for storage (12.5% agreed). When asked about the Licence Fee 50% also strongly disagreed with this element with 25% agreeing that people in temporary accommodation should contribute to the rent, through a licence fee – the LHA was the preferred rate of the two suggested rent rates with 75% preferring this option.

Despite the groups generally being unsupportive of the proposals no reasons were given that directly related to pregnancy, being recently pregnant or breast feeding or maternity. Therefore, **no equalities impact has been identified** based on pregnancy or maternity.

### Race

Equalities analysis prior to consultation revealed a disproportionate representation of non-white households in temporary accommodation, and therefore the potential for an equalities impact. This potential impact was explored during consultation through focus groups with service users of Coventry Refugee and Migrant Sector and engagement with third sector organisations.

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

Analysis of consultation responses reveals the proportion of all respondents who reported as white was 68.4% (non-BAME), with 20.1% reporting as BAME and 11.5% preferring not to say. Conversely, only 28% of respondents in TA were white (none-BAME) whilst 60% were BAME (12% preferred not to say).

Race	All Respondents (%)	Respondents in TA (%)
Arab	1.1	0
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	0	0
Asian or Asian British Chinese	0	0
Asian or Asian British Indian	2.3	4
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	1.1	4
Black or Black British African	8.0	24
Black or Black British Caribbean	0	0
Mixed White and Asian	1.1	4
Mixed White and Black African	0.6	4
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	1.7	4
Other	0	0
Other Asian Background	0	0
Other Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Background	1.1	4
Other/Black/African/Caribbean Background	2.9	12
Prefer not to say	11.5	12
White British	64.4	20
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0	0
White Irish	1.1	4
White Other	2.9	4

There were substantial differences in the level of agreement with respect to race across different proposals. The following table details the differences:

	Non-BAME		BAME	
	Agree (All levels)	Disagree (All levels)	Agree (All levels)	Disagree (All levels)
<b>Q6 - Utilities</b>	70.6%	23.2%	50.0%	35.5%
<b>Q7 – Council Tax</b>	59.8%	34.8%	38.7%	37.1%
<b>Q9 - Storage</b>	50.9%	34.8%	26.2%	44.3%
<b>Q11 – Licence Fee</b>	69.7%	21.5%	41.0%	22.9%
<b>Q13 – Licence Fee Rate</b>	LHA	Median Rate	LHA	Median Rate
	71.7%	28.3%	66.0%	34.0%

BAME respondents were supportive of the utilities, council tax and licence fee elements but less enthusiastic than non-BAME people. They disagreed with charging for storage, whereas non-BAME respondents did not. Whilst supportive of the LHA rate, relatively more BAME respondents supported the Median rate than non-BAME respondents.

It can be assumed that BAME people are less supportive of the policy than non-BAME people because of race however comparing the data across both tables reveals that the lower levels of enthusiasm may well be down to household's accommodation status rather than their race – BAME respondents were predominantly living in temporary accommodation and therefore will be directly impacted by the policy proposals.

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

The survey feedback was similar to the feedback obtained from attendees at the Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre focus groups - The respondents stated that they felt that if you had a home you should expect to pay bills. They added, however, that they would not be able to afford to pay bills. One reason given was that, as they were asylum seekers, they received an income which was less than standard benefits which indicated that they may be in more support or the policy if they were in support of standard benefits. Another comment was that they could afford to pay bills if they were working but unable to afford it if they were not.

Consultation feedback has revealed that there may be some **negative equalities impact for BAME** people because of their over-representation in temporary accommodation when compared with the population as a whole however responses received revealed that BAME people were supportive of charging for most policy elements.

### Mitigations

The mitigations already suggested for other impacted groups (one-month's free storage, financial assessment on storage charges and the opportunity to apply for Direct Housing Payments) should help to mitigate some of this impact.

### Sex

Prior to consultation it was identified that women living in temporary accommodation may be disproportionately impacted through the implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy due to:

- women's over-representation in temporary accommodation
- the higher proportion of women as lone parents
- the financial element of domestic violence and abuse

The explored this potential impact during consultation through a focus group with women fleeing domestic violence and engagement with third sector organisations.

The consultation survey has also been analysed using filters based on sex. The analysis revealed 65.9% of respondents were females, 28.2% of respondents were male, 1.2% described their sex in another way and 4.7% preferred not to say. There was a higher percentage of women in temporary accommodation (76%) compared with respondents from the general public (65.9%).

Sex	All Respondents (%)	Respondents in TA (%)
Male	28.2	24
Female	65.9	76
In another way	1.2	0
Prefer not to say	4.7	0

Analysis of the opinions held based on sex showed responses differed substantially between male and female respondents. There were not enough respondents who identified differently to draw any strong conclusions. The below table details the differences between male and female respondents.

	Male		Female	
	Agree (All levels)	Disagree (All levels)	Agree (All levels)	Disagree (All levels)

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

<b>Q6 - Utilities</b>	56.3%	33.4%	68.8%	25.9%
<b>Q7 – Council Tax</b>	43.8%	47.9%	57.1%	32.1%
<b>Q9 - Storage</b>	41.6%	45.9%	21.3%	35.8%
<b>Q11 – Licence Fee</b>	58.4%	25.1%	61.2%	21.6%
<b>Q13 – Licence Fee Rate</b>	LHA	Median Rate	LHA	Median Rate
	78.9%	21.1%	68.7%	31.3%

Though both groups were in favour of People in Temporary Accommodation paying for utilities and a licence fee, female respondents were more enthusiastic. Both groups were not in favour of the proposal to start charging for storage, however males were more balanced between agreement and disagreement. Males were not in favour of charging for Council Tax, whereas females were. Both groups favoured the LHA, though males were more greatly in favour. Consequently, males were not in favour of charges for Council Tax or storage costs, but were in favour of charges for utilities and rent contributions. Females were in general more supportive than males, and were supportive of all proposals except charging for storage costs.

### Consultation Responses

During consultation some respondents expressed concern over the storage element of the policy and its potential impact on people fleeing domestic violence (the majority of which are women):

*“There is an expectation that tenants could store their belongings in another way if charges are introduced, eg using family/friends instead. We would note that this won’t always be possible, for example those escaping DV may not have a support network they can use in this way.”*

However, other respondents stated that people fleeing domestic violence often leave without any belongings and therefore may not have anything placed into storage.

*“i was in temporary accommodation a number of years ago and still got all my benefits, as i had left my husband, i had nothing but what me and the children stood up in. but as i got all my benefits the first payment went on clothes, i was sensible and kept buying mop bucket/ plates etc, but others just spent it as they had no bills to pay - everybody else has to pay, why should they have extra money in their pockets when within their benefits they get paid towards bills”*

Analysis of the survey equalities data and text entries has revealed there may be some **negative equalities impact on women** fleeing domestic violence however women were more supportive of the policy than men.

### Mitigations

During focus groups and workshops, Council Officers discussed any potential impact, and mitigations should they materialise. In addition, the online survey has been analysed and solutions suggested have been discussed. The following mitigations are being put forward:

1. **Storage Costs:** A one-month grace period for every household placing furniture into storage is granted to allow them time to settle into temporary accommodation and carry out personal budgeting.

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

*“To help with the above affordability issues, we suggest there could be a grace period for keeping items in storage without charge while a household is in TA.”*

- Storage Costs:** A financial assessment will be carried out to ascertain how much a household can afford to pay. The repayment costs of storage will spread over a longer period of time taking into account the affordable amount.

*“We understand that households will not be asked to pay these costs in full if affordability checks show that they are unaffordable. We strongly support this”*

- Lack of Essential Items:** Households who have no, or few, essential items due to their homelessness status (for example, because they have left a domestically abusive relationship) can make an application for a Community Support Grant.

### Sexual Orientation

Data analysis prior to consultation revealed a high number of ‘blank’ and ‘other’ responses on Homelessness Applications which made assessing the potential equality impact based on sexual orientation difficult.

During consultation the project team reached out to the LGBT+ community through Coventry Pride to try and gain insight into any potential equality impact. This activity resulted in a good response from the community with 8.4% of respondents identifying as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer or Asexual (4% of respondents in TA identified as Bisexual).

Sexual Orientation	All Respondents (%)	Respondents in TA (%)
Heterosexual/Straight	74.4	88
Prefer not to say	17.9	8
Bisexual	3.0	4
Asexual	1.8	0
Gay Man	1.2	0
Gay Woman/Lesbian	1.2	0
Queer	0.6	0
Other	0	0

None of the free text responses in the consultation survey indicated an equalities impact based on sexual orientation therefore survey responses were filtered based on sexual orientation to investigate whether there is a difference in opinion between heterosexual and non-heterosexual people.

	Heterosexual		Non-Heterosexual	
	Agree (All levels)	Disagree (All levels)	Agree (All levels)	Disagree (All levels)
<b>Q6 - Utilities</b>	64%	27.2%	84.7%	15.4%
<b>Q7 – Council Tax</b>	56%	33.6%	53.9%	46.2%
<b>Q9 - Storage</b>	41.9%	36.8%	46.2%	46.2%
<b>Q11 – Licence Fee</b>	58.4%	20.8%	75%	25%

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

Q13 – Licence Fee Rate	LHA	Median Rate	LHA	Median Rate
	70.1%	29.9%	72.7%	27.3%

Analysis has revealed that non-heterosexual people are more supportive of the utilities, storage and licence fee elements of the policy than heterosexual people, whilst heterosexual people are more supportive of charging for council tax than non-heterosexual people. **No equalities impact** has been identified based on sexual orientation.

### Care Leavers and Armed Forces

Whilst not protected characteristics, analysis was also carried out to look at any potential impact on care leavers and armed forces. Analysis found that 3.7% of respondents were care leavers (4.2% lived in Temporary Accommodation) and 12% had been or had a close family member who had been a member of the armed forces (12.5% of people living in temporary accommodation).

The analysis found no mention of an impact on these groups other than a concern around affordability for people under the age of 25 (discussed in under the 'Age' section of this report). Analysis found no equalities impact on this group as a direct result of the implementation of this policy.

### Outcome of equality impact

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#### 9. Indicate which of the following best describes the equality impact of this project/review:

- There will be **no** equality impact if the proposed option is implemented
- There will be **positive** equality impact if the proposed option is implemented
- There will be **negative** equality impact if the proposed option is implemented but this can be objectively justified
- There will be both **positive and negative** impacts if the proposed option is implemented

### Summary of ECA

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**Write a paragraph below which summarises the key aspects of this ECA.**

*This paragraph should be included in the Equalities/EIA section of any Cabinet/Cabinet Member Report.*

The equalities analysis has indicated both potential positive and negative equality implications of implementing a temporary accommodation charging policy in Coventry. The consultation process identified the following **negative equality impacts** on people with the following protected characteristics:

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

- **Age:** Concerns were expressed that the levelling charges would impact on parent's ability to get children to school thus impacting on the child's educational attainment. Especially, under the circumstances when the Council places children in temporary accommodation far from their school.
- **Age and/or disability:** concerns were raised regarding the cost of utilities and the impact on people with higher energy needs (children and people with disabilities such as COPD). Especially if the temporary accommodation used by the Council is of low energy efficiency and if the Council choose to install (more expensive) pre-payment meters.
- **Disability:** Concerns were raised that charging for removals and storage could either cause or exacerbate mental health conditions, during what is already a difficult time.
- **Sex:** Some respondents expressed the view that the storage element could negatively impact people fleeing domestic violence (predominantly women) as they may not have support networks available to help store belongings whilst others' felt they were less likely to be impacted as they often leave without any belongings.

Respondents to the consultation mainly provided more generic positive and negative feedback on the proposals which could apply to all protected characteristics.

Some respondents to the consultation expressed concern that the proposed policy would negatively affect already vulnerable people and/or families; people/families who are already experiencing financial difficulties/poverty, people with physical and mental disabilities and discourage people wanting to leave domestic violence and abusive relationships.

**Positive equality impacts:** Some respondents to the consultation felt that the proposals provided a positive opportunity to support people living in temporary accommodation to develop or regain a sense of personal and financial responsibility for their day to day lives. The overarching benefit of the policy would be potentially increasing the sustainability of longer-term accommodation options for those who have experienced homelessness.

Some respondents expressed the view that the current situation could be widening inequality between people living in temporary accommodation and those who do not – they felt the money currently being spent would be better spent on in other areas, such as adult social care.

### Mitigations

Following consultation analysis and discussions with third sector organisations the following mitigations are recommended:

- **Storage Costs:** It is recommended a one-month grace period for every household placing furniture into storage is granted to allow households time to settle into temporary accommodation and carry out personal budgeting.
- **Storage Costs:** A financial assessment will be carried out to ascertain how much a household can afford to pay. The repayment costs of storage will spread over a longer period of time taking into account the affordable amount.
- **Utility Costs:** A working group has been established to explore the potential impact of charging for utilities on children, and other vulnerable groups, alongside mitigations. The working group will explore the best form of payment method (bills or pre-payment meters or a mix of the two) alongside other advice, support and/or mitigations.
- **Travel Costs:** The Council will explore other financial support options for supporting households in temporary accommodation with children whose current school is not located near their current accommodation (e.g. prevention pot or funding via education service)

## Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

Households on low incomes can make an application for Council Tax Support, whilst households in receipt of full or partial housing benefit can apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment to help with housing and storage costs.

The newly commissioned support providers will also actively work with people and families in temporary accommodation to understand the policy, their responsibilities and support people with their budgeting skills in order to mitigate where possible any overall negative impacts.

A review of the revised policy will be undertaken one year after implementation which will include a review of actual ECA impact.

### Approvals from Director and Cabinet Member

**Name of ECA Author** Samantha Richardson

**Date** 13/02/2020

**Director:**

**Cabinet Member:**

**Please detail below any committees, boards or panels that have considered this analysis.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Decision taken</b>
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### *Next steps*

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Please send this completed ECA to the Insight Team as follows:

Wendy Ohandjanian ([wendy.ohandjanian@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.ohandjanian@coventry.gov.uk) tel. 7683 2939)

Jaspal Mann ([jaspal.mann@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:jaspal.mann@coventry.gov.uk) tel. 7683 3112)

**Coventry City Council  
Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form**

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**Approvals from Director and Cabinet Member**

Name of ECA Author Samantha Richardson

Date 13/02/2020

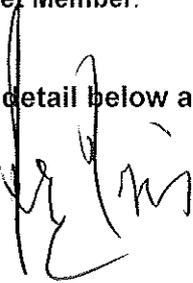
Director:

 D. ASHMORE

Cabinet Member:

Please detail below any committees, boards or panels that have considered this analysis.

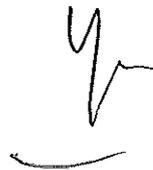
Name



Date

20 / 2 / 20

Chair



Decision taken

**Next steps**

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Please send this completed ECA to the Insight Team as follows:

Wendy Ohandjanian ([wendy.ohandjanian@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.ohandjanian@coventry.gov.uk) tel. 7683 2939)

Jaspal Mann ([jaspal.mann@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:jaspal.mann@coventry.gov.uk) tel. 7683 3112)

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## Public report

Cabinet Report

Paragraph 3

Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

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**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 financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)**

Cabinet  
Council

10 March 2020  
17 March 2020

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Councillor T Khan

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (People)

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Options to Improve the Provision of Temporary Accommodation for Single Homeless People Through Property Acquisition

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**Is this a key decision?**

Yes - the proposals involve financial implications in excess of £1m per annum and are likely to have a significant impact on residents or businesses two or more electoral wards in the City.

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**Executive Summary:**

The Council has legal duties to provide accommodation to homeless people who are eligible and in priority need. In recent years demands on the Housing and Homelessness service have increased, with an attendant rise in the use and cost of Temporary Accommodation.

The Council has responded with a new Housing and Homelessness strategy including the recommissioning of Homelessness-related Support Service contracts, review of key policies and procedures, improvements in Temporary Accommodation options available for families and significant reductions in the amount paid for this accommodation. This paper sets out options to continue this work by improving the accommodation and support available to vulnerable residents, especially for the increasing number of single homeless adults in the city.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet is requested to recommend that the Council:

- 1) Approve the proposals and delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Transformation, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, to identify the properties and to agree detailed terms of the transaction and to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction
- 2) Approve the addition to the capital programme of an amount outlined in the private report to meet the cost of acquisition and refurbishment of properties for use as Temporary Accommodation for single homeless people, funded from borrowing.

Council is requested to:

- 1) Approve the proposals and delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Transformation, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, to identify the properties and agree detailed terms of the transaction and to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction
- 3) Approve the addition to the capital programme of an amount outlined in the private report to meet the cost of acquisition and refurbishment of properties for use as Temporary Accommodation for single homeless people, funded from borrowing.

**List of Appendices included:**

None

**Background papers:**

None

**Other useful documents**

Cabinet Report 27 November 2018:

[Options to improve the quality but reduce the cost of temporary accommodation](#)

Council Report 19 March 2019:

[Adoption of Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2019-24](#)

**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 March 2020

**Report title:**

Options to Improve the Provision of Temporary Accommodation for Single Homeless People Through Property Acquisition

**1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 In common with most of the Country, the Council has seen a significant increase in demand from homeless households over the past few years. This may be due to several factors, including the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which brought in the new prevention and relief duties, changes to welfare benefits and wider welfare reforms and an increasing gap between typical rent and income levels in the city.
- 1.2 As of February 2020, the service has a caseload of over 800 households owed some form of homelessness duty, and over 680 households in Interim or Temporary accommodation provided by the local authority. The number of approaches to the service, the number owed a homelessness duty and the number in Temporary Accommodation all continue to rise.
- 1.3 Aside from the proposals contained in this report, the Housing and Homelessness service is exploring and delivering a number of projects to address these issues. These include better quality accommodation for families either through leasing or securing nomination rights, increasing the number of supported accommodation units for single people, and increasing access to the private rented sector to discharge homelessness duties.
- 1.4 In the last 18-months several projects have successfully reduced the use of B&Bs for families and moved families to more cost effective and suitable accommodation. As at 16 January 2020, no homeless families are living in B&B accommodation provided through the Homeless service (which has been the case since September 2019 except briefly in emergency cases). However, there remains a large number of single homeless people in B&B or hotel accommodation (approximately 30 to 35% of the whole cohort). This accommodation typically is not suitable to support a household, with limited cooking facilities or private space, and is the most expensive type of temporary accommodation that councils use.
- 1.5 Although Housing Benefit (HB) can be claimed for this accommodation, only a proportion of the HB paid out by the Council can be claimed back as subsidy from The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP). This results in a shortfall between the cost of accommodation and the HB subsidy claimed back. The shortfall is greatest when people are placed in private B&B or Hotel-type accommodation, compared to other types of accommodation such as self-contained units or Council-owned properties.
- 1.6 Although the Council no longer owns any Council houses following the housing stock transfer to Whitefriars in September 2000, it is able to own properties providing the total housing stock remains under 200 dwellings under exemption from the Secretary of State. In practice this means the Council can develop or acquire a small amount of residential property directly, presenting new options to improve the quality and reduce the cost of temporary accommodation.
- 1.7 This above situation has resulted in a significant financial pressure for the Council, primarily due to the increasing demand and high cost of Temporary Accommodation. For 2019/20 it is forecast that the cost to the council of households in Temporary Accommodation will be in excess of £9m.

- 1.8 Various schemes are underway to reduce the cost of Temporary Accommodation including Caradoc Hall and Frank Walsh House. Additionally, the Council continues to look at alternative forms accommodation that could reduce the gap between the temporary accommodation cost and housing benefit subsidy grant, which is the cost met by the Council. Through negotiating better rates with existing accommodation providers, the Council has reduced costs over £1m per annum.
- 1.9 Under current housing benefit legislation, direct Council ownership of Temporary Accommodation attracts a higher subsidy than most other forms of Temporary Accommodation. To maximise the subsidy that we can claim and reduce the cost to the Council, this paper therefore seeks approval to purchase properties for use as Supported Accommodation for single individuals.

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

### **2.1 Option 1 (not recommended) – do nothing**

2.2 The Council could maintain its current approach to Temporary Accommodation. Although the use of expensive and poor-quality accommodation has reduced, this option would see a significant number of single households continuing to be placed in unsuitable accommodation. This would do nothing further to address the support needs of this cohort or the significant financial pressure resulting from the use of expensive accommodation and HB subsidy loss.

2.3 The number of new admissions to Temporary Accommodation consistently outstrip the number discharged (a net increase of 3 per week on average). Therefore, doing nothing would not be a neutral position as the numbers in Temporary Accommodation would continue to increase.

2.4 This is not the recommended option.

### **2.5 Option 2 (not recommended) – lease properties for use as temporary accommodation**

2.6 Rather than purchasing properties directly as a Council it would be possible to lease for use as Temporary Accommodation. Leasing could take different forms, from entering into longer contracts for existing private sector accommodation to leasing large buildings or individual houses.

2.7 This would have an impact on the Housing Benefit subsidy that could be recovered. In leased homelessness accommodation that is not self-contained for period up to 10 years, the Council can only claim 90% of the 2011 one bedroom Local Housing Allowance Rate back from DWP (£88.27 per week) for single people.

2.8 This is lower than the subsidy that can be claimed for singles living in B&Bs or hotels (£98.08 per week) and is much lower than the subsidy that is available for directly owned Council Temporary Accommodation. For directly owned accommodation, full subsidy can be claimed as long as the costs are deemed to be reasonable and proportionate.

2.9 For singles, the lease of properties for use as Temporary Accommodation is therefore deemed to be a more expensive option.

2.10 Aside from the financial impacts of leasing there would also be less control over the provision of support and the quality of the accommodation. We wish to see the creation of

accommodation that is not only a safe place for someone to stay, but also supports them to become tenancy ready and live self-sufficiently. The current accommodation providers do not offer this additional support service, which is partly the cause of the large numbers of people in Temporary Accommodation for long periods of time.

2.11 This is not the recommended option.

2.12 **Option 3 (recommended) – acquire properties for use as supported temporary accommodation**

2.13 The recommended option would create a pathway for single people in Temporary Accommodation comprised of the following elements:

- Two Council-owned buildings of approximately 25 beds each. The layout would consist of private bedrooms and share laundry and cooking facilities. These buildings would be for clients with the highest support needs and would be staffed around the clock. Staff based at the properties would provide property management, housing management and personal support to the residents. As clients develop tenancy and lifestyle skills they may be referred to the next step in the pathway:
- Approximately 10 smaller Council-owned buildings of approximately 5 beds each, dispersed across the city. Similarly, clients would have private bedrooms with shared facilities. They would also be supported by property, housing and personal support staff based at the buildings, although their needs and interactions with staff would be less.
- All clients would be given support to bid and secure permanent accommodation either in the social or privately rented sector. An intended outcome for all clients would be tenancy readiness and helping them to secure long-term, sustainable homes.

2.14 This option keeps the property and housing management resource 'in house' to be delivered directly by the local authority. This will allow closer management of the building to ensure it accepts referrals for clients presenting with the highest needs. These are clients that private providers are typically unwilling or unable to accommodate. It is also considered to be the most cost-effective way of providing this type of accommodation. The intention is for the personal support element (namely supporting clients to develop the skills to maintain a tenancy) to be provided by a specialist private support provider with experience in providing personal support to people with complex needs.

2.15 These properties would be owned by the Council and 100% of the eligible rent covered by Housing Benefit would be reclaimed in subsidy from the DWP, significantly reducing the overall cost to the Council.

2.16 The subsidy will therefore cover most of the costs associated with owning and running the properties. Costs covered include interest on borrowing, overheads, maintenance, running costs, staff, facilities staff and insurance. The subsidy will not cover capital repayment of loans or the cost of the personal support workers.

2.17 The Council are aware of opportunities within the local housing market to acquire larger buildings as well as smaller properties. To ensure properties can be purchased and refurbished to a suitable standard under this model, the Council recommends a budget is approved which is outlined in the private report.

2.18 The detailed financial case is outlined in the private version of this report.

2.19 Alongside the financial case, the non-financial benefits are also significant. The project will create more accommodation with dedicated support for those with higher support needs.

This complements the wider approach of the Housing and Homelessness strategy and the recommissioning of Homelessness-related support contracts. These have taken a 'positive pathway' approach to tackling homelessness, providing support from early intervention through prevention, crisis support and tenancy sustainment.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 No consultation has yet been undertaken as part of this project. However, if the recommendations are approved there would be local public consultation on the use of any large buildings before a final decision is made under the delegated authority.
- 3.2 To achieve this, we will work with local partners, businesses, residents and Ward Members to engage with local communities on our proposals. This engagement is likely to include elements of face to face feedback, such as in a workshop session, and the opportunity to feed into an online survey and discussion group using the Council's Let's Talk platform.

### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 Following the decision, the existing project team will seek to identify and acquire larger properties as soon as possible. It is anticipated that the acquisition and renovation of a suitable building could take 6 to 12 months, dependent on market availability and current condition of properties in question. As above, the intention is to open two larger buildings, although this may be delivered in two phases dependent on availability of suitable properties.
- 4.2 The acquisition of smaller buildings will be phased over the course of the next 12 months to ensure a gradual build-up of available properties. The initial houses could be acquired quickly and would not have the same renovation requirements as the larger buildings. However, the intention is to open the first larger building before operating any properties as the support and management resources will be based out of here.

### **5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

#### **5.1 Financial implications**

The financial implications are largely contained in the private report.

Under the proposed model it is estimated that substantial savings will be generated. In order to generate these savings, capital investment is required. This capital requirement will need to be met through borrowing.

The model assumed the capital is funded through borrowing over 40 years. The cost of borrowing is recovered through the housing benefit subsidy grant.

A number of key risks are included in paragraph 6.2, all of which would have financial implications. The mitigation for these risks is also included in section 6.2 below.

#### **5.2 Legal implications**

- 5.2.1 Under Section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003 the Council has a specific power to invest. The power states "a local authority may invest for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment or for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs". This provides the Council with a power to invest in properties, for any purpose relevant to its functions (this function would have to be identified) or if the Council

can show it is for the prudent management of its financial affairs. Under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council also has a power “to do anything that individuals generally may do” (the “General Power of Competence”). “Individual” means an individual with full capacity. The General Power of Competence gives the Council:

- i. power to do a thing anywhere in the United Kingdom or elsewhere,
- ii. power to do it for a commercial purpose or otherwise for a charge, or without charge, and
- iii. power to do it for, or otherwise than for, the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area.

5.2.2 Where the Council uses the General Power of Competence to do something for a commercial purpose, section 4 of the Localism Act 2011 requires that the Council must do so through a company (which has a wider definition than for the purposes of section 95 Local Government Act 2003).

5.2.3 The General Power of Competence is limited by any restrictions on any pre-existing powers of the Council. The General Power of Competence can be used in conjunction with existing powers, for example the section 95 trading power.

#### **Procurement and State Aid**

5.2.4 The Council is not purchasing any services, goods or works as part of the transaction, and so the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council’s contract procedure rules will not apply as this is a property transaction.

5.2.5 The Council is complying with EU State aid law as the transaction is being undertaken upon arms’ length terms, meaning that no benefit is conferred on the vendor and there is no distortion to competition.

#### **Housing Revenue Account**

5.2.6 The Council have an exemption from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government which allows the Council to hold up to 200 properties without the need to operate a housing revenue account. Each time a property is acquired the Council need to inform the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government of the new address.

### **6. Other implications**

#### **6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan ([www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/))?**

This scheme contributes to the following objectives in the Council Plan:

- ‘Reducing the impact of poverty’ – by supporting people and placing them in suitable accommodation, with the intention of helping them secure their own permanent accommodation long term. Evidence shows that secure housing can lift people out of poverty and reduce the wider impact of poverty on their lives
- ‘Improving health and wellbeing’ – by providing safe and adequately supported accommodation, which evidence shows is one of the key wider determinants of health and wellbeing
- ‘Protecting our most vulnerable people’ – by offering support and guidance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, providing personal support, and ultimately helping them to secure permanent accommodation
- ‘Making savings so that we can support frontline services’ – by operating a model that will significantly reduce the overall cost of Temporary Accommodation when

compared to B&Bs and other nightly rates. This saves money that can be better used to fund activities that prevent homelessness and other frontline services

- ‘Empowering citizens and encouraging active communities’ – by providing more personal support in a safe setting to help people achieve their ambitions
- ‘Working together with neighbours and partners across the voluntary, public and private sectors’ – this scheme requires the Council to work with private sector owners of accommodation to acquire and use for homeless clients. The council will also continue to work with many partners to support homeless people.

## 6.2 How is risk being managed?

A number of risks have been identified related to this project along with mitigations:

- Risk that occupancy levels are not maintained at the properties – this will be mitigated by close housing management and performance monitoring. There is high demand for accommodation of this type and there will not be a shortage of suitable clients. The Accommodation Team have experience maintaining other properties above 90% occupancy.
- Risk that Benefits Legislation changes (reducing reclaimed subsidy) – there is no immediate indication that this legislation is set to change. If a change is proposed the Council would still make significant savings for the period that current legislation continued. If there was a substantial change to legislation the Council would still own an asset that could either be sold or repurposed. We are developing contingency plans to use the buildings for other purposes in case this risk materialises.
- Where the Council is the employer, a risk that directly managing property and housing management staff would lead to additional costs compared to contracting an external organisation – there will be resilience for these teams within the existing facilities management and accommodation teams to manage sickness absence and leave. The drawbacks of providing this through an external provider (loss of control, expense and time delays) are thought to outweigh the risks of providing it internally.
- Planning permission will likely be required for the larger buildings – the Council would look to ensure that the sale is subject to securing planning permission.
- Risk that the required team structure costs are more than we can claim through HB – internal discussions in relation to team costs will be undertaken to ensure fit within HB guidelines.

## 6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Effective management of supported accommodation will require additional human resources. In brief, these are likely to include a new team manager and a small team of housing officers. These staff will be employed directly by the local authority and report in to the existing Accommodation Team within the Housing and Homelessness Service. There will also be resource required for building maintenance and cleaning.

The project will result in new accommodation, both the residential units and the provision of on-site office space for the resources mentioned above. In total the project is expected to result in 12 additional properties in the Council's portfolio which will be dispersed across different areas of the city.

As the Council is seeking to acquire these properties it will own the assets after capital repayments have been made.

#### **6.4 Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA)**

No formal Equalities and Consultation Analysis has been carried out for this project. Citizens placed in the accommodation related to this project will be determined based on the homelessness duties owed and their specific housing need. Due to the nature of the proposal this scheme will naturally only have an impact those living as single people.

Beyond this it is not anticipated that there will be any particular impact on any group based on age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

All households affected will have a Personal Housing Plan which must take into account the applicant's individual circumstances including due regard to the public sector equality duty.

#### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

None

#### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

There is an implication on local neighbourhoods, especially in the areas where the larger buildings are located as they will house more clients in a single area. The smaller buildings are intended to be dispersed across the city and are not like to have any significant impact on local neighbourhoods. The Council will engage with communities and local neighbourhoods affected by any proposed properties once they have been identified.

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James Harrison, Programme Manager – Transformation

**Directorate:**

People

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Martin Donovan	Accommodation Manager	People	05/02/2020	07/02/2020
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Julie Newman	City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer	Place	07/02/2020	11/02/2020
David Ashmore	Director Housing and Transformation	People	07/02/2020	13/02/2020
Councillor G Duggins	The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership	-	17/02/2020	18/02/2020

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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 contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining the exemption under Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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Cabinet  
Council

10 March 2020  
17 March 2020

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Councillor T Khan

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (People)

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Options to increase the supply of affordable permanent housing for households living in Temporary Accommodation

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**Is this a key decision?**

Yes - the proposals involve financial implications in excess of £1m per annum and are likely to have a significant impact on residents or businesses of two or more electoral wards in the City.

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**Executive Summary:**

The Council has been experiencing an increase in the number of households living in temporary accommodation. The length of time households are required to live in temporary accommodation is also increasing. Not only is this unsuitable for households but it also places significant financial pressure on the housing service. Critically, there is insufficient suitable and affordable permanent accommodation available. Increasing the supply of this type of accommodation is a key priority of the Council.

The gap between the cost of temporary accommodation and housing benefit subsidy grant is met by the Council, and as activity has increased in temporary accommodation this is creating a significant financial pressure.

A proposal put forward by Cornerstone Partnership, a social enterprise, offers the Council access to affordable permanent accommodation. Access to the properties would be phased over a 2-year period but would ultimately give access to 103 permanent properties at the Local Housing Allowance rental level for the city. Nomination rights will enable the Council to fill these properties with families from temporary accommodation, ending main housing duty and reducing temporary accommodation activity

All aspects of the proposal have been considered and compared against other possible options. The outcome of this work is that this option would create financial benefits and allow quick access to a large number of affordable permanent properties. This report therefore seeks approval to enter into a 15 year transaction with Cornerstone Partnership for the supply of temporary accommodation for two years and permanent accommodation for fifteen years.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet is requested to recommend that the Council:

- 1) Approve the amount specified in the Private Report to be funded from the Housing & Homelessness Revenue Budget over the 2 year period
- 2) Approve the Cornerstone Partnership transaction and delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Transformation, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, to agree detailed terms of the transaction and to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction

The Council is requested to:

- 1) Approve the amount specified in the Private Report to be funded from the Housing & Homelessness Revenue Budget over the 2-year period
- 2) Approve the Cornerstone Partnership transaction and delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Transformation, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, to agree detailed terms of the transaction and to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction

**List of Appendices included:**

None

**Background papers:**

None

**Other useful documents**

Council Report 19 March 2019:

[Adoption of Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2019-24](#)

**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 March 2020

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**Report title:** Options to Increase the Supply of Affordable Permanent Housing for Households Living in Temporary Accommodation

**1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 In common with most of the Country, the Council has been experiencing increasing demand for support for homeless households over the past few years. This may be due to several factors, including the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which brought in the new prevention and relief duties, changes to welfare benefits, and an increasing gap between typical rent and income levels in the city.
- 1.2 The service now has a caseload of over 800 households owed some form of homelessness duty, and over 680 households living in interim or temporary accommodation provided by the local authority. The number of approaches to the service, the number owed a homelessness duty and the number in temporary accommodation all continue to rise.
- 1.3 A key issue preventing temporary households owed a homelessness duty from moving on to permanent accommodation is the lack of suitable and affordable properties that are accessible to this group.
- 1.4 The Council understands that this is a key issue and has been exploring ways in which this problem can be addressed. As well as considering proposals to increase the supply of suitable affordable housing, the Council has also been working on proposals to reduce the cost of temporary accommodation.
- 1.5 A property proposal that aims to supply more affordable permanent properties has been put forward by Cornerstone Partnership, a social enterprise, who own and lease properties across the city. This paper explores the Cornerstone Partnership proposal in more detail and discusses the reasons why it is recommended that the Council enters into a transaction with them.

**2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

**2.1 Option 1 (not recommended) – do nothing**

- 2.2 Demand on the housing and homelessness service is continuing to increase, resulting in a growing cost to the Council and pressure on the service. This is a common issue across other Local Authorities and internal analysis of approaches to the service indicates that net admissions will continue to increase. By doing nothing the number of households living in temporary accommodation is expected to continue to increase.

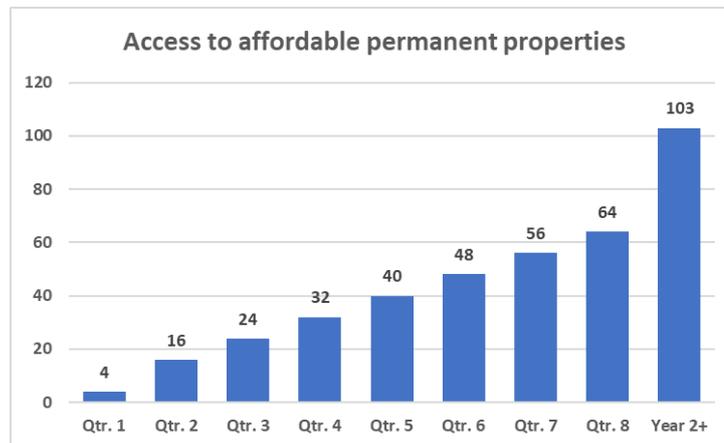
2.3 This is not the recommended option.

**2.4 Option 2 (recommended) – Enter into Cornerstone transaction**

- 2.5 This recommended option would supply much needed suitable and affordable properties to households living in temporary accommodation. It would also provide financial benefits.
- 2.6 Cornerstone are now offering the Council direct access to temporary and permanent properties under a property transaction. The transaction requires a commitment from the Council to pay to access 78 temporary accommodation properties over a 2-year period. The transaction is 2 years for temporary accommodation and a 15-year nomination period over the permanent accommodation. There will be option to extend for a further 15 years if both parties mutually agree.

- 2.7 Increasing the supply of affordable housing is a key priority of the Council and this deal offers an opportunity to do this. The deal would enable households to move on from temporary accommodation into more long-term and stable properties.
- 2.8 Although there is an additional cost associated with the temporary accommodation element of the transaction, the Council will derive financial benefits from access to additional permanent affordable properties.
- 2.9 For the purposes of this report 'affordable' is used to describe rents set at Local Housing Allowance levels. At these rates, rent can be covered in full by Housing Benefit and reclaimed through a subsidy grant.
- 2.10 At the commencement of the deal the Council will have access to 4 permanent properties. Access to the remaining properties will be phased over the 2-year period, with 103 available from the end of year 2.

**Table 1: Cornerstone proposal – supply of permanent properties**



- 2.11 Once the Council has access to 103 permanent properties, it will have the right to use them for a 13 year period. Each property will enable the Council to discharge duty to a household living in temporary accommodation.
- 2.12 The estimated value of 103 permanent affordable properties to the Council is significant and will create large financial savings overall.
- 2.13 The non-financial benefits of this proposal provide an opportunity to move on households from temporary accommodation into more stable permanent accommodation.
- 2.14 By ending main duty and reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation there will also be a reduction in the pressure on the housing team, freeing up time for them to focus on the remaining group of households in temporary accommodation.

**3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 No consultation required.

**4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 Subject to Cabinet and Council approval, officers will work with Cornerstone Partnership to complete the necessary agreements as soon as possible to enable the deal to start in April 2020

## **5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

### **5.1 Financial implications**

5.2 The deal would allow the Council to gain much needed access to permanent affordable properties that would create financial savings over the lifetime of the arrangement.

5.3 The costs of the deal would be funded through the housing and homelessness budget, with future savings first used to alleviate the budgetary control process. After this savings will ultimately deliver budget reductions to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, reducing the additional resource that has been put in over the last 3 years.

5.4 Further details of the financial implications are provided in the Private report.

### **5.5 Legal implications**

### **5.6 General Powers**

The Council has a general power to enter into leases under the powers of general competence contained in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 as well as the powers contained in S111 and S120 of the 1972 Local Government Act.

### **5.7 Procurement and State Aid**

The Council is not purchasing any services, goods or works as part of the transaction, and so the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's contract procedure rules will not apply as this is a property transaction.

The Council is complying with EU State aid law as the transaction is being undertaken upon arms' length terms, meaning that no benefit is conferred on the vendor and there is no distortion to competition.

## **6. Other implications**

### **6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan ([www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/))?**

This scheme contributes to the following objectives in the Council Plan:

- 'Reducing the impact of poverty' – by supporting people and placing them in suitable accommodation, including secure long term permanent accommodation. Evidence shows that secure housing can lift people out of poverty and reduce the wider impact of poverty on their lives
- 'Improving health and wellbeing' – by providing safe and secure accommodation, which evidence shows is one of the key wider determinants of health and wellbeing
- 'Protecting our most vulnerable people' – by ensuring that people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness have appropriate and suitable housing, with more opportunities to secure long term permanent accommodation.
- 'Making savings so that we can support frontline services' – by having more affordable permanent accommodation available to move households on from expensive temporary accommodation, savings will be made. This allow more money to be used to fund activities that prevent homelessness and other frontline services.
- 'Empowering citizens and encouraging active communities' – by providing families with the security of long term accommodation within communities across the city.

- ‘Working together with neighbours and partners across the voluntary, public and private sectors’ – under this deal the Council will work with Cornerstone Partnership, a social enterprise, who aims to tackle homelessness issues through the provision of permanent housing. The council will also continue to work with many partners to support homeless people.

## 6.2 How is risk being managed?

A number of risks have been identified related to this project along with mitigations:

- Risk that occupancy levels are not maintained at the properties – this will be mitigated by close housing management and performance monitoring. There is high demand for accommodation of this type and there will not be a shortage of suitable clients. The Accommodation Team have experience maintaining other properties above 90% occupancy.
- To mitigate the risk of the transaction not providing the long term benefits to the Council in relation to the permanent accommodation, security has been sought from Cornerstone. The two directors of the company have agreed to provide security to the Council to mitigate the risk.

## 6.3 Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA)

No formal Equalities and Consultation Analysis has been carried out for this project. Citizens placed in the accommodation related to this project will be determined based on the homelessness duties owned and their specific housing need. Due to the size of the properties that will be made available through this deal, it will only have an impact families.

Beyond this it is not anticipated that there will be any particular impact on any group based on age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

## 6.4 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None

## 6.5 Implications for partner organisations?

None

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

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**Directorate:**

People

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<b>Names of approvers for submission:</b> (officers and members)				
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David Ashmore	Director Housing and Transformation	People	11/02/2020	14/02/2020
Councillor G Duggins	The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership	-	17/02/2020	18/02/2020

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**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 contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining the exemption under Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.**

Cabinet  
Council

10<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration - Councillor J O'Boyle

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Place)

**Ward(s) affected:**

St Michaels

**Title:**

Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions

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**Is this a key decision?**

Yes – the proposals involve financial implications in excess of £1m per annum

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**Executive Summary:**

This report is seeking approval for the acquisition of a commercial investment property which would generate new income for the Council.

The subject property is a purpose built, 2 storey, detached office on a well located and popular business park extending to 9,400 sqft with 48 on site designated car parking spaces.

It is proposed that the Council would acquire the 999 year long leasehold interest in the land and buildings. Details of the price to be paid, income generated, and initial return made by the investment is outlined in the private report.

As the current tenant's lease ends in June 2020 the reversionary yield for the unit is set to improve. This will be by either negotiating a new lease with the current tenant on improved terms or alternatively following the refurbishment of the property letting to a new tenant. Our external property agent's advice is outlined in the private report.

The Council already owns the Freehold of the estate.

The level of return generated is assessed based on the level of risk associated with the length of leases and the security of the income. The negotiated price has been validated by external property experts as providing 'market value' for the Council.

It is intended that the property would be held by the Council as an investment asset and managed by the Council's Commercial Property Management team.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet is recommended to request that Council:

1. Approve the use of its powers under Section 12 of Local Government Act 2003 and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to acquire the leasehold interest in Oak House, subject to the occupational tenancy, for a sum identified in your private report.
2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the City Solicitor, to undertake the necessary due diligence, negotiate and finalise the terms of the acquisition of the properties and to complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.
3. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Cabinet Members for Jobs and Regeneration and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.
4. To approve the necessary adjustment to the Capital programme to reflect the capital expenditure incurred in the acquisition of the Oak House interest.

Council is recommended to:

1. Approve the use of its powers under Section 12 of Local Government Act 2003 and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to acquire the leasehold interest in Oak House, subject to the occupational tenancy, for a sum identified in your private report.
2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the City Solicitor, to undertake the necessary due diligence, negotiate and finalise the terms of the acquisition of the properties and to complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.
3. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Cabinet Members for Jobs and Regeneration and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.
4. To approve the necessary adjustment to the Capital programme to reflect the capital expenditure incurred in the acquisition of the Oak House interest.

**List of Appendices included:**

Plan 1: Site plan for the acquisition of the interest.

**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 – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

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Report title: Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions.

## **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 The Council is committed to investing capital receipts in order to increase its income and therefore the revenue available to deliver key services.
- 1.2 An opportunity has been presented to the Council to acquire property for the purpose of generating revenue income.
- 1.3 The property comprises a purpose-built office accommodation across a two storey detached building, constructed of steel portal frame with brick elevations and pitched tiled roof and extends to approximately 874.51 sqm (9,409 sqft).
- 1.4 Internal accommodation is split broadly equally across ground and first floor level. Internally the accommodation includes an atrium reception, raised floor, suspended ceiling, combined heating/air conditioning and passenger lift.
- 1.5 The accommodation will require a level of refurbishment following the tenant's vacation to aid reletting the accommodation.
- 1.6 There are 48 on site car park spaces (providing a parking ratio of 1:18 sqm (1:195 sqft) which is considered a good level for office accommodation. An option to reconfigure and extend the provision to 54 spaces is being investigated.
- 1.7 The current Rateable Value (RV) of the property (including car parking) is £81,200.
- 1.8 The property is let to Peacock Insurance Services Limited. The terms of the lease are in the private report.
- 1.9 Details of the current income and future rental expectations are outlined in the private report.
- 1.10 The Council already owns the freehold but currently only receives a peppercorn ground rent. The opportunity is to acquire the income generated from the occupational lease.
- 1.11 External property consultants Drake Howard have valued the property interests. They have confirmed that the price reflects the market value for the asset based on the level of income generated, quality of tenants, length of leases and market risks.
- 1.12 Legal due diligence and building surveys are being undertaken and the acquisition is subject to receiving satisfactory reports.

## **2. Options and recommended proposal**

### **Option 1 – Proceed with Acquisition**

- 2.1 The proposed acquisition of the office investment would complement the Council's existing investment portfolio, helping to diversify it and provide a balance to the other assets.
- 2.2 The office accommodation is well located on an established and sought after business park with businesses being able to recruit and retain staff having the benefit of Warwickshire Shopping Village located adjacent.

- 2.3 Due to the way the property is configured, if it becomes vacant it could be let to a single or multiple-tenants improving the likelihood of securing new tenants. We are advised that there is a still a healthy level of interest from local business seeking good quality, well located, small to medium size offices
- 2.4 Good level of onsite car parking such as available at the subject property, on a business park is attractive to tenants.
- 2.5 The Council already owns the freehold of the estate. There ia an opportunity to improve the initial investment return over the next 6 – 12 months at the termination of the current lease.
- 2.6 External property consultants Drake Howard have valued the property interests. They have confirmed that the price reflects the market value for the asset based on the level of income generated, quality of tenants, length of leases and market risks.
- 2.7 The risks of the investment are reflected in the investment yield / return on the capital employed to purchase the property and due to the scarcity of property available are typical of those currently available in the investment market.
- 2.8 The anticipated return is higher than that which placing the money on deposit would secure.
- 2.9 Legal due diligence and building surveys are being undertaken and the acquisition is subject to receiving satisfactory reports.
- 2.10 The vendors have agreed to the terms of the purchase subject to the sale completing on or before the 31st March 2020.

### **Option - 2 Not to proceed with this acquisition**

- 2.11 This option is not recommended as well located, good quality investment opportunities with the potential to increase the return on the investment over the next 12 months are limited in the current Coventry market.

**Recommendation** – To proceed with the purchase of the income producing investment.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

No public consultation has been undertaken

### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 Subject to Cabinet and Councils approval it is required that the Council will secure the acquisition of the leasehold interest subject to the occupational tenancy on or before 31st March 2020.

### **5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate resources**

#### **5.1 Financial implications**

The commercially sensitive financial implications of this transaction are contained within the private report.

Members have previously approved a number of commercial property acquisitions in order to provide the Council with new income streams to help support the Medium Term Financial

Strategy and support the wider delivery of Council services. It is important to consider the proposed Council's investment in the company in the context of the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy approved by Council as part of the Budget Setting Report in February 2020. The acquisition is proportionate to the size of the Council and the view of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services is that the investment is consistent with the Commercial Investment Strategy.

Each proposed acquisition has been considered on a commercial business case taking into account the one-off investment costs, the income to be generated from rent, and any net landlord liabilities. The detailed business case assessment set out in the private report identifies the risks and how these can be managed.

This capital receipts that will be used to fund this acquisition were taken into account within the forecasts included in the recent Budget Report to Council. However, it is important to note at this stage is that the Council will not be able to enter into any further commitments involving capital receipts until and unless further capital receipts are identified in future.

## 5.2 Legal implications

Under Section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003 the Council has a specific power to invest. The power states "a local authority may invest for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment or for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs". This provides the Council with a power to invest in acquiring Oak House Binley, for any purpose relevant to its functions (this function would have to be identified) or if the Council can show it is for the prudent management of its financial affairs. Under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council also has a power "to do anything that individuals generally may do" (the "General Power of Competence"). "Individual" means an individual with full capacity. The General Power of Competence gives the Council:

- i. power to do a thing anywhere in the United Kingdom or elsewhere,
- ii. power to do it for a commercial purpose or otherwise for a charge, or without charge, and
- iii. power to do it for, or otherwise than for, the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area.

Where the Council uses the General Power of Competence to do something for a commercial purpose, section 4 of the Localism Act 2011 requires that the Council must do so through a company (which has a wider definition than for the purposes of section 95 Local Government Act 2003).

The Council may also take any action (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions, which would again include their investment functions (s111 of the Local Government Act 1972).

The Council will ensure that in exercising its investment functions to expand its property portfolio that any actions are reasonable and proportionate and for proper purposes consistent with the Council's prudential regime and its investment strategy.

### **Best Consideration**

The Council has the general power under section 123(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to dispose of land and property in any manner it wishes. The Secretary of State's consent is not required provided the disposal is for the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained. The leases entered into will discharge this obligation

The Council's external agents, Avison Young have verified that the terms of the acquisition specified in this report represent market value for the best value and in turn satisfy the requirements under Section 123 Local Government Act 1972

### **Legal Due Diligence**

All acquisitions are subject to the vendors being able to show good title and the undertaking of the normal due diligence and finalising the terms of acquisition with regards to the acquisition of land and buildings.

Officers within Legal Service (Place Directorate) have been consulted with regards to the preparation of this report and will agree and complete the legal documentation effecting the acquisition of the freehold and leasehold interests ensuring that the Council's interests are properly protected.

### **Procurement and State Aid**

The Council is not purchasing any services, goods or works as part of the transaction, and so the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's contract procedure rules will not apply.

The Council is complying with EU State aid law as the transaction is being undertaken upon arms' length terms, meaning that no benefit is conferred on the vendor and there is no distortion to competition.

## **6. Other implications**

### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council Plan?**

The purchase of the leasehold interest and the net financial income benefits that flows from it will contribute to the Council Plan of making the most of our assets to deliver priorities with fewer resources.

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

The risks around the strength of the income being acquired have been identified and reflected in the proposed price to be paid for the asset.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The impact to the organisation will be limited to the generation of additional work for officers within Place Directorate in dealing with the acquisition of the property and long-term management of the interest. The financial implication has been outlined in the finance section of this report

The acquisitions will generate additional income producing commercial investments.

#### **6.4 Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA)**

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken as the proposal concerns the acquisition of land and buildings for redevelopment as no Council service or group will be impacted.

An equality impact assessment is a process designed to ensure that a policy project or service does not discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable people. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 imposes an obligation on Local Authorities to carry out an equality impact assessment when the local authority is exercising a public function.

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken by officers as the proposal set out in this report relates to the acquisition of a legal interest in the land and does not constitute a change in service delivery policy or the exercise of a public function.

#### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

The Council's acquisition of the commercial property proposed will have no additional implication or impact on the environment.

#### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

There are no implications for any partner organisations.

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

Paul Beesley, Manager Property Development, Disposal &amp; Acquisitions

**Directorate:**

Place Directorate

**Tel and email contact:**

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Email: paul.beesley@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person(s).

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Directorate or organisation</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				
Lara Knight	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Place	19/02/20	19/02/20
<b>Names of approvers for submission:</b> (officers and members)				
Paul Jennings	Finance Manager (Corporate Finance)	Place	05/02/20	19/02/20
Gurbinder Sangha	Corporate and Commercial Lead Lawyer, Legal Services	Place	05/02/20	06/02/20
Adam Hunt	Head of Property and Development	Place	19/02/20	19/02/20
Martin Yardley	Deputy Chief Executive	Place	20/02/20	21/02/20
Councillor J O'Boyle	Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration	-	21/02/20	21/02/20

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**Plan 1 – Oak House Binley Business Park**



PLACE DIRECTORATE  
 PROPERTY  
 ONE FRIARGATE  
 COVENTRY  
 CV1 2GN  
 Tel: 024 76972105



**Title: Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry**

Drawn By: LB  
 Scale :NTS  
 Date: 21/02/2020

Martin Yardley - Deputy Chief Executive, Place  
 Richard Moon - Director, Project Management & Property Services

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**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 contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining the exemption under Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.**

Cabinet  
Council

10<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration - Councillor J O'Boyle

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Place)

**Ward(s) affected:**

St Michaels

**Title:**

Phase 2A Belgrade Place, Upper Wells Street, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions

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**Is this a key decision?**

Yes – the proposals involve financial implications in excess of £1m per annum

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**Executive Summary:**

This report is seeking approval for the acquisition of a commercial investment property which would generate new income for the Council.

The subject property is 100% let and comprises 129,500 sqft of mixed use, city centre accommodation including a hotel, restaurants, convenience store, gym and residential accommodation.

The proposal being that the Council would acquire the long leasehold interest in the land and receive the income from the occupational tenants, 70% is secured against two strong tenants with leases for between 11 and 22 years. Details of the price to be paid, income generated and initial return made by the investment is outlined in the private part of your report.

The level of return generated is assessed based on the level of risk associated with the length of leases and the security of the income. The negotiated price has been validated by external property experts as providing 'market value' for the Council.

It is intended that the property would be held by the Council as an investment asset and managed by the Council's Commercial Property Management team.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet is recommended to request that Council:

1. Approve the use of its powers under Section 12 of Local Government Act 2003 and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to acquire the leasehold interest in Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza, subject to the seven occupational tenancies, for a sum identified in the private report.
2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the City Solicitor, to undertake the necessary due diligence, negotiate and finalise the terms of the acquisition of the properties and to complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.
3. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Cabinet Members for Jobs and Regeneration and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.
4. To approve the necessary adjustment to the Capital programme to reflect the capital expenditure incurred in the acquisition of Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza

Council is recommended to:

1. Approve the use of its powers under Section 12 of Local Government Act 2003 and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to acquire the leasehold interest in Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza, subject to the seven occupational tenancies, for a sum identified in the private report.
2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the City Solicitor, to undertake the necessary due diligence, negotiate and finalise the terms of the acquisition of the properties and to complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.
3. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Cabinet Members for Jobs and Regeneration and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.
4. To approve the necessary adjustment to the Capital programme to reflect the capital expenditure incurred in the acquisition of Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza

**List of Appendices included:**

Plan 1: Site plan for the acquisition of the interest.

**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 – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Report title: Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza, Upper Wells Street, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions.

## **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 The Council is committed to investing capital receipts in order to increase its income and therefore, the revenue available to deliver key services.
- 1.2 An opportunity has been presented to the Council to acquire property for the purpose of generating revenue income.
- 1.3 The property comprises a purpose-built mixed-use accommodation including at 120 bed hotel, 63 one and 2 bed self-contained residential flats, Gymnasium, ground floor restaurants and convenience store. Completed in 2008 with a steel frame and rain screen cladding to the elevations comprising a combination of materials.
- 1.4 The property provides approximately 129,500 sqft of internal accommodation.
- 1.5 The property is let to seven tenants, Premier Inn, Coventry University, J D Gyms, Pizza Express, Café Rouge, Bella Italia and McColl's. There are a range of lease lengths from 22 years to 4 years however 70% of the income is secured against Premier Inn and Coventry University who have 22 and 11 years left respectively on their leases.
- 1.6 The Casual Dinning Group, who own Café Rouge, have recently advised that they intend to change the concept for Coventry investing in a significant refit of this unit changing it from Café Rouge to The Mulberry, an all day dining offer café / bar.
- 1.7 Phase 2A is also responsible for the management and maintenance of the external public realm around the whole of Belgrade Plaza. The costs of this is recovered through a service charge levied to the other building tenants.
- 1.8 Although there is no on-site car parking, there is the 1000 space Belgrade public car park operated by NCP 24/7, immediately adjacent supporting the activity and uses in the property.
- 1.9 74% of the current rent passing is reviewed by way of fixed uplifts in accordance with the Consumer Price Index.
- 1.10 The Council already owns the freehold and currently receives a ground rent having granted a long lease over the development site in 2006, which will continue to be received. The opportunity is to acquire the additional income generated from the occupational leases as outlined in the private report.
- 1.11 External property consultants Avison & Young have valued the property interests. They have confirmed that the price reflects the market value for the asset based on the level of income generated, quality of tenants, length of leases and market risks.
- 1.12 Legal due diligence and building surveys are being undertaken and the acquisition is subject to receiving satisfactory reports.

## **2. Options and recommended proposal**

### **Option 1 – Proceed with Acquisition**

- 2.1 The proposed acquisition of the mixed-use investment, would complement the Councils existing investment portfolio, helping to diversify it and provide a balance to the other assets.

- 2.2 The investment has a good proportion of long-term income secured against strong tenants.
- 2.3 Purchasing the land and interests not only provides a substantial increase in the annual income generated from the site but also provides a strategic possibility to combine the land holdings for redevelopment in the medium to long term.
- 2.4 Based on the purchasing cost outlined in the finance section of the report the return generated on the proposed investment would produce an initial return as outlined in your private report. 74% of the rents are reviewed in line with the Consumer Price Index which provides greater certainty around the future increases in the rents. The remainder being reviewed to the market rent at the time.
- 2.5 External property consultants Avison & Young have valued the property interests. They have confirmed that the price reflects the market value for the asset based on the level of income generated, quality of tenants, length of leases and market risks.
- 2.6 The risks of the investment are reflected in the investment yield / return on the capital employed to purchase the property and due to the scarcity of property available are typical of those currently available in the investment market.
- 2.7 The anticipated return is higher than that which placing the money on deposit would secure.
- 2.8 The vendors have agreed to the terms of the purchase subject to the sale completing on or before the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

## **Option 2 - Not to proceed with this acquisition**

- 2.9 This option is not recommended as good quality investment opportunities with strong covenants and 10 year plus income are limited in the current Coventry market.

**Recommendation** – To proceed with the purchase of the income producing investment.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

No public consultation has been undertaken

### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 Subject to Cabinet and Councils approval it is required that the Council will secure the acquisition of the leasehold interest on or before 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 days of a positive decision.

### **5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate resources**

#### **5.1 Financial implications**

The commercially sensitive financial implications of this transaction are contained within the private report.

Members have previously approved a number of commercial property acquisitions in order to provide the Council with new income streams to help support the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and support the wider delivery of Council services. It is important to consider the proposed Council's investment in the company in the context of the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy approved by Council as part of the Budget Setting Report in February 2020. The acquisition is proportionate to the size of the Council and the view of the Director of

Finance and Corporate Services is that the investment is consistent with the Commercial Investment Strategy.

Each proposed acquisition has been considered on a commercial business case taking into account the one-off investment costs, the income to be generated from rent, and any net landlord liabilities. The detailed business case assessment set out in the private report identifies the risks and how these can be managed.

The capital receipts that will be used to fund this acquisition were taken into account within the forecasts included in the recent Budget Report to Council. However, it is important to note at this stage is that the Council will not be able to enter into any further commitments involving capital receipts until and unless further capital receipts are identified in future.

## **5.2 Legal implications**

Under Section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003 the Council has a specific power to invest. The power states "a local authority may invest for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment or for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs". This provides the Council with a power to invest in acquiring Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza, for any purpose relevant to its functions (this function would have to be identified) or if the Council can show it is for the prudent management of its financial affairs. Under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council also has a power "to do anything that individuals generally may do" (the "General Power of Competence"). "Individual" means an individual with full capacity. The General Power of Competence gives the Council:

- i. power to do a thing anywhere in the United Kingdom or elsewhere,
- ii. power to do it for a commercial purpose or otherwise for a charge, or without charge, and
- iii. power to do it for, or otherwise than for, the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area.

Where the Council uses the General Power of Competence to do something for a commercial purpose, section 4 of the Localism Act 2011 requires that the Council must do so through a company (which has a wider definition than for the purposes of section 95 Local Government Act 2003).

The General Power of Competence is limited by any restrictions on any pre-existing powers of the Council. The General Power of Competence can be used in conjunction with existing powers, for example the section 95 trading power.

The Council may also take any action (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions, which would again include their investment functions (s111 of the Local Government Act 1972).

The Council will ensure that in exercising its investment functions to expand its property portfolio that any actions are reasonable and proportionate and for proper purposes consistent with the Council's prudential regime and its investment strategy.

### **Best Consideration**

The Council has the general power under section 123(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to dispose of land and property in any manner it wishes. The Secretary of State's consent is not required provided the disposal is for the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained. The leases entered into will discharge this obligation.

The Council's external agents, Avison & Young have verified that the terms of the acquisition specified in this report represent market value for the best value and in turn satisfy the requirements under Section 123 Local Government Act 1972

### **Legal Due Diligence**

All acquisitions are subject to the vendors being able to show good title and the undertaking of the normal due diligence and finalising the terms of acquisition with regards to the acquisition of land and buildings.

Officers within Legal Service (Place Directorate) have been consulted with regards to the preparation of this report and will agree and complete the legal documentation effecting the acquisition of the freehold and leasehold interests ensuring that the Council's interests are properly protected.

### **Procurement and State Aid**

The Council is not purchasing any services, goods or works as part of the transaction, and so the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's contract procedure rules will not apply.

The Council is complying with EU State aid law as the transaction is being undertaken upon arms' length terms, meaning that no benefit is conferred on the vendor and there is no distortion to competition.

## **6. Other implications**

### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council Plan?**

The purchase of the leasehold interest and the net financial income benefits that flows from it will contribute to the Council Plan of making the most of our assets to deliver priorities with fewer resources.

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

The risks around the strength of the income being acquired have been identified and reflected in the proposed price to be paid for the asset.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The impact to the organisation will be limited to the generation of additional work for officers within Place Directorate in dealing with the acquisition of the property and long-term management of the interest. The financial implication has been outlined in the finance section of this report

The acquisitions will generate additional income producing commercial investments.

### **6.4 Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA)**

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken as the proposal concerns the acquisition of land and buildings no Council service or group will be impacted.

An equality impact assessment is a process designed to ensure that a policy project or service does not discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable people. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 imposes an obligation on Local Authorities to carry out an equality impact assessment when the local authority is exercising a public function.

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken by officers as the proposal set out in this report relates to the acquisition of a legal interest in the land and does not constitute a change in service delivery policy or the exercise of a public function.

#### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

The Council's acquisition of the commercial property proposed will have no additional implication or impact on the environment.

#### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

There are no implications for any partner organisations.

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

Paul Beesley, Manager Property Development, Disposal and Acquisitions

**Directorate:**

Place Directorate

**Tel and email contact:**

Tel: 024 7697 6746

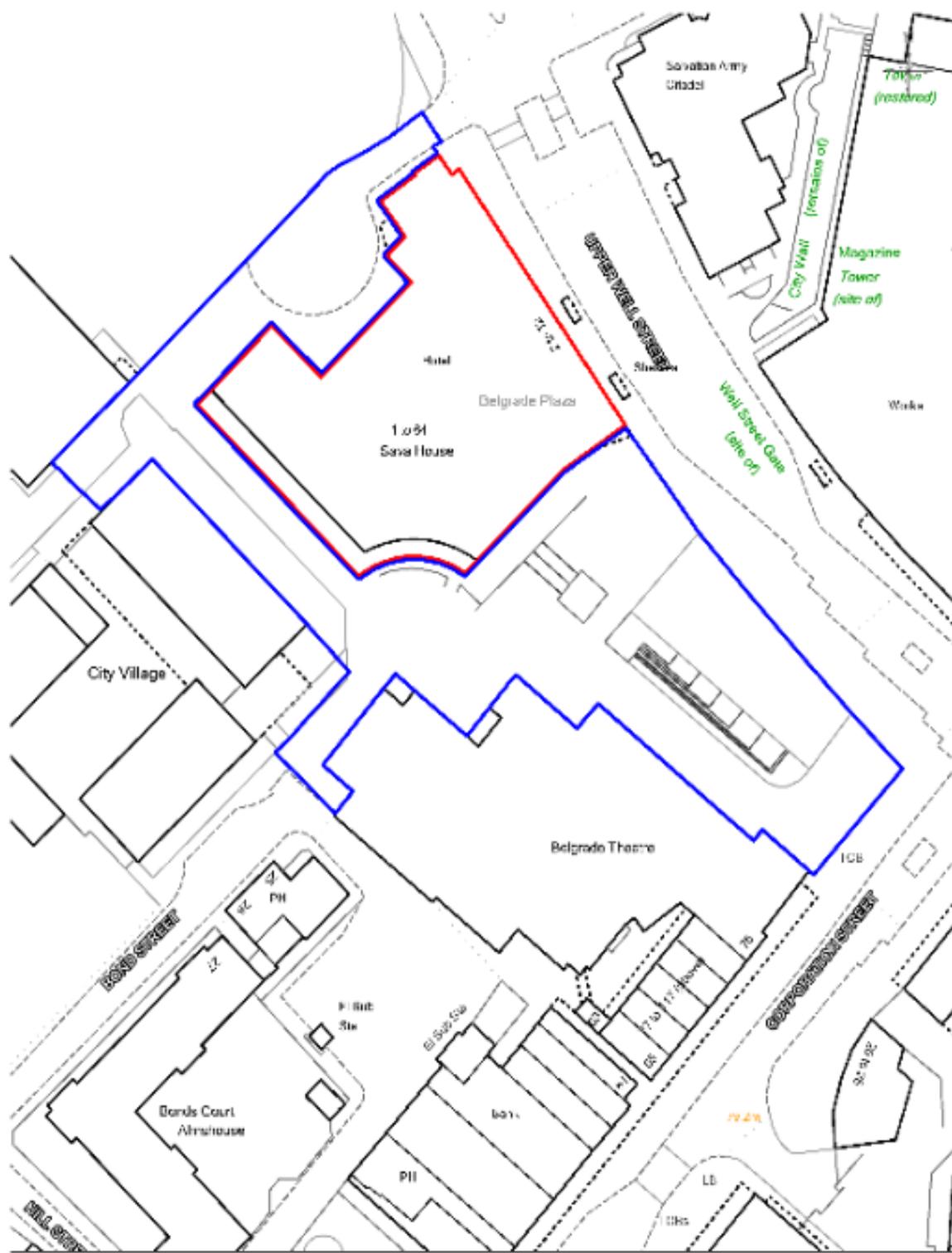
Email: paul.beesley@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person(s).

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<b>Contributors:</b>				
Lara Knight	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Place	19/02/20	19/02/20
<b>Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)</b>				
Paul Jennings	Finance Manager (Corporate Finance)	Place	05/02/20	19/02/20
Gurbinder Sangha	Corporate and Commercial Lead Lawyer, Legal Services	Place	05/02/20	06/02/20
Adam Hunt	Head of Property and Development	Place	19/02/20	19/02/20
Martin Yardley	Deputy Chief Executive	Place	20/02/20	21/02/20
Councillor J O'Boyle	Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration	-	21/02/20	24/02/20

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Plan 1 – Phase 2A Belgrade



PLACE DIRECTORATE  
 PROPERTY  
 ONE FRIARGATE  
 COVENTRY  
 CV1 2GN  
 Tel: 024 76972105



Title: Belgrade Plaza and surrounding land

Drawn By: LB  
 Scale: NTS  
 Date: 04/02/2020

Martin Yardley - Deputy Chief Executive, Place  
 Richard Moon - Director, Project Management & Property Services

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