

DELIVERING TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR VULNERABLE RESIDENTS



Lichfield
District Council

Cllr Doug Pullen, Leader of Lichfield District Council

Date:	9 April 2024
Agenda Item:	5
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Key Decision?	Yes
Local Ward Members	N/a

CABINET

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This paper introduces a proposal for the council to directly intervene and invest in the current under-provision of temporary accommodation across our district, where it is needed.
- 1.2 There are approximately 32 local individuals and families living in temporary accommodation in our district at any one time, with another five individuals / families who may need to be supported in the short-term. Every year, the council spends approximately £80,000 on this emergency accommodation to support local residents.
- 1.3 Due to a shortage of temporary accommodation in the district, families and individuals are often placed in emergency B&B accommodation, often outside of the district and away from the support networks and local facilities they rely on.
- 1.4 Currently the council holds more than £1.8million in commuted sums and Right to Buy receipts. A commuted sum is something the council can negotiate to receive, where affordable housing cannot be delivered within a housing development site (for example due to land constraints). The council can then invest the commuted sum off-site in affordable housing. The council also receives Right to Buy receipts, generated through Right to Buy sales of the housing stock transferred to Homezone (now Bromford), which can also be used to invest in affordable housing. 2
- 1.5 The council is also expecting to receive a further £1 million in commuted sums in the coming years, although there is no set date for when these receipts will be received, as it will depend on the progress of each related development.
- 1.6 The proposal set out in this paper is for these funds to be invested, through our wholly owned company (LWM Traded Services), to deliver more temporary accommodation across the district, including more 'housing first' housing pathway scheme units to support local rough sleepers.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet approves the spend of commuted sums and Right to Buy receipts, projected to the end of the current financial year, on delivering new temporary accommodation in the district and to delegate the selection of units to the Cabinet Member for Housing & the Local Plan, S151 Officer and Assistant Director for Customer, Resident & Business Services, subject to a completed options appraisal (see 2.3) and council approval of option 2.4.

- 2.2 Cabinet requests the purchase, refitting and management of the properties purchased using the funding agreed, for the purpose of delivering new temporary accommodation is carried out by the council's wholly owned company LWM Traded Services Ltd.
- 2.3 Cabinet acknowledges that a wrap-around support package will be required to ensure the welfare of individuals and families placed in the temporary accommodation units and the ongoing maintenance and management of units delegates the delivery of an options appraisal into the most effective support package delivery model to the Cabinet Member for Housing & the Local Plan, the S151 Officer and Assistant Director for Customer, Resident & Business Services, subject to the costs of the delivery being within approved budgets.
- 2.4 Cabinet recommends to Council to increase the approved budget in the capital programme for new temporary accommodation in the district by **£979,000** from **£1,178,000** to **£2,157,000** with funding provided by additional projected housing capital receipts of **(£979,000)**. Future commuted sums and capital receipts may be allocated to further affordable housing as part of the normal budget monitoring process.

3. Background

Emergency accommodation

- 3.1 There is a limited supply of temporary/emergency accommodation units in the district. The units managed by Bromford on behalf of the district council have very high occupation rates and are generally full, apart from void and turn-around times.
- 3.2 At any anyone time there is usually around 32 individuals/families in temporary accommodation, with approximately five further individuals/families who may imminently need it.
- 3.3 Every year, the council spends approximately £80,000 on temporary accommodation to support local residents, including families with children.
- 3.4 Oftentimes this accommodation can be emergency bed and breakfast accommodation, and oftentimes outside of the district. Bed and breakfast accommodation offers limited/no cooking facilities, and limited facilities outside of the bedroom, making it unsuitable for long-term placements. Legally most placements in bed and breakfast accommodation should be no more than six weeks.
- The average time homeless families spend in B&B accommodation in the district is 4.5 weeks.
 - The average time single people spend in B&B accommodation in the district is 6 weeks.

'Housing first' – housing pathway scheme accommodation

- 3.5 The council has six 'housing first' housing pathway scheme units. The units are occupied by ex-rough sleepers who, in line with 'housing first' principles, have been moved into the units despite having had significant difficulties managing tenancies in the past. Wrap around support for the tenants is currently provided by [Spring Housing](#), a housing charity that specialises in providing homes for those in greatest need.
- 3.6 Four of the units are occupied by individuals who have now successfully maintained a tenancy for several years, thanks to wrap around support provided by Spring, but who still have high support needs. Whilst ideally the ambition would be to now move these customers onto new general needs properties and free-up the housing pathway scheme units for new rough sleepers, the concern is that moving such customers away from a home that has now become their safe haven, may result in them falling back onto the streets, thereby undoing the good work achieved over the past few years.

3.7 As an alternative, the council is keen to replace four of the six units, so that the current successful tenants can remain in their homes indefinitely, with a new package of tapering support provided by Spring for the remainder of the contract period (subject to contract negotiations), and four more previous rough sleepers can be moved into the new units under the existing package of support provided by Spring.

Bore Street shops units

3.8 The council has already approved the investment of £360,000 to support the redevelopment of five city centre affordable housing units. These units will be utilised to support individuals and couples who need to move on from emergency B&B and temporary accommodation to a more secure home, but who have less acute support needs and for whom being city centre based will be beneficial vs potentially challenging. These units should come into operation by the end of 2024 and a package of support will need to be identified for these units as part of the options appraisal.

Alternative options	Committed sums can only be invested into affordable housing. As such, the alternative option is to not invest the funds at this present time, however some committed sums have a clawback period, so it is vital that the sums are invested to deliver positive outcomes in a timely fashion.
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Consultation	Consultation has taken place with the council’s housing strategy team, housing team and with Bromford Housing who has confirmed there is a great need for additional temporary accommodation units across the district.
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Financial implications	The funds available to support temporary accommodation in the district and the amount in the approved capital programme are shown below:			
		Projected 31/03/2024 £000s	36a Bore Street £000s	Affordable housing £000s
	Housing Capital Receipts from former Right to Buy	£1,339	£360	£979
	Affordable Housing Committed Sums	£860	£0	£860
	Funding provided by External Grant	£450	£132	£318
	Total Available	£2,649	£492	£2,157
	Conversion of 36a Bore Street	£492	£492	£0
	Affordable Housing Monies	£1,178	£0	£1,178
	Approved Budgets in the Capital Programme	£1,670	£492	£1,178
	Additional budget to be added to the capital programme			£979
	Recommended revised budget			£2,157

Approved by Section 151 Officer	Yes – awaiting comment from PWC on tax implications. May
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Legal implications	Legal implications will be incorporated and fully explored in the options appraisal (see 2.3).
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Approved by Monitoring Officer	Yes
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Contribution to the	The council’s current Strategic Plan 2020 to 2024 sets out an ambition to enable people to live healthy and active lives, as well as help themselves and others. It also
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delivery of the strategic plan	sets out an ambition to develop prosperity and invest in the future. This proposal to invest commuted sums and Right to Buy receipts into affordable housing will both help people to live healthy lives, it will also give people springboard back into the employment market longer-term to develop their own economic prosperity long-term.
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Equality, diversity and human rights implications	The allocation of new temporary accommodation properties will be delivered in line with the council's existing homelessness policies which have been subject to an equality impact assessment.
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EIA logged by Equalities Officer	Equalities Officer confirmed new EIA not required.
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Crime & safety issues	The creation of further housing pathway scheme units will help to address concerns around the welfare and safety of rough sleepers locally.
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Data assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council spends approximately £80,000 on temporary accommodation to support local residents including families with children. The average time homeless families spend in B&B accommodation in the district is 4.5 weeks. The average time single people spend in B&B accommodation in the district is 6 weeks. The data gathered on housing need demonstrates that most people waiting on the housing register prefer to live in Chase Terrace, Boley Park or Curborough wards. Register for social housing – How many homes are there and how long could I wait? According to the Social Progress Index, the areas with the highest housing need (highest claimants of housing benefit and highest number of homelessness applications are Chadsmead, Stowe, Curborough and Chasetown.
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Environmental impact (including climate change and biodiversity)	N/a
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GDPR / Privacy impact assessment	N/a
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	Risk description & risk owner	Original score (RYG)	How we manage it	New score (RYG)
A	Committed sums need to be returned to developer through lack of timely investment.	Likelihood: Red Impact: Red Score: Red	Develop a robust plan to spend committed sums in line with strategic objectives.	Likelihood: Green Impact: Green Score: Green
B	Homes procured by Lichfield District Council subject to right to buy legislation.	Likelihood: Red Impact: Red Score: Red	Temporary homes will be let through licence, avoiding right to buy legislation and ensuring permanence in delivery of temporary/emergency accommodation to local vulnerable residents.	Likelihood: Green Impact: Green Score: Green
D	Full housing benefit cannot be claimed in relation to supported accommodation provision, due to status of property leaseholder	Likelihood: Red Impact: Red Score: Red	Deliver full options appraisal on leaseholders in relation to new units, to ensure full benefit can be claimed in relation to services provided.	Likelihood: Green Impact: Green Score: Green

Background documents	Council on 14 July 2020 - Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (allocation of Right to Buy Receipts to support delivery of this Strategy)
Relevant web links	