



Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

Time and Date

10.00 am on Thursday, 13th July, 2023

Place

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2 - Council House

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
 - a) To agree the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 March 2023
 - b) Matters arising
4. **Review of the Implementation of the Homefinder Allocations Scheme**
(Pages 7 - 26)

Briefing Note of the Housing & Homelessness Lead
5. **Review of Additional Licensing Scheme** (Pages 27 - 48)

Briefing Note of the Head of Safer Housing and Communities
6. **Work Programme 2023-2024** (Pages 49 - 52)

Report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
7. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

Julie Newman, Chief Legal Officer, Council House, Coventry

Wednesday, 5 July 2023

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Usha Patel Email: usha.patel@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillors M Ali (Chair), R Bailey, J Gardiner, B Gittins, G Hayre, M Heaven, A Hopkins, A Kaur and R Thay

By invitation Councillors S Agboola, P Akhtar, AS Khan and D Welsh

Public Access

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Usha Patel

Email: usha.patel@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)
held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 23 March 2023

Present:

Members: Councillor L Bigham (Chair)
 Councillor S Agboola
 Councillor R Bailey
 Councillor J Gardiner
 Councillor G Hayre
 Councillor M Heaven
 Councillor R Lakha (substitute for Councillor A Hopkins)
 Councillor R Singh
 Councillor R Thay

Other Members: Councillor P Hetherton, Cabinet Member for City Services
 Councillor G Lloyd, Deputy Cabinet Member for City Services

Employees (by Service Area):

Law and Governance: S Bennett, G Holmes

Transportation and C Archer, J Logue
Highways:-

Apologies: Councillor A Hopkins

Public Business

35. Declarations of Interest

The Scrutiny noted that Councillor L Bigham was a member of West Midlands Transport Delivery Board and that Councillor R Singh was a Scrutiny Member of the WMCA Transport Sub-Committee

It was also noted that Members are School Governors.

36. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February, 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Further to Minute 30/22, relating to “Empty Dwellings”, the Scrutiny Board noted the comprehensive response and assurances that had been received from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities in relation to their comments regarding the wording of the Empty Dwellings Strategy.

37. **School Streets**

The Scrutiny Board considered a Briefing Note of the Director of Transportation and Highways, together with a comprehensive presentation at the meeting, which detailed the introduction of five School Streets, using Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), to create a safer environment outside schools during entry and exit times at the start and end of the school day and encourage a modal shift.

The proposed School Streets programme is a collaborative initiative between Coventry City Council and Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and is funded through the Walking and Cycling Programme. School Streets have been implemented across the UK and 23 School Streets have already been installed across Birmingham, Walsall, and Solihull. The TfWM collaboration is the first regional cross-border School Streets programme. The existing initiatives have been installed with relatively good outcomes, including increasing walking and cycling. Local Authorities submitted a bid for potential School Streets and these have been prioritised to 16 locations, to be delivered by September 2023, based on a number of criteria including, level of school/local political support, links to cycling and walking infrastructure and existing framework to promote School Streets. Local authorities needed to demonstrate they had a high-level project plan deliverables to demonstrate success, including to measure any benefits. Coventry received funding of £190k from a total allocation of £410k for the region.

The School Streets scheme has numerous road safety benefits and secondary benefits include a reduction in air pollution and an increase in walking and cycling, helping to create a healthier and safer place for children and young people. Residents are still permitted to access/egress their property during the times of the restriction using a permit system. Access is permitted at all times for emergency services.

The proposed School Streets will be introduced using Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs), these differ slightly from traditional TROs as they provide an opportunity to see how the scheme works for a period of up to 18 months, allowing monitoring and assessment to be undertaken before a final decision is made whether they should be made permanent. The first 6 months of operation are also an objection period, allowing parents, residents, drivers etc to see how the scheme works before making comments or objections.

School Streets is being trialled at five locations. The first scheme has recently been installed in the Knights Templar Way Area (Templars Primary School) and became operational on 27 February 2023. This was funded separately and not through the Walking and Cycling Programme and was in response to safety concerns raised by local residents and Councillors

Four further School Street schemes are proposed to be funded through the Walking and Cycling Programme. The schools selected for the trial are Stanton Bridge Primary School, Southfields Primary School, Ravensdale Primary School and Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School and are supported by Ward Councillors and Headteachers.

The Briefing Note detailed the following four key high-level deliverables per school:-

Milestone 1: Official confirmation of school's interest to local authority and TfWM in delivering a school street. Indicative timescale: Early 2023 - January-February 2023

Milestone 2: Informal and formal consultation for each school street is complete as part of any TRO/ETRO. Spring 2023 (March-April 2023).

Milestone 3: Set up of monitoring and evaluation and baseline monitoring and evaluation is completed. Spring 2023 (March-April)

Milestone 4: Delivery of infrastructure, marketing materials and implementation of the TRO/ETRO. Summer 2023 (May-September 2023)

The Scrutiny Board asked questions and made comments on a number of issues including:-

- How the School Streets are signed and operated, particularly in relation to the enforcement of the TRO's by the Police and the penalties that would be applied for non compliance
- The criteria that was used to select the first 5 schemes
- The need for continual engagement with the schools and parents during the trial
- Consultation that has already been undertaken with the schools and consultation with residents that will now take place and which will help to shape the schemes that are introduced
- How the schemes will be monitored and assessed during the trial period
- Other initiatives that have been and which will be undertaken by the schools to encourage the modal shift
- The budget for the schemes. Coventry's success in securing a high proportion of the region's budget was noted and welcomed
- The benefits of the scheme on children's health and wellbeing as well as the scheme creating a safer environment for all
- Assurances were received that any possible displacement of traffic will be carefully monitored and assessed
- Data available from other schemes around the country (It was noted that Sustrans national data on the impact of the introduction of School Streets would be circulated to Members after the meeting)
- Operational issues, such as permits and exemptions for deliveries to residents

The Scrutiny Board expressed their support for the introduction of School Streets and paid tribute to the comprehensive work being carried out in this regard.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board:-

- 1) Note, welcome and support the steps being undertaken to trial the use of School Street and the proposed School Street programme which is being undertaken as an 18 month trail in collaboration with Transport for West Midlands.**

2) Request that a review of the School Street trial be added to the Work Programme for 2023/24.

38. Outstanding Issues and Work Programme for 2022/23

The Scrutiny Board noted their Work Programme for 2022/23.

39. Thanks

The Chair, Councillor L Bigham, thanked the Cabinet Member for City Services, Councillor P Hetherton and the Deputy Cabinet Member for City Services, Councillor G Lloyd, together with officers, for their attendance at the Scrutiny Board during 2022/23, and for the comprehensive information provided at meetings throughout the year.

Councillor Hetherton reciprocated those thanks for the support given by the Scrutiny Board in matters relating to her portfolio.

40. Any Other Items of Urgent Public Business

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.15am)



Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: The Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

Date: 13th July 2023

Subject: Coventry Homefinder Policy 12 Month Review

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To update the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) following the 12–18-month review report of the Coventry Homefinder Policy and accompanying IT system following their implementation in September 2021.
- 1.2 To draw the Scrutiny Boards attention to the report and its key findings, the impacts that have been identified, and the housing needs of those who are on the housing register, versus the supply and availability of social housing properties within Coventry.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board is recommended to:
 - 1) Note the information and key findings detailed within the report; and
 - 2) Identify any further recommendations for the Cabinet Member in respect of the operation of the Homefinder Policy

3 Information / Background

- 3.1 The Coventry Homefinder Policy was implemented in September 2021 following a review and public consultation. The Policy was implemented alongside a new IT system and the partnership acts as a single point of access for those requiring social housing in Coventry. The new scheme means that only those with an assessed housing need qualify to join the housing register.
- 3.2 The Coventry Homefinder Policy has five key objectives:
 - Operate within the legal framework
 - Be realistic, simple, and transparent
 - Make best use of housing stock
 - Lettings properties quickly
 - Create balanced and sustainable communities
- 3.3 At the point that the new policy was introduced, the service committed to carrying out a review of the impact and effectiveness of both the new policy and the operation of the new IT system after both 6 and 12 months. This review report includes data from both 12 and 18 months of operation.

- 3.4 The review examines feedback from partners of the scheme, including Registered Housing Providers that operate within Coventry, and representatives from Coventry Advice Agencies. The review evaluates each objective that the policy aims to achieve, recognises achievements, and addresses any issues that have been raised by partners for further development of the scheme.
- 3.5 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out alongside the review, to measure and mitigate against any impact that the policy has had on particular groups within the City.
- 3.6 The report outlines the current position of the scheme and the role that it has had in the first 18 months on those requiring social housing in Coventry and the subsequent impact that is linked to those owed duties by the statutory homelessness service. The report also outlines the current needs of those who are presently on the housing register and gives a breakdown of numbers in each key priority group who are able to bid for available properties on the register.
- 3.7 The report also demonstrates both the supply and demand of social housing within the City and the number of properties that have come available for letting within the first 18 months of the scheme being active. It also outlines the current level of need that is presently on the housing register and gives a breakdown of those in each priority band and the reasons for their housing need.

4 Wider Housing Context

- 4.1 The report outlines the current demand for housing in Coventry and the wait times experienced for residents who are waiting for suitable accommodation. There are some additional factors that can also be considered to give some context to the ongoing demand.
- 4.2 There has been an increase in homelessness nationally and 'No Fault' evictions and increasing cost of living are both contributory factors for many households who are experiencing homelessness or seeking alternative housing. The local housing allowance was frozen in 2020 and many households are not able to secure or retain private rented accommodation that is affordable to them.
- 4.3 The national trends in homelessness are reflected locally in Coventry, with the Housing & Homelessness service receiving increased approaches from those who are requiring housing assistance. Coventry currently has the highest number of households who are living in temporary accommodation that we have experienced, many of which are awaiting a permanent offer of housing from the housing register with the supply of available properties significantly short of what is required to meet this demand, particularly for the larger three bed plus properties.
- 4.4 Coventry has a buoyant private rental market and increasing rents mean that many are not able to access private rented accommodation as an alternative to social housing. Some landlords are choosing to exit the market completely which leaves fewer private rented properties available in the already competitive market.

5 Appendices

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – Coventry Homefinder 12-18 Month Report

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Job Title: Housing & Homelessness Lead

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Coventry Homefinder – Review of new Policy and IT System after 12 and 18 months of operation

1. Introduction

Coventry Homefinder is the choice-based lettings system by which the majority of social housing in Coventry is let. As Coventry City Council no longer has any Council Housing (following the large-scale transfer of all council stock to Whitefriars Housing Group, now Citizen Housing, in 2000), all social housing in Coventry is owned and managed by Registered Providers (Housing Associations). Coventry Homefinder is a partnership between the Council and Registered Providers who operate in the city.

The Coventry Homefinder Policy determines who is able to register, what level of priority each applicant has (using a Banding system based on assessed housing needs) and allows Registered Providers to advertise the properties that they have available.

The Coventry Homefinder Policy was reviewed and rewritten following a period of consultation and the new policy was implemented with a new IT system in September 2021. All applicants were asked to re-register to have their circumstances assessed against the new policy. There were changes to the banding system, with some housing needs given different relative priority compared to the previous policy, and qualifying criteria regarding household income were introduced for the first time. Applicants are also now only accepted on to the register if they have a demonstrable housing need, so applicants that are already adequately housed are not able to join the register.

When the new policy was introduced, we committed to carrying out a review of the impacts of the new policy and the operation of the new IT system (Locata) after 6 months and 12 months of operation. This report also looks at the impact at 18 months, as some aspects of the policy and IT system were not implemented immediately and have taken time to 'bed in'.

At 6 months, the register was still in a state of flux after the re-registration process, and new applicants joining and being assessed under the new policy. At 12 and 18 months, the register has continued to grow. At the 18-month point, the IT system has been upgraded to include an annual renewal process, so that all applicants must confirm (at 12 months after their original registration) that they want to remain on the register and are given the option to change/update their details or confirm that they are unchanged. The effects of the introduction of the annual review will be monitored over the next 12 months.

Prior to the implementation of the new policy, there were c13,000 applicants on the register, of which c3,500 had a recognised priority need in the banding system. Applicants had to register, and then complete a second form to request priority need banding. Since the implementation of the new policy, housing need is now assessed at the initial point of registration with applicants only required to complete one application form, and there are now c7,800 households on the register. Whilst the overall number on the register is lower, all those on the register do have a recognised housing need, which suggests that the actual level of housing need was not being fully recognised under the previous policy and system. The intelligence behind the system is such that it can band some applications automatically, with officers assessing applications where more detail is required, which means they are able to assist with any missing information or queries.

An initial Equalities Assessment was undertaken at the outset of the policy, and this has been reviewed in line with this policy review. Following this exercise, it was identified that there has not been any adverse impact on any particular group when compared to the previous policy.

The Homefinder Steering Group (made up of officers from the Council's Housing & Homelessness Team, three Registered Provider partners and a representative of Coventry advice agencies) has contributed to this report.

2. Objectives

There are five objectives that the Coventry Homefinder Policy aims to achieve:

Objective	Achievements	Issues raised during the review	Comments
Operate within the legal framework	The policy is in line with the legislation and statutory guidance	One Registered Provider (RP) raised two instances where people requiring an adapted property were not able to 'bid' on an adapted house as they had no household members under 16, when they should not have been restricted. This was identified, and their criteria were updated manually by the team to resolve the error and allow them to bid. The team are exploring ways to prevent this occurring in the future.	Some minor wording changes to the policy have been approved, to provide clarity or to update the wording to reflect the actual operation of the IT system (the policy was originally written before the IT system was in place). We will continue to review the policy against new legislation or statutory guidance as necessary.
Be realistic, simple and transparent	Simple - One application form rather than having to apply for priority separately. Fewer bands but recognising more housing needs. Auto bidding is available for those that request it.	Whilst a single application form means that people do not have to apply separately for priority banding, it does mean that the form is quite long and takes time to complete. Initially (during the re-registration process and first few months of operation), there were a high number of applications closed because evidence documents were not uploaded. There was also a size limit on documents that could be uploaded.	The number of applicants that have a housing need on the current register suggests that there were a significant number on the previous register with a housing need that hadn't been recognised, as they hadn't completed the second form to request priority banding. It is preferable to ensure that all household needs are recognised correctly, even if that means more information is required at initial application. The issue of the size limits on document uploads was resolved early on in the process, with larger file sizes now allowed.

Objective	Achievements	Issues raised during the review	Comments
		<p>Advice agencies reported that the process of re-registration was not perceived as simple by some applicants.</p> <p>There is no option for third party agencies to make or manage an application on someone’s behalf, unless they log in using the client’s password, which is not a secure approach.</p> <p>Advice agencies raised issues with the evidence requirements for medical/disability assessments – letters dated within the last 3 months – they feel that for some long-term conditions, older evidence should be accepted.</p> <p>Advice agencies also highlighted the potential for customers to be ‘digitally excluded’ if they do not have the skills or access to technology to use the website, both for application and bidding.</p>	<p>Additional guidance notes and a video were provided to help people upload their evidence documents and other parts of the re-registration/application process.</p> <p>Third Party access (for example, to allow advice agencies to log in on behalf of clients) was not available on the ‘old’ system, so this has not changed. It is not possible to allow third party access due to complexities in ensuring that they only have access to necessary data.</p> <p>The Change of Circumstances form has been improved so that changes to contact details can be updated easily and without the need for verification, and other changes to circumstances can be submitted without the need to re-complete the entire form (just the relevant changes need to be completed).</p> <p>Officers are allowed to use discretion when requesting medical details for long term conditions that are not expected to change/improve – they do not always require letters dated within 3 months.</p> <p>Coventry Homefinder is a web-based system, and it is recognised that some people are unable to access the website without support – support is provided for people to make their application and auto</p>

Objective	Achievements	Issues raised during the review	Comments
			<p>bidding can be set up (reflecting their needs and preferences) to 'bid' on their behalf when suitable properties are available. Those without access to technology can use computers in the libraries or in Broadgate House. There is also provision of further support for those that require assistance as a result of being digitally excluded (e.g., telephone assistance).</p>
	<p>Realistic – people who have no housing need, and were therefore extremely unlikely to be successful, are no longer able to join the register.</p> <p>People who need to resolve issues such as arrears are aware of what those issues are and (informed when placed in reduced preference or 'skipped')</p>	<p>Advice agencies reported that some applicants whose band has changed (especially those who are severely overcrowded) feel it is unfair and feel that they now have a lower chance of securing a property.</p> <p>Advice agencies also raised the issue of the Reduced Preference band – to ensure that the reasons for reduced preference are clear to the applicant and that they can access support to resolve the issue where possible.</p>	<p>The data (in the remainder of the report) showing the applicants who have been successful in securing a property does indicate that, despite many overcrowded households, relatively few properties have been let to severely overcrowded applicants (who need two bedrooms more than their current property). A higher proportion of properties have been let to statutory homeless applicants. However, applicants that are statutorily overcrowded can make a homelessness application on that basis and provided with temporary accommodation to alleviate the issue. The relative priority for households who are overcrowded by one bedroom is unchanged.</p> <p>Applicants are informed in writing when they are placed in the reduced preference band and the reasons for this.</p>

Objective	Achievements	Issues raised during the review	Comments
	<p>Transparent – previous lets are shown on the website, applicants can see where they came in previous shortlists and the band/date of the successful bidder.</p> <p>Fewer and clearer bands so applicants can understand where they are in the order of priority, which categories have highest priority.</p> <p>Information is shared with partners at relevant forums to share progress of scheme</p>	<p>Advice agencies raised that there is little visibility of the RPs own policies to show what circumstances would cause them to skip a shortlisted applicant (e.g., level of arrears).</p>	<p>The Policy and the website include contact details for the partner RPs, including the websites, where information on their individual policies can be found.</p> <p>Information is now published on the website regarding the current time taken for an application to be assessed and processed.</p>
<p>Make best use of housing stock</p>	<p>The policy has changed who qualifies to join the register, and essentially reduces the list, to refocus on those with the highest assessed need. This will help allocate properties to</p>	<p>The register shows more accurately the level of need, but there is no longer any visibility of how many households would <i>like</i> social housing - the old system gave an indication of the level of demand for social housing in the city.</p>	<p>The majority of properties advertised are let to people with the highest housing needs, in Band 1. As only those with an assessed housing need are on the register, all homes let through Homefinder are meeting the housing needs of Coventry citizens.</p> <p>There is now an Occupational Therapist in the team that advises on the correct</p>

Objective	Achievements	Issues raised during the review	Comments
	<p>households who need them most as assessed by the policy.</p> <p>Properties with adaptations are advertised and applicants requiring those adaptations are prioritised over others on the shortlist that don't require adaptations.</p>	<p>An RP believes the new bands are making it harder for customers who are overcrowded to get housed as homeless customers have a higher priority. This does not assist them to make best use of their housing stock and to offer a pathway for existing tenants to move when their circumstances change. This may also be the case for customers who are underoccupied.</p>	<p>banding for applicants who need to move for medical reasons, including whether aids/adaptations can be provided in their current home, and advice on the suitability of available homes on Homefinder. However, we will review the process used to let adapted properties to ensure that it is efficient and ensures that properties are offered to the most suitable applicants.</p> <p>There has been no change in the types of property becoming available (none was expected) but there has been a change in the proportion of properties being let to different groups of housing need.</p> <p>As there are currently 1,100 households in Band 1, this will impact on people in lower bands, particularly for large family homes.</p>
Letting properties quickly	<p>People in certain categories have shown that they are tenancy ready, and therefore more able to successfully take on a tenancy (and those not tenancy ready are aware of the issues</p>	<p>RPs have fed back that it is beneficial to be able to advertise properties as they become available, rather than wait for a bidding 'cycle'.</p> <p>RP's have raised operational issues with auto bidding – that with the large number of applicants on auto bidding, it has caused delays to shortlisting and requires</p>	<p>There have been properties where the shortlist has been exhausted without a suitable applicant accepting the property. Often these are sheltered accommodation, so there may be scope to promote this as an option for people on the register who would be eligible for it. It has historically been an issue letting some types of sheltered housing in Coventry.</p>

Objective	Achievements	Issues raised during the review	Comments
	<p>that need to be resolved)</p> <p>Properties are advertised throughout the week when they become available, rather than waiting for set days for the adverts to appear.</p> <p>Auto bidding is available for those that request it and is also set up for applicants who are statutory homeless.</p>	<p>additional resources from RP staff to work through shortlists to find a successful candidate.</p>	<p>Although a change has been made to the auto bidding of single households, delays in taking relevant customers off auto bidding means that they still appear on shortlists and have to be skipped which adds time to the shortlisting process. This process will be reviewed.</p>
<p>Create balanced and sustainable communities</p>	<p>Some housing needs are explicitly recognised in the new policy that were not recognised in the same way in the old policy (e.g. households struggling to afford their current home, people living with family wanting to form their own household, two households</p>	<p>Approximately half of the properties let through Homefinder have been to Statutory Homeless households.</p> <p>One RP partner has raised concerns that there is no 'pathway' for their own customers who are overcrowded to secure a larger home as they are now lower in the priority band than homeless households.</p>	<p>We will continue to monitor the groups that are successful in securing a property through Homefinder.</p>

Objective	Achievements	Issues raised during the review	Comments
	wanting to join together to form one household etc).		

3. Review of housing need on the register

Live applications – Bands and Reasons

The below tables consider the live applications and banding 12 months and 18 months after the scheme went live:

	12 months	18 months
Band 1	1155	1063
Band 2	1114	1521
Band 3	1989	2472
Band 4	1398	1899
Reduced Preference	566	371
Total	6222	7326

	12 months	18 months
Band 1	19%	15%
Band 2	18%	21%
Band 3	32%	34%
Band 4	22%	26%
Reduced Preference	9%	5%
Total	100%	100%

Live applications and reasons for banding:

Band	Reason for banding	12 months	18 months
Band 1	Coventry Care Leavers who are assessed as tenancy ready	54	70
	Statutorily Homeless (Main Housing Duty accepted as a homeless household)	741	597
	Tenants of partner housing providers who are under-occupying a property by 2 or more bedrooms	31	30
	Urgent housing need due to health and/or social care difficulties	196	198
	Urgent housing need due to Social and/or Welfare issues	149	188
Band 2	Armed Forces - Additional Preference	5	9
	Homelessness Relief (households at relief duty stage)	377	618
	Overcrowding - require an additional 2+ bedrooms	150	165
	People living in named short-term supported accommodation including hostels and refuges, and who are assessed as tenancy ready	488	619
	Tenants of partner housing providers who are under-occupying by one bedroom	95	113
Band 3	Homeless households who do not have a priority need	122	164
	Homelessness Prevention (households at prevention duty stage)	179	249
	Housing need due to health and or social care difficulties	218	288
	Housing need relating to Social, Welfare or Hardship issues	41	51
	Overcrowding - requires 1 additional bedroom	1428	1718
Band 4	Coventry Care Leavers (who are not tenancy ready) or Care leavers with no local connection)	8	14
	Housing need with No Local Connection	17	27
	Housing Need with Local Connection	1162	1588
	People living in named short-term supported accommodation including hostels and refuges who are not tenancy ready	195	249
RP	Reduced Preference Band	566	371
Total		6222	7326

Band	Reason for banding	12 months	18 months
Band 1	Coventry Care Leavers who are assessed as tenancy ready	1%	1%
	Statutorily Homeless (Main Housing Duty accepted as a homeless household)	12%	8%
	Tenants of partner housing providers who are under-occupying a property by 2 or more bedrooms	0%	0%
	Urgent housing need due to health and/or social care difficulties	3%	3%
	Urgent housing need due to Social and/or Welfare issues	2%	3%
Band 2	Armed Forces - Additional Preference	0%	0%
	Homelessness Relief (households at relief duty stage)	6%	8%
	Overcrowding - require an additional 2+ bedrooms	2%	2%
	People living in named short-term supported accommodation including hostels and refuges, and who are assessed as tenancy ready	8%	8%
	Tenants of partner housing providers who are under-occupying by one bedroom	2%	2%
Band 3	Homeless households who do not have a priority need	2%	2%
	Homelessness Prevention (households at prevention duty stage)	3%	3%
	Housing need due to health and or social care difficulties	4%	4%
	Housing need relating to Social, Welfare or Hardship issues	1%	1%
	Overcrowding - requires 1 additional bedroom	23%	23%
Band 4	Coventry Care Leavers (who are not tenancy ready) or Care leavers with no local connection)	0%	0%
	Housing need with No Local Connection	0%	0%
	Housing Need with Local Connection	19%	22%
	People living in named short-term supported accommodation including hostels and refuges who are not tenancy ready	3%	3%
RP	Reduced Preference Band	9%	5%
Total		100%	100%

- It is not possible to directly compare the bands with those under the previous policy, as the reasons for priority in each band has changed. However, there were 3137 households on the register with an assessed housing need in Sept 2021, prior to the implementation of the new policy.
- The overall number of applicants on the register has reduced from 13,349 in Sept 21. However, the number of people recognised as having a housing need has increased from 3137 (in Bands 1A to 2C). We will need to monitor how the implementation of the annual review (where applicants must renew their application each year and confirm they wish to remain on the register) affects the overall number on the register.
- The number of statutory homeless households on the register increased compared to the period immediately before implementation (372 in Sept 2021) and continued to increase up to 12 months after implementation, however, has now started to reduce (in number and as a proportion of the total register)
- The number of people recognised as being overcrowded has significantly increased compared to the period immediately before implementation of the new policy (from 983 in Sept 21). This may be as a result of the new IT system automatically recognising overcrowding situations rather than requiring the applicant to make a separate application for priority, as under the previous system.
- The number of people who have priority due to a medical issue initially decreased (from 362 in Sept 21) but has risen over the period.
- The number of people with priority due to social/welfare issues has significantly increased (from 47 in Sept 21)

Bedroom Need of people on the register:

	12 months	18 months	12 months % of total	18 months % of total
Single person requiring studio or 1 bedroom	2592	3236	42%	44%
1 bed need	208	253	3%	3%
2 bed need	1409	1647	23%	22%
3 bed need	1483	1606	24%	22%
4 bed need	436	481	7%	7%
5 bed need	79	87	1%	1%

6 bed need	11	12	0%	0%
7 bed need	4	4	0%	0%

- The number requiring large (4-bedroom) or very large properties (5+ bedrooms) is small compared to the overall register but has increased significantly over the first 18 months of the policy. This is significant as the supply of properties with 4, 5, or more bedrooms is severely limited. As can be seen below, only two 5-bedroom properties and one 6-bed property has been advertised since the new policy has been implemented. We do not believe that there are any 7-bedroom or larger properties owned by housing associations in Coventry.

4. Supply of properties advertised and let

The number of properties of each size that were advertised:

Number of bedrooms	Up to 6 months	6 to 12 months	12 to 18 months	Total	Overall %
Studio	64	59	59	182	11%
One bed	213	171	210	594	37%
Two bed	190	195	199	584	36%
Three bed	86	72	78	236	15%
Four bed	5	4	11	20	1%
Five bed	1		1	2	0%
Six bed	1			1	0%
Grand Total	560	501	558	1619	100%

Landlords of properties that have been advertised:

Landlord	Up to 6 months	6 to 12 months	12 to 18 months	Grand Total	Overall %
Green Square Accord	12	10	2	24	1%

Citizen	438	387	408	1233	76%
Clarion	4	6	5	15	1%
Midland Heart	50	36	80	166	10%
Nehemiah	2	1		3	0%
Orbit	19	37	48	104	6%
PA Housing	4	4	1	9	1%
Stonewater	31	20	14	65	4%
Grand Total	560	501	558	1619	100%

- 48% of properties were studio or one-bed properties, and only 16% had three or more bedrooms. This is very similar to the property profile for the 12 months prior to implementation of the new policy and is a long running trend.
- Whilst the number of households requiring 4 or more bedrooms is a relatively small proportion of the overall register (8%), there are very few properties of this size that become available (1.4%)

Who has been housed?

Band of successful bidder	Up to 12 months	From 12 to 18 months	Total
Band 1	788	409	1197
Band 2	128	61	189
Band 3	32	15	47
Band 4	22		22
Ready to offer	91	73	164
Grand Total	1061	558	1619

Band reason – successful bidders	Up to 12 months	12 to 18 months	Grand Total	Overall %
Armed Forces Additional Preference	1		1	0.1%
Coventry Care Leavers who are assessed as tenancy ready	63	33	96	6.6%
Homeless households who do not have a priority need	4	2	6	0.4%
Homelessness Prevention (households at prevention duty stage)	19	3	22	1.5%
Homelessness Relief (households at relief duty stage)	83	39	122	8.4%
Housing need No Local Connection	1		1	0.1%
Housing need due to health and or social care difficulties	11	5	16	1.1%
Housing need relating to Social, Welfare or Hardship issues	2	1	3	0.2%
Housing Need with Local Connection	20	2	22	1.5%
Overcrowding require an additional 2+ bedrooms	5	4	9	0.6%
Overcrowding requires 1 additional bedroom	15	8	23	1.6%
People living in named short-term supported accommodation including hostels and refuges who are not tenancy ready	8	1	9	0.6%
People living in named short-term supported accommodation including hostels and refuges, and who are assessed as tenancy ready	94	38	132	9.1%
Reduced Preference Band	1	6	7	0.5%
Statutorily Homeless (Main Housing Duty accepted as a homeless household)	470	255	725	49.8%
Tenants of partner housing providers who are under-occupying a property by 2 or more bedrooms	12	6	18	1.2%
Tenants of partner housing providers who are under-occupying by one bedroom	3	8	11	0.8%
Urgent housing need due to health and/or social care difficulties	105	44	149	10.2%
Urgent housing need due to Social and/or Welfare issues	53	30	83	5.7%
Grand Total	970	485	1455	100.0%

- Almost half (49.8%) of all lets have been to statutory homeless households – this is higher than to the 12 months prior to the new policy being implemented (37%).

- Relatively few properties have been let to households who are overcrowded, despite this category being a large proportion of the overall register.
- A relatively large number of properties were let to Coventry Care Leavers who were tenancy ready (6.6%), compared to the proportion on the register (<1%).

Bidding

The table below shows the average number of bids per property size:

Number of bedrooms	Up to 12 months	12 to 18 months
Studio	112	134
One bed	151	181
Two bed	122	158
Three bed	231	310
Four bed	86	132
Five bed	25	21
Six bed	4	N/A

- This shows the average number of bids per property has increased over the 18 months as the register has increased in size.
- Three-bedroom properties received the highest number of bids on average
- Compared to the 12 months prior to implementation of the new policy – the overall average has reduced (was 220 bids per property). This is likely to be due to the smaller number of households on the register overall.

Average 'waiting times'

The table below shows the average 'waiting times' of people on the register before being housed, by bedroom size.

Type / Size	13 Sept 2021 to 12 March 2022	13 March 2022 to 12 Sept 2022	13 Sept 22 to 12 March 2023	Last 12 months of 'old' policy
Studio general needs	7 months	7 months	9 months	14 months
1-bed general needs	15 months	15 months	15 months	18 months
2-bed flat or maisonette	7 months	10 months	8 months	
2-bed house	12 months	9 months	9 months	13 months
3-bed flat or maisonette	6 months	8 months	8 months	
3-bed house	15 months	14 months	15 months	12 months
4-bed	11 months	33 months	3 years	
5-bed		11 years		25 months

- This data shows a reduction in 'waiting time' on the register before being housed, for all sizes of properties.
- Under the 'old' policy applicants could bid for properties where they did not have a recognised housing need. The requirement to have a recognised housing need under the new policy has led to lower numbers on the housing register and reduced average wait times for applicants who are successful in securing a property. There are also a larger number of properties being offered to those who are statutory homeless who are in the highest priority band, this has also attributed to the reduction in overall average wait times.

5. Impact of the changes

As part of the 12 – 18 month review, an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out to identify any impact on protected groups following the implementation of both the policy and IT system.

6. Recommendations following the review

There are several impacts from the implementation of the new Homefinder policy that will require further consideration. Further recommendations and actions include:

- We will continue to review the policy against any new legislation or revised statutory guidance
- Further discussion regarding the impact of the policy on households who are overcrowded, particularly those where they are requiring 2 additional bedrooms
- We will work with RP's to consider auto-bidding for single people where it has been identified as creating additional pressures on shortlisting processes
- We will have further discussions with RP's in the city regarding making the best use of housing stock in the city including the possibility of letting smaller properties to families
- Continue to review the impact of the policy



Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

Date: 13th July 2023

Subject: Review of the Additional Licensing Scheme

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To provide the Board with information about the review of the Additional Licensing Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and provide Members an opportunity to take part in that review.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) are recommended to:
 - 1) Consider the information provided in the briefing note and Appendix 1 & 2.
 - 2) Provide comments to be considered as part of the review of the Additional Licensing Scheme.
 - 3) Agree to receive the final Cabinet report, which will provide information on the progress of the Scheme thus far following the conclusion of the review.

3 Background and Information

- 3.1 The duty to licence Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) was introduced in July 2006 through powers provided under the Housing Act 2004 (the Act), at that time HMOs that were 3 or more storeys in height and occupied by 5 or more persons required a licence through the HMO mandatory licensing powers.
- 3.2 In October 2018 the definition for HMOs requiring a mandatory HMO licence was changed to include any HMO occupied by 5 or more people forming two or more households, in effect removing the three-storey requirement.
- 3.3 Additional licensing of HMOs is a discretionary power that, if introduced by Local Authorities, can be applied to those HMOs which are not required to be licensed under the mandatory licensing powers.

- 3.4 The provision of good quality housing for Coventry residents is a priority for the City Council and additional Licensing of HMOs was first introduced on the 4th May 2020. The scheme can only run for a period of 5 years, during which time the Council must carry out a review. The Additional Licensing scheme means that all HMOs, including those properties converted into self-contained flats without building regulations approval (Section 257 HMOs) require a licence.
- 3.5 The private rented sector (PRS) is an important part of our housing market, with 4.7 million households in England. The sector has undergone rapid growth over the last ten years and is now the second largest tenure in England.
- 3.6 HMOs form a vital part of this sector, often providing cheaper accommodation for people whose housing options are limited.
- 3.7 HMOs are known to be commonly occupied by students but there are also a growing number of young professionals and migrant workers sharing houses and flats. Some HMOs are occupied by the most vulnerable people in our society.
- 3.8 These people live in properties that were not built for multiple occupation, and the risk of overcrowding and fire can be greater than with other types of accommodation. The government wants to support good private landlords who provide decent well-maintained homes and not impose unnecessary regulation however, the nature of HMOs means that regulation of this part of the sector is widely agreed to be necessary.
- 3.9 Mandatory licensing of HMOs came into force in 2006 under the Housing Act 2004 (the Act) and originally applied to properties of three storeys or more with five or more people making up two or more separate households living in them.
- 3.10 As demand for HMOs increased in the decade since mandatory licensing was first introduced there has been a significant increase in properties with fewer than three storeys being used as HMO accommodation, notably two storey houses originally designed for families and flats.
- 3.11 Some have been used by opportunist rogue landlords who exploit their vulnerable tenants, and rent sub-standard, overcrowded and potentially dangerous accommodation. The growth of HMOs has also had an impact on the local community, including where inadequate rubbish storage leads to pest infestation and health and safety problems.
- 3.12 In May 2020 the Council introduced a citywide Additional Licensing Scheme which required all HMOs in Coventry to be licensed.
- 3.13 Within the Act there is a legal requirement to review the scheme “from time to time” following its operation. To fulfil this requirement the Council intends to commence a review of the Additional Licensing Scheme. Details of the review can be found at Appendix 1.

4 Health Inequalities Impact

- 4.1 The review of Additional Licensing scheme makes links to the Council’s Equality and Diversity Policies and an Equalities Assessment exists for

regulatory activities. A specific Equalities Assessment has been completed for this report and is attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

Appendix 1: Consultation Plan

Appendix 2: Equalities Impact Assessment

Name and job title:

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Regulatory Services

Streetscene and Regulatory Services

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Review of Coventry City Council's Additional HMO Licensing Scheme

Consultation Exercise and Communications and Engagement Plan

Purpose of this document

This document outlines the approach that would be taken to deliver the statutory review required of Coventry City Council's Additional HMO Licensing Scheme.

Background

Coventry City Council's current Additional HMO Licensing scheme (the scheme) expires on 4th May 2025, and the Council now needs to carry out an in-depth review of the scheme which will include a consultation exercise that will take place for three months from July of this year. This will seek feedback from stakeholders of the current scheme with a view to enabling a full options appraisal for the future of the scheme.

Aims and objectives

Raise awareness of the review of the current licensing arrangements. Engage with key stakeholders of the current scheme to record progress and assess options for the future.

Enable a full analysis of the scheme to date, capturing any improvements to property conditions and overall management and collect broad views from the various stakeholders involved.

Statutory requirement to consult on future direction once the current scheme comes to the end of its term.

Audiences

Primary audiences:

- * Private sector tenants, particularly those living in HMOs.
- * Private sector tenant groups and local support groups.
- * Landlords, particularly those that own smaller HMOs.
- * Managing agents.
- * Landlord associations.
- * Residents, particularly people living near smaller HMOs.
- * Students, particularly those living in smaller HMOs.
- * Councillors.

Secondary audiences:

- * Neighbouring local authorities.
- * Coventry City Council staff, particularly those working in housing and planning.
- * Police, fire & rescue, and probation services.
- * Voluntary, community and social enterprise groups, particularly those providing support services to tenants.

Approach

We will use a range of communication channels to target key stakeholders to be able to evaluate the current scheme and identify any issues. This will then form the basis of a full options appraisal which will be presented to Cabinet at a future meeting.

Activity	Description	Timing
Online questionnaire	A dedicated HMO Licensing Review page will be created on the council's online platform "Let's Talk" which will contain an online survey seeking feedback on the current licensing scheme.	July/August
Ward drop-in sessions	Drop-in sessions in each ward to provide people the opportunity to comment on the AHMO licensing review and ask questions of council officers before submitting responses.	12 weeks commencing in July Sessions 4:30pm - 6:30pm
Letters to tenants	Details of the consultation sent to tenants living in registered HMOs to gauge their level of satisfaction with current AHMO licensing scheme and get feedback on any shortcomings.	July 2023
Letters to landlords	Details of the consultation sent to landlords and managing agents currently operating licensed HMOs.	July 2023
Social media	Posts to council owned channels.	July/August
PR	Press release summarising consultation.	June 2023
Landlord newsletter	Landlord focused article for landlord newsletter.	June 2023
Councillor briefing	Members Briefing: Document outlining the review requesting feedback.	June/July 2023
Coventry & Warwick University	Student focus groups seeking their experience of living in HMO's	June 2023

Consultation design

Please note: This is an indicative design which only considers the main objectives of the scheme, whilst also collecting demographic data. The review will also seek feedback on the scheme's infrastructure, such as the fee structure and the application process.

HMO Licensing Questionnaire 2023

The Council would like to know what you think about the additional licensing scheme that was introduced in 2020 and the future proposals for the scheme.

What do we need to know?

We want your views about the licensing scheme for HMOs throughout the city.

Why are we asking you?

The council has a duty to carry out a review of any discretionary licensing scheme it has implemented to determine if it is achieving the aim of improving management standards. The scheme is now reaching its third year and as such this is an appropriate time to review it. The outcome of this review will help measure the effectiveness so far.

What will happen to the results?

The results will help us to make an informed decision about the future of the scheme and to make sure that your views are taken into account.

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY

Question 1 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 2 – Only complete if you live outside of Coventry

Question 3 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 4 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 5 – To be completed by anyone who is a landlord or an owner of HMOs in Coventry

Question 6 – To be completed by anyone who is a letting or managing agent of properties in Coventry

Question 7 – To be completed by anyone who is living or has lived in a HMO in Coventry in the past 5 years

Question 8 – To be completed by anyone who lives in Coventry

Question 9 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 10 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 11 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Q1. Which postcode area of Coventry City Council do you live in?

- CV1 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- CV2 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- CV3 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- CV4 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- CV5 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- CV6 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- CV7 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- Outside the Coventry City Council postcode areas *(please answer Q2 then proceed to Q3)*

Q2. If you have indicated that you live outside the Coventry City Council postcode areas shown in Question 1 then please indicate which Local Authority area you live in?

- Warwick District Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Birmingham City Council
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- Other outside Coventry – please indicate below

Q3. Are you aware that Coventry City Council introduced a licensing scheme for all HMOs in May 2020?

- Yes
- No
- No comment

Q4. Please indicate below which category best describes you?

(Please tick only one)

- a. Homeowner living in Coventry
- b. Living with parents/ family in Coventry
- c. Living outside of Coventry
- d. A landlord or owner of HMOs / family rented property in Coventry
- e. A tenant who is currently living or has lived in a HMO in the past 5 years in Coventry
- f. A student who is currently living or has lived in a HMO in the past 5 years in Coventry
- g. A tenant in a rented property in Coventry that is not a HMO
- h. Letting or Managing agent responsible for properties in Coventry

- i. Other (*Please state below*)

Q5. If you have indicated that you are a landlord or an owner of HMOs in Coventry then please also answer Questions 5a.

NOTE: If you are not a landlord or an owner of a HMO in Coventry then please proceed to answer Question 6.

Q5a. How many HMOs do you own?

- 1-10
 11-20
 21-50
 50+

Q6. If you have indicated that you are a letting or managing agent responsible for properties in Coventry then please also answer Questions 6a.

NOTE: If you are not a letting or managing agent responsible for HMOs in Coventry then please proceed to Question 7.

Q6a. How many HMOs do you let/manage?

- 1-10
11-20
20-50
50+

Q7. If you have indicated that you are living or have lived in a HMO in Coventry in the past five years then please indicate whether you have had personal experience of any of the following?

NOTE: If you are not living or have not lived in a HMO in Coventry in the past five years then please proceed to Question 8.

(Please tick all that apply)

- Fear of reporting repairs for being evicted
- Notice to quit for no apparent reason
- Unreasonable rent increases
- Deposit issues
- Lack of contact with landlord/ agent
- Difficulties in getting repairs done
- Intimidation
- Harassment
- Problems associated with certificates
 - Gas
 - Electric
 - Fire
 - No HMO licence
 - All of the above
- Uncertainty about who to contact to report repairs

- Uncertainty about who to contact in an emergency

Q8. If you have indicated that you live in Coventry then please answer this question and then proceed to Question 9.

NOTE: If you do not live in Coventry then please proceed to Question 9.

Have you ever experienced any of the following problems with HMOs in the area of Coventry where you live?

(Please tick all that apply)

- Poorly managed refuse/ untidy or overflowing bins/ excessive black sacks
- Empty unattended HMOs during term time/ height of summer
- Poor property condition
- Poor external appearance of properties
- Overgrown gardens
- Nuisance
- Anti-social behaviour
- Parking associated issues
- Other (please indicate)

**Q9. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements?
*(Please answer all parts)***

Additional licensing in Coventry has.....

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

9a) Ensured that privately rented HMO properties are better maintained and managed?

9b) Helped reduce anti-social behaviour?

9c) Helped to improve living conditions in HMOs across the city?

9d) Helped to improve the management of HMOs?

9e) Reduced the number of HMOs available to live in?

9f) Dealt with the problems associated with HMOs?

9g) Increased the number of HMOs in the surrounding areas of Coventry?

Q10. The Council is seeking views as to whether it should renew the Additional Licensing scheme in 2025, which again would include all HMOs within the city.

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

(Please answer Q11)

(Please answer Q11)

Q11. If you have indicated that you strongly disagree or disagree with the proposal to renew the additional licensing of all HMOs in Question 10 above, then please indicate which of the following applies.

Please tick all that apply.

11a. The Scheme has been a success and is no longer needed

11b. HMOs in Coventry are managed better now than 5 years ago

11c. Longer licences are needed

11d. The fee for a licence should be reduced for compliant landlords

11d. The process is too bureaucratic and should be simplified

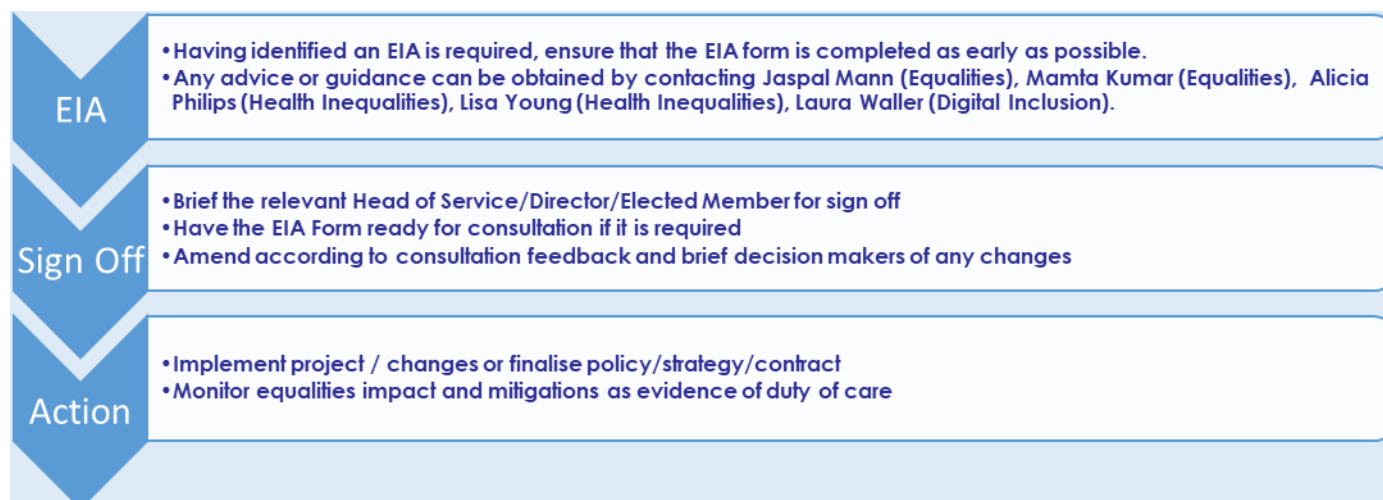
11e. The Council doesn't punish rogue landlords enough

Any other reasons? *(Please indicate below)*

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



Title of EIA		HMO licensing consultation
EIA Author	Name	Steven Chantler
	Position	Principal Environmental Health Officer
	Date of completion	18/5/23
Head of Service	Name	Davina Blackburn
	Position	Strategic Lead of Regulation
Cabinet Member	Name	David Welsh
	Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities



PLEASE REFER TO [EIA GUIDANCE](#) FOR ADVICE ON COMPLETING THIS FORM

SECTION 1 – Context & Background

1.1 Please tick one of the following options:

This EIA is being carried out on:

- New policy / strategy
- New service
- Review of policy / strategy
- Review of service
- Commissioning
- Other project (*please give details*)



1.2 In summary, what is the background to this EIA?

Coventry City Council implemented a city-wide HMO additional licensing scheme on 4 May 2020, which required all HMOs in the city to be licensed.

The council has a duty to carry out a review of any discretionary licensing scheme it has implemented to determine if it is achieving the aim of improving management standards and property conditions for the tenants that live there. The scheme is now reaching its third year and as such this is an appropriate time to review it. The outcome of this review will help measure the effectiveness so far and will assist in informing a future decision on the renewal of any scheme designation.

The review is also intended to lead to service improvements within the remaining life of the existing scheme and for any future scheme and will provide a positive way of engaging with partners, both internal and external, landlords and tenants, and as such has the additional benefit of raising awareness of HMO licensing.

1.3 Who are the main stakeholders involved? Who will be affected?

Landlords
Agents
Tenants in the Private Rented Sector
Residents living in the city.

1.4 Who will be responsible for implementing the findings of this EIA?

The Property Licensing Team

SECTION 2 – Consideration of Impact

Refer to guidance note for more detailed advice on completing this section.

In order to ensure that we do not discriminate in the way our activities are designed, developed and delivered, we must look at our duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



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

2.1 Baseline data and information

Please include a summary of data analysis below, using both your own service level management information and also drawing comparisons with local data where necessary (go to <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/factsaboutcoventry>)

We are now half way through the scheme and have collected a lot of data in relation to property improvements that have been made to the properties in terms of repair and maintenance, which will be baselined from the scheme's inception. The review and consultation process will seek to speak stakeholders to gauge their satisfaction of the scheme and what impact it has made to their lives.

2.2 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show what the potential impact is for each of the protected groups.

- Positive impact (P),
- Negative impact (N)
- Both positive and negative impacts (PN)
- No impact (NI)
- Insufficient data (ID)

**Any impact on the Council workforce should be included under question 2.6 – not below*

Protected Characteristic	Impact type P, N, PN, NI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
Age 0-18	P	Improved housing conditions

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



Age 19-64	P	Improved housing conditions
Age 65+	P	Improved housing conditions
Disability	P	Improved housing conditions
Gender reassignment	P	Improved housing conditions
Marriage and Civil Partnership	P	Improved housing conditions
Pregnancy and maternity	P	Improved housing conditions
Race (Including: colour, nationality, citizenship ethnic or national origins)	P	Improved housing conditions
Religion and belief	P	Improved housing conditions
Sex	P	Improved housing conditions
Sexual orientation	P	Improved housing conditions

HEALTH INEQUALITIES

2.3	<p>Health inequalities (HI) are unjust differences in health and wellbeing between different groups of people which arise because of the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age. These conditions influence our opportunities for good health, and result in stark differences in how long we live and how many years we live in good health.</p> <p>Many issues can have an impact: income, unemployment, work conditions, education and skills, our living situation, individual characteristics and experiences, such as age, gender, disability and ethnicity</p> <p>A wide range of services can make a difference to reducing health inequalities. Whether you work with children and young people, design roads or infrastructure, support people into employment or deal with welfare benefits – policy decisions and strategies can help to reduce health inequalities</p> <p>Please answer the questions below to help identify if the area of work will have any impact on health inequalities, positive or negative.</p> <p>If you need assistance in completing this section please contact: Alicia Philips or Lisa Young in Public Health for more information. More details and worked examples can be found at https://coventrycc.sharepoint.com/Info/Pages/What-is-an-Equality-Impact-Assessment-(EIA).aspx</p>
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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



Question	Issues to consider	
<p>2.3a What HIs exist in relation to your work / plan / strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore existing data sources on the distribution of health across different population groups (<i>examples of where to find data to be included in support materials</i>) ● Consider protected characteristics and different dimensions of HI such as socio-economic status or geographical deprivation 	
	<p>Response:</p>	
<p>2.3b How might your work affect HI (positively or negatively).</p> <p>How might your work address the needs of different groups that share protected characteristics</p>	<p>Consider and answer below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Think about whether outcomes vary across groups and who benefits the most and least, for example, the outcome for a woman on a low income may be different to the outcome for a woman a high income ● Consider what the unintended consequences of your work might be 	
	<p>Response:</p> <p>a. Potential outcomes including impact based on socio-economic status or geographical deprivation</p>	
	<p>b. Potential outcomes impact on specific socially excluded or vulnerable groups eg. people experiencing homelessness, prison leavers, young people leaving care, members of the armed forces community.</p> <p>The review will enable the Council to continue improving the standards and management of HMO's in Coventry thus continuing to prevent issues of overcrowding and ensuring such properties are safe and well managed.</p>	



2.4 Next steps - What specific actions will you take to address the potential equality impacts and health inequalities identified above?

The HMO licensing scheme is city wide and aimed at improving some of the poorest accomadtion in the city and in the event that the review identifies areas of inequality, then a resource can be deployed in those areas to address specific problems.

DIGITAL INCLUSION

2.5 The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the uptake of digital services nationally, whereby people who are digitally enabled have better financial opportunities, can access new information and are better connected to others (Lloyds Consumer Digital Index, 2021). However, for those who are digitally excluded, the digital divide has grown during the last two years, and without intervention people will be left behind with poorer outcomes across employment, health and wellbeing, education and service access. Some people are more likely to be excluded including: older people, people from lower income households, unemployed people, people living in social housing, disabled people, school leavers before 16 with fewer educational qualifications, those living in rural areas, homeless people, or people who’s first language is not English ([NHS Digital.](#))

Some of the barriers to digital inclusion can include lack of:

- **Access** to a device and/or data
- **Digital skills**
- **Motivation** to get online
- **Trust** of online safety

Digital exclusion is not a fixed entity and may look different to different people at different times.

Example 1. Person A, has access to a smartphone and monthly data and can access social media apps, however lacks the digital skills and confidence, and appropriate device to create a CV, apply for jobs and attend remote interviews, and/or access educational and skills resources.

Example 2. Person B, is digitally confident and has their own laptop, however due a lower household income and other financial priorities, they cannot afford their monthly broadband subscription and can no longer get online to access the services they need to.

Example 3. Person C has very little digital experience and has heard negative stories on the news regarding online scams. Despite having the financial resource, they see no benefit of being online and look for alternatives whenever possible. A new council service requires mandatory online registration, therefore they do not access it.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



<p>It is important that we all consider how we can reduce digital inequalities across our services, and this may look very different depending on the nature of our work.</p> <p>Please answer the questions below to help identify if the area of work will have any impact on digital inequalities, positive or negative.</p> <p>If you need assistance in completing this section please contact: Laura Waller (<i>Digital Services & Inclusion Lead, CCC</i>). More details and worked examples can be found at https://coventrycc.sharepoint.com/Info/Pages/What-is-an-Equality-Impact-Assessment-(EIA).aspx</p>		
Question	Issues to consider	
2.5 What digital inequalities exist in relation to your work / plan / strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your work assume service users have digital access and skills? • Do outcomes vary across groups, for example digitally excluded people benefit the least compared to those who have digital skills and access? • Consider what the unintended consequences of your work might be. 	
	Response: The review will contain a digital questionnaire, which may not be accessible to everyone.	
2.5b How will you mitigate against digital inequalities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If any digital inequalities are identified how can you reduce these? For e.g. if a new service requires online registration you may work with partner organisations to improve digital skills and ensure equitable processes are available if someone is unable to access online. 	
	Response: Face to face meetings have been arranged in all wards in the city in the evenings, which will ensure that hand written or face to face interviews can be undertaken.	

2.6 How will you monitor and evaluate the effect of this work?

A full appraisal of the information collated will be undertaken to ensure the HMO licensing scheme is reaching far and wide and fulfilling its purpose of improving housing conditions across the city for

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



all.

2.7 Will there be any potential impacts on Council staff from protected groups?

No

You should only include the following data if this area of work will potentially have an impact on Council staff. This can be obtained from: Nicole.Powell@coventry.gov.uk

Headcount:

Sex:

Female	
Male	

Age:

16-24	
25-34	
35-44	
45-54	
55-64	
65+	

Disability:

Disabled	
Not Disabled	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

Ethnicity:

White	
Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

Religion:

Any other	
Buddhist	
Christian	
Hindu	
Jewish	
Muslim	
No religion	
Sikh	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

Sexual Orientation:

Heterosexual	
LGBT+	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



3.0 Completion Statement

As the appropriate Head of Service for this area, I confirm that the potential equality impact is as follows:

No impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

Positive impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

Negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

Both positive and negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

4.0 Approval

Signed: Head of Service:	Date:
Name of Director: Andrew Walster	Date sent to Director:
Name of Lead Elected Member: David Welsh	Date sent to Councillor:

Email completed EIA to equality@coventry.gov.uk

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Agenda Item 6

Communities and Neighbourhoods Work Programme 2023-24

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Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

Last updated 16th May 2023

13 July 2023
Review of the Implementation of the Homefinder Allocations Scheme Review of Additional Licensing Scheme
21st September 2023
Local Plan Review Reducing Litter on our Streets – Community Initiative
26th October 2023 7th December 2023 8th February 2023 7th March 2023 2023/2024
Homes for Ukraine Scheme Update on Empty Properties Dog Fouling School Streets Resurfacing and pothole treatment Housing and Homelessness Waste Services Exempt Supported Accommodation

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
13 July 2023	Review of the Implementation of the Homefinder Allocations Scheme	Requested at the meeting on 8 th December.	Cllr Welsh Jim Crawshaw
	Review of Additional Licensing Scheme	A review of the Additional Licensing scheme for the private rented sector	Adrian Chowns Cllr Welsh
21st September 2023	Local Plan Review		Cllr Welsh Chris Styles
	Reducing Litter on our Streets – Community Initiative		Cllr Hetherton Andrew Walster
26th October 2023			
7th December 2023			
8th February 2023			
7th March 2023			
2023/2024	Homes for Ukraine Scheme	To consider the situation with Ukrainian guests once the 12 month hosting arrangements are ending	Cllr Welsh Peter Barnett

Communities and Neighbourhoods Work Programme 2023-24

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Update on Empty Properties	To provide an update on Empty Property Strategy as requested at the meeting on 9.02.23.	Cllr Welsh Davina Blackburn Adrian Chowns
	Dog Fouling	To look in more detail about approached to prevention and enforcement of dog fouling (Public suggestion)	Cllr AS Khan Craig Hickin
	School Streets	The Board requested a follow up item once the experimental traffic regulation orders had been in place and reviewed	Joel Logue Cllr Hetherton
	Resurfacing and pothole treatment	To look at the effectiveness of pothole repairs and resurfacing (Public suggestion)	Neil Cowper Cllr Hetherton
	Housing and Homelessness	Update on services including Affordable House definitions and numbers; Number of properties purchased in Coventry through Right to Buy / Voluntary Right to Buy; Energy efficiency and running costs of modular buildings; Management of Anti-Social Behaviour;	
	Waste Services		
	Exempt Supported Accommodation	To receive an update on progress and outcomes achieved through SHIP funding and any government consultation (SB4?)	Cllr Welsh Jim Crawshaw Adrian Chowns

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