

## Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy Consultation Survey

1) Which one of these categories best describes you? (Choose any one option)

- Coventry Resident - currently Living in Temporary Accommodation Coventry Resident Member of the Public (not a Coventry Resident)
- Local Housing Association (Registered Provider) - Please state name of your organisation

If you are responding as a Local Housing Association please state the name of your organisation

- Voluntary or community sector organisation – Please state name of your organisation

If you are responding as a community sector organisation please state the name of your organisation

- Private Landlord – Please state name of your organisation

If you are responding as a Private Landlord please state the name of your organisation

- Coventry City Council - Employee
- Coventry City Council - Elected Member
- Other - please state

If you have chosen 'other' please state how you are responding.

### Utilities and Council Tax

The Council are proposing to start charging homeless households that live in Temporary Accommodation for their council tax and for the utilities they use.

Currently, depending on the type of accommodation, only some households in private rented accommodation pay their utility costs (gas, water and electricity) and only a limited number of households pay Council Tax. Charging for Council tax, and asking households to pay for the utilities they use, will save the Council approximately £400,000 per year.

Support will be provided to households to help them with budgeting skills needed to secure and maintain permanent accommodation. This is sometimes called being 'tenancy ready'

## Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy Consultation Survey

2) Please tell us whether you agree or disagree that people living in Temporary Accommodation should be responsible for the utilities they use. (Choose any one option)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree Strongly
- Disagree
- Don't Know

**Note:** This proposal only affects households who are provided temporary accommodation by the Council within private rented sector or housing association accommodation.

3) Please tell us whether you agree or disagree that people living in Temporary Accommodation should be responsible for their Council Tax. (Choose any one option)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree Strongly
- Disagree
- Don't Know

**Note:** People in Hotels and B&Bs are not liable for Council Tax.

If you have any comments about utilities and council tax please state below.

### Belongings in Storage

Currently the Council stores homeless households' furniture, and other items, free of charge with a private storage company. Under the proposed Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy, households with items in storage will have to pay the full cost of removals and storage. The Council will continue to arrange for the removal and storage of the furniture. The amount a household will have to pay will be dependent on the amount they put into storage. Prices for storage currently range from £24.00 per week to £72.00 per week and the average cost of removals is £347. Some households do not have items in storage - they will not need to pay anything under the proposed policy. The Council will put in place a repayment scheme to help spread the costs of storage. An affordability assessment will be carried out, where appropriate, to help determine the weekly payment amounts.

4) Please tell us whether you agree or disagree that people living in Temporary Accommodation should pay to keep their belongings in storage. (Choose any one option)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

If you have any comments about storage costs and charging please state below

## Licence Fee

All households who are provided with temporary accommodation complete a housing benefit application. Housing Benefit is a Government scheme designed to help people on low incomes pay their rent and is a means tested benefit. This means some households in temporary accommodation receive full housing benefit and others do not (currently 20% of households in temporary accommodation receive partial housing benefit or none). Working households are normally only entitled to full housing benefit if they earn the same or less than what the government says they need to live on. This is because they are deemed to have 'excess income' - this is money above what the government states a household needs to live on (minus any disregarded income, such as child benefit). Under the proposed policy, 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. Only 20% of all households in Temporary Accommodation are likely to fall into the category of having excess income. How the Council will calculate the amount a household needs to pay will be explained through case studies on the next two pages.

5) 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? (Choose any one option)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't know

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.

Licence Fee - The Affordable Contribution. Approximately, 20% of all households in Temporary Accommodation are likely to be asked to make a rent contribution through a licence fee (because they have 'excess income'). The licence fee will be the capped (maximum) amount the household will be asked to contribute towards the rent. The Council has developed two options for how much the licence fee could be. The licence fee will be capped at the option chosen following consultation OR 65% of the household's excess income (whichever is the lower). The two options are: Option 1 - UP TO the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) - levels are set nationally and are the maximum housing costs a household would receive through Housing Benefit/Universal Credit. Option 2 - UP TO the

## Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy Consultation Survey

median rent for the City - The Median Rent Rate has been based upon the Valuation Office Median Rent Rate for the City.

Property Size – Number of Bedrooms	Council Currently Pays (Average Weekly Rent)	Licence Fee under each Option (Maximum Weekly Contribution)	
		Option 1 - LHA Rate Households Pays	Option 2 - Median Rate Households Pays
Shared Accommodation	£385.00	£69.95	£81.92
1 Bedroom Accommodation	£420.00	£92.05	£126.92
2 Bedroom Accommodation	£455.00	£114.82	£150.00
3 Bedroom Accommodation	£525.00	£132.04	£173.08
4 Bedroom Accommodation	£595.00	£175.79	£230.77

### Important Note!

The Maximum Weekly Rent has been used for the purpose of demonstrating the greatest likely impact. The Weekly Rent on Temporary Accommodation is always higher than permanent accommodation because the properties are fully furnished, include utilities costs and council tax, have higher repair costs and a higher turnover of tenants than permanent accommodation, resulting in rent loss during vacant periods. The Council has reduced the rental charges with providers and are working on a number of projects to source cheaper temporary accommodation.

### Licence Fee (affordable contribution) - Case Studies

The Council would like to consult on how much the licence fee should be - the LHA Rate or Median Rent Rate. The case studies on the next page will help you work through the impact of each option on families in different circumstances.

### Case Study 1

Michael and Sarah Due to the landlord deciding to sell their previous home, Michael (aged 33) and Sarah (aged 26) live in Temporary Accommodation with their two children aged four and one. Michael works 37 hours a week and takes home £1155 per month (after tax and national insurance) and the family receives a total of £315.59 in benefits per week. Their total weekly household income is £582.13 (broken down below).

## Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy Consultation Survey

### Michael and Sarah's Weekly Income

Salary	Maternity Allowance	Working Tax Credit	Child Tax Credit	Child Benefit	TOTAL WEEKLY INCOME
£266.54	£139.58	£24.78	£116.83	£34.40	<b>£582.13</b>

### Current Costs

The cost of their accommodation (how much the Council pay) is £455.00 per week (this includes a £42.90 charge for utilities and £23.38 per week for Council Tax). They have some furniture and belongings in storage which costs £46.92 per week to store and the removal costs were £326.96. The Council currently cover all of these costs. Applying housing benefit regulations Michael and Sarah are deemed to have an excess income of £271.97 per week. Under the proposed policy Michael and Sarah will be asked to pay their utilities, licence fee, council tax and removal and storage costs.

### Michael and Sarah's Outgoings under each Option

POLICY ELEMENT	WEEKLY CHARGES		WHAT MICHAEL AND SARAH WOULD PAY UNDER EACH OPTION	
	What the Council currently pays	What Michael and Sarah Currently Pay	OPTION 1 – Local Housing Allowance at £114.82 per week.	OPTION 2 – Median Rent Rate at £150.00 per week.
<b>Rent contribution</b>	£388.72	£0.00	<b>£114.82</b>	<b>£150.00</b>
Utilities	£42.90	£0.00	£42.90	£42.90
Council Tax	£23.38	£0.00	£23.38	£23.38
Storage	£46.92	£0.00	£46.92	£46.92
Removals*	£12.58	£0.00	£12.58	£12.58
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£479.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£240.60</b>	<b>£275.78</b>
Money Michael and Sarah would have left after charges have been paid (per week):		<b>£582.13</b>	<b>£341.53</b>	<b>£306.35</b>
*Total cost of £326.96 spread over 26 weekly payments. Removal charges would end at week 27.				

### Case Study 2 - Emma

Emma is a lone parent aged 40 with three children, aged 9, 12 and 14. After fleeing domestic abuse the family live in temporary accommodation. Emma works 30 hours a week and takes home £782.00 per month (after tax and national insurance). The family receives a total of £341.42 in benefits per week - her total household weekly income is £521.88 (as broken down below).

## Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy Consultation Survey

Salary	Working Tax Credit	Child Tax Credit	Child Benefit	TOTAL WEEKLY INCOME
£180.46	£72.99	£220.33	£48.10	<b>£521.88</b>

### Current Costs

The cost of her accommodation (the rent the Council pay) is £420.00 per week (this includes £42.90 for utilities and £23.38 for Council tax per week). Emma has some furniture and belongings in storage which costs £46.92 per week to store and the removal costs were £326.96. Applying housing benefit regulations Emma and her family are deemed to have an excess income of £157.93 per week. Under the proposed policy Emma will be asked to pay her utilities and contribute an affordable amount towards the rent (through the licence fee), council tax and removal and storage costs.

POLICY ELEMENT	WEEKLY CHARGES		WHAT EMMA WOULD PAY UNDER EACH OPTION	
	What the Council currently pays	What Emma currently pays	OPTION 1 – Local Housing Allowance at £114.82 per week.	OPTION 2 – Median Rent Rate at £150.00 per week.
<b>Rent contribution</b>	£353.72	£0.00	<b>£102.65</b>	<b>£102.65</b>
<b>Utilities</b>	£42.90	£0.00	£42.90	£42.90
<b>Council Tax</b>	£23.38	£0.00	£23.38	£23.38
<b>Storage</b>	£46.92	£0.00	£46.92	£46.92
<b>Removals*</b>	£12.58	£0.00	£12.58	£12.58
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£432.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£228.43</b>	<b>£228.43</b>
Money Emma would have left after charges have been paid (per week):		<b>£521.88</b>	<b>£293.45</b>	<b>£293.45</b>
*Total cost of £326.96 spread over 26 weekly payments. Removal charges would end at week 27.				

Outgoings under each option compared. In Case Study 1 Michael and Sarah would have to pay £114.82 under the LHA rate and £150.00 under the median rent rate. In Case Study 2 Emma will have to contribute £107.84 under BOTH the LHA and Median Rent Rates. This is because the household contribution will be capped at the option chosen following consultation OR 65% of the

## Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy Consultation Survey

household's excess income (whichever is the lower). In Emma's case 65% of her excess income (£102.65) is less than the capped contribution amounts.

6) Having considered both families circumstances which rate do you think the Council should use as the licence fee? (Choose any one option)

- The Local Housing Allowance Rate
- The Median Rent Rate

**Note:** People on Full Housing Benefit will not be expected to pay anything towards the rent (through a licence fee).

Please explain your answer...

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

### Equalities Questions

These optional questions help us understand how different people are affected by the proposals.

7) How would you describe yourself? (Choose any one option)

- Male
- Female
- In another way
- Prefer not to say

8) Is your gender different from the gender you were assigned at birth, or are you in the process of reassigning it? (Choose any one option)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

9) Which of the following best describes your ethnic background? (Choose any one option)

- White British
- White Irish
- White Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Other White Background
- Mixed White and Black African
- Mixed White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed White and Asian
- Other Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Background
- Asian or Asian British Indian
- Asian or Asian British Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British Chinese
- Other Asian Background
- Black or Black British African
- Black or Black British Caribbean
- Other/Black/African/Caribbean Background
- Arab

## Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy Consultation Survey

- Other
- Prefer not to say

10) What is your sexual orientation? (Choose any one option)

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay Man
- Gay Woman/Lesbian
- Heterosexual/Straight
- Queer
- Other
- Prefer not to say

11) What age group are you in? (Choose any one option)

- Under 16
- 16-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85 or over

12) Do you consider yourself to be? (Choose any one option)

- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- No Religion
- Atheist
- Prefer not to say
- Other

13) Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person? (Choose any one option)

- Yes
- No

Answer this question only if you have chosen Yes for Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

14) How would you describe your impairment? (Please choose as many as apply) (Choose all that apply)

- Hearing Impairment



## Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy Consultation Survey

- Mobility Impairment
- Reduced Physical Capacity
- Visual Impairment not corrected by spectacles or contact lenses
- Learning Disability
- Neurological condition
- Sensory Impairment
- Learning Difficulties
- Speech Impairment
- Mental Health Condition
- Physical Co-ordination Difficulties
- Mental Illness
- Physical Impairment
- Long-standing Illness or Health Condition
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

15) What is your legal marital or civil partnership status? (Choose any one option)

- Never married and never registered a civil partnership
- Married
- Separated, but still legally married
- Divorced
- Widowed In a registered civil partnership
- Separated, but still legally in a civil partnership
- Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved
- Surviving partner from a civil partnership
- Prefer not to say

16) Are you, or have you recently been, pregnant? (Choose all that apply)

- Pregnant
- Had a baby in the last six months
- Breastfeeding
- No
- Not Applicable

17) Are you, or will you soon be, a care leaver? (Choose any one option)

- Yes
- No

18) Do you, or a member of your immediate family, currently serve, or have previously served, in the armed forces? (Choose any one option)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say