

23 August 2017

CABINET – 4 SEPTEMBER 2017

A meeting of Cabinet will be held at 5.30 pm on Monday 4 September 2017 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Rugby.

Adam Norburn
Executive Director

A G E N D A

PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Minutes.

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2017.

2. Apologies.

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest.

To receive declarations of –

(a) non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;

(b) pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors; and

(c) notice under Section 106 Local Government Finance Act 1992 – non-payment of Community Charge or Council Tax.

Note: Members are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their interests at the commencement of the meeting (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a prejudicial interest, the Member must withdraw from the room unless one of the exceptions applies.

Membership of Warwickshire County Council or any Parish Council is classed as a non-pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct. A Member does not need to declare this interest unless the Member chooses to speak on a matter relating to their membership. If the Member does not wish to speak on the matter, the Member may still vote on the matter without making a declaration.

4. Question Time.

Notice of questions from the public should be delivered in writing, by fax or e-mail to the Executive Director at least three clear working days prior to the meeting (no later than Tuesday 29 August 2017).

Growth and Investment Portfolio

5. Warwickshire County Council Children's Centre Services.

Corporate Resources Portfolio

6. Finance and Performance Monitoring 2017/18 – Quarter 1.

7. Rate Relief for Ratepayers.

Communities and Homes Portfolio

8. Housing Financial Assistance Policy.

9. Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group Recommendations.

Environment and Public Realm Portfolio

Nothing to report to this meeting.

The following item contains reports which are to be considered en bloc subject to any Portfolio Holder requesting discussion of an individual report

10. Woodside Park Sewerage Charges/Mobile Home Regulations.

11. Risk Management Strategy.

12. Implementation of recent revisions to the Equality Act 2010.

13. Motion to Exclude the Public under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

To consider the following resolution:

“under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.”

PART 2 – EXEMPT INFORMATION

Growth and Investment Portfolio

Nothing to report to this meeting

Corporate Resources Portfolio

1. Insurance portfolio renewal.

2. Replacement of current Document Management System with an integrated Revenues and Benefits Solution.

Communities and Homes Portfolio

Nothing to report to this meeting.

Environment and Public Realm Portfolio

3. Resourcing the Council's Safety and Resilience Team.

The following item contains reports which are to be considered en bloc subject to any Portfolio Holder requesting discussion of an individual report

Nothing to report to this meeting.

Any additional papers for this meeting can be accessed via the website.

The Reports of Officers (Ref. CAB 2017/18 – 3) are attached.

Membership of Cabinet:

Councillors Stokes (Chairman), Mrs Crane, Mrs Parker, Ms Robbins and Mrs Timms.

CALL- IN PROCEDURES

Publication of the decisions made at this meeting will normally be within three working days of the decision. Each decision will come into force at the expiry of five working days after its publication. This does not apply to decisions made to take immediate effect. Call-in procedures are set out in detail in Standing Order 15 of Part 3c of the Constitution.

If you have any general queries with regard to this agenda please contact Claire Waleczek, Senior Democratic Services Officer (01788 533524 or e-mail claire.waleczek@rugby.gov.uk). Any specific queries concerning reports should be directed to the listed contact officer.

If you wish to attend the meeting and have any special requirements for access please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Warwickshire County Council Children's Centre Services

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date: 4th September 2017

Report Director: Head of Growth and Investment

Portfolio: Growth and Investment

Ward Relevance: All

Prior Consultation: Senior Management Team

Contact Officer: Tom Kittendorf

Public or Private: Public

Report subject to Call-In: No

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: No

This report relates to the following priority(ies):

- Corporate Priorities:**
- Enable Residents to live healthy and independent lives
 - Understand our communities and enable people to take an active part in them

Statutory / Policy Background: None

Summary: WCC is proposing a remodel of its Children's Centres and is considering different ways to deliver services for local children and their families.

There are 39 existing Centres across Warwickshire, 12 of which are proposed for conversion to Family Hubs, with the remaining 27 subject to reassessment for alternative options and potential closure.

The proposals highlight a saving of £1.1million towards WCC's requirement to reduce its budget by £67million by 2020.

Public consultation is open until 11 September 2017

Financial Implications:

None

Risk Management Implications:

None

Environmental Implications:

None

Legal Implications:

None

Equality and Diversity:

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken by Warwickshire County Council. A copy is available as part of the agenda on the Council's website and a copy has been placed in the Members' Room for information.

Options:

WCC outline proposal includes:
Retain: Boughton Leigh, Claremont and Oakfield Centres
Reassess & Potential Closure: Cawston & Dunchurch, Hillmorton, Long Lawford, Newbold and Wolston

Recommendation:

The response to the Warwickshire County Council proposals for the remodelling of Children's Centres, including Rugby borough provision before the deadline of 11 September 2017, as at Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To ensure appropriate Children Centre provision is maintained across Rugby borough including Town Centre and rural locations.

Cabinet – 4 September 2017

Warwickshire County Council Children Centre Services

Report of the Head of Growth and Investment

Recommendation:

The response to the Warwickshire County Council proposals for the remodelling of Children's Centres, including Rugby borough provision before the deadline of 11 September 2017, as at Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.

1. Introduction and Background

Warwickshire County Council is proposing changes to how services are provided to local children and their families by remodelling its Children's Centre and considering ways to make sure families who use them get the right support.

Children's Centres offer a range of family services to parents, prospective parents and young children (0-5) across Warwickshire. Services include childcare, early years learning and school readiness, parenting support, health and wellbeing advice and employment, finance and adult education support.

Warwickshire County Council must ensure the sufficient provision of Children's Centres under the 2006 Childcare Act.

There are currently 39 Children's Centres in Warwickshire, 7 of which are situated in Rugby borough.

Warwickshire County Council is proposing to convert 12 Children's Centre in to Family Hubs. Family Hubs will be in areas of greatest need and where targeted support would be believed most beneficial.

The remaining 27 Centres are to be reassessed with opportunities within the local community to be explored. Consideration will be given to reduced resources and the future suitability of each centre based on access, location, and whether there are alternative community based venues nearby.

In Rugby borough, there are 3 proposed Family Hubs to be located at Boughton Leigh, Claremont and Oakfield.

Centres subject to reassessment including alternative options and potential closure include; Cawston & Dunchurch, Hillmorton, Long Lawford, Newold and Wolston.

The 27 total centres not identified to become Family Hubs will become 'Spokes' or outreach sites. Consequently, existing Children's Centres may be assessed as not meeting current and future needs and will cease to be funded by the County Council.

The proposal to remodel Children's Centres will save £1.12million as part of the Council's need to reduce its budget by £67million by 2020.

Particular attention for members surrounds the need for remaining centres to align with the regeneration strategy, ensuring the borough's most deprived neighbourhoods have access to relevant children's services. The proposed reassessment and potential closure of Newbold may affect the Council's strategy aims and objectives.

Officer feedback includes the suitability of school sites serving the community needs of which the current facilities of Newbold, Overslade and Brownsover are situated.

Public consultation is being conducted online at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask until 11th September 2017. A copy of the questionnaire is attached at Appendix 1.

2. Conclusion

Warwickshire County Council have proposed changes to Children's Centre services as part of overall budget saving of £67million.

Across Rugby borough it is proposed 3 of 7 Rugby Children's Centres are to be remodelled and developed in to 'Family Hubs'. The remaining 4 facilities will be subject to reassessment and potential closure.

Public consultation is open until 11 September 2017, available online at: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask or www.surveymonkey.co.uk/familyhubs

A suggested response from this Council is attached at Appendix 2.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 4 September 2017

Subject Matter: Warwickshire County Council Children's Centre Services

Originating Department: Growth and Investment

List of Background Papers

WCC Children's Centre Consultation PDF

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

Paper Questionnaire Version

We put children at the heart of all we do.

We want to make sure children have the best possible start in life and we are committed to working with families, services and communities, directing people toward easy to access support based on need in order to keep children safe, healthy and happy.

Context

Warwickshire County Council is looking at new ways to offer services and support to children and their families, and in particular those under 5.

Under the 2006 Childcare Act Warwickshire County Council must ensure the sufficient provision of Children's Centres in its area to meet the support needs of all local parents and carers, prospective parents and young children.

There are currently 39 Children's Centres in Warwickshire offering a range of family services to parents, prospective parents and young children (0-5) across Warwickshire. Services include childcare, early years learning and school readiness, parenting support, health and wellbeing advice and employment, finance and adult education support.

What is this consultation about?

The council is proposing changes to how services are provided to local children and their families by remodelling its Children's Centres and considering different ways to make sure families who use them get the right support for the right issue at the right time. If you use or have an interest in these services we want to know what you think of our ideas and invite you to take part in our public consultation.

What will happen with the information that we gather?

All comments, feedback and information we receive will be used to inform how future 0-5 years services are delivered. You will not, in any way, be identifiable in the survey analysis from your responses and any comments will be anonymous. The findings from the consultation will be presented to Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet, for their approval to commence implementing the recommendations, and then be published. All data will be stored securely and erased within four years. Please do not provide any additional correspondence to our surveys, as personal information may be disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998. If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, including your contact details, please tell us why, but be aware that, under the Freedom of Information Act, we cannot always guarantee confidentiality. For further information see www.warwickshire.gov.uk/privacy or contact our Customer Service Centre on 01926 410410.

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

A bit about you and your interest in the consultation

We'd like to ask you some questions to help us understand how you would like us to reshape services. We want to make sure we talk to as many different people as possible so please can you tell us a bit about you and your interest in the consultation.

* 1. What best describes you? **Please tick all that apply.**

- Parent/grandparent/carer
- Children's Centre staff
- Children's Centre Advisory Board
- Early Years setting or provider
- Warwickshire County Council staff
- Health partner
- Volunteer
- Childminder
- General public
- Partner organisation (please specify below)
- Prefer not to answer

Other or partner organisation (please specify)

* 2. Please select the Warwickshire district or borough where you live, or work if you are responding on behalf of an organisation. **Please tick all that apply.**

- North Warwickshire Borough
- Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough
- Rugby Borough
- Stratford-on-Avon District
- Warwick District
- Countywide
- I live outside Warwickshire
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

3. We will only ever use your address details to allow for geographical analysis on local services. We will not use your address details to identify individuals.

What is your postcode? If you are responding on behalf of yourself and your family please put your home postcode, or that of the organisation if on behalf of the organisation. Alternatively, leave this box blank. Please be reassured we will not use this information to identify you. It will be used to understand different needs by area.

Please fill in the box below.

* 4. Do you have any children and/or caring responsibility for any children? **Please tick one box only.**

- Yes
- No
- I'm responding on behalf of an organisation
- Prefer not to answer

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

Your children

* 5. How old is your child/children or the child/children you care for? **Please tick all that apply.**

- 0-11 months
- 1 year old
- 2 years old
- 3 years old
- 4 years old
- 5 - 11 years old
- 12 - 16 years old
- 17 - 18 years old
- 19 years old and over
- I do not have children
- Prefer not to answer

* 6. Would you describe any of your children as having health or development needs that require additional support? **Please tick one answer only**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

Commenting on the proposal

* 7. We'd now like to ask you your thoughts on the proposal in the consultation document - link here to view the details.

1st column - What services do you think need to be provided for children and families in your local area? **Please answer for all services - yes, no, don't mind or don't know in the 1st column**

2nd column - And of the services you say yes to in the 1st column, which do you think are the ones needed most? **In the 2nd column, please rank their importance 1-5 where 1 is most needed**
Leave any others blank please.

	Services needed	My top 5 most needed services (where 1 is the MOST needed)
Access to mental health support for children and adults	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Access to brief interventions for low mood/loneliness	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
School Health & Wellbeing Service	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Health Visiting	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Health and Wellbeing Services for advice on a range of issues such as healthy eating, child development, oral health, safety, exercise, emotional wellbeing.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Housing advice	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Support into employment (including adult education)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Income maximisation & budgeting	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Debt advice	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Understanding finances/access to welfare	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Access to support for families with Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	Services needed	My top 5 most needed services (where 1 is the MOST needed)
Mediation/relationship support	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Family support and advice	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Parenting courses	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Attachment support programmes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Parental support and education	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Access to family information	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Speech, language and communication advice and support	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
School readiness programmes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Peer support to parents and carers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Library led activities	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Stay and play	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Early learning	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Prefer not to answer	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>	

* 8. Of the 39 Children's Centres, it is proposed we will convert 12 into Family Hubs in areas of greatest need and where targeted support would be most beneficial. They would be located as follows:

North Warwickshire Borough - Atherstone

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough - Camp Hill, St Michael's, Stockingford and Abbey

Rugby Borough - Boughton Leigh, Claremont and Oakfield

Stratford-on-Avon District - Alcester

Warwick District - Lillington, Sydenham and Westgate

The Family Hub will be a place where children and families can access a range of services for 0-19 year olds (up to 25 years for children with disabilities) including: Early Years services, parental support and education, financial support and advice, health and wellbeing support and advice.

In three of these hubs across the county, we propose exploring whether these services can be delivered alongside wider services to families and adults through proposed Community Hubs. It is intended that family hubs will deliver a wide range of services to children, young people, families and adults and may link with further Community Hubs in the future.

Underpinning the service delivery are the key principles of safeguarding and providing the right support, for the right issue, at the right time.

With less money it is important we target our remaining resources where they are most needed. We have to consider the future suitability of each Centre based on access, location and whether there are alternative community based venues nearby.

The aim is to help communities thrive with services which fit the needs of those living there and ensure the most vulnerable in our communities are safeguarded.

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the idea of creating Family Hubs?

Please select one option.

Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any comments to make?

* 9. The proposal is to create 12 Family Hubs across Warwickshire.

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the number of Family Hubs proposed for your area? **Please choose one option per row.**

	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree
1 in North Warwickshire Borough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 in Rugby Borough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1 in Stratford-on-Avon District	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 in Warwick District	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any comments to make?

* 10. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree that these locations meet your needs? **Please choose one option per row.**

	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree
North Warwickshire Borough - Atherstone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough - Camp Hill, St Michael's, Stockingford, Abbey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rugby Borough - Boughton Leigh, Claremont and Oakfield	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stratford-on-Avon District - Alcester	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Warwick District - Lillington, Sydenham and Westgate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any comments to make?

11. The creation of 12 Family Hubs may mean that some of the remaining 27 Children's Centres become outreach sites but some may not be funded by Warwickshire County Council in future if they do not meet current and future needs.

Where the existing Children's Centres may work as outreach sites, there will need to be conversations with the community based on the available funding and whether there is capacity from the community (or an alternative provider) to take responsibility for the buildings and deliver the services that are wanted by children and families in the area.

We will explore any opportunities within the local community and providers to continue to offer services at the remaining 27 Centres. In doing this we will have to consider the reduced resources available and the future suitability of each Centre based on access, location and whether there are alternative community based venues nearby. We want to make sure that all our families in need have access to family support, wherever they live in the county. In places where the Children's Centres may not continue in their current buildings, we remain committed to retaining and building up the family support service.

What could be done with the remaining 27 Children's Centres? How else could they be used for children and families? **Please write your answer in the box below.**

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

Commenting on the proposal continued

* 12. We want to promote self-help, independence and resilience, but provide assistance for those who may be in need of greater support. The way we deliver services in the future may mean fewer buildings but better quality services, and a broader range. Services could be delivered from a number of sites such as libraries or other community buildings.

Which of these places do you currently access services for children and families at? **Please choose all that apply.**

And which would you feel comfortable accessing services for children and families at in future? **Please choose all that apply.**

If you currently use a place, please also tick that you feel comfortable accessing it.

	Currently access	Would feel comfortable accessing
Leisure centres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hospitals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GP practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Halls attached to other places of worship e.g. mosque, temple	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Church halls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Village halls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community centres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Centres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family Hubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

* 13. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. **Please choose one box per row.**

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Neither agree nor disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

I am aware of the opportunities to volunteer my time to support the delivery of services in my local area.

I currently access services/ support (such as a parent and toddler group or an informal network of friends) which are delivered through a local voluntary or community group

I am aware of the range of services which are delivered by voluntary and community organisations within my local area

I would find it more convenient if services were all in one place

I would be happy to access services for children and families from somewhere other than Children's Centres

Delivering services for children and families close to my home is essential to me

Do you have any comments to make?

* 14. Increasingly, across the country, services are being delivered in different and more flexible ways through the use of 'hub and spoke' models. For example, delivering some services centrally (at a 'hub'), with mobile outreach services and activities delivered at other sites such as community buildings (or 'spokes').

Which of the following services are most important to provide locally at outreach sites? **Please tick up to 10 services.**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to mental health support for children and adults | <input type="checkbox"/> Family support and advice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to brief interventions for low mood/loneliness | <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting courses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Health & Wellbeing Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment support programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Visiting | <input type="checkbox"/> Parental support and education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Wellbeing Services for advice on a range of issues such as healthy eating, child development, oral health, safety, exercise, emotional wellbeing. | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to family information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing advice | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech, language and communication advice and support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support into employment (including adult education) | <input type="checkbox"/> School readiness programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Income maximisation & budgeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer support to parents and carers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Debt advice | <input type="checkbox"/> Library led activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding finances/access to welfare | <input type="checkbox"/> Stay and play |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to support for families with Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) | <input type="checkbox"/> Early learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mediation/relationship support | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

Additional thoughts

15. What else could be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal, if adopted? **Please write your answer in the box below.**

16. And what could be done to make it successful? **Please write your answer in the box below.**

17. Do you have any other comments or suggestions in relation to this proposal and how we can continue to provide services for those aged 0-5 and their families? **Please write your answer in the box below.**

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

Children's Centres

We'd like to know about your usage of Children's Centres.

* 18. Do you use Children's Centres? **Please choose one answer only.**

- Yes - as a parent or as part of my work
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

Children's Centre usage

* 19. Which Children's Centres' services have you **used in the last 12 months**? **Please tick all that apply or choose none of these if you haven't used any.**

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, or have visited as part of your work please tick 'As part of my work' **only**.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abbey Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Oakfield Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcester & District Children's Centre - including Bidford and Salford Priors | <input type="checkbox"/> Park Lane Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atherstone Early Years Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Polesworth Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Badger Valley Children's Centre (Shipston) | <input type="checkbox"/> Rainbow Children's Centre - including Smorrall Lane, Keresley Newland Primary School or Newdigate Primary School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boughton Leigh Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Riversley Park Children's Centre - including Our Lady & St Joseph Catholic Academy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulkington Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Southam & District Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camp Hill Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> St. Johns Children's Centre (Kenilworth) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cawston Children's Centre – including Dunchurch | <input type="checkbox"/> St. Michael's Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Claremont Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Stockingford Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clopton and District Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Stratford Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coleshill Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Studley & District Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hillmorton Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Sydenham Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kenilworth Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Warwick Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kingsbury Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Wellies Children's Centre (Wellesbourne) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kingsway Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Westgate Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ladybrook Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Whitnash Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lighthorne Heath & District Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Wolston Children's Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lillington Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> As part of my work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long Lawford Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> None of these |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newbold Riverside Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newburgh Children's Centre | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

* 20. Which Children's Centre is the main Centre you use the most? Please choose **one only** or choose **none of these if you don't use any**

Which Children's Centre is the nearest to your house? Please choose **one only** or choose **don't know if you don't know**.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, or have visited as part of your work please tick 'As part of my work' **only**.

	Main Centre Used (tick one box)	Closest Centre to your house (tick one box)
Abbey Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alcester & District Children's Centre - including Bidford and Salford Priors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Atherstone Early Years Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Badger Valley Children's Centre (Shipston)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boughton Leigh Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bulkington Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Camp Hill Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cawston Children's Centre – including Dunchurch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Claremont Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clopton and District Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coleshill Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hillmorton Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kenilworth Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kingsbury Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kingsway Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ladybrook Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lighthorne Heath & District Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Main Centre Used (tick one box)	Closest Centre to your house (tick one box)
Lillington Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Long Lawford Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newbold Riverside Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newburgh Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oakfield Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Park Lane Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Polesworth Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rainbow Children's Centre - including Smorrall Lane, Keresley Newland Primary School or Newdigate Primary School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Riversley Park Children's Centre - including Our Lady & St Joseph Catholic Academy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Southam & District Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
St. Johns Children's Centre (Kenilworth)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
St. Michael's Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stockingford Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratford Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Studley & District Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sydenham Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Warwick Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wellies Children's Centre (Wellesbourne)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Westgate Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Main Centre Used (tick one box)	Closest Centre to your house (tick one box)
Whitnash Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wolston Children's Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As part of my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of these	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>	

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

Equality Monitoring Information

Warwickshire County Council is committed to promoting and achieving equality and fairness for all. The information requested below helps us monitor and understand the profile of our customers, staff and members. It is confidential and anonymous, and it cannot be attributed back to you.

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty section of the Equality Act 2010, we have a legal duty to understand the communities we serve, our customer profile and the profile of our staff and members. This Duty can only be met by effective monitoring of the protected characteristics as identified in the Equality Act 2010.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation you may not feel these questions are relevant. However, we would like to ensure we have fair access to the consultation for all.

* 21. What is your gender identity? **Please tick one box only.**

- Male (including trans man)
- Female (including trans woman)
- Other including non-binary
- Prefer not to answer

* 22. How old are you? **Please tick one box only.**

- Under 18
- 18 – 29
- 30 – 44
- 45 – 59
- 60 – 74
- 75 +
- Prefer not to answer

* 23. Do you have a long standing illness or disability? (physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.)? **Please tick one box only.**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

* 24. What is your ethnicity? **Please tick one box only.**

- White – English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish / British
- White - Irish
- White – Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- White - Any other background please specify
- Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed - White and Black African
- Mixed - White and Asian
- Mixed - Any other mixed background
- Arabic
- Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British - Chinese
- Asian or Asian British - Indian
- Asian or Asian British Any other background
- Black or Black British - African
- Black or Black British - Caribbean
- Black or Black British - Any other background
- Any other Ethnic group. Please specify
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

* 25. What is your religion? **Please tick one box only.**

- Buddhist
- Christian
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Sikh
- None
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

* 26. Do you consider yourself to be...? **Please tick one box only.**

Heterosexual or straight

Gay or lesbian

Bisexual

Prefer not to answer

Other (please specify)

Reshaping Services for Children and Families - Family Hubs Consultation

Final questions

We just have 2 final questions before we come to the end of the survey.

* 27. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status? **Please tick one box only.**

- Employee in full-time job
- Employee in part-time job
- Self-employed
- Full-time education at school, college or university
- Looking after the home or family
- Unemployed and available for work
- Not working due to illness or disability
- Wholly retired from work
- On a government supported training programme
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

* 28. Please describe how you feel about your household income? **Please tick one box only.**

- Living comfortably on current income
- Coping on current income
- Finding it difficult on current income
- Finding it very difficult on current income
- Prefer not to answer

* 29. Many thanks for taking the time to respond to our consultation. How easy or difficult would you say it was to answer the questions? **Please tick one star only.**

Difficult

Easy



Other (please specify)

Proposed Rugby Borough Council Response to WCC Children's Centre Consultation

The proposed remaining children's centres must align with Rugby Borough Council's Regeneration Strategy led by the LSP, signed up to by Warwickshire County Council (WCC) to ensure that Rugby's most deprived neighbourhoods will have access to the relevant children's services. With this in mind, Rugby Borough Council Officers feel that the centre in Newbold must be kept open, ensuring the top three deprived neighbourhoods would be covered.

With regard to the physical locations, all three sites in Newbold, Overslade and Brownsover are on school grounds which offer security and confidentiality for visiting clients but are not suitable to be run by community associations and groups with wider community aims.

The Claremont Centre is a stand-alone building that Officers suggest would be suitable for Benn and Town Centre based community groups to manage. Benn and the Town Centre has a strong network and infrastructure of Community Organisations whereas the three most deprived neighbourhoods have a fragile community infrastructure.





EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/ ANALYSIS (EqIA)

PL-CSOC-21 Children's Centres

To ensure sustainability of services to the most vulnerable and hard to reach, the OOP 20/20 savings target of £1.12M will be delivered via a community led approach to specialist early years community development. Revised funding formulae have been developed to look at different ways of distributing the budget in order to focus on areas of deprivation and poor school readiness. This will ensure funding will be allocated to those communities that have more vulnerable children and families. The 0-5 offer may be provided in a different way at some Children's Centres by community groups, voluntary, private and independent early year's providers and schools. The proposal being consulted on in summer 2017 is for 12 locations to remain designated as Children's Centres, with the ability to operate differently using a hub and spoke model. The vision for 2020 is to integrate the commissioning of Children's Centres with the commissioning of health visitors and family nurse partnerships to provide an enhanced range of services at Family and Community Hubs with the focus on services rather than buildings. The change to children's centres is foundational to this vision, and to longer term sustainability.

Equality Impact Assessment/ Analysis (EqIA)

Group	People
Business Units/Service Area	Children & Families
Plan/ Strategy/ Policy/ Service being assessed	OOP PG_CF_14-18 OPP PG_CF_05 £1.12M savings
Is this is a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	Existing Children's Centres Group/Collaboration Model (Contracts 1 st September 2014 – 31 st August 2017); newly commissioned (Sep 2014) following service re-design resulting from budget reductions. October 2014
EqIA Review team – List of members	Bill Basra Fiona McCaul
Date of this assessment	29/6/17
Signature of completing officer (to be signed after the EqIA has been completed)	Bill Basra
Are any of the outcomes from this assessment likely to result in complaints from existing services users and/ or members of the public? If yes please flag this with your Head of Service and the Customer Relations Team as soon as possible.	Yes, Head of Service aware.
Name and signature of Head of Service (to be signed after the EqIA has been completed)	 Beate Wagner
Signature of GLT Equalities Champion (to be signed after the EqIA is completed and signed by the completing officer)	Chris Lewington 

A copy of this form including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Group Equalities Champion and the Corporate Equalities & Diversity Team

Working for Warwickshire



Form A1

INITIAL SCREENING FOR STRATEGIES/POLICIES/FUNCTIONS FOR EQUALITIES RELEVANCE TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION, PROMOTE EQUALITY AND FOSTER GOOD RELATIONS



High relevance/priority



Medium relevance/priority



Low or no relevance/priority

Note:

1. Tick coloured boxes appropriately, and depending on degree of relevance to each of the equality strands
2. Summaries of the legislation/guidance should be used to assist this screening process

Business Unit/Services:	Relevance/Risk to Equalities																													
	Gender			Race			Disability			Sexual Orientation			Religion/Belief			Age			Gender Reassignment			Pregnancy/Maternity			Marriage/Civil Partnership (only for staff):					
State the Function/Policy /Service/Strategy being assessed:	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
0-5 Community Redesign of Children's Centre Services	✓					✓		✓				✓			✓	✓					✓	✓								✓
Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty for example or our most geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes please explain how.																								YES						
Warwickshire's 39 Children's Centres currently deliver the same offer across Warwickshire, based on a model of 10 groups and collaborations. The model: - proposes a targeted approach that focuses on delivery of services rather than the maintenance of buildings - proposes to ensure that services can be accessed easily by the most vulnerable children & families that are hard to reach. - produces greater integration under the Children & Families Transformation agenda.																								YES						

- will deliver a budget reduction of £1.12M to this service ensuring resources remains focussed on the most vulnerable children, families and communities in Warwickshire.
By working with communities and early years providers we hope to reduce the impact on communities in a manner that is most appropriate to need. Any impact will be in areas of greater affluence where there is more community capacity and resilience, so reducing the impact on the most vulnerable.

Are your proposals likely to impact on a **carer** who looks after older people or people with disabilities? **If yes please explain how.**

YES

An overall reduction in services may impact on families who have children with disabilities. Currently Childrens centres work closely with IDS in supporting referrals and some centres offer 2Help nurture nurseries that will be supporting some children with disabilities.

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Form A2 – Details of Plan/ Strategy/ Service/ Policy

<u>Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining</u>	
(1) What are the aims and objectives of Plan/Strategy/Service/Policy?	<p>This presents the opportunity for greater promotion of family hubs and whole family approach and for the consolidation of services and centres where the need is greatest and to ensure that services can be accessed easily by the most vulnerable children & families that are hardest to reach.</p> <p>In order to remain sustainable, £1.12M savings must be made from managing and providing Children’s Centres service, mandated in the OOP2020 plan but this plan will ensure that WCC will uphold its statutory duties so that every child in Warwickshire will have the best start in life that builds independence, school readiness and resilience.</p>
(2) How does it fit with Warwickshire County Council’s wider objectives?	<p>WCC core purpose of:</p> <p><i>“Develop and sustain a society that looks after its most vulnerable members, delivers appropriate, quality services at the right time, and seeks opportunities for economic growth and innovation.”</i></p> <p>In additions the work links with the following plans, strategies and programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Organisational Plan 2020 • Smart Start Strategy 2016-2020: Giving Warwickshire’s children the best start in life • Community Capacity Programme
(3) What are the expected outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A re-focussing of resources on the most vulnerable children, families and communities in Warwickshire to improve their outcomes and support children to be school ready • A budget reduction of £1.12M
(4) Which of the groups with protected characteristics is this intended to benefit? (see form A1 for list of protected groups)	Age – as a result reshaped 0-5 provision

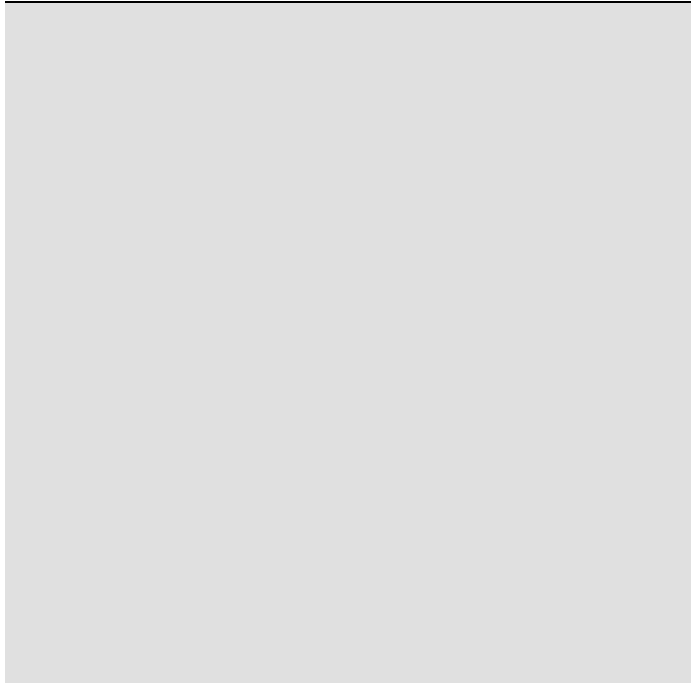
<u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</u>	
(1) What type and range of evidence or information have you used to help you make a judgement about the plan/ strategy/ service/ policy?	Smart Start Foundation Programme has a Needs Assessment and has undertaken extensive asset mapping and engagement work across all communities of Warwickshire, recognising the protected characteristics. This has helped informed the Smart Start Strategy and has helped inform proposals. We have also relied on extensive work undertaken by Commissioning since 2015.
(2) Have you consulted on the plan/ strategy/ service/policy and if so with whom?	Consultation 29 th June to 11 th September 2017 See Cabinet paper of 15 th June 2017
(3) Which of the groups with protected characteristics have you consulted with?	<p>The reduction in services has the potential to impact upon our ability to engage with children and parent/carers across all protected characteristic and of no specific protected characteristic. No specific consultation or those with protected characteristics has been undertaken at this point; consultation is taking place as per (2) above.</p> <p>However as part of the consultation and redesign we shall be taking account of the learning and feedback from community members involved in the Smart Start engagement and asset mapping programme undertaken in 2016 and this will be included in the EIA Action Plan accordingly. This involved a total of 1,127 parents, 42% had used Children Centres' often and 58% did not use children's centres very often. The methods incorporated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 574 online survey responses • 377 Face to face interviews • 36 Focus groups <p>The range of methods used was to reach those who would not normally engage or have less of a voice and in relation to engaging families within the protected characteristic ;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17% of the respondents identified as non- white British • 10% stated that English was not the first language spoken at home • A total of 6% considered themselves to disabled • 10% stated they had at least one child with disability • When asked <i>if anyone in the household was employed?</i> 13% of the respondents said no; this is broadly in line with the 11% of households in receipt of out of work benefit • 12% of respondents identified as receiving lone parent benefit

Stage 3 – Analysis of impact

Through the re-design and reduction in budget, there will be an inevitable impact on all services and service users, which will affect all families including those with protected characteristics. We will consider the impact of groups with protected characteristics alongside how we support their consultation within the process as part of our planning. All relevant characteristics have been taken into account in the design of the consultation survey which captures information in regard to a range of protected characteristics; we also considered it in the planning and delivery of the consultation events; consideration of impact forms a key part of how the consultation questionnaires are analysed and fed into the redesign of 0-5 services.

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<p>(1) From your data and consultations is there any adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group which could amount to discrimination?</p> <p>If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 16% of 0-4s in Warwickshire were identified in the 2011 Census as having an ethnicity other than White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British/Irish. • The ethnic breakdown varies across the county and therefore some children's centre groups may identify some communities within their target groups. • Those with English as a second language may need to use interpretation and translation services in order to gain access to provision. 	<p style="text-align: center;">DISABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduced range of services may have an impact for families with disabled child or disabled parents as a consequence of reduced provision distance to travel to services, lack of transport and use of community provision lacking specialist support. • Children's Centre Groups and Collaborations collect data on children with special educational needs and disabilities currently and some have chosen to target services for these groups 	<p style="text-align: center;">GENDER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service specification requires that services are accessible at a range of times to all members of the family. Whilst both males and females are registered for Children centres; females are, the predominate users. • As a result both genders will be potentially affected with larger number of females affected • Targeted groups such as 'father groups' may no longer be available due to redesign and lack of resources to fund them. • A potential reduction in centres may make access an issue with lack of transport and access to a car • A much larger proportion of staffing within the Children's Centres is female and therefore women will be disproportionately affected by potential re-design, re-structures, reduction in hours, etc.
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AGE

- Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014, there were 229 births to teenage mothers in Warwickshire:
- Teenage parents may be affected by a potential reduction in services however the Family Nurse Partnership is a targeted programme aimed at vulnerable teenage parents.
- Teenage parents are identified as target groups by some children's centre groups.

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		<p>PREGNANCY MATERNITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential reduction in services will inevitably have an impact on this key client group for children's centres. • The service redesign and move to integrated services with Health Visiting and Family Nurse Partnership is to help mitigate the adverse impact and support a universal offer for pregnant women. 	
<p>(2) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?</p>	<p>We are building on what parents and carers have already told us about services through the Smart Start Programme; the engagement work to take place in the Autumn 2016. We aim to engage parents from a range of protected characteristic by using a range of methods and working with other organisation that have the relationship with these groups where appropriate.</p> <p>Although this EIA focuses on the re-design of the service, consideration will be given to the impact of options on staff. Some of the staff within centres may fall within groups with protected characteristics. It is likely staffing structures will alter, hours may reduce and some roles will be lost. With significant budget savings to make this will be an inevitable consequence and therefore can be justified on cost grounds.</p>		

<p>(3)What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? (this should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)</p>	<p>Consultation Alignment with development of Community Hubs, Health Visitor re-commissioning Modelling of key alternatives based on feedback Detailed evaluation and analysis of outcomes and impacts Final detailed proposal to Cabinet Q3 2017/18 Detailed implementation planning and engagement</p>
<p>(4) How does the plan/strategy/service/policy contribute to promotion of equality? If not what can be done?</p>	<p>By re-targeting our services to those most in need having regard to local circumstances</p>
<p>(5) How does the plan/strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not what can be done?</p>	<p>WCC works closely with a range of partners across Children Services and the community and has been undertaking a programme of Protect training in line DfE requirements. Warwickshire County Council is committed to addressing inequality and discrimination, evidenced through their policies, practice and staff development and training. This proposal will promote community cohesion by operating the services in a more integrated way rather than separately.</p>
<p>(6) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes how can they be overcome?</p>	<p>The model places more emphasis on vulnerable families. With significant budget savings to make, and in order to keep barriers to access to a minimum, we will need to explore a range of options for service delivery potentially involving both community and provider led services. During the consultation we will not only be keen to hear from users of Childrens Centres but also those families who have not, in order to better understand any barriers to access. When we undertake the engagement and consultation we will be using data we gather and use this to inform the decision making process. We will consider the impact of those families within the protected characteristics.</p>
<p>(7) What are the likely positive and negative consequences for health and wellbeing as a result of this plan/strategy/service/policy?</p>	<p>Children's Centres were established to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children and parents and a reduction in resources may reduce the range of health related services available.</p> <p>Through the consultation and service redesign we will ensure a wide range of partners are engaged to help mitigate the impact and that effect sign posting is in place to support families. The broadening of the age range will also extend and cover a broader remit.</p> <p>Staff well-being may also be affected by the uncertainty of redesign, tender process and potential changes to services, which may include staff redundancies. The providers all are aware of their responsibility to their staff and we will endeavour to work with them and keep them engaged through the process to reduce the impact where possible.</p>

<p>(8) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact on population health? (This should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)</p>	<p>This issue will be consulted on and addressed following the consultation process</p>
<p>(9) Will the plan/strategy/service/policy increase the number of people needing to access health services? If so, what steps can be put in place to mitigate this?</p>	<p>The key health services offered through children's centres relate to universal pre/post natal provision, so numbers should not be affected; we encourage early intervention and sign-posting to other health services as appropriate. This proposal is in line with preventative early care to produce a reduction in the need for access higher tier services and improved population health outcomes</p>
<p>(10) Will the plan/strategy/service/policy reduce health inequalities? If so, how, what is the evidence?</p>	<p>The current service and proposed redesigned services will be expected to reduce health inequalities by targeting services to those most in need and giving children the best possible start in life.</p>

<p><u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review & Monitoring</u></p>	
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If No Further Action is required then go to – Review & Monitoring

(1)Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements which can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.

EqlA Action Plan

Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments
Consultation documents and resources	Jenny Bevan	July – Sept 2017	Lead for consultation/research within the project plan	To be designed in plain English and with consideration of client group and target
Events Work to support community redesign of 0-5 services / Community Capacity Transformation Team	Sharan Panesar	July to Sept 2017	C&F Transformation Team Administrative support of the : to organise room hire, publicity costs, staffing, refreshments	Series of community events at a series of local venues to support engagement and encourage people to have a voice through completing the consultation questionnaire
Wider communication and engagement through use of, media, social media, forums, on line surveys and face to face meetings	Helen List	July to Sept 2017	Lead for the communications and media/ social media part the project plan	Range of communication, media and social media methods to support awareness and understanding and some targeted consultation to ensure voices of more vulnerable groups are heard
Wider engagement with a range of key stakeholders and members	Bill Basra	Ongoing	Bill Basra, those on the 0-5 Redesign Group and Marina Kitchen, Beate Wagner	To encourage productive involvement and encourage people to make use of the formal consultation
Analysis & Evaluation & Report	Jenny Bevan	July to Sept 2017	Lead for consultation/research part of the project delivery plan	Sufficient time is allocated to do a comprehensive analysis and ensure we consider inequalities appropriately
Staff consultation, staff communication and support	Lucy Vial	Sept 2017	HR support	Period of uncertainty for staff. Potential outcomes for staff will not be fully clear until the final detail of the recommended proposal goes to Cabinet in Q3

(2) Review and Monitoring
State how and when you will monitor
policy and Action Plan

This plan will be monitored and reviewed by the 0-5 Redesign Project Group which is a delivery group of the Children & Families Transformation Programme, accountable to Customer & Transformation Board.

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Agenda No 6

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Finance & Performance Monitoring 2017/18 – Quarter 1
Name of Committee:	Cabinet
Date:	4 th September 2017
Report Director:	Head of Corporate Resources & Chief Financial Officer
Portfolio	All Portfolios
Ward Relevance	All Wards
Prior Consultation	None
Contact Officer	Mannie Ketley - Head of Corporate Resources & Chief Financial Officer
Report Subject to Call-in	Yes
Report En-Bloc	No
Forward Plan	Yes
Corporate Priorities	This report relates to the following priority(ies): All Council Priorities
Risk Management Implications	This report is intended to give Cabinet an overview of the Council's spending and performance position for 2017/18 to inform future decision-making.
Financial Implications	As detailed in the main report.
Environmental Implications	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) The Council's anticipated financial position for 2017/18 be considered;
- 2) A supplementary General Fund revenue budget of £29,290 for 2017/18 be approved to fund a net increase in the Council's Business Rates payable on its own properties;
- 3) A General Fund revenue budget virement to Corporate Savings of £30,000 be approved following reduced awards made by the Grants Working Party;
- 4) A net nil Supplementary General Fund revenue budget of £12,340 for additional Housing Benefit staffing costs in 2017/18 be approved, wholly funded from external funding received for the Right Benefit Initiative Scheme; and
- 5) A Supplementary General Fund capital budget of £46,440 be approved for the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants to be funded from additional external grant awarded in 2017/18.

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT:

- 6) A net nil Supplementary General Fund revenue budget of £108,750 in 2017/18 and £36,250 in 2018/19 be approved for the Family Weight Management Scheme, to be met from external funding;
- 7) A General Fund revenue budget virement of £59,840 be approved to transfer the budget for photocopier charges from Business Support to IT Services, following the award of a new photocopier contract;
- 8) A General Fund revenue budget virement of £72,390 be approved for the transfer of three posts from the Work Services Unit to the Customer Support Services.
- 9) A supplementary HRA capital budget of £147,500 be approved for 2017/18 for the purchase of Property Repairs Service vehicles

previously categorised as a General Fund capital budget provision, to be funded from HRA Capital Investment Balances;

- 10) The return of a £147,500 General Fund capital budget be approved, as a result of the re-categorisation of the Property Repairs Service vehicles scheme as a HRA budget; and
- 11) Performance summary and performance data included in Appendix 4 be considered and noted.

RECOMMENDATION

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- 8) A General Fund revenue budget virement of £72,390 be approved for the transfer of three posts from the Work Services Unit to the Customer Support Services.
- 9) A supplementary HRA capital budget of £147,500 be approved for 2017/18 for the purchase of Property Repairs Service vehicles previously categorised as a General Fund capital budget provision, to be funded from HRA Capital Investment Balances;
- 10) The return of a £147,500 General Fund capital budget be approved, as a result of the re-categorisation of the Property Repairs Service vehicles scheme as a HRA budget; and
- 11) Performance summary and performance data included in Appendix 4 be considered and noted.

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the first of the quarterly finance and performance monitoring reports for 2017/18, which combines both finance (revenue and capital) and performance monitoring. The purpose of the report is to inform Cabinet of the Council's overall financial and performance position for the year to-date and also the year-end projections as supplied by officers. A final report will be presented to Cabinet in June 2018 for year-end.

The key sections of the report are laid out as follows:

- General Fund (GF) Revenue Budgets - Section 3 and Appendix 1;
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Revenue Budgets - Section 4 and Appendix 2;
- Capital Budgets - Section 5 and Appendix 3;
- Performance – Section 6 and Appendix 4

Throughout the report from a financial perspective adverse variances to budget, expenditure overspends and income shortfalls, are shown as positive values. Favourable variances, such as expenditure underspends and additional income, are shown as negative values.

2. BACKGROUND

The Council is committed to achieving financial self-sufficiency and recognises that whilst the Council has responded successfully to the challenge so far, the Council will have to continue to adapt and alter its operations over the medium term in order to meet its objective of becoming financially self-sufficient by 2020. With this objective in mind, the Council has taken a pro-active approach and considered a number of key policy changes in order to set a balanced budget for 2017/18 and reduce the budget deficits in the later years of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The key policy decisions considered were:

Key Decision / Policy Change	Outcome	Indicative Estimate £'000	Draft 2017/18 Budget £'000
Green Waste	£40 charge approved	-400	-400
Hall of Fame	Entry fee approved	-250	-165
Voluntary Redundancies	Approved	-220	-220
£5 increase in Council Tax (compared to 2%)	Approved	-53	-53
Reduction in Empty Property Reliefs	Deferred to facilitate an external consultation	-35	0
Total		-958	-838

After approval of these key policy decisions, the 2017/18 General Fund revenue budget was set by Council on 28th February 2017, with a contribution of £120,000 from balances to fund the deferred decision for the proposed reduction in Council Tax reliefs for empty properties and a revised charging structure for the Hall of Fame.

Despite this positive progress in transforming the organisation and its finances, from a funding perspective the landscape for the local government sector remains challenging. Although some of the uncertainty surrounding the future of NHB has been resolved, crucially there continues to be substantial uncertainty and risk to the Council's medium-term financial position from the on-going reform of retained business rates. Furthermore, whilst the budget for 2017/18 was balanced, a gap in the region of £600,000 remains in the later years of the current Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Council has already begun taking action to address this gap, including income generation initiatives and digitalisation of services. Updates will be reported to Cabinet throughout the 2018/19 budget setting process, beginning with an initial budget setting report in October 2017.

3. GENERAL FUND (GF) REVENUE BUDGETS:

3.1 Overview and key messages

- There is a favourable variance to date of **£627,100**, based on actual spend to the end of the Quarter 1 against profiled budgets.
- GF services show an anticipated favorable variance of **£617,500** at year-end.
- This includes forecast income of £840,000 from the green waste service subscriptions, exceeding income expectations for the year by **£440,000**.
- The Corporate Savings Target has been set at **£200,000** for 2017/18, to include all savings achieved through more efficient working and savings realised through vacant posts. To date officers have been able to identify **£36,500**.

3.2 Major Variances

A summary of the key variances is included within the table below:

Portfolio / Service Area	Variance at Quarter 1 £	Variance Forecast to Year-End £
Growth and Investment		
Benn Hall - The service has seen an increase in bar sales over the first quarter, it is likely this will even out over the quieter summer period.	-13,200	+1,000
Hall of Fame - The variance to date and forecast to year-end relates to an underachievement of ticketing income. A marketing strategy is currently in development to boost overall visitor numbers, including improving the visibility of the attraction with key customer groups.	+37,000	+100,000
Sports & Recreation - Variance mainly relates to unbudgeted spend on salaries and an underachievement of income.	+17,900	+35,900
Other minor underspends	-16,500	+2,400
Subtotal	+25,200	+139,300
Corporate Resources		
Legal Services – Variance relates to an overachievement of income received from court cases.	-12,100	-14,300
Housing Benefit Admin (Universal Credit) – Receipt of additional Universal Credit Support income, which will be offset with additional expenditure later in the year.	-23,300	-6,600
Other minor variances	-18,600	10,500
Subtotal	-54,000	-10,400
Environment and Public Realm		
Cemeteries – Higher than anticipated income from burial and license income.	-26,400	-39,400
Crematorium – Sales of memorial items continue to improve and exceed budget expectations.	-23,700	-36,900
Environmental Services – Projected salary vacancy has resulted in a variance to year-end.	-7,200	-53,800
Regulatory Services – A number of salary vacancies has resulted in the service projecting an underspend to year-end.	-29,600	-50,300
Parks, Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces – Unplanned repairs on park equipment following incidence of vandalism and a general need for additional repairs maintenance.	+9,000	+18,700

Green Waste Scheme – Following the successful launch of the Green Waste Scheme the service had recognised £823,000 of income by the end of June, representing a £407,530 overachievement against budgeted to Quarter 1. Modest income receipts have been forecast for the remainder of the year.	-407,530	-440,000
Refuse and Recycling - reduced charges for recycling gate fee have been recognised in the first quarter, however a prudent forecast has been made to year-end due to the volatility of the charges throughout the year.	-48,500	-58,350
Works Services Unit – The variance is mainly due to an overachievement of income on the Trade Waste service (-£57,000) plus forecast salary savings from vacant posts of approximately £150,000. These salary savings will be considered for allocation against the corporate savings target, once a review of the structure of the Waste and Transport team has been completed. These underspends are offset by an underachievement of income on the Highways service (+£140,000) and other variances within the service.	-73,600	-31,100
Other minor variances	-3,000	+16,400
Subtotal	-610,600	-674,800
Communities and Homes		
Customer & Information Services – Salary vacancies has resulted in a projected variance at year-end.	-4,600	-11,600
Housing Options Team – Increased costs of temporary accommodation due to a rise in demand, but due to new Universal Credit procedures the Council is not able to recover costs at the level of previous Housing Benefit Subsidy.	+13,500	+42,400
Other minor variances	+700	+3,800
Subtotal	+9,600	+34,600
Executive Directors Office		
Minor variances (no individual variances +/-£10k)	+2,700	+5,500
Subtotal	+2,700	+5,500
Other Corporate Items		
Net Cost of Borrowing - Exchange rate gains following sale of Icelandic bank assets	0	-73,500
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) - Slippage on completion/purchase of assets in late 2016/17 which means MRP will not now be applied to 2018/19	0	-38,200
Net Variance	-627,100	-617,500

Positive Figures (+): Overspend/Underachievement of income
Negative Figures (-): Underspend/Additional income

3.2 Anticipated General Fund Balances

	£	£
GF Balance at 31st March 2017		-2,159,350
Approved budget carry forwards from 2016/17	+116,870	
Contribution from balances 2017/18	+120,000	
Supplementary budget approvals/pending	+44,320	
Anticipated variance to the end of 2017/18	-617,500	
Amount to be added to balances		-316,400
Anticipated GF Balance at 31st March 2018		-2,475,750

Positive Figures (+): Contribution from Balances
 Negative Figures (-): Contribution to Balances

The table above shows that GF balances are forecast to be just above £2.5 million at the end of 2017/18, after considering the projected variance and other budget adjustments.

3.3 General Fund Risks

The main financial risks to the delivery of the forecast year-end position for 2017/18 are:

- **Hall of Fame** - Receipt of budgeted ticket income and sponsorship income from the Hall of Fame, with significant income yet to be secured against annual budgets of £165,000 and £200,000 respectively
- **Housing Options** – Universal Credit continues to impact on the amount of income that can be recovered from temporary accommodation, however the Council has measures in place to mitigate this risk
- **Highways** – The Highways service within the WSU has an anticipated reduction in income of £140,000 due to market conditions, which is being investigated by the budget officer.
- **Recycling Gate Fee** – the level of fee paid is heavily influenced by the prevailing market conditions for the sale of recycled materials. The actual fee paid at year-end could vary significantly in either direction from the amount currently forecast depending on the market conditions for the remainder of the year.
- **Crematorium Income** – whilst the service continues to establish a strong proportion of the local market, actual income received is largely determined by mortality rates which can be affected by seasonal and other factors outside of the Council's control.

3.4 Supplementary Budget Requests

Business Rates – Recommendation 2

The Valuation Office Agency adjusted all rateable values in England and Wales on 1st April 2017 to reflect changes in the property market. There have been increases and decreases in the rateable values of the Council's own properties which has resulted in a net overall increase in rates payable of £3,950.

However, the Government's transitional relief scheme limits how much bills change each year as a result of the 2017 revaluation. This means that some of the Councils Business Rate bills have only gone up or down by a certain amount for 2017/18 and will be phased in gradually over 5 years until the bill reaches the full amount set by revaluation. For 2017/18 the impact of this transitional relief scheme net overall increase in bills on Council properties is £29,290.

Housing Benefit Staffing – Recommendation 4

A net nil supplementary general fund revenue budget of £12,340 has been requested to enable the payment of additional housing benefit staffing costs in 2017/18. The DWP have awarded Right Benefit Initiative funding of £12,340 to combat incorrect earnings and use the funding to process as many Real Time Information (RTI) referrals as possible each month. Local Authorities are expected to spend the funding on staffing costs that are additional to business as usual Housing Benefit administration costs.

Family Weight Management Scheme – Recommendation 6

The Council has been successful in its bid to extend the contract of the Family Weight Management scheme, which will see the project continue for a further a year until June 2018. The extension of scheme will be wholly funded from contracted income from Warwickshire County Council.

4 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) REVENUE BUDGETS:

4.1 Context

Housing Rents were set by Council on 7th February 2017, in the context of rent policy changes from government, most notably the imposition of 1% rent reductions for the period 2016/17 until 2019/20. The impact upon income generation as a consequence of this change is estimated at £5.107m over the 4-year period.

4.1 Overview and key messages

- There is an overspend to date of **£33,750**, based on actual spend to the end of the Quarter 1 and monitored against profiled budgets.
- HRA services show an anticipated underspend of **£275,650** at year-end.
- In accordance with principles set out in the Council's response to the implementation of HRA self-financing in 2012/13 all in-year surpluses will be utilised in the repayment of debt subject to the maintenance of a prudent HRA working balance. The HRA revenue balance currently stands at £1.431m and will be reviewed in light of service requirements and risks in preparation for 2018/19 rent setting.

4.3 Major Variances

A summary of the key variances follows:

HRA Income and Expenditure	Variance at Quarter 1 £	Variance Forecast to Year-End £
Rent income from dwellings, land, and buildings - Income levels for service charges and garages are currently lower than estimates. This is subject to change based on the turnover rate of re-lets, voids and Right to Buy applications during the remainder of the financial year.	+40,270	+57,730
Supervision and Management – Forecast variance arising from net effect of replacing current CCTV/Concierge monitoring contract with in-house provision; vacant posts within the following teams: Estate Management; Property Maintenance, Independent Living Service.	-5,170	-333,380
Other minor variances	-1,350	0
Net Variance	+33,750	-275,650

Positive Figures (+): Overspend/Underachievement of income
Negative Figures (-): Underspend/Additional income

4.4 Anticipated HRA Balances

	£	£
HRA Balance at 31st March 2017		-1,431,000
Anticipated underspend to the end of 2016/17	-275,650	
Indicative allocation of underspends to amounts set aside for the repayment of debt	+275,650	
Amount to be taken from balances		0
Anticipated HRA Balance at 31st March 2018		-1,431,000

Positive Figures (+): Contribution from Balances
Negative Figures (-): Contribution to Balances

It is anticipated that the projected underspend of £275,650 will be utilised to increase the amount set aside for the repayment of debt in 2017/18, subject to a review of ongoing HRA revenue balances based on risk analysis.

5 CAPITAL:

5.1 General Fund Capital – Overview

- The General Fund capital programme is currently budgeted at £5.456 million for 2017/18 (including £1.197m carry forwards from 2016/17.)
- At the end of Quarter 1, the General Fund capital programme shows an overspend of **£36,990** against profiled budgets.
- There is currently a projected underspend to year-end of **£58,440**.

5.2 General Fund Capital – Major Variances

A summary of the variances by portfolio is included within the table below:

Portfolio / Service Area	Variance at Quarter 1 £	Variance Forecast to Year-End £
Growth and Investment	0	0
Communities and Homes		
Capital Digitalisation Work – a supplementary capital budget will be requested at year end to be met from the Digitalisation and Trading reserve.	+32,820	+32,820
Disabled Facilities Grant – a supplementary capital budget is requested for approval to be met from additional grant funding awarded in 2017/18.	0	+46,440
Other minor variances	+19,020	0
Subtotal	+51,840	+79,260
Environment and Public Realm		
Vehicles – is requested that budget totalling £147,500 relating to Property Repairs Team Vehicles is returned following its incorrect categorisation within the General Fund.	-3,300	-147,500
Other minor variances	-9,920	+9,800
Subtotal	-13,220	-137,700
Corporate Resources	-1,630	0
Net Variance	+36,990	-58,440

Positive Figures (+): Overspend
Negative Figures (-): Slippage / Underspend

5.3 HRA Capital - Overview

- The HRA capital programme is currently budgeted at £7.502 million for 2017/18 (including £0.420m carry forwards from 2016/17).
- At the end of Quarter 1, the HRA capital programme shows an overspend of **£25,070** against the profiled budget.
- There is currently a projected overspend to year-end of £147,500, which solely relates to a requested supplementary for Property Repairs Team vehicles.

5.4 HRA Capital – Major Variances

A summary of the key variances follows:

	Variance at Quarter 1 £	Variance Forecast to Year- End £
Property Repairs Team Vehicles – a supplementary HRA capital budget of £147,500 to be met from HRA capital balances is requested for 2017/18 for Property Repairs Team Vehicles incorrectly categorised within the General Fund budget. A corresponding reduction in the General Fund capital budget requirement is shown a section 5.2.	0	+147,500
Other minor variances	+25,070	0
Net Variance	+25,070	+147,500

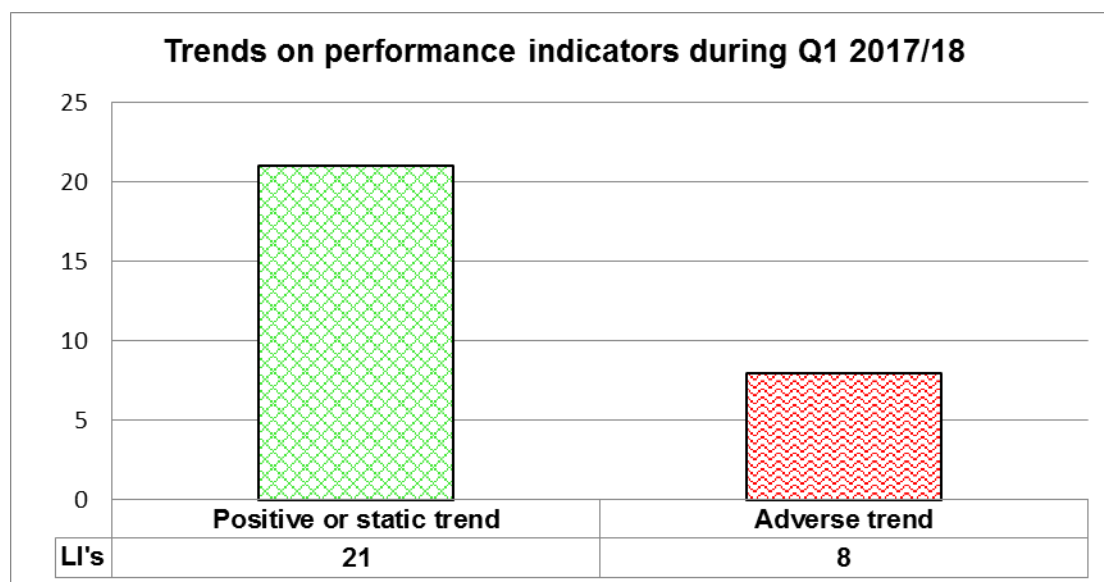
Positive Figures (+): Overspend
Negative Figures (-): Slippage / Underspend

6. PERFORMANCE

This is the monitoring report for the first quarter of 2017/18 and the reported data for each portfolio can be seen in Appendix 4. To further interrogate the data please login to the Rugby Performance Management System (RPMS).

Q1 Summary:

On the whole the Council is performing well over the range of data that is currently reported with 72% of the performance indicators showing as a positive trend or falling within the 5% tolerance of a target.



Communities & Homes

- The Citizens Advice Bureau data for homeless preventions was unavailable as at the time of writing this report. The data should become available to view on the RPMS soon.
- The Rugby Borough Council homeless preventions remain fairly static. There have been some successes in securing alternative accommodation.

Corporate Resources

- Short term sickness is showing a positive trend with less staff off on short term sickness and less days lost. Long term sickness has increased and this is explained within the supporting appendix.

Environment & Public Realm

- Food premises attaining a hygiene rating 3 and above have suffered a 2% drop from Q4 however this is within normal fluctuation; there are around 400 inspections per year. The drop equates to 2 businesses over the quarter.

Growth & Investment

- The performance indicators for this portfolio that are measured by trend have all performed positively.

To get login details for the RPMS or a refresher course on using the system please contact RPMSsupport@rugby.gov.uk

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 4th September 2017

Subject Matter: Finance & Performance Monitoring 2017/18 – Quarter 1

Originating Department: Corporate Resources

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Document No.	Date	Description of Document	Officer's Reference	File Reference

General Fund
Revenue Budget Monitoring 2017/18 April 2017 to June 2017

Key:

+ = over spend / income shortfall

- = under spend / additional income

	Profiled Budget to Qtr 1	Actual Spend to Qtr 1	Variance to Profile Qtr 1	Current Budget	Projection to Year-End	Variance to Year-End
Portfolio Expenditure :-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Growth & Investment	1,938	1,963	25	3,363	3,502	139
Corporate Resources	3,320	3,266	-54	1,634	1,624	-10
Environment & Public Realm	2,634	2,023	-611	7,567	6,892	-675
Communities & Homes	603	613	10	1,004	1,039	35
Portfolio Expenditure	8,495	7,865	-630	13,568	13,057	-511
Executive Director Office	1,058	1,061	3	1,884	1,889	5
	9,553	8,926	-627	15,452	14,946	-506
Less Corporate Savings Target				-200	-200	0
Less IAS 19 Pension Adjustment				-309	-309	0
Less Capital Charge Adjustment				-2,392	-2,392	0
Net Expenditure				12,551	12,045	-506
Net Cost of Borrowing				628	554	-74
MRP Adjustment				1,476	1,438	-38
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay				88	88	0
Total Expenditure (before Parish Precepts)				14,743	14,125	-618
Parish Council Precepts & Council Tax Support				731	731	0
Total Expenditure				15,474	14,856	-618

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
Revenue Budget Monitoring 2017/18 April 2017 to June 2017

Appendix 2

Key: + = over spend / income shortfall - = under spend / additional income

Description	Profiled Budget to Qtr 1 £'000	Actual Spend to Qtr 1 £'000	Variance to Profile Qtr 1 £'000	Current Budget £'000	Projection to Year-End £'000	Variance to Year-End £'000
Income						
Rent income from dwellings	-3,731	-3,733	-2	-16,253	-16,263	-10
Rent income from land and buildings	-37	-34	+3	-152	-152	0
Charges for services	-338	-326	+12	-1,473	-1,427	46
Contributions towards expenditure	-40	-12	+28	-215	-193	22
Total Income	-4,146	-4,105	+41	-18,093	-18,035	+58
Expenditure						
Transfer to Housing Repairs account	0	0	0	3,237	3,237	0
Supervision and Management	2,406	2,402	-4	4,622	4,288	-334
Rents, Rates, Taxes and other charges	3	2	-1	3	3	0
Depreciation & Impairment	3,681	3,681	0	3,681	3,681	0
Debt Management Cost	0	0	0	15	15	0
Provision for Bad or Doubtful Debt	0	0	0	131	131	0
Amounts set aside for the repayment of debt	0	0	0	4,922	4,922	0
Total Expenditure	6,090	6,085	-5	16,611	16,277	-334
Net Cost of Services	1,944	1,980	36	-1,482	-1,758	-276
HRA Share of Corporate & Democratic Core Costs	200	200	0	200	200	0
Interest Payable & Similar Charges	0	0	0	1,251	1,251	0
Interest & Investment Income	0	0	0	-26	-26	0
Net Operating Expenditure	2,144	2,180	36	-57	-333	-276
Contributions to (+) / from (-) Reserves	0	0	0	57	57	0
Surplus(-)/Deficit(+) for year	2,144	2,180	36	0	-276	-276

Capital Budget Monitoring 2017/18
April 2017 to June 2017

Appendix 3

Key:
+ = over spend / income shortfall
- = under spend / additional income

Portfolio	Profiled Budget to Qtr 1 £'000	Actual Spend to Qtr 1 £'000	Variance to Profile to Qtr 1 £'000	Current Budget £'000	Projection to Year-End £'000	Variance to Year-End £'000
Growth & Investment	0	0	0	49	49	0
Corporate Resources	172	170	-2	953	953	0
Environment & Public Realm	171	157	-14	3,446	3,309	-137
Communities & Homes	80	132	+52	1,008	1,087	+79
Sub Total General Fund	423	459	+36	5,456	5,398	-58
Housing Revenue Account	1,074	1,099	+25	7,501	7,649	+148
Overall Total	1,497	1,558	+61	12,957	13,047	+90

Performance Report for Cabinet Q1 2017/18

Report Author: Christopher Trezise (Performance Management & Improvement Officer)

Generated on: 17 July 2017




How to analyse the trend data

It is important to note that trend data is set to two extremes. Aim to maximise the value or aim to minimise the value. Some data that we collect is not measured against either of these trends and is just factual data.

This report is best viewed in colour so it is recommended to view the electronic version rather than printed black and white copies. The electronic version can be found on the intranet.

An upward pointing arrow is indicative of a positive trend and a downward pointing arrow is indicative of a negative trend.

N/A – When you see this in the trend box it means that the data is not measured against a trend so a trend arrow is not generated.

 - The blue trend arrows represent the long term trend. Long term looks at the data and compares it to the same period over a larger frequency – i.e. Months are compared for the same period last year, quarters compared to same period in previous year and Years are compared over 4 years.


 - The purple trend arrows represent the short term trend. Short term looks at the data and compares it to the previous frequency – either the last month, quarter or year.

 - The bar (both purple and blue) represents no movement in the trend.





Where the short term trend shows as negative then contextual commentary from the assignees and managers has been provided directly beneath the performance measure. Where seasonal trends occur, like at the Art Gallery or Leisure Centre, then contextual commentary will be provided on the long term trend instead.

Communities & Homes Portfolio




Equality & Diversity Data Set




Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis			Portfolio
Ethnic Minority representation in the workforce - employees	9.5%	Q1 2017/18		↑	↓	6 - CH Portfolio
This measure has only dropped by 0.1% and last year in 2016/17 the measure ranged between 8.5 and 9.7%						

Homelessness Data Set

Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis			Portfolio
Number of homeless preventions made by Rugby Borough Council	38	Q1 2017/18		↑	↑	6 - CH Portfolio
Number of homeless preventions made due to financial advice being provided by Citizens Advice Bureau	79	Q4 2016/17		↑	↑	6 - CH Portfolio
The number of households accepted for re-housing	47	Q1 2017/18		N/A	N/A	6 - CH Portfolio
The number of homeless decisions made each quarter	74	Q1 2017/18		N/A	N/A	6 - CH Portfolio







The Q1 data for the Citizens Advice Bureau is unavailable at the time of writing this report. This data should become available soon on the Rugby Performance Management System.

Housing Rents Data Set				
Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis	Portfolio
Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery	95.51%	Q1 2017/18	  	6 - CH Portfolio
The percentage collected dropped by a mere 0.40% and remains within accepted 5% tolerance of the target.				







Housing Voids				
Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis	Portfolio
Average void rent loss	£487.80	June 2017	  	6 – CH Portfolio
<p>April saw an increase in rent loss from Q4's relatively consistent figure. The rent loss for May dropped to under £300 which is the first time since April 2013. However the figure increased again in June to the highest rent loss figure since June 2016.</p> <p>There were a number of contributing and accumulative factors as to why there was an increase in rent loss for the month of June. It just so happened that these factors came together in terms of letting the properties in the same month so there was a big hit in one go.</p>				

Corporate Resources Portfolio

Benefits Operational Dataset




Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis		Portfolio	
Number of households in receipt of benefits	6,019	Q1 2017/18				6 - CR Portfolio
Benefits - average end to end time for claims (days)	19.86	June 2017				6 - CR Portfolio













Financial Data Set

Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis		Portfolio	
% of Council Tax collected (cumulative over 10 months per year)	29.30%	Q1 2017/18				6 - CR Portfolio
Percentage of Non-domestic Rates collected (cumulative over 10 months per year)	29.6%	Q1 2017/18				6 - CR Portfolio

It is important to remember that these are cumulative measures and the short term trends are false adverse trends. The long term trend looks at the same quarter in the previous year and the value has dropped by less than 1%

Gas Certification Data Set

Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis		Portfolio	
Percentage of properties with a gas appliance that have a valid gas certificate	99.61%	June 2017				6 - CR Portfolio

Sickness Absence Data Set						
Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis			Portfolio
Number of working days lost due to long term sickness absence	901	Q1 2017/18				6 - CR Portfolio
Number of working days lost due to short term sickness absence	753.5	Q1 2017/18				6 - CR Portfolio
Number of staff on long term sickness absence	42	Q1 2017/18				6 - CR Portfolio
Number of staff on short term sickness absence	148	Q1 2017/18				6 - CR Portfolio










Short term sickness is showing a positive trend with less staff off on short term sickness and less days lost. Long term sickness is showing the opposite story.

In this quarter we have had a total of 31 people on long term sickness absence (+20 days). Of those 31 people 18 are now back at work.

Managers continue to work within the parameters of the Absence Management Policy. Early referrals to Occupational Health are offered for employees absent through musculoskeletal problems, stress or following surgery.







Environment & Public Realm Portfolio

Environmental Data Set						
Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis			Portfolio
Cumulative Tonnage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	20911	Q1 2017/18		N/A	N/A	6 - EPR Portfolio
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	39.1%	Q1 2017/18		N/A	N/A	6 - EPR Portfolio
The decrease is due to the reduction of garden waste during the first three months of the year as it was a very dry, but mild winter with little growth. There is also a trend across the UK with recycling decreasing due a reduction in government publicity and promotion etc. highlighting the reason to recycle						
No. of Flytipping incidents reported	279	Q1 2017/18				6 - EPR Portfolio

Food Hygiene Data Set						
Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis			Portfolio
% of premises within the Rugby Borough that have attained the Food Hygiene Rating 5	70.3%	Q1 2017/18				6 - EPR Portfolio
% of premises within the Rugby Borough that have attained the Food Hygiene Rating 4 and above	85.4%	Q1 2017/18				6 - EPR Portfolio
% of premises within the Rugby Borough that have attained the Food Hygiene Rating 3 and above	93.2%	Q1 2017/18				6 - EPR Portfolio

For premises attaining rating 3 and above the 2% drop from Q4 is not significant and is within normal fluctuation as we do around 400 inspections per year and it would only equate to around 2 businesses over the quarter.

Parks Data Set

Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis			Portfolio
Quality rating of Parks and the Grounds	2.74	Q1 2017/18				6 - EPR Portfolio
Average end to end time in days for determining applications of works to protected trees	33.25	Q1 2017/18				6 - EPR Portfolio


High volume of work has led to time increase but only by 1 day compared to last quarter.

Growth & Investment Portfolio

Benn Hall Data Set

Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis			Portfolio
No. of room bookings at the Benn Hall	54	June 2017				6 - GI Portfolio
Footfall through the door at the Benn Hall	4,208	June 2017				6 - GI Portfolio

Sports & Rec Data Set

Performance Indicator (PI)	Latest Data Available		Performance Trend Analysis			Portfolio
Total number of young people contacts - Borough wide ages 5-19	20,781	Q1 2017/18		N/A	N/A	6 - GI Portfolio
Total grant aid obtained from external funding sources	£76,222.00	Q1 2017/18		N/A	N/A	6 - GI Portfolio
Leisure Centre Visits	60,129	June 2017				6 - GI Portfolio

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Rate Relief for Ratepayers
Name of Committee:	Cabinet
Date:	4th September 2017
Report Director:	Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Financial Officer
Portfolio:	Corporate Resources
Ward Relevance:	
Prior Consultation:	None
Contact Officer:	Chryssa Burdett X3495
Public or Private:	Public
Report subject to Call-In:	No
Report En-Bloc:	No
Forward Plan:	No
	This report relates to the following priority:
Corporate Priorities:	GROWTH AND INVESTMENT - Promote sustainable growth and economic prosperity
Statutory / Policy Background:	Local Government Finance Act 1988
Summary:	The Government announced several measures in the Budget to help ratepayers with changes to their rate bills.
Financial Implications:	The measures are being funded by the Government
Risk Management Implications:	There are no risk management implications for this report

Environmental Implications:	There are no environmental implications for this report
Legal Implications:	There are no legal implications for this report
Equality and Diversity:	There are no equality and diversity implications for this report
Options:	
Recommendation:	The report be noted.
Reasons for Recommendation:	The Government is funding this relief

Cabinet - 4th September 2017

Rate Relief for Ratepayers

Report of the Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Financial Officer

Recommendation

The report be noted.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Local Government Finance Act 1988 allows the Council to grant Discretionary Rate Relief. The Government announced several measures in the 2017 Budget to help ratepayers with changes to their rate bills from 1 April 2017. The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the impact of the various measures for the Borough's ratepayers.

1.2 PUBLIC HOUSE RELIEF

The first one of these measures is £1,000 for public houses where the Rateable Value is less than £100,000.

It is a one year only scheme. Any pub which has to pay less than £1,000 in business rates will get a lower amount and it will be apportioned if they occupy for less than the year. It will only be given to pubs where you can go in to buy a drink without having to purchase food. Private members' clubs and restaurants will not qualify.

The cost of this measure is being fully reimbursed by Central Government, but the Council has to have a policy in order to grant the relief and this is attached at Appendix 1.

There are 66 public houses in the Rugby area that may qualify for the relief. A form has been sent out to them all in order to apply the relief.

1.3 SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES

The second one of the measures is to ensure that no business losing small business rate relief or rural rate relief as a result of revaluation faces a bill of more than £600.

There are 16 businesses that will receive this help. The Government will be fully funding this measure. Software will be available by September 2017 and those businesses will be granted the relief automatically.

1.4 LOCAL DISCRETIONARY FUND

The third measure is to have a locally designed scheme to help those businesses that have been hardest hit by the revaluation. It is a scheme for 4 years with reducing amounts of funding for each year.

Rugby has been granted £278,000 for 2017/18 and a draft scheme has been designed to help all businesses that have had a rates increase. Rugby is responsible for designing their local scheme and has consulted with major preceptors before scheme is adopted. This is a condition to receiving the funding and so will be brought to Cabinet to be approved.

Although the Council will not be consulting directly with the Federation of Small Businesses, the draft scheme has been designed in conjunction with North Warwickshire Borough Council and Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, and feedback that they have received will be fed into the final version of the scheme. Consultation will also be sought from Rugby First.

Name of Meeting:
Cabinet

Date of Meeting:
4th Sep 2017

Subject Matter:
Rate Relief for Ratepayers

Originating Department:
Resources

List of Background Papers

Document No.	Date	Description of Document	Officer's Reference	File Reference
1.				

* The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

* Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Document No.	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A
--------------	------------------------------------

* There are no background papers relating to this item.

(*Delete if not applicable)

Business Rates

Public House Relief Scheme 2017-18

Introduction

The Government announced in the Budget on 8 March 2017 that it will provide a relief of up to £1,000 to all occupied public houses with a rateable value of £100,000 or less in 2017-18.

As this is a measure for 2017-18 only, the Government is not changing the legislation around the reliefs available to properties. Instead the Government will, in line with the eligibility criteria set out in this document, reimburse local authorities that use their discretionary relief powers, introduced by the Localism Act (under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended) to grant relief. Central government will fully reimburse local authorities for the local share of the discretionary relief (using a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003). The Government expects local government to grant relief to qualifying ratepayers.

Ratepayers will be required to apply for the relief in order to ensure that public house relief granted complies with EU law on state aid. An application form is attached at appendix A.

Properties that will benefit from relief

Public Houses that will benefit from the relief will be occupied, with a rateable value of £100,000 or less.

The Government's policy intention is that eligible pubs should:

- Be open to the public
- Allow free entry other than when occasional entertainment is provided
- Allow drinking without food to be consumed
- Permit drinks to be purchased at a bar

For these purposes, it should exclude:

- Restaurants
- Cafes
- Nightclubs
- Hotels
- Snack bars
- Guesthouses
- Boarding houses
- Sporting venues
- Music venues
- Festival sites
- Theatres
- Museums
- Exhibition halls
- Cinemas
- Concert Halls
- Casinos

The lists set out above are not intended to be exhaustive and any application will be considered to determine whether they are broadly similar in nature to those listed.

Calculation of Relief

The total amount of government-funded relief available for each property for the year under this scheme is £1,000. There is no relief available under the scheme for properties with a rateable value of more than £100,000.

The eligibility for the relief and the relief itself will be assessed and calculated on a daily basis.

The relief will be applied against the net bill after all other reliefs.

Where the net rate liability for the day after all other reliefs but before public house relief is less than the public house relief of £1,000, the maximum amount of this relief will be no more than the value of the net rate liability. This will be calculated ignoring any prior year adjustments in liabilities which fall to be liable on the day.

Ratepayers that occupy more than one property will be entitled to relief for each of their eligible properties, subject to State Aid de minimis limits.

State Aid

State Aid law is the means by which the European Union regulates state funded support to businesses. Providing discretionary relief to ratepayers is likely to amount to State Aid. However Public House Relief will be State Aid compliant where it is provided in accordance with the De Minimis Regulations (1407/2013)

The De Minimis Regulations allow an undertaking to receive up to €200,000 of De Minimis aid in a three year period (consisting of the current financial year and the two previous financial years).

To administer De Minimis it is necessary for the local authority to establish that the award of aid will not result in the undertaking having received more than €200,000 of De Minimis aid.

The application form in Appendix A will require the ratepayer to declare that the award of public house relief will not exceed its De Minimis threshold.

Appendix A

Dear []

BUSINESS RATES ACCOUNT NUMBER: _____

The value of the business rates public house relief to be provided to [name of undertaking] by [name of local authority] is £ []

This award shall comply with the EU law on State Aid on the basis that, including this award, [name of undertaking] shall not receive more than €200,000 in total of De Minimis aid within the current financial year or the previous two financial years). The De Minimis Regulations 1407/2013(as published in the Official Journal of the European Union L352 24.12.2013) can be downloaded at :-

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:352:0001:0008:EN:PDF>.

Please list all previously received De Minimis aid below, including the total amount of this and any other Public House Relief you are being granted

Amount of De Minimis aid	Date of aid	Organisation providing aid	Nature of aid
€	1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018	Local authorities (for the Public House Relief total you do not need to specify the names of individual authorities)	Public House Relief

I confirm that :

- 1) I am authorised to sign on behalf of _____{name of undertaking}; and
- 2) _____{name of undertaking} shall not exceed its De Minimis Threshold by accepting this Public House Relief.

SIGNATURE

NAME

POSTION

BUSINESS

ADDRESS

DATE

Appendix A (reverse)

REFUSAL OF PUBLU+IC HOUSE RELIEF FORM

Name & Address of Premises	Business Rates Account No	Amount of Rate Relief

I confirm that I wish to refuse Public House Relief in relation to the above premises.

I confirm that I am authorised to sign on behalf of _____{name of undertaking}

SIGNATURE

NAME

POSITION

BUSINESS

ADDRESS

DATE

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Housing Financial Assistance Policy
Name of Committee:	Cabinet
Date:	4 September 2017
Report Director:	Head of Communities and Homes
Portfolio:	Communities and Homes
Ward Relevance:	All
Prior Consultation:	None
Contact Officer:	John Hier, Housing and Regeneration Manager Tel: 01788 533620 email John.hier@rugby.gov.uk
Public or Private:	Public
Report subject to Call-In:	Yes
Report En-Bloc:	No
Forward Plan:	Yes
Corporate Priorities:	This report relates to the following priority(ies): Communities and Homes: Ensure residents have a home that works for them and is affordable.
Statutory / Policy Background:	Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002.
Summary:	Report to consider the adoption of a revised Housing Financial Assistance Policy to enable the delivery of Better Care Fund objectives and increased capital budgets from the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) allocation. The Financial Assistance Policy document is

available on the Council's website as part of the agenda and a copy is also available in the Members' Room.

Financial Implications:

The DFG capital allocations have increased significantly over the last couple of years. The budget for 2017-18 is £539,000 compared to £274,000 in 2015-16.

Risk Management Implications:

The revised policy will help deliver on spending commitments and therefore reduce the risk of underspends.

The spending is monitored by the HEART Management Board and the County Council Better Care Fund Administrators.

Environmental Implications:

The policy is designed to improve the conditions for vulnerable households within their home.

Legal Implications:

None Identified

Equality and Diversity:

The policy is designed to provide assistance to households in receipt of means tested benefit or those suffering from health conditions. More generally preventative forms of assistance will be available to those over the age of 55 or with a disabled person in the household.

Options:

Agree the revised Housing Assistance Policy.

Do not agree the revised Housing Assistance Policy.

Recommendation:

- (1) The Countywide Financial Assistance Policy be adopted as part of the HEART partnership; and
- (2) the existing Renovation Loans budget of £31,110 for 2017-18 be transferred across for use as part of the Warm and Safer Homes (WaSH) Grants; and

- (3) any changes to the policy that maintain the alignment with the Better Care Fund objectives be delegated to the Head of Communities and Homes in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Council formalised the HEART partnership in October 2016 providing DFGs via Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council. Although all of the Councils in Warwickshire have aligned their approach for the provision of DFGs, this was not the case for other forms of assistance to householders, with each Council providing different types of assistance including a mix of loans and grants. The HEART Management Board requested options to amend the Housing Renewal and Financial Assistance Policy to provide a consistent approach via HEART across Warwickshire. The new approach also aligns the policy to the objectives of the Better Care Fund to assist with the prevention of admissions to hospital and support hospital discharge and the reduction of social care interventions.

Rugby Borough Council currently offer Renovation Loans to vulnerable owner occupiers for property improvements. These have not been popular with residents and historically the Council has struggled to spend its annual budget. In 2016-17 only 8 were taken out by householders in the borough and in the current financial year only £526 has been spent of a budget of just under £32,000. Because of the lack of take-up, a recommendation has been made to transfer the existing Renovation Loans budget for 2017-18 into the new Warm and Safer Homes (WaSH) grants scheme.

Cabinet – 4 September 2017

Housing Financial Assistance Policy

Report of the Head of Communities and Homes

Recommendation:

- (1) The Countywide Financial Assistance Policy be adopted as part of the HEART partnership; and
- (2) the existing Renovation Loans budget of £31,110 for 2017-18 be transferred across for use as part of the Warm and Safer Homes (WaSH) Grants; and
- (3) any changes to the policy that maintain the alignment with the Better Care Fund objectives be delegated to the Head of Communities and Homes in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

1.1 Background

Since 2003 the Council has had the discretion to develop and maintain its own Housing Financial Assistance Policy in compliance with the Housing Assistance (Regulatory Reform England) Order 2002. This allows the Council to provide financial assistance for owner occupiers within the borough. Each Housing Authority within England should publish and maintain a policy to allow assistance to be provided.

The Council has maintained such a policy since 2003 as have other Councils within Warwickshire. In addition to discretionary forms of assistance described within the policy, there remains the mandatory DFG, which is currently channelled through the Better Care Fund administered by Warwickshire County Council.

There is an opportunity to align the Council's policies within the objectives of the Better Care Fund. Any underspends within the DFG funding could then be utilised to support the Better Care Fund objectives to reduce hospital admissions, assist with discharge, and prevent or reduce the need for social care.

Home environment plays a major role in the health and wellbeing of residents and as such Housing Authorities can contribute to the objectives by providing assistance to adapt, repair or modify homes. The Home Environment Assessment and Response Team (HEART) has been developed to provide these services on behalf of Warwickshire Councils. To align and harmonise the assistance available within Warwickshire will ensure consistent promotion, delivery and management.

However, the HEART partnership is the delivery body for many of the forms of assistance, which Councils can offer, and in order to do so effectively it is necessary to harmonise the partner Councils policies.

1.2 Proposed policy

This policy has been prepared by all five district and borough Councils across Warwickshire to consider mutual adoption and consistent delivery through HEART. Once agreed, the HEART service will act on behalf of the partner Councils and will take decisions on matters within this policy on their behalf. A decision by HEART will be a decision of the partner Council in that regard, and the HEART service will be responsible and accountable to the partner Councils and other authorities for the decisions and actions it takes.

The policy has been prepared as much as possible in accordance with withdrawn government guidance ODPM Circular 05/2003 ('the guidance'), which was not replaced but which still reflects best practice and thinking on the subject.

Adopting the revised policy will align the aims and objectives of the policy with those of the Better Care Fund (BCF). This will allow the Council to allocate uncommitted capital within the DFG allocation on additional preventative measures in line with BCF objectives and Social Care and Housing capital projects.

The contents of the new policy are similar to the assistance types available in previous policies and include:

- Disabled Facilities Grants (Mandatory Grant)
- Discretionary Disabled Facilities Assistance – a discretionary grant (up to £10,000) and a discretionary loan (a further £10,000) when the cost of works goes above the statutory maximum.
- Warm and Safer Homes Grants (WaSH) – discretionary assistance to remove hazards from homes (up to £10,000) including fire safety, insulation, damp, electric and gas works, roof repairs, carpentry and flooring upgrades.
- Hospital Discharge Grant – to facilitate discharge from hospital or reduction or prevent likely return due to the home environment (up to £10,000).
- Home Safety / Handy person – small grants to carry out preventative works of up to £500 per property over a 3-year period.

The assistance will be funded via the DFG allocation provided by the Government via the Better Care Fund. This funding has increased significantly over the last few years. Rugby received an allocation of £539,000 in 2017-18 compared with £274,000 in 2015-16. The other local authorities in Warwickshire have also received similar increases in recent years. It is expected that this funding will continue to rise for the next 2-years by a further 10%, following the previous Government Spending Review.

Under the Better Care Fund conditions for this capital funding, and included within the HEART Partnership Agreement, the capital funding can be used for other purposes in line with the objectives of the Better Care Fund i.e.

- Avoiding non-elective admissions (general and acute) to acute care
- Supporting and avoiding discharge from acute care
- Avoiding long term admissions to residential and nursing care
- Improving the effectiveness of re-ablement

As DFGs are mandatory and must take priority, it will be necessary to manage the budgets within each spending stream. Depending on the funds available at any point within a year, certain parts of the discretionary assistance may need to be prioritised whilst others are stopped.

The policy provides each local authority within the HEART partnership with the autonomy to put extra local capital in to the services. A recommendation has been made for the existing Renovations Loans budget to be transferred for use as part of the new WaSH Grants, which will replace the Renovation Loans and will be used to remove hazards from eligible owner occupiers' homes. The use of the budget will be monitored over the next 12-months along with the DFG spend to see if the funding received by the Government is sufficient going forward to cover the statutory DFGs and the other discretionary grants including the WaSH Grants.

The capital budgets spend by HEART are ring fenced for each housing authority, there is no pooling of capital budgets.

1.3 Conclusion

The increase in national DFG funding has created the opportunity to increase financial assistance to local residents to help address conditions within the home environment.

The Countywide HEART partnership will deliver the financial assistance and in order to provide a consistent approach across the partnership the policies of partners need to be aligned with the Better Care Fund objectives to ensure equality of assistance and delivery across the County.

Adopting the revised policy will allow better local support for residents and allow the Council to take advantage of the opportunities available to assist with the prevention and reduction in the need for care and health interventions.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 4 September 2017
Subject Matter: Housing Financial Assistance Policy
Originating Department: Communities and Homes

List of Background Papers

Document No.	Date	Description of Document	Officer's Reference	File Reference

* The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

* Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Document No.	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A

* There are no background papers relating to this item.

(*Delete if not applicable)

Warwickshire
Housing
Authorities



Housing Financial
Assistance Policy
2017

Date of Issue :	30/6/2017	Next Review :	Last Review:	Updated to reflect board comments from 26 th May 2017 plus comments From WDC 3 rd June 17
		1/7/2019	N/A	
Last Reviewed by	David Baxendale / Paul Coopey			
Policy Owner	Housing Authorities / HEART Management Board		Page 2 of 64	
Approval Date	To be confirmed			
Author	David Baxendale			
Version Control	v 1.01			
Document ID.	HEART MB - HFAP			

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 - Home Safety Check Scheme and ‘Handyperson’ minor works
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 - Energy efficiency support
 - Other forms of assistance - empty homes, conversions, downsizing
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a Contacts for HEART service and partner organisations

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c Regulatory Reform Order 2002 – articles 3 & 4

d1 narrative summary of financial assistance measures

d2 tabulated summary of financial assistance measures

Key definitions, references and abbreviations

RRO – Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/1860/article/3/made>

The 'Act' (1996) – Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/53/contents>

The 'Guidance' (2003) – Circular 05/2003 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/145088.pdf>

DFG – Disabled Facilities Grant.

DDFA – Discretionary Disabled Facilities Assistance

BCF – Better Care Fund

WCC – Warwickshire County Council

NBBC – Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

NWBC – North Warwickshire Borough Council

RBC – Rugby Borough Council

SoADC – Stratford on Avon District Council

WDC – Warwick District Council

HEART – Home Environment Assessment and Response Team

DBEIS – Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

HHSRS – the Housing Health & Safety Rating System, the prescribed system under the Housing Act 2004 for measuring hazards associated with housing conditions

ECO – Energy Company Obligation

Certified Date – the date certified by the service on behalf of the Council as that on which the execution of eligible works is completed to the Councils (HEART) satisfaction. In this instance being the works complete date.

Dwelling – a building or part of a building occupied or intended to be occupied as a separate dwelling, together with any yard, garden, outhouse and appurtenance belonging to it or usually enjoyed with it.

Exempt disposal – a disposal or transfer of the whole or part of the premises to a person whose main residence is the property and who is (a) one of the joint owners of the dwelling, or (b) the wife, husband or partner (including same sex) of the owner or one of the joint owners of that property.

Relevant disposal – a conveyance of the freehold or an assignment of the lease, or the granting of a long lease (one of over 21 years, otherwise than at rack rent)

Member of family – a person is a member of the applicant’s family if they are the spouse of the applicant or living together as partners, or is the grandparent, parent or dependent child of the applicant or their spouse or partner (inclusive of same sex partners, step-children, adopted and foster children).

Owner-occupier – whilst this term is self-explanatory, where appropriate it will include certain tenants with repairing type leases (sometimes called FRI or Full Repairing and Insuring Leases, of a suitable duration) who would otherwise be unable to insist their ‘superior landlord’ undertake renovations. Repairing lease tenants would qualify for DFG in their own right, with permission.

1 Introduction

1.1 HEART is a delivery body, a partnership between Warwickshire County Council (the 'welfare' authority) and the five District and Borough Councils of Warwickshire (the 'housing' authorities);

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Rugby Borough Council

Stratford on Avon District Council

Warwick District Council

1.2 Each of the five District & Borough Councils are obliged, under the 2002 RRO, to publish a policy addressing any non-mandatory forms of private sector housing assistance, and only to deliver assistance in accordance with that policy.

1.3 Each Council developed local policies independently, though there will have been consultation between neighbours. Policies were then revised in different directions and at different times, being delivered in a variety of ways and with a distinct local focus. Not surprisingly, though the general aims of many policies may have similar roots, in practice they look quite different.

1.4 However, the HEART partnership is the delivery body for many of the forms of assistance which Councils can offer, and in order to do so effectively it is necessary to harmonise the aims and some of the details of those partner Councils.

1.5 This policy is being prepared by all five Councils for them to consider mutual adoption and consistent delivery through HEART. Once appropriate approvals have been given and delegated, the HEART service will act on behalf of the partner Councils and will take decisions on matters within this policy on their behalf. A decision by HEART will be a decision of the partner Council in that regard, and the HEART service will be responsible and accountable to the partner Councils and other authorities for the decisions and actions it takes. In this policy, therefore, unless stated otherwise any reference to a Council or Councils includes or means HEART.

1.6 The policy has been prepared as much as possible in accordance with withdrawn government guidance ODPM Circular 05/2003 ('the guidance'), which was not replaced but which still reflects best practice and thinking on the subject.

2 Context

2.1 Housing is in short supply, with a backlog of unmet demand exceeding supply, and first time buyers facing competition against buy to let investors in a harsh lending environment with slow wage growth. This has contributed to an increase in private rented accommodation which now stands as the second largest tenure in England, with social housing in third place. Property values (prices) and rents have also risen, increasing pressure on domestic finances. Changes in benefits rules are also contributing to an increase in the development of smaller shared accommodation. Central public funds for the renovation of private sector housing were cancelled in 2010, with limited local provision.

2.2 A changed definition of fuel poverty reduced the number of households falling into that group (without affecting the circumstances of those no longer counted), but whilst domestic SAP (the energy efficiency) ratings gradually improve, increasing fuel costs offset some of that progress and some families continue to struggle to achieve affordable warmth. Public investment in domestic energy efficiency including that required from utility companies has reduced, though ECO funding has been further extended to late 2018. Being 'hard to heat' is a feature of many older and solid-wall type properties and those not on mains gas networks, some of which are rented and/or occupied by vulnerable people who may be retired or with young children and few resources or choices. Some families find themselves overcrowded, whilst other older couples or single people find themselves in under-occupied homes which may be expensive to heat and difficult to clean, decorate and maintain, but are unwilling or unable to downsize.

2.3 With an ageing population, and people living longer with illness, disabilities and frailty, many homes are in need of some form of adaptation such as a stair-lift or wet room (level access shower) to reduce social care costs and the risks of unnecessary GP visits, expensive hospitalisation or supported care.

2.4 Nationally, housing legislation and finance has leaned towards new build for private sale and rent, and away from public provision, with little attention to the condition of existing privately owned homes as evidenced by the recent housing White Paper. Some other recent and current developments are looking to try to improve the rental market and specifically to address the most extremely inefficient homes in energy terms. Resources for joined up health based housing projects via the Better Care Fund has recently increased, with recognition of the true value of spend-to-save intervention measures in health, home safety and adaptations.

2.5 At a local level:

2.5.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Councils Housing Strategy plays a vital role in determining the council's vision and priorities for housing in the future. The current Housing Strategy covers 2017-2022 and consists of a number of pledges, namely:-

To rise to the challenge of the changing legislation and maximise its use to improve housing conditions

To make best use of the capital resources available to address poor housing conditions or personal needs

To complete a Council Housing stock condition survey of all of our properties

To build more Council homes on Housing Services land to add to our social housing stock

To review and monitor housing needs in the Borough in order to keep our stakeholders informed and enable the appropriate delivery of housing types for our current and future population of the Borough

To continue to work in partnership with our statutory and third sector colleagues to deliver housing and housing related support to those vulnerable residents of our borough that require it

To endeavour to maximise the resources available to deliver these services by ensuring close and ongoing liaison with all partner agencies

2.5.2 North Warwickshire Borough Council is looking to adopt a Housing Strategy that complies with the vision required for the Borough and which fits in with our Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026.

Rural North Warwickshire is a community of communities. A place where people want to live, work and visit, now and in the future, which meets the diverse needs of existing and future residents, is sensitive to the local environment and contributes to a high quality of life. A place which is safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run and which offers equality of opportunity and good services to all. With this in mind, we are working towards the following aims:

- Encouraging the development of housing that meets the needs of our future population. Therefore making sure that there is a mix of open market, shared ownership, starter homes and affordable/social rent.
- Looking at where we can regenerate properties to bring them up to a good standard and in some cases, bring empty properties back into use.
- To help reduce/prevent homelessness by looking at triggers and seeing if there is any support that can bring about preventative measures.

2.5.3 Rugby Borough Council's private housing priorities are to improve:

- The quality of the private sector.
- Access for households to live in private-sector properties

Sitting under this are the following themes:

- Bring empty homes back into use
- Improved private-sector housing conditions (both private-rented and owner-occupied)
- Working more closely with private-sector landlords
- Increased support and housing options for potentially vulnerable home-owners and tenants.

The Strategy will help to meet the strategic objectives of the Council. The overall objective of the council is to achieve a *borough that is clean, green and safe*. Our priorities are to achieve outcomes for: People, Business, The environment, and how the council operates.

The outcomes which are sought by the Corporate Strategy that are most relevant to the private-sector housing strategy are:

- High standards of existing and future housing stock
- Regeneration of our priority neighbourhoods
- Improved health and wellbeing for all age groups

2.5.4 Stratford-on-Avon District Council has adopted a Housing Strategy that has a vision of being “a District of sustainable communities offering more people the opportunity to live in good quality housing of their choice”. As part of this, three key aims have been developed:

1. To support communities including the supply and choice of good quality affordable homes for local people
2. To improve existing housing and help people to live as independently as possible
3. To prevent homelessness and reduce the harm caused by it.

The Council’s financial assistance is primarily focused on the second of these, but does help support the other objectives too. The Council employs an Independent Living Officer, who signposts people to grant assistance. The Council also has an Empty Property Officer, who calls upon grant funding to deliver the Council’s aims.

2.5.5 The key objectives for Warwick District Council's Housing Strategy are:

- Providing suitable accommodation, information and advice for the homeless in an effort to prevent and reduce homelessness
- Meeting the need for housing across the District by addressing the need for new home provision
- Improving the management and maintenance of existing housing
- Ensuring people are supported to sustain, manage and maintain their housing

Our vision is to make Warwick District a great place to live, work and visit.

2.5.6 HEART Business Case

The HEART Business Case was adopted by all partner Councils during 2016. The business case can be found on each Council's web site within the Council report sections. The following aims were included within the document:

- A. To enable customers with multiple and complex conditions to maximise their potential and live in their chosen home environment.
- B. To reduce pressure on other expensive services e.g. residential homes, hospitals, and home care by postponing the need or reducing the amount of care and support required.
- C. To improve quality of life for older and disabled people and their carers (improved dignity, less stressful, empowering, and improved flexibility in daily tasks).
- D. To be proactive and avoid where possible, crisis situations for customers and carers in regards to managing in their chosen home environment.
- E. To promote positive health and well-being styles of living, prevention of falls, and reduce hypothermia in older people.
- F. To improve living conditions by reducing hazards in the home.
- G. To reduce demand elsewhere in the housing, health and care system.
- H. To prevent hospital admissions and/or facilitate timely hospital discharges.
- I. To develop practitioners with the skills and capabilities that enables them to provide the appropriate intervention, to minimise risk to their customers and carers, be outcome focussed and able to 'get it right first time'.
- J. To contribute to the following strategic drivers:
 - Integration & Partnership working.
 - New legislation – Care Act.
 - Safety, Well-being & Prevention.
 - Preventing & Facilitating hospital discharges.
 - Better outcomes for customers & carers in their home environment (Public Health, Social Care & NHS Outcomes Frameworks for 2015-16).
 - Maximising capacity to meet demand within existing or less resources, e.g. Avoidance of growth in Non-Elective Admissions.
- K. Potential for strategic thinking and planning in building accessible new homes, refurbishment programmes, and best use of stock with registered social landlords.

2.5.7 Better Care Fund Principles

The £5.3bn Better Care Fund was announced by the Government in the June 2013 spending round, to ensure a transformation in integrated health and social care.

The Better Care Fund (BCF) is one of the most ambitious programmes across the NHS and local government to date. It creates a local single pooled budget to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more closely together around people, placing their wellbeing as the focus of health and care services, and shifting resources into social care and community services for the benefit of the people, communities and health and care systems

National conditions are applied the BCF. In 2016/17 these conditions were:

NHS England will also require that Better Care Fund plans demonstrate how the area will meet the following national conditions:

- Plans to be jointly agreed;
- Maintain provision of social care services;
- Agreement for the delivery of 7-day services across health and social care to prevent unnecessary non-elective (physical and mental health) admissions to acute settings and to facilitate transfer to alternative care settings when clinically appropriate;
- Better data sharing between health and social care, based on the NHS number;
- Ensure a joint approach to assessments and care planning and ensure that, where funding is used for integrated packages of care, there will be an accountable professional;
- Agreement on the consequential impact of the changes on the providers that are predicted to be substantially affected by the plans;
- Agreement to invest in NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services, which may include a wide range of services including social care;
- Agreement on local action plan to reduce delayed transfers of care.

As DFG is allocated through the BCF then Housing authorities are included in agreeing the local plans and using the funding to work towards delivery of BCF metrics.

For Housing this included where feasible:

Contributing to the transfer of care from the NHS to Social Care – delayed discharge.

Contributing to preventing admissions to hospital – through prevention of accidents and ill health from unsuitable housing conditions.

2.6 Councils are obliged, under the 1996 Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act, to facilitate the delivery of the last remaining mandatory grant for private housing assistance – the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). However, if they wish to go further, they are required to do so under an adopted and published policy via the 2002 RRO (see above). Whilst reference to the mandatory DFG is not required in this policy, it provides useful context through which some of the other forms of assistance can be framed and understood.

2.7 The context of this policy is therefore to deliver safer and appropriate housing which is affordable to heat, and which reduces the risks of ill health, accidents and the costs of their impacts on residents and wider society. Further, it is to do so in a county-wide consistent and harmonised way, through a joint delivery partnership – HEART.

3 Priorities and capital resources

3.1 The following capital financial resources are available to apply and deliver through this policy:

Capital grants from central government distributed through the Better Care Fund or otherwise.

Where capital monies are provided through the BCF they will be allocated for spending in line with decisions regarding capital expenditure agreed with the Warwickshire Cares Better Together Board and the Capital Annex of the HEART partnership agreement.

Local capital from the Boroughs and Districts which each Council may provide for any specified purpose.

Monies from national schemes such as energy company obligations.

Money provided from partners or other public sector organisations to address specified problems.

Money obtained from charitable or other sources on behalf of customers.

3.2 The above will be targeted in accordance with the following priorities;

Local Housing Authorities are obliged first and foremost to deliver mandatory DFGs either via the 1996 Act route or an equally effective parallel pathway. Alternative discretionary assistance should not normally be promoted at the expense of delays to the statutory grant. They may then consider measures which will prevent injury or ill health, and/or limit harmful effects, reduce risks, reduce care costs and negative impacts etc., to promote recovery and improve quality of life and support carers.

3.3 In addition to mandatory DFGs, Councils will therefore determine their local priorities to offer;

- Discretionary Disabled Facilities Assistance (DDFA)
- Relocation assistance
- Hospital discharge support
- Home Safety Check Scheme
- Warm and Safer Homes (WaSH) Grant
- Energy efficiency support

3.4 Not all of the above forms of financial aid can or will be delivered or deliverable via HEART, and some partner Councils may pick and choose from the discretionary menu to suit their local circumstances, priorities and resources. However, those partner Councils wishing to deliver assistance outside of HEART and not contained in this policy will need their own local policy to do so. Partner Councils may choose to NOT offer any of the assistance types detailed in this policy – with the exception of mandatory DFG – or to modify conditions, criteria, limits etc. ONLY IF they have provided a codicil to this policy if they require the HEART service to act differently in their local area.

3.5 Budgets will be set for each form of assistance based on available resources and some forms of assistance may not be funded in any particular year. To ensure the delivery of mandatory DFGs and maximum impact of resources the budgets for each form of assistance will be transferrable. Each Councils funding will be ring fenced for spending within their local areas.

4 Assistance types – details

4.1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (included for context and for a small number of variable options)

4.1.1 The Council will award mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) according to the governing legislation – principally the 1996 Act and subordinate Regulations and Orders as amended - and guidance issued by central Government, and which details amongst other matters the types of work that are to be funded, the maximum grant payable (currently £30,000), and the test of financial resources where applicable. A more detailed information leaflet is available on request, along with online materials.

4.1.2 Qualifying criteria – all owner-occupiers and tenants, licensees or occupiers who are able to satisfy the criteria in sections 19-22 of the 1996 Act are eligible to *apply* for DFG, but applicants must be aged 18 or over (this does not apply to the disabled person, who may be younger). Tenants of Council and other Social Housing are also eligible to apply, but Councils and some social landlords (Registered Providers) may have parallel and equally effective systems which can be no less effective or generous than DFG. Being eligible to apply does not automatically confer approval – some cases will not meet statutory tests as described below, and others may have significant means tested contributions in excess of the cost of works. Other (private) landlords may also apply for mandatory DFG on behalf of their disabled tenants.

4.1.3 As a part of the application process, the Councils will require certificates relating to property ownership and future occupation, and will request permission from the owner as standard legislation does not specify owner's permission for grant aided works to tenanted property. The Council would reasonably want to ensure the tenant has the right to carry out the works and that the landlord would not object or attempt to reinstate the property and evict the client. The Council can also waive the owner's certificate requirement if it is considered 'unreasonable in the circumstances'.

4.1.4 Qualifying works – eligible works for mandatory DFG are set out in section 23(1) of the 1996 Act, as amended. These are;

(a) facilitating access by the disabled occupant to and from the dwelling, qualifying houseboat or qualifying park home, (now including the garden) or

(b) making the dwelling, qualifying houseboat or qualifying park home safe for the disabled occupant and other persons residing with him;

(c) facilitating access by the disabled occupant to a room used or usable as the principal family room;

(d) facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room used or usable for sleeping;

- (e) facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a lavatory, or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
- (f) facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a bath or shower (or both), or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
- (g) facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a wash hand basin, or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
- (h) facilitating the preparation and cooking of food by the disabled occupant;
- (i) improving any heating system in the dwelling, qualifying houseboat or qualifying park home to meet the needs of the disabled occupant or, if there is no existing heating system or any such system is unsuitable for use by the disabled occupant, providing a heating system suitable to meet his needs;
- (j) facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of a source of power, light or heat by altering the position of one or more means of access to or control of that source or by providing additional means of control;
- (k) facilitating access and movement by the disabled occupant around the dwelling, qualifying houseboat or qualifying park home in order to enable him to care for a person who is normally resident and is in need of such care;

4.1.5 The Councils will include as part of the mandatory DFG the cost of a maintenance agreement for a period of five (5) years from the certified date for stair lifts, through-floor lifts, Clos-o-mat type toilet, step-lifts and similar equipment installed with the assistance of that grant. Where installing a reconditioned stair lift, any unspent warranty will be increased to a full 5 years if possible and affordable.

4.1.6 A DFG will only be made if the works are both 'necessary and appropriate' and 'reasonably practicable', where the housing authority has consulted the welfare authority or its agents. Where an applicant prefers a different scheme of works to that approved by the Councils, the Council may offer to 'offset' the value of the original scheme towards those greater works with appropriate safeguards. This is at the discretion of the Council (HEART).

4.1.7 Works which have been commenced prior to the approval of an application will not be eligible for financial assistance without prior written consent from the Local Authority/HEART by a person authorised to give such consent.

4.1.8 Unexpected works which arise during the carrying out of eligible works will be considered for assistance if the works could not have been reasonably foreseen before commencement and if they are vital to the completion of a safe and effective scheme. Unforeseen works carried out without prior approval of the Council will not be eligible for assistance. Approval should always be sought in writing, timed and dated with details of the

extra items and costs. Where unforeseen works are necessary these will be added to the grant up to the specified maximum for mandatory DFG. Costs above the mandatory grant maximum may be supported as discretionary DDFA in accordance with this policy. Care must be taken when agreeing to schemes of works on third-party property such as tenanted accommodation, that the property owner is fully engaged with the decision process. This is also particularly important where an architect or similar is acting on the customers behalf, and where issues such as planning permission, building control and other regulation are involved. Specialist advice from a private occupational therapist may be necessary to ensure that the objectives of the original scheme are being effectively met.

4.1.9 Councils are funding the HEART service in part through agency fees which have been harmonised at 12.5%. Where those fees take the cost of works above the specified maximum, then these will be paid as Discretionary DFA. HEART fees have no impact on an applicant's assessed contribution – the applicant does not contribute towards the fees. An applicant's actual costs may exceed their assessed contribution if the works cost exceeds the maximum, or the applicant has arranged for a wider scope or better quality of works or product, or has chosen a more expensive contractor.

4.1.10 The Council's DFG award is for a sum of funding only, and is not inclusive or exclusive of using particular contractors or products. Customers may specify and choose their own contractors, agent, products and design – but take responsibility for those choices which may fall outside of the remit of any HEART contractors, as long as the result meets the Council's and Occupational Therapist's requirements.

4.1.11 Financial Assistance - Mandatory DFG will be subject to a means test in accordance with the regulations made under the 1996 Act, as amended. The maximum mandatory DFG award is £30,000 minus any contribution required by a 'means test' (test of financial resources). Successive applications may be awarded for those persons whose condition is degenerative, or they develop additional needs, or the delivered scheme fails to meet the needs. Where successive applications are awarded, the applicants contribution to the first grant award will be taken into account if within the time period of the contribution originally calculated (10 years if owner, 5 years if tenant). NOTE: where an applicant is in receipt of a recognised, qualifying, means tested benefit they will not be further means tested and they will have no calculated contribution to make. Where works are for the benefit of a child or young person of 19 years age or younger at the date of application – they too will be exempt a means test.

4.1.12 Where works are being carried out to Council properties, the Council will carry out or arrange those works directly without a formal DFG application based on the recommendation of the welfare authority directly or through HEART). Local policies and procedures will determine whether that recommendation can be approved and how.

4.1.13 Public and private DFG applications or recommendations will usually be processed in chronological order, excepting in emergency circumstances at the discretion of the Council or HEART service. Enquiries for DFG will initially be assessed to determine if alternative services, equipment, support or advice are more appropriate as well as or initially instead of more significant works. The purpose of the screening assessment is to support residents to improve or maintain their capability and to reduce, delay or otherwise avoid creating dependency where independence is a viable, healthier and better long-term option.

4.1.14 Recovery of Assistance Awarded – Some mandatory DFG may be recoverable in accordance with permitted values. Where the customer is an owner-occupier and not a tenant, a sum of up to £10,000 may be recovered for works in excess of £5,000. This sum would only be recovered if the property was sold or title otherwise transferred within 10 years of the certified (completion) date of works, subject to the Council's discretion to reduce or waive in the case of financial hardship. NOTE: this is separate and different to the potential repayment of grant in the event of a breach of occupancy conditions or detected fraud. Also, Councils are entitled to recalculate grant awards in limited circumstances, such as for example if any relevant insurance claims are pending, and to cease making payments and to seek repayment in some cases as detailed in sections 40-42 of the 1996 Act.

4.1.15 The Council will also impose a standard condition that it may recover specialised equipment, such as stair lifts, where no longer required. For clarity – the equipment is the property and responsibility of the customer, both during and after any warranty period, but in the event it is no longer required for the customer the Council have an automatic first right to recovery for re-use, subject to the condition of the equipment and any making-good costs. Such equipment recovery, assessment, repair, refurbishment, cleaning, storage and reinstallation is at the Councils discretion, cost and risk, and not at the customers. The customer or their family, executor or heirs should notify the Council in such circumstances, and the Council will endeavour to provide a swift assessment and decision. The Council may also waive this recovery requirement if it considers it appropriate to do so, and is not obliged to remove or dispose of unwanted equipment.

4.1.16 Conditions relating to Contractors, Standard of Works and Invoices –

- In approving an application for financial assistance, the Council will require as a condition that the eligible works are carried out in accordance with any specification it has decided to impose.
- An applicant must take all reasonable steps to pursue any relevant legal or insurance claim (e.g. medical negligence or accident) which can be made in relation to the eligible works and must notify the Council of the outcome of such a claim and repay the equivalent financial assistance so far as is appropriate, in the Councils view.
- The eligible works must be carried out by the contractor(s) upon whose estimate the financial assistance is based, or if two estimates were submitted, by one of

those contractors. The Council's consent must be obtained prior to the works if a contractor who did not submit an estimate is to carry out the works, and if an agreement is given, an estimate from the new contractor must be submitted to the Council (this does not automatically convey a difference in revised grant award – any additional costs must be separately financed by the client).

- An invoice, demand or receipt will not be acceptable if it is given by the applicant or a member of the applicant's family. Where works are carried out by the applicant or a member of their family, only the cost of materials used will be eligible for financial assistance.
- It is a condition of the financial assistance that the eligible works are carried out within 12 months of the date of approval of the application. This period may be extended by the Council if it thinks fit, particularly where it is satisfied that the eligible works cannot be completed for good cause – requests for additional time must be made in writing before the 12 month period ends, and approved extra time will be confirmed in writing by the Council.
- The payment of the financial assistance to the applicant will be dependent upon the works being carried out to a standard that is satisfactory to the Council and upon receipt of a satisfactory invoice, demand or receipt for the works and any preliminary or ancillary services or changes.
- The Council will usually make payments direct to the contractor on behalf of the client, and not usually to the applicant. Where the applicant disagrees with a payment made direct to a contractor, no payment shall be made until any dispute is resolved. Legislation permits the Council to make payment by delivering to the applicant an instrument of payment in a form made payable to the contractor, OR by making payment direct to the applicant in accordance with information provided prior to grant approval. NOTE: Contractors receiving direct payment may be required to provide sufficient information to be set up on the Council's financial systems – BUT this should not frustrate the client's choice, as the mandatory DFG grant (only) is an award of funds and not an award tied to a specific contractor with additional financial conditions. Other discretionary awards and forms of assistance may allow different rules on payment in kind etc.

4.1.17 Recovery of compensation – it is a condition of the grant that the applicant must take all reasonable steps to pursue any relevant claim for personal injuries which caused the applicant to apply for a DFG or related assistance, and to repay to the Council the grant or assistance, so far as is appropriate, out of the proceeds of any claim, or to use that award directly to fund the adaptations work.

4.1.18 Future occupation of the dwelling – it is a condition of the grant that throughout the grant condition period (that is 5 years from the date of certification) the dwelling is occupied in accordance with the intention stated in the certificate of owner occupation or availability for letting, or intended tenancy. NOTE: There are no provisions regarding the possible

repayment of a mandatory DFG in the event of an exempt disposal of the property. No conditions apply in respect of future occupation of a dwelling where a DFG is approved for works to the common parts of a dwelling.

4.1.19 Recovery of specialised equipment –

- Where a mandatory DFG is approved for the installation of a stairlift, or a through-floor lift, or other specialist equipment the applicant shall notify the Council if, and as soon as, the equipment is no longer needed within a period of 5 years after the certified date.
- The Council, HEART service or its agents shall be entitled upon reasonable prior written notice given to the applicant or their representative either following the giving of notification above, or at any time during the 5 year period after the certified date, to inspect the equipment and to remove it at their discretion.
- The Council agrees, within a reasonable time following an inspection of the equipment, to:
 1. notify the applicant in writing whether the equipment is to be removed, and
 2. if the equipment is to be removed, to remove it or arrange for it to be removed and forthwith make good any damage caused to the property by its removal by the Council or its agents,
- the Council agrees that where the applicant has contributed to the cost of installing equipment which the Council intends to remove, to pay him/her within a reasonable time of that removal the proportion of the reasonable current value of its original cost (residual value – at time of removal) which represents the proportion of their contribution to the cost of the installation.
- Subject to the Council giving prior written notice in accordance with the above, the applicant agrees, within their power, to give reasonable access to the property to the Council and its agents for the purposes of inspection and removal of equipment, and will not act to prevent, delay, prohibit or frustrate such activity.

4.1.20 Where a charge (repayable grant or loan) is due for recovery, on receipt of a written request from the responsible person the HEART or Private Sector Housing Manager will consider the options to reduce or waive repayment in particular circumstances to be determined in accordance with the following criteria;

- (i) the extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were he to be required to repay all or any of the grant;
- (ii) whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the recipient of the grant to take up employment, or to change the location of his employment;

- (iii) whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or wellbeing of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises;
- (iv) whether the disposal is made to enable the recipient of the grant to live with, or near, any person who is disabled or infirm and in need of care, which the recipient of the grant is intending to provide, or who is intending to provide care of which the recipient of the grant is in need by reason of disability or infirmity.

If that initial decision is not accepted and further appealed, details of that appeal will be determined by the Head of Home Environment Services as the head of the HEART service, together or in consultation with the appropriate Head of Housing from the Council for that address or area.

4.1.21 Where funds are repaid, they will return to the home Council for that property who may determine to redirect back into their local HEART capital resources, or otherwise.

4.1.22 All recoverable charges will be recorded as local land charges. Any Council wishing to record charges on the national Land Registry may do so directly themselves, either at their expense or added to the repayment cost ONCE HAVING INFORMED THE LIABLE PARTY. Residents will need to seek permission from their mortgage provider and potentially seek independent financial advice prior to agreeing to charges placed against their property.

4.2 Discretionary Disabled Facilities Assistance (DDFA)

4.2.1 The Council will consider applications for discretionary Disabled Facilities Assistance (DDFA), subject to terms and conditions. A means test of financial resources similar to that applied to mandatory DFG will be applied to all applications for DDFA, excepting applications where the works are for the benefit of a disabled child or young person as defined by the relevant regulations.

4.2.2 DDFA may be awarded and will be subject to the availability of resources. An extra £10,000 may be available as a top-up to owner occupiers* with sufficient equity (works costing £30-40,000). A further £10,000 may be available as a 0% repayable loan (charge) for when works cost £40-50,000 and there is no viable alternative such as relocation support. *tenant cases depending on particular circumstances – as tenants have no equity and landlords may decline charges, Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) may be requested to accept charge against property. Whilst tenants should not be disadvantaged, nor should their landlords be rewarded with improved properties with no security of tenure for the tenant. Offers should represent good value, but be prudent and low risk.

Where the landlord is a private landlord or Registered Social Landlord, options will be explored with the owners of the property depending on circumstances.

4.2.3 DDFA will be registered as a local land charge against the property and any sum over £40,000 will be recovered on the sale or transfer of the property, subject to rules regarding exempt sales. Note – this is separate to the £10,000 recoverable DFG which expires at 10 years from certification of works completion.

4.2.4 Councils are required first to consult the 'welfare authority' to consider what assistance would be necessary and appropriate for the client, and then apply a test of what is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances of the property (as at 4.1.6). The service must consider viable alternative solutions which appear more cost effective. Such solutions may include contributions towards alternative house purchase and moving costs to an adapted or more economically adaptable and suitable property.

Moving and house purchase finance will be determined on a case by case basis determined by:

- the tenure and location of the original and new properties,
- the residual equity and any increased mortgage debt,
- whether moving within the District/Borough, or the County, or beyond,
- whether the original property is unadaptable, unaffordable or poor value to adapt,

or that moving is purely an occupier choice or as a result of a landlords refusal to permit adaptation – see examples at 4.2.14.

DFG of up to £30,000 is available for adaptations in properties residents have moved to (within the local or County area only), but may be reduced by any contributions to moving costs and purchase contributions.

DDFA is available to owner-occupiers with sufficient equity, but also to tenants subject to individual determination and equitable opportunities dependent on the attitude of RSL or private landlords as regards repayable charges as above. Note – neither tenants nor owner occupiers will be disadvantaged and the system will be equitable as far as possible, to be ‘tenure blind’. Tenants, however, with works projected to cost in excess of £30,000 will be encouraged or required to consider housing options such as relocation in priority to actual works to their rented home. Case workers may have similar options conversations with owner-occupiers.

As there are too many variables to set a fixed policy on awards for moving or buying property, each case will be determined on its merits subject to resources by recommendation from the Case Officer to the HEART Manager with sufficient discretionary authority to approve works of that value.

4.2.5 Qualifying criteria – these are the same as for mandatory DFG.

4.2.6 Qualifying works – applications within this heading will be considered for the following purposes;

To top up the financial assistance for adaptation works where the reasonable cost of the required work exceeds the set maximum for mandatory DFG (currently £30,000). The amount of DDFA in such circumstances shall be reasonable. The Council reserves the right to consider alternative solutions where they appear more cost effective, reasonable, practicable or appropriate. NOTE: Welfare Authorities (Warwickshire County Council) also have resources and responsibility for adaptations and equipment under other legislation, e.g. the Care Act. HEART service staff may also assist with charitable applications.

Assist the disabled person to move to a more suitable property where it is impracticable to adapt or more cost effective than adapting the current home of a disabled person to make it suitable for his or her present or future needs, even though the new property may need some adaptation.

4.2.7 Rehousing options include trying to identify and offer suitable accommodation in the social rented sector. The Council will, however, bear in mind that for many disabled people the location of their home is a key consideration – often they have an established support system and network of friends, family and local organisations that, understandably, they will wish to maintain.

4.2.8 Works which have been commenced prior to the approval of an application, and unforeseen works – the same conditions apply to DDFA as to DFG.

4.2.9 Financial Assistance – all DDFA will be subject to a means test the same as that for mandatory DFG, including the exemptions for young people. DDFA to meet the difference between the maximum mandatory grant that can be awarded and the total eligible cost of the qualifying works, inclusive of HEART fees, will not incur any interest charges to maintain or increase its value over time (i.e. the liability will not grow).

4.2.10 Unless specified below, where properties are owner occupied the DDFA awarded will be placed as a charge on the property and will be recoverable on the sale or transfer of the property title, subject to the rules regarding exempt sales.

4.1.11 Circumstances where DDFA it may be considered NOT to be registered as a charge against the property;

- Applicants for DDFA who are not owner occupiers will be referred for a financial assessment for a commercial loan. If it is not possible for the applicant to obtain affordable loan finance, then the DDFA may be in the form of a grant award, subject to conditions.
- Applicants who have transferred ownership of a property to others within the previous 10 years or where the transfer did not involve a sale at market value, or those who are not owners but who are living with family, then the family will be asked to register the DDFA loan as a charge which may or may not be a viable option depending on the family circumstances.

4.2.12 Conditions relating to contractors, standards of work and invoices – as for mandatory DFG

4.2.13 Conditions restricting future use and ownership of the property – the following additional conditions will apply where the Council has made an award of DDFA;

- The owner will notify the Council in writing if a relevant disposal of the property is proposed.
- The owner of the property will provide, within 21 days of a written notice from the Council, a statement confirming the ownership and occupancy of the dwelling. If the property has been sold or transferred the statement will include the date of transfer of ownership.
- DDFA will be registered as a charge against the property and will be repayable on sale or transfer of the property, subject to exempt sales. The charge will be binding on successors in title.
- It is a condition of DDFA that where an owner makes a relevant disposal of the dwelling, other than an exempt disposal, the DDFA shall be repayable subject to above.

- If a relevant disposal takes place after a period of 5 years after the certified date of completion of works, no amount shall be recovered which, after repayment of all charges registered against the property, results in owner(s) having a residual equity of less than £10,000. No account will be taken by the Council of charges subsequent to the charges registered by the Council.
- If the property is transferred, or the sale price does not reflect the market price, the Council will have the right to seek an independent valuation of the market value, which will be binding on both parties, in order to recover the grant repayable.

4.2.14 Criteria for consideration in cases of help-to-buy/move; (this is not an exclusive or exhaustive list, as other factors may become apparent with experience):

- The disabled person may wish or need to move to give or receive care, or to receive medical treatment.
- The disabled person may wish or need to move to maintain or gain employment.
- The cost of works to the property may exceed the benefit to the client.
- The cost of works may exceed the available grant and loan maximum and any available client or third party contribution.
- The client's calculated contribution may be unaffordable and moving/buying is a better financial solution.
- The client may need to move to reduce rent and/or release spare bedrooms which they can no longer afford (e.g. benefits cap and/or the spare room subsidy).
- A different property may provide a greater benefit for the client for the funds.
- The current property may not be adaptable, and another property may be more amenable to adaptation.
- The current property may contain hazards or defects which would not be sufficiently addressed by the works or otherwise by the client or owner.
- The property owner (landlord) refuses to permit the adaptation.
- The property is for sale, or pending foreclosure, bankruptcy (as security against debt) or repossession.
- The tenancy is due to end and not be renewed, or is otherwise unstable.
- Relationship breakdown.
- The client wishes to downsize and/or release equity (some of which could be used towards adaptation and moving costs).
- The client wishes to move to or purchase in another Council area and may be entitled to mandatory DFG in addition to support to move or buy (this may be within or outside of Warwickshire).

4.3 Hospital Discharge Grant

4.3.1 Hospital Discharge Grant (HDG) of up to £10,000 will be payable where housing defects or adaptation works are preventing discharge from hospital as assessed by professionals attached to either Social Services, Acute or Primary Care Trust, or a senior officer working in the recognised hospital discharge process, or to reduce the risk of re-admission or address significant difficulties in providing safe and dignified home based care. Works may include adapting the living environment to accommodate a disability, remedying defects including safety hazards including security, and thermal comfort measures (insulation, heating).

4.3.2 Hospital Discharge Grants will NOT be subject to a test of applicant's financial resources (i.e. NOT means tested) where it facilitates rapid discharge and the release of a hospital or care bed resource. In such cases, clients may be assessed ahead of date order and as a priority – which will impact on other less urgent cases. Contractors may also be asked to prioritise or re-schedule works to accommodate the need for a rapid adaptation, and may charge a premium for such. Additional works that may assist with reducing re-admission may also be included within the considered works, or other forms of assistance included within this policy.

4.3.3 Conditions;

The works must be necessary in order to facilitate discharge from hospital or care or reduce readmission, to save or reduce hospitalisation or residential care costs or to facilitate safe and dignified home care and avoid or reduce the cost of a care package,

Assessment for HDG will take priority over other casework at the discretion of the HEART Team Manager or Head of Home Environment Services.

The Council reserve the right to refuse this award if there is doubt or another form of assistance is more appropriate, or where the primary responsibility lies with an alternative organisation.

All other conditions e.g. relating to repayment, contractors, standards of work and invoices etc. that apply to DFG will apply to HDG.

4.3.4 HEART and Councils will work with other agencies including Health and Social Care to provide a flexible and rapid offer for genuine and needy cases where other assistance types are likely to be ineffective. This will include exchange of information, getting approval of the customer and family / carers, access to the property for assessment, completion of appropriate records, liaison with contractors and the conduct of work. The form of this flexible package cannot be prescribed in greater detail – each case will have its own merits and opportunities, some of which may be fluid in any event.

4.4 Home Safety Grant and 'Handyperson'

4.4.1 A free home safety check (inspection) will be offered to any qualifying resident assessed by HEART for other services or as a stand-alone request or referral. Qualifying criteria defining the vulnerable target group are; available to those of any tenure aged 55 or over, or a household containing a disabled person.

4.4.2 Assessment may indicate a need below the level that qualifies for statutory intervention through Social Care, for equipment (aids), and/or minor works or adaptations (half step, grab rail, ramp, key safe, smoke and CO alarms etc.). Assessed minor works are not means tested, up to financial limits.

4.4.3 If NO Care Act need is assessed but preventative works are strongly indicated, equipment and minor works of up to £500 can be funded, reimbursed if agreed prior to works being commenced or otherwise provided via any approved 'handy-person' scheme or directly purchased by or on behalf of the customer if suitability is agreed. This can fund both labour and materials – see examples at 4.4.7. Fees on the value of each works / equipment will be applied by HEART and in addition to the maximum award where necessary. Cases costing more than the maximum sum may be referred if eligible for DFG, or WaSH grant and subject to means test. Provision of assistance is a *spend-to-save* measure intended to reduce more expensive accidents and their consequences.

4.4.4 HEART processing fees for handy-person type works and services will be 12.5% (2017) or whatever standard fee rate applies.

4.4.5 To facilitate a better service, it is proposed to explore the options to establish, procure or contract one or more Handy-person services. To fully explore the opportunities would delay the agreement of the principal tools of this policy, and thus will be addressed retrospectively.

4.4.6 The service will make award(s) to a maximum of the £500 of Home Safety Grants within a 3 year period. The awards are per household, not per person.

4.4.7 The safety check aims to provide a free Home Environmental risk assessment to identify potential hazards, such as -

- Falls Prevention; Advise on safe clear floor pathways, ill-fitting carpets, trailing electrical wires, uneven floors, furniture obstructions, garden paths and shed / garage access, access to main doors (front, side, rear), bins etc.
- Mobility and use of facilities; Freedom of movement within home, identify ill-fitting doors and windows, stair & grab rails, steps, lighting, switches and sockets, changing a lightbulb, putting up or adjusting curtains / blinds and fittings,
- Hazards from hot surfaces and materials; Radiators, gas fires, hot water cooker arrangements,

- Warm Home Assessment; Identify damp & mould, insulation (cavity & loft), lack of central heating, draught proofing, water cylinder jacket, fuel poverty assessment, tariff/supplier choice, meter position and readability
- Security checks; Window & door locks, fitting key safes,
- Fire Safety; Smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors.

Provision of remedial work once agreed by the Service User

- Grab rails
- Stairs rails
- Internal ramps (half steps)
- Refitting and/or easing doors
- Easing windows
- Key safes
- Fit smoke alarms
- Door safety chains
- Access to property (minor trip hazards)
- Change & fit light bulbs
- Tack loose fitting carpets
- Re-route trailing wires
- Fixing loose floor boards (or refer on to others)
- Relocate small items of furniture
- Remove minor slip trip or fall hazards within the home or garden.

4.5 Warm and Safer Homes (WaSH)

4.5.1 The Decent Homes Standard contains four elements, that dwellings¹;

1. meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing (that a property is free of category 1 hazards as identified by an appropriately trained professional under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System - Housing Act 2004)
2. are in a reasonable state of repair
3. have reasonably modern facilities and services
4. provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

4.5.2 Further detail is available at section 4 of the linked document; https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7812/138355.pdf. This standard was originally introduced for social housing, then adopted as an aspirational target for private housing – but not as an enforceable standard excepting the first element.

4.5.3 All partner Councils agree that reducing category 1 HHSRS hazards is a key aim along with element 4 on thermal comfort, which has significant crossover with fuel poverty and health risks particularly to vulnerable groups. Elements 2 and 3 are important but less vital, and in the context of existing budgets, staffing and priorities there is no intention to include them in any current discretionary scheme as stand-alone items (i.e. excepting where they also meet element 1, HHSRS hazard). Element 4, thermal comfort, would be treated under the separate Energy Efficiency support (details following) except where it also constitutes a category 1 hazard which takes priority. Offers may be combined at the discretion of the service. NOTE: at the discretion of HEART, a category 2 hazard that will deteriorate over time or adversely affect the occupant due to health conditions will be considered for assistance. See 4.5.6 below for an indicative list of HHSRS hazard categories and circumstances which should be recognisable to Housing Assessment Officers, and circumstances suggesting escalation to more experienced surveyors.

4.5.4 For **owner-occupiers** partner Councils will award SUBJECT TO RESOURCES a discretionary sum for works identified or agreed by the service, as follows;

1. Grant of up to £10,000 for works agreed by service.
2. Full costs awarded if a member of the household is in receipt of a qualifying means tested benefit, otherwise
3. where the applicant has a qualifying health risk (to be agreed and varied as appropriate by HEART Board members) which can be alleviated or improved by works to the home, subject to the DFG test of financial resources – an

¹ excludes certain mobile homes, houseboats as defined in legislation (Housing Act 2004)

applicant's calculated contribution is offset against the cost of works. Where Board members agree to provide assistance based on designated health conditions such as dementia, then they will agree the specific details and criteria of any assistance under this section.

4. Minimum property ownership period of 3 years before award, no repeat application or further award within 3 years of certification (completion)
5. An expectation of reasonable care, not due to deliberate or negligent damage, use of insurance award

Qualifying means tested benefits;

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (? or perhaps not)
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit, and your annual gross income does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (during the initial roll-out of this benefit) – or equivalent

4.5.5 For **private sector landlords**, there is not just an expectation but a legal obligation for their properties to be free of category 1 HHSRS hazards. Action on category 1 and relevant category 2 hazards will be referred to local private sector housing teams for enforcement consideration in accordance with their policies.

4.5.6 The Housing Health & Safety Rating System classifies 29 hazard types, split into four broad groups; physiological, psychological, protection against infection, and protection against accidents. Within each hazard profile (see HHSRS Operating Guidance), properties are allocated an average risk rating dependent - in some cases - on property age, tenure, HMO or non-HMO, house or flat. Certain hazard profiles identify a 'vulnerable client group', based on age. The top four hazards, by average HHSRS score, are excess cold, falls on level surfaces, falls on stairs and entry by intruders. The remaining 25 hazards score on average very low, and conditions would have to be severe to escalate towards a category 1 score. A numerical score is calculated by a function of the probability of an incident occurring within the next 12 months (based on observable or reported data), together with the severity of harm types resulting from the incident, and range from zero to several thousands. The cut-off between category 2 hazards and the more severe category 1 hazards is a score of 1000

points or more. Councils have discretion to act on category 2, but MUST act on category 1 hazards, and can do so regardless of tenure – but not in the Council’s own stock.

The other 25 hazards are;

- Damp and mould growth
- Excess heat
- Asbestos and manmade fibres (MMF)
- Biocides
- Carbon monoxide, Nitrogen Dioxide and Sulphur Dioxide
- Lead
- Radiation, including Radon
- Un-combusted fuel gas (asphyxiation, not explosion of fire)
- Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)
- Crowding and Space
- Lighting
- Noise
- Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse
- Food safety
- Personal hygiene, sanitation and drainage
- Water supply
- Falls with baths
- Falls between levels
- Electrical hazards
- Fire
- Flames and hot surfaces
- Collision and entrapment, including low architectural features
- Explosions
- Position and operability of amenities
- Structural collapse and falling elements

Housing Assessment Officers may consider the following to be likely category 1 hazards;

1. Excess cold - ineffective or lack of heating systems, occupier(s) unable to maintain comfortable temperatures, lack of radiators or central heating to commonly used rooms, sole means of heating to a room is electric on-peak fires or convector heaters, uncontrollable draughts, exacerbating factors such as broken window(s), windows which cannot be closed, lack of insulation (loft, cavity wall or hot water tank).
2. Slips, trip, falls - Very uneven or unstable flooring or external yards/pathways, holes and/or rot to floorboards, dangerous changes in level, poor slip resistant surfaces to external steps, missing balustrading/guarding to stairs or external steps.
3. Lack of security - Insecure windows and doors, faulty/broken locking mechanisms or glazing, if high crime rate area.

4. Electrical hazards – live bare wires at accessible level, water/moisture ingress to electrical fixtures and fittings, damaged lighting/power fixtures or fittings, missing blanking plates or circuit breakers to consumer units.
5. Lack of electric supply.
6. Lack of hot and cold water to washing and bathing facilities or other disrepair.
7. Smell of natural gas, signs of incomplete combustion to gas appliances, gas appliances marked as do not use by gas safety engineers, open flue gas fires within sleeping rooms.
8. Lack of food storage, preparation areas and water supply available for preparing/cooking food.
9. Fire risk within properties where occupier exhibits behavioural problem leading to high fire loading – such as hoarding.
10. Structural collapse – falling brickwork, defective chimney stacks/pots, other building elements either at risk of falling from height or being heavy (window frames etc.).
11. Falls on stairs - no handrail, handrail not extending to full length of flight, steep stairs, narrow stairs, twisting stairs, gaps in balustrades / spindles, poor lighting.

Housing Assessment Officers may also consider the following cases likely category 2 hazards that need to be rectified, as they will deteriorate over time:

1. Damp and mould - Extreme condensation and mould growth, resulting from lack of natural or mechanical extract ventilation, inadequate heating or insulation, penetrating dampness from holes in the roof etc.
2. Toilets blocked due to defects or other defective foul or surface water drainage such as gullies, pipework, guttering etc.
3. Operation of windows/doors - difficult to open/close, external doors swollen, missing door/window handles
4. Collapse of internal elements such as falling plasterwork, fixtures and fittings etc.

4.6 Energy efficiency support

4.6.1 Fuel poverty, or ‘affordable warmth’, is a key health issue as it impacts severely and directly on the most vulnerable sections of our communities – from the very young to the oldest. Around 30,000 excess winter deaths are attributed to cold related illness annually. These can include flu, pneumonia and chest infections as well as strokes and heart attacks. It can also contribute to increased risk of falls. Those impacts which are not fatal may nonetheless be debilitating with severe and permanent effects, and all may bear upon stretched medical and social care services. Increases in allergies and asthma from exposure to mould spores from condensation and damp are also harmful, and in the very young can develop into whole lifetime conditions which can affect educational achievement and employment prospects. NICE guidelines advocate action to address fuel poverty and excess cold.

4.6.2 Funding for domestic energy efficiency improvements via national schemes like ECO (Energy Companies Obligation) and the Green Deal have lacked stability and are under review or early stage implementation. Phase 2 of ECO was due to expire on 31.3.2017 but is being extended in a modified form until September 2018. Exact details of modifications and guidance are awaited from the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy. Energy companies are still delivering schemes, in some cases nationwide and in others bespoke with local partners such as Councils.

4.6.3 Councils can play an important role in delivering schemes, particularly in partnership with energy companies, as they have a track record of delivery along with local data, knowledge and networks of connections and communications, and can act as a trusted brand and bridge between communities and the private sector. Councils can generate publicity and capture potential leads for onward referral, and also act as intermediaries and ambassadors of their constituents in dealings with other funders or providers. Councils can also ‘top up’ energy company offers and fill gaps where certain customers, properties or works may not be covered by ECO-type schemes.

4.6.4 As schemes and relationships with funders and their delivery infrastructure may change on a rapid cycle – and it would not be possible or prudent to re-write this policy every time such a change occurred – only a generic description of the types of assistance which may be offered can be given at this point. This policy may be supplemented by codicils from time to time which capture more specific offers, but in general the service will offer appropriate grants and/or loans, materials and the provision of works directly or otherwise with partners to the criteria, limits and terms & conditions as are negotiated and agreed to provide maximum impact and benefit. This is likely to include a Statement of Intent under new ECO2 rules to target flexible eligibility provision and declare households as qualifying under Fuel Poor (FP) or LIVC (living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of cold housing), and any solid wall in-fill insulation scheme, pending DBEIS guidance.

4.7 Other forms of assistance

4.7.1 Councils may from time to time wish to consider grants or other financial and non-financial assistance for purposes not aligned to the Better Care Fund, or to address local issues, either directly or via HEART. These matters may include; empty homes, conversions / HMOs, assistance to down-size and release larger family housing.

4.7.2 As those issues are not directly associated with the HEART harmonisation agenda, they are not explored here further and await development at the discretion of the Councils or HEART Management Board.

NOTE: If a Council is going to offer or deliver any RRO qualifying assistance directly or through HEART, it should be included either in their own stand-alone policy or in this policy as an appendix/codicil.

5 Assistance process, and access

5.1 Customers may refer themselves or be referred to the HEART service either directly or indirectly by all appropriate channels – telephone, email, regular mail (post) or at appropriate offices (main office at Town Hall, Nuneaton – satellite offices at Bedworth and partner Councils offices and satellites). Satellites, partners and switchboards will have been briefed to channel all relevant enquiries to the HEART duty desk at Nuneaton Town Hall (for the North – NBBC, NWBC and RBC) and Warwick District Council HEART duty desk at Riverside House, Leamington Spa for the South (WDC/SoADC), which serve to screen incoming contacts to either immediately signpost or redirect or to conduct initial enquiries for processing onwards. Other District/Borough Council offices and sites may be used by staff as drop-in offices and for occasional meetings.

5.2 The HEART duty desk operates from 0900-1700, Monday to Friday excluding Bank and Public holidays. There is no emergency out of hours service or contact (messages can be left), but staff will sometimes have to arrange home or other visits or make contact with customers outside of those hours by agreement to deliver better and more effective service. Enquiries will usually be addressed in chronological order as received, excepting cases as detailed further under prioritisation (section 9).

5.3 All information received and processed will be treated in accordance with confidentiality and data protection rules, as agreed in the HEART Data Sharing Protocol.

5.4 Staff have all had additional training in equalities and diversity, and on the safeguarding of both adults and children. In appropriate circumstances, staff may be legally obliged or directed by a supervisor to refer cases of 'concern for welfare' to other appropriate agencies for investigation in line with agreed policies.

5.5 Once initial screening has occurred, unless referred to other services, each case will be allocated to an Occupational Therapist, Housing Assessment Officer, or Home Improvement Officer as appropriate to the needs and circumstances. Those staff will normally make contact by telephone or otherwise as directed, and will then usually arrange for a home visit to view the property and discuss the customer's wishes and needs. The outcome of that visit will inform any schedule or specification of works, and the staff will provide and assist the customer to complete any necessary application documentation. Customers may be asked to sign a customer agreement for some types of work, but HEART fees for financially assisted works are all grant aided and are not paid by the customer.

5.6 Once customers have been supported to apply for assistance, they should receive written notification of a decision in due course. Prior to that, the HEART service can arrange for contractors to visit and view the property and quote for the identified works, and can also engage a design professional who may draw plans and assist with the process for more major, complex and expensive adaptations which may require planning permission and

which may need refinement from an initial brief. An asbestos testing contractor may also be engaged to check if works require special protection. Other professionals such as structural engineers etc. may also be necessary from time to time. The value of some works may dictate that two or even three different quotes are obtained to compare value. (Note- see section 8 – contractors are a customer choice, customers may choose contractors other than those working with the HEART service, and are not obliged to use the least cost contractor but may be liable for additional costs outside of any award).

5.7 The customer's key worker will contact the customer regularly with updates, and will visit during works and on completion as appropriate. Some cases require one or more pre-start meetings, as some customers may have to make temporary arrangements to facilitate the works.

5.8 During and on completion of works, contractors may make requests for interim or final payments, which will be checked by the service before approval with the customer's permission only. In the case of dispute over value, work quality or otherwise, the HEART service will mediate towards mutual satisfaction and a fair outcome for all. After completion and final payment, customers should receive any appropriate warranty, guarantee, certificate or similar. If customers have any contribution to pay towards works, for extra works or other purposes, the customer should pay the contractor directly and up front i.e. before Council funds, and in any event for works outside of grant scope. The Council is not responsible for chasing applicants for money and receiving it and then paying it out to a contractor. Contractors should be responsible for obtaining the money owed to them by clients

5.9 Stairlifts and similar are usually provided with a standard 5 year warranty. Whilst the lift becomes the property of the customer, if the customer no longer requires it or can no longer use it, the HEART service has 'first call' to survey and remove any reusable lift for other customers. 'Make good' works will be offered (or compensation to the value of any decor), together with the proportional residual value of any original customer contribution. See 4.1

5.10 Customers are able to make repeat or successive applications if their needs change and within the specific assistance type conditions. If customers are concerned or unhappy with any issue and wish to speak with a supervisor, they may ask for the Senior Housing Assessment Officer or Senior Occupational Therapist, and may then escalate to the HEART Team Manager as appropriate in advance of options to appeal or complain.

5.11 ALL applicants for and beneficiaries of financial assistance must have a valid UK National Insurance number, a UK address and the right to reside in the UK and to receive the benefit of public funding. Grants and assistance will be provided for works to Warwickshire properties only, but relocation support (costs) may be provided for moves outside Warwickshire County.

6 Assistance conditions, and advice

6.1 Assistance conditions will be particular to each assistance type and will be provided in writing with any application form, paperwork, and approval or otherwise. Customers may ask their key worker for clarification or further detail as necessary.

6.2 Approvals of grant or loan will usually relate to a sum of money and not be specific to a particular contractor or set of contractors the customer must use. However, the Council must have received and be satisfied with quotes from alternative contractors in advance of works.

6.3 An approval may be for less than 100% of the cost of the works, and the customer should be informed of their contribution or shortfall and should not instruct the commencement of works until that sum can be covered. Customers should also be aware of the possibility of unforeseen works which may fall outside of the scope of further financial aid, and may require a reasonable contingency.

6.4 Customers may be assisted by their key worker to seek charitable finance for any shortfall or assessed contribution, but should seek professional independent financial advice for any commercial loan or equity release type product.

6.5 Certain assistance types may require a minimum period of occupation or ownership to avoid the partial or complete repayment of funds. Some assistance types may have a non-expiring obligation to repay funds, and unless otherwise stated will usually be in the form of a zero-interest loan or charge not requiring periodic repayment, but terminal settlement. Mandatory DFGs may require up to £10,000 to be repaid if circumstances are triggered within 10 years of the certified (completion) date.

7 Fees and Ancillary Charges

7.1 The Council will consider reasonable fees for financial assistance. The following fees will be eligible for financial assistance if they have been properly incurred in making an application or seeking approval for the proposed works, or to ensure the satisfactory completion of works assisted under this policy;

- Confirmation, if sought by the Council, that the applicant has a relevant owners interest
- Relevant legal fees
- Technical and structural surveys
- Design and preparation of plans and drawings
- Preparation of schedules of relevant works
- Assistance in completing forms
- Advice on financing the costs of the relevant works which are not met by grant
- Applications for building regulations approval (including application fee and preparation of related documents), planning permission, listed building consent and conservation area consent (and similar)
- Obtaining of estimates
- Advice on contracts
- Consideration of tenders
- Supervision of the relevant works
- Disconnection and reconnection of utilities where necessitated by relevant works
- Payment of contractors
- In a case where the application is for DFG or DDFA, the reasonable services and charges of a (private) occupational therapist in relation to the relevant works

7.2 HEART fees – The HEART service charge fees for the services they provide which are in excess of the statutory minimum necessary to approve the grant application. Currently the fees are set at 12.5% of cost of grant / loan funded works. This can be amended by the agreement of the HEART Management Board.

7.4 In order to streamline the process, these fees will be deducted at source by HEART. Any HEART fees will be excluded from any repayable element of financial awards, and in any case these fees will be in addition to the maximum amounts specified for any particular award. The fees will be based on the maximum grants amount.

Examples

DFG Grant	(£30,000 Max)	Home Safety Grant	(£500 max)
Cost of works	£10000	Cost of Works	500
Fee	£1250	Fee	62.5
Total Award	£11250	Total Award	£562.5

10 year charge for works between £5000 and £15000	£5000		
Amount excluded from charge	£1250		

7.5 Where the Council / HEART service is not assisting the works with grant or financial award, but the customer still requires technical or professional services to support their project, the customer will be responsible for paying HEART fees accordingly. Customers will need to sign an appropriate customer agreement form. Dispute resolution will be between customers and their chosen contractors, but with appropriate support from HEART staff.

7.6 The HEART Management Board will set the level for technical and professional services for privately funded customers.

8 HEART Contractors

8.1 The HEART service currently operates an open list of contractors which can be joined on successfully meeting the requirements of the contractor's standards and code of conduct. In addition some contractors may be accessed through framework agreements provided by external organisations.

8.2 All Councils are keen to promote the economy within their local areas and as such capital spending can contribute towards this objective. Where feasible and not to the detriment of the service provided then local contractors will be given the opportunity to tender for works.

8.3 HEART has a number of types of contractors and specialist services within its supply chain. These include

- Architects
- Structural engineers
- Asbestos surveying companies
- Stair lift manufacturers and installers
- Bathroom installers
- General builders
- Specialist builders
- Gas and electricity contractors

As HEART effectively links contractors and suppliers with grant applications it is recognised that a responsibility and relationship exists between the contractor and HEART. It is therefore the commissioning intention of HEART to procure and manage the supply chain through a series of appropriate tenders and frameworks. Some of these frameworks may be national public sector frameworks that the Council can access. Further commissioning may be necessary to create more local frameworks where effectively contractors are working for HEART and HEART is making its own contractors available to customers. Procurement will seek to ensure a suitable legal relationship between HEART and contractors where each body is responsible for their work and actions and suitable arrangements are in place to ensure poor performance is rectified.

8.4 Each job that is intrusive will be subject to an asbestos survey to determine if specialist removal or precautions are necessary to complete the job. This survey will be paid via the capital grant irrespective of whether work progresses as will other specialist survey or design works where the grant works do not progress.

9 Prioritisation

9.1 Where possible the Council will commence consideration of an enquiry for assessment for financial support or other services within this policy in chronological order of receipt of enquiry, subject to the following provisions;

- With the agreement of HEART senior supervisor, an enquiry must be considered as urgent if the customer would be unable to remain in their home safely unless the works are expedited, notwithstanding that care in the home is provided, OR that required works are necessary to facilitate discharge from hospital or nursing or residential care,
- Any priority scheme agreed for DFGs
- The property subject of the enquiry is in such a condition as to present an immediate and significant danger to the occupants or visitors.
- For the purposes of budgetary control a category of financial assistance may be given priority over another, or sums may be switched between categories but NOT to the detriment of mandatory DFGs
- For the purposes of policy or project implementation a category of financial assistance may be given priority over another
- Where staff resources are employed to work in a specialist area e.g. Home Improvement Officers dealing with complicated WaSH grants, then the enquiries generated for those specific work areas will be considered within their own chronological priority order, irrespective of the wider enquiries dealt by the wider team.
- NOTE: devolved budgets are NOT pooled – if a budget for an area is fully committed, budgets from other areas will not be transferred but sub-budgets for different assistance types in that local area may be reallocated at the discretion of the home partner Council. This means that some enquiries or applications may be suspended pending identification of local funds, whilst later cases from other areas go ahead.

9.2 Where resources (financial, staffing or other) are limited, those services which are provided for vulnerable groups or most vulnerable individuals will take priority over other types of assistance or cases.

9.3 Where a property, case, customer or category of service is to be considered outside of chronological order the Head of Service or HEART Team Manager / Private Sector Housing Manager or Team Leaders will sanction the action and a written record will be retained on file in justification of that decision.

10 Enforcement Policies

10.1 Although this Financial Assistance Policy is designed to support and encourage the co-operation of owners and landlords to maintain and improve their homes, it must be borne in mind that the Council may have to resort to statutory action. This may be necessary:

- To comply with legislation compelling the Council to act, as a mandatory duty or statutory function
- To protect the living conditions of private tenants, particularly those living in shared accommodation or houses in multiple occupation (see separate local HMO licensing policies)
- To protect the conditions of owner occupiers where necessary and appropriate, or those of their neighbours affected by poorly maintained property

10.2 Each Council has adopted its own enforcement policy to ensure that their actions are carried out with clearly understood principles, practices and standards, in a consistent way, proportional to the issues being addressed, and with a courteous and helpful approach by the Council staff involved. Councils will seek to act with an open, transparent and honest approach. Each Councils policies and actions should reflect the principles of the Regulators Code; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulators-code>.

10.3 A copy of each Council's housing enforcement policy will be available online and at each principal office of the Councils at reasonable time and without charge. Printed copies can be provided for a nominal charge, but free copies will be available on request to voluntary organisations and partners, particularly those representing customer groups who may receive assistance under this policy, Warwickshire County Council Social Services (Adult and Children's Social Care), the Library Service and the National Health Service.

10.4 Each Council's policy may be updated from time to time.

11 Complaints

11.1 Whilst each partner Council has its own separate formal complaint process, HEART has a process which should be used regardless of the location of the service provided or requested, or the particular employing organisations involved.

Note – if Councils have opted to provide any assistance within this policy directly and outside of HEART then their own process should be followed – details via their individual websites, main offices or contact centres which can be referred onwards by HEART or for which HEART can give details.

11.2 Any member of the public who is dissatisfied with the performance of the HEART service in administering this policy may make a formal complaint through the HEART procedure. However, we would encourage both the public and the staff (and their supervisors) to try to address any misunderstandings or disagreements by mutual agreement – within the jurisdiction of the staff to do so – to avoid the need for a matter to escalate to formality. Staff should still make supervisors and managers aware of such issues even if resolved, in order to facilitate learning and service improvement.

11.3 Complaints that amount to a disagreement with the Council about its decisions, or the Policy, rather than the way in which the decisions or policies have been implemented, cannot be considered under this (HEART) Complaint Procedure:

https://www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/info/19999/feedback/201/customer_feedback

Where appropriate an appeal can be made to the Appeals Panel to consider the merits of a decision on whether a case outside of policy should receive assistance – see ‘Appeals and out of policy cases’ – section 12.

11.4 Examples of the type of complaint that will come within this complaints procedure are:

- Failure of HEART to provide the service to an appropriate level or standard as described in this policy
- Unhelpful attitude of a HEART service employee
- Neglect or delay in answering a query or responding to a request for service outside of that which is reasonable
- Failure to follow the services agreed policies, rules or procedures
- Failure to take account of relevant matters when coming to a decision
- Failure to inform people of their rights
- Malice, bias or the non-application of Equal Opportunities policies or principles

11.5 Complaints, compliments and feedback are made through the NBBC web site as above.

11.6 The complaints procedure is not a substitute or alternative to any person's right to complain to their elected representatives or to the appropriate Ombudsman, but the latter will usually insist on the customer using the service complaints process first.

12 Appeals and out-of-policy cases

12.1 The appeals process has been designed to incorporate the following key principles:

- Accessibility
- Simplicity and clarity
- Promptness of action and speed of resolution
- Objectivity and independence
- Confidentiality
- Comprehensiveness

12.2 There are two forms of appeal which may occur:

- a. Issues of a professional or technical nature, e.g. where an applicant disagrees with the assessment of conditions or needs,
- b. 'special case' issues where the works, social or financial circumstances of the applicant or type of assistance required are not accounted for within the policy or where the customer believes the policy to be wrong or unfair.

12.3 In order to properly consider appeals, there will be two levels of escalation: The Supervisors Panel (Private Sector Housing Manager and Heart Service Manager), and the Senior Management Panel (Head of Home Environment Service and the local Head of Housing or equivalent).

12.4 Technical / professional appeals may be in relation to:

- Hazards determined under the HHSRS
- The perceived condition of any building element
- The remedial works determined by the Council

12.5 Special Case Appeals – where the works, social or financial circumstances of the applicant or type of assistance requested for are not accounted for within the policy, the applicants will be able to appeal.

12.6 Where the Supervisors Panel declines an appeal then the appellant (client, disabled person or applicant – directly or via an advocate or agent) may escalate to the next level (Senior Management).

12.7 Appellants will be eligible to appeal where it is argued that their special circumstances are not adequately reflected through the existing policy. The claim can only be successful if they establish to the satisfaction of the Panel that their case falls within the following criteria:

- Failure to carry out works will place the applicants or existing family's health and safety at immediate risk

- The applicant or member of their family has a specific and serious medical condition or disability – including mental health – which is being aggravated by the existing condition of the property and the provision of assistance would significantly improve the condition
- The condition of the house will imminently prevent the ability of the existing family to continue to live together
- The condition of the property will lead to the intervention of other statutory services, thereby causing additional expenditure from other public sources e.g. children being taken into care
- The work would be of wider benefit than to the applicant and their family e.g. where other properties are affected.

12.8 In all of the above cases:

- The applicant has no means by which they could reasonably be expected to fund the work, either privately or with ‘welfare’ assistance, and
- The assisted works must significantly reduce the problems under the above criteria, described by the applicant or identified by the Council

12.9 Where the applicant does not fulfil the above criteria, they will be notified and they may then appeal to the Senior Management Panel to decide their case. Where a Panel agrees that the case fulfils the above criteria, then the assistance may be agreed.

12.10 Initial assessments – a form will be provided to the applicant in order for them to document their case, along with the criteria listed above. It will be for the applicant to provide sufficient detail concerning their case. Where the applicant requires support to make an appeal submission, the HEART service may assist with the form.

12.11 Initial assessments will be carried out by the Supervisors Panel based on the evidence provided on the form. Clients will not be requested to attend an initial hearing, but submit written representations only. If the Supervisors Panel require further information from the client, they will make appropriate arrangements.

12.12 Written notification of the Supervisors Panel decision will be given to the applicant along with information concerning their legal rights or how the claim will progress.

12.13 The initial assessments will be recorded along with reasons for the decision.

12.14 Where the medical criterion is being used it may be appropriate for independent medical advice to be sought which may require revenue funding.

12.15 Upon escalation, the Supervisors Panel will provide reasons for refusing the appeal and will provide information regarding the implications of a positive decision and further information required, and will act to keep the applicant informed of progress.

12.16 The appellant will provide any additional information requested and may be invited to attend or address a **hearing** of the Senior Management Panel if appropriate, or to provide further information to clarify their case. The appellant may bring with them a representative to help or present their case if invited. The Panel will listen to the available evidence and will be able to question both Officers and the Appellant, if in attendance. The applicant may also request a written hearing of the Senior Management Panel and to make representations in person.

12.17 Written notification of the Panel decision will be given to the applicant and where the decision is negative or conditional information concerning their legal rights will also be given.

12.18 The Panels although acting independently are advised that the guidelines described at paragraphs above may also be used to determine any case, however they may also want to consider any individual circumstances that do not fall within the guidelines.

12.19 Decisions to grant appeals and continue and application will then be dealt with in date order from initial enquiry unless the Panel decides to deal with the case urgently, i.e. the appeal will not delay the process excepting for the unavoidable time taken to hear and determine the matter.

12.20 Due to the personal nature of the appeals process, none of the reports will be published unless all methods of identifying the applicant including their address have been removed from the report.

12.21 Outcomes – if the Panel finds in favour of the appellant then it may decide to:

- Offer one of the standard forms of assistance contained in this policy or as so modified, or
- Decide a special form of assistance which would address the issues raised, imposing any terms and conditions as thought appropriate, which nonetheless comply with the spirit of legislation and Council policies.

13 Service standards, Key Performance Indicators and Targets

13.1 There is no national standard for aspects of the above matters excepting a statutory requirement for Councils to determine valid and fully made applications for mandatory DFG within six months. This does not account for pre-application activities such as the screening process and the 'application support' and administration including occupational therapy assessment, means testing, producing specifications, finding contractors etc. In practice, when an application is received by the HEART service it is practically complete and ready for an almost instant decision. In a few cases there may be details to pursue, such as proof of property ownership, landlord or owner's permission etc., and if there are alternative schemes under consideration or issues to do with financing the customers contribution. However, the service records all key activities and dates and can report on a variety of measures, including date enquiry received, date application submitted, date determined, date works started, value of works and contributions, date works finished, and completed as in signed-off.

13.2 There is also a national standard for giving 12 months for works to be completed, but this can be extended by negotiation if there are valid reasons to do so, such as the customer receiving care or wanting works deferred, occasional changes in contractor or specification, complex snagging etc. Generally, for most cases not involving additional building or conversions e.g. level access showers and straight stairlifts, works are complete within one week of starting (time between approval and start is dependent upon outside factors). Curved stair lifts have a longer manufacturing lead time, but a short installation time once produced. Conversions and extension buildings take longer but usually within 4 months from start. All key dates and any delays, and the reasons for them, are recorded on a case by case basis. Cases with delays are individually considered to identify any causes which could be avoidable or to pass on any service improvement learning. General Service process times on an officer by officer and HEART wide basis are also considered for any variable factors affecting efficient delivery, as all front line service staff are supervised and monitored frequently.

13.3 Locally, the service aims to apply the funding it receives fully each year with minimal waiting lists and with maximum benefit to customers. All HEART KPIs and measures have been agreed through the partnership agreement which are reported on a quarterly basis to the Management Board. Other forms of assistance may require the development of further KPIs which will be agreed via the HEART Management Board. HEART Partnership Agreement Measures and Indicators are set out below in 3.15 but may be subject to change as the partnership develops.

13.4 Minor changes to this policy will be made by the Head of Housing or equivalent within each authority whereas more substantial changes will be made in consultation with relevant elected members of each partner authority.

3.15 HEART Partnership Measures and Indicators

	Outcomes – number of instances where the service has helped customers to:	
KPI 1	Managing and maintaining nutrition and hydration	
KPI 2	Maintaining personal hygiene	
KPI 3	Managing toilet needs	
KPI 4	Being appropriately clothed	
KPI 5	Being able to make use of the home safely	
KPI 6	Maintaining a habitable home environment	
KPI 7	Developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships	
KPI 8	Accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering	
KPI 9	Making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community, including public transport, and recreational facilities or services	
KPI 10	Carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child.	
	Major Adaptations	
KPI 11	Number of Private Sector DFG's Approved within the quarter	
KPI 12	Number of Private Sector DFG's where works are completed within the quarter	
KPI 13	Number of Private Sector DFG's where the case was closed in the quarter	
	Demand	
KPM 1	Number of enquiries within the quarter	
KPM 2	Total number of Telephone Assessments in period	
KPM 3	Total enquiries on Intake list with no telephone assessment at period end	
KPM 4	Total number on list waiting for face to face visit at period end	
KPM 5	Total number that had face to face visit at period end	
KPM 6	Total number closed within period	
KPM 7	Number of cases closed within period that had received a visit	
	Interventions – the number of instances that the service delivers the activities.	
KPI 11 a	Finance Support	Charity support
KPI 11 b		Direct payment – social care
KPI 11 c		Maximising income - Benefits
KPI 12 a	Energy Efficiency	Energy efficiency survey
KPI 12 b		Energy efficiency referral
KPI 13 a	Falls and Safety	Falls prevention assessment
KPI 13 b		Falls prevention works carried out
KPI 13 c		Home safety survey
KPI 13 d		Home Safety works carried out
KPI 14 a	Housing Hazards (statutory)	Full Housing Hazards Assessment
KPI 14 b		Housing Hazards Identified
KPI 14 c		Housing hazards removed – grants / loans
KPI 15 a		Housing hazards removed – other

		means
KPI 15 b		Social housing repairs
KPI 15 c		Social Housing Fast Track
KPI 16 a	Advice	Information & Advice – Health promotion / prevention
KPI 16 b		Information & Advice – Housing related
KPI 16 c		Information & Advice – general
KPI 17 a	Activities of Daily Living	Major Adaptations – Disabled Facilities Grant
KPI 17 b		Major Adaptations – Social Housing
KPI 17 c		Minor Adaptations – ICESS
KPI 17 d		Minor Adaptations – other
KPI 18 a	Alternative Accommodation Support	Rehousing support
KPI 18 b		Suitability of property assessment
KPI 18 c		Specialist Professional support – self funding adaptations
KPI 19 a	Referrals	Referral to Social Care
KPI 19 b		Referral to Health
KPI 19 c		Referral to Housing – Private Sector
KPI 19 d		Referral to Housing - Allocations
	Council Housing Major Adaptations	
KPM 8	Total number of Major Adaptation Assessments for Council Housing referred within quarter per authority.	
	Average costs of Major Adaptations	
KPM 9	Average cost of a private sector major adaptation within the quarter per local authority area.	
	End to End Time and Key Stage Times (for major adaptations closed within the quarter)	
KPM 10	Time from enquiry to the service to completion of building works.	
KPM 11	Enquiry to Telephone Assessment (all cases)	
KPM 12	Telephone Assessment to Face to Face Assessment (all cases)	
KPM 13	Face to Face Assessment to Contractor visit	
KPM 14	Contractor visit to Quotation	
KPM 15	Quotation to DFG Approval	
KPM 16	DFG Approval to Start of Works	
KPM 17	Start of Works to Completion of works	
	Timeframe (enquiry to works complete) & Cost for Each type of Major Adaptation (north / south split)	
KPM 18	Type	
KPM 19	Number	

KPM 20	Average duration
KPM 21	Best time
KPM 22	Poorest time
KPM 23	Average cost
	Drop out rate
KPI 20	Customers who are identified as requiring a major adaptation but the case is closed without it being delivered.
	Compliments and Complaints (north / south split)
KPI 21	Number of compliments received by the service within the quarter.
KPI 22	Number of formal complaints received by the service in the quarter.
KPI 23	Number of times the service was found to be at fault following a formal complaint.
	Customer Satisfaction Survey (percent of customers reporting the service performance at good or better on the agreed satisfaction survey under the following themes)
KPM 24	Respect and Dignity
KPM 25	Communication
KPM 26	Responsiveness
KPM 27	Reliability
KPM 28	Contractors
KPM 29	Overall experience

14 Policy implementation plan

14.1 The policy will be implemented from a date to be agreed by Partner Councils and the Service once it has received the necessary political approvals. HEART is already delegated to approve and vary financial assistance offers on behalf of partner Councils, and – where budgets have been devolved – to make and claim payments for such. Systems will be in place to record at each Council each transaction which may require recording as a Local Land Charge, which could trigger notification of liability for repayment, recovery of specialised equipment, or similar including the appropriate legal authority to pursue such claims if any and to write-off, waive or reduce any unrecoverable claims or those accepted as inappropriate or hardship cases.

14.2 This policy will be reviewed no less frequently than five years from commencement, with interim annual reports to partner Councils and KPI reports on a more frequently agreed basis as per the agreed HEART partnership agreement and as directed by the Management Board.

14.3 Notwithstanding the above, if circumstances require the policy to be reviewed then the HEART service will report to the Management Board or each partner authority may request the Management Board to review the policy.

15 Signatories and key dates

This document must be ratified by each partner Housing Authority by its own process, and duly minute as agreed and adopted. The effective date of the policy is that of each partner Council.

Minute reference number Date

Representing (organisation) **Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council**

Minute reference number Date

Representing (organisation) **North Warwickshire Borough Council**

Minute reference number Date

Representing (organisation) **Rugby Borough Council**

Minute reference number Date

Representing (organisation) **Stratford on Avon District Council**

Minute reference number Date

Representing (organisation) **Warwick District Council**

Appendix A

Contacts for HEART service and partner organisations

HEART

- Main office base – Town Hall, Coton Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5AA
- Telephone – 02476 376294
- Email – customer.services@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk
- Website - https://www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/info/21036/heart/353/heart_%E2%80%93_hel ping_you_live_independently_at_home

Warwickshire County Council

- Main office base – Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL
- Telephone – 01926 410410
- Email - customerservicecentre@warwickshire.gov.uk
- Website - <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/>

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

- Main office base - Town Hall, Coton Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5AA
- Telephone – 02476 376376
- Email – customer.services@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk
- Website - <https://www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/site/>

North Warwickshire Borough Council

- Main office base – Council House, South Street, Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 1AD
- Telephone – 01827 715341
- Email - customerservices@northwarks.gov.uk
- Website - <https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/site/>

Rugby Borough Council

- Main office base – Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby, Warwickshire CV21 2RR
- Telephone – 01788 533533
- Email - contact.centre@rugby.gov.uk
- Website - <https://www.rugby.gov.uk/site/index.php>

Stratford on Avon District Council

- Main office base - Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 6HX

- Telephone – 01789 267575
- Email – info@stratford-dc.gov.uk
- Website - <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/index.cfm>

Warwick District Council

- Main office base - Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Leamington Spa, CV32 5HZ
- Telephone – 01926 450000
- Email - contactus@warwickdc.gov.uk
- Website - <https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/site/>

Service Contacts:

Contact Details – To help us deal with your enquiry please choose the correct team to contact for your property address.

Residents of **Rugby, Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire Borough Councils** – contact:

HEARTNorth@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk 02476376294

Residents of **Warwick District and Stratford on Avon District Councils** – contact:

southhat@warwickdc.gov.uk 01926 456422

For informal Service Complaints, Press and Partner Enquiries, Councillor and MP Enquiries contact:

HEART@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk

Formal complaints, compliments and comments can be made through NBBC web site at:

https://www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/info/19999/feedback/201/customer_feedback

Appendix (b1) – Local Scheme of Policy Variation – North Warwickshire Borough Council

Appendix (b2) – Local Scheme of Policy Variation – Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

Appendix (b3) – Local Scheme of Policy Variation – Rugby Borough Council

Appendix (b4) – Local Scheme of Policy Variation – Stratford on Avon District Council

Appendix (b5) – Local Scheme of Policy Variation – Warwick District Council

Appendix (C) - Articles 3 & 4 of The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002

Power of local housing authorities to provide assistance

3.—(1) For the purpose of improving living conditions in their area, a local housing authority may provide, directly or indirectly, assistance to any person for the purpose of enabling him—

- (a) to acquire living accommodation (whether within or outside their area);
- (b) to adapt or improve living accommodation (whether by alteration, conversion or enlargement, by the installation of any thing or injection of any substance, or otherwise);
- (c) to repair living accommodation;
- (d) to demolish buildings comprising or including living accommodation;
- (e) where buildings comprising or including living accommodation have been demolished, to construct buildings that comprise or include replacement living accommodation.

(2) The power conferred by paragraph (1)(a) may be exercised to assist a person to acquire living accommodation only where the authority—

- (a) have acquired or propose to acquire (whether compulsorily or otherwise) his existing living accommodation; or
- (b) are satisfied that the acquisition of other living accommodation would provide for that person a benefit similar to that which would be provided by the carrying out of work of any description in relation to his existing living accommodation.

(3) Assistance may be provided in any form.

(4) Assistance may be unconditional or subject to conditions, including conditions as to the repayment of the assistance or of its value (in whole or in part), or the making of a contribution towards the assisted work; but before imposing any such condition, or taking steps to enforce it, a local housing authority shall have regard to the ability of the person concerned to make that repayment or contribution.

(5) Before a local housing authority provide assistance to any person, they shall—

- (a) give to that person a statement in writing of the conditions (if any) to which the assistance is to be subject; and
- (b) satisfy themselves that that person has received appropriate advice or information about the extent and nature of any obligation (whether financial or otherwise) to which he will become subject in consequence of the provision of assistance.

(6) A local housing authority may take any form of security in respect of the whole or part of any assistance.

(7) Where any such security is taken in the form of a charge on any property, the local housing authority may at any time reduce the priority of the charge or secure its removal.

(8) This article is subject to articles 4 and 5.

(9) Nothing in this article affects any power of a local housing authority under Part 14 of the 1985 Act (loans for acquisition or improvement of housing).

Provision of assistance: supplementary

4. A local housing authority may not exercise the power conferred by article 3 in any case unless—

(a) they have adopted a policy for the provision of assistance under that article;

(b) they have given public notice of the adoption of the policy;

(c) they have secured that—

(i) a document in which the policy is set out in full is available for inspection, free of charge, at their principal office at all reasonable times; and

(ii) copies of a document containing a summary of the policy may be obtained by post (on payment, where a reasonable charge is made, of the amount of the charge); and

(d) the power is exercised in that case in accordance with that policy.

Appendix D1 –Assistance Measures – summary

Mandatory: Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) - Maximum £30,000 grant, partial repayable element (owner occupiers), means tested except children's cases and/or qualifying means tested benefits, stairlift recovery, no limit on repeats.

Discretionary:

Discretionary Disabled Facilities Assistance (DDFA) – Further grant of up to £10,000 and loan of up to £10,000 for works exceeding maximum mandatory DFG or for removal costs and/or purchase cost difference to move to more suitable property. Extra loan element repayable. Means tested INCLUDING child cases.

Hospital Discharge Grant (HDG) – Maximum up to £10,000 to overcome delayed hospital discharge, reduce (re)admission risk enabling safe and dignified home based care. NOT means tested where facilitating rapid hospital discharge, else may be referred for DFG.

Home Safety Grant / Handy-person (HSG) – Free home safety check for those 5+ or with disabled person in household. Minor aids, equipment and adaptations / works of up to £500 (cumulative in 3 years) for non Care Act cases, and £1000 for Care Act assessed needs (via Community Care <Delayed Discharges etc.> Act 2003 funding stream). Not repayable.

Warm & Safer Homes Grant (WaSH) – Maximum up to £10,000 for removal of HHSRS category 1 and key category 2 hazards for owner occupiers, not further/repeat means tested for those already on a qualifying means tested benefit (i.e. passported), OR vulnerable (agreed medical need) and then subject to DFG test of financial resources. Owner occupiers 3 year minimum ownership, no repeat award for 3 further years.

Energy Efficiency Support – not specified, in accordance with offers from utility companies and national schemes which change from time to time, such as the ECO Energy Companies Obligation initiative.

Other – The service may from time to time amend the above offers, including revocation and/or additional measures, along with LOCAL schemes which may be applied directly by relevant Councils in their own areas (see appendices b1 – b5 above).

Appendix D2 –Assistance Measures – tabulated

Assistance Name	Mandatory (M) / Discretionary (D)	Value (max. £)*	Purpose(s)	Criteria	Repayable / other notes
Disabled Facilities Grant – DFG	M	£30,000 Means tested except for child cases <19 years, otherwise means tested benefit passported qualification)	Specified purposes in 1996 Housing Grants Construction & Regeneration Act, section 23 (as amended)	Owner occupier, landlord or tenant, for disabled person. Necessary & appropriate, reasonable & practicable.	Up to £10,000 for works over £5,000 if disposal within 10 years – owner occupiers only. Repeat applications OK.
Discretionary Disabled Facilities Assistance (DDFA)	D	£10,000 grant £10,000 loan / charge (means tested including child cases)	Top-up to DFG, plus and relocation assistance (purchase and move costs)	DFG costs in excess of £30,000 plus agreed move value on case by case basis	Grant not repayable, loan repayable (0%, charge against property – not time expiring)
Hospital Discharge Grant (HDG)	D	£10,000 (not means tested)	Facilitate rapid hospital discharge, prevent or reduce risk of (re)admission	Agreed as urgent, cost saving, best option given alternatives	Not repayable
Home Safety Grant / Handy-Person (HDG)	M/D	£500 over 3 years Not means tested	Minor aids, equipment, repairs and adaptations	Over 55 or disabled person in household	Not repayable
Warm and Safer Home Grant (WaSH)	D	£10,000 <u>Either</u> qualifying means tested benefit OR vulnerable (agreed medical need) with DFG means test	Removal of HHSRS category 1 and key category 2 hazards	Owner-occupiers, 3 years minimum ownership	Not repayable, no re-award for 3 years
Energy Efficiency Support	-	n/a – tba (ECO etc.)	Reduction in fuel poverty, improve domestic energy efficiency	n/a	n/a
Other – revisions, revocations, additions and local schemes as indicated	D	n/a	Tba – including local		

- NOTE: all above for owner-occupiers and private tenants only except where detailed, notwithstanding £500 Home Safety Grant for equipment and minor aids also available to Council tenants.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group
Recommendations

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date: 4 September 2017

Report Director: Head of Communities and Homes

Portfolio: Communities and Homes

Ward Relevance: All

Prior Consultation: Representatives of the Homelessness
Scrutiny Sub Group

Contact Officer: John Hier, Housing and Regeneration
Manager email john.hier@rugby.gov.uk
tel: 01788 533620

Public or Private: Public

Report subject to Call-In: Yes

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following
priority(ies):
Portfolio: Communities and Homes
We will: Ensure residents have a home
that works for them and is affordable

Statutory / Policy Background: Housing Act 1996 part 6 as amended by
the Homelessness Act 2002.
Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Summary: The Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group
was established in response to recent
increases in homelessness in the
borough and following a number of
meetings and workshops produced the
Review of Homelessness Report
(appendix 1), which made a number of

recommendations to help reduce homelessness going forward. The recommendations of the group were endorsed by the Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 July 2017 who requested that the recommendations of the Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group should be submitted to Cabinet on 4 September 2017.

Financial Implications: None identified

Risk Management Implications: None identified

Environmental Implications: None Identified

Legal Implications: None Identified

Equality and Diversity: An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. The priorities set out in the recommendations will help some of the most vulnerable households in the borough.

Options: Agree the recommendations made by the Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group (appendix 1).

Do not agree the recommendations made by the Homelessness Scrutiny Sub- Group.

Recommendation:

- (1) The Council focuses on early intervention through the Trailblazer project and works with partners to better understand the complex, multiple issues of people approaching the service;
- (2) an annual workshop with partners and organisations be introduced to promote joined up thinking and minimise gaps in services; and
- (3) the Council continues working with local landlords via the Private Sector Leasing Scheme to lessen the need for bed and breakfast accommodation.

Reason for Recommendation:

These 3 areas recommended which cover early intervention to prevent homelessness, working with private landlord to increase housing options and effective partnership working are regarded as key areas to reduce homelessness.

Cabinet – 4 September 2017

Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group Recommendations

Report of the Head of Communities and Homes

Recommendation

- (1) The Council focuses on early intervention through the Trailblazer project and works with partners to better understand the complex, multiple issues of people approaching the service;
- (2) an annual workshop with partners and organisations be introduced to promote joined up thinking and minimise gaps in services; and
- (3) the Council continues working with local landlords via the Private Sector Leasing Scheme to lessen the need for bed and breakfast accommodation.

1.1 Background

The Council has seen significant increases in the levels of homelessness in recent years from 106 homeless acceptances by the Council's Housing Options Team in 2013-14 to 171 in 2014-15 and 179 in 2015-2016. The vast majority of applicants accepted as homeless by the Housing Options Team are not street homelessness and this accounts for a very small percentage of those accepted by the Council. The 3 highest reasons for homelessness in the borough, are 1. asked to leave by parents, 2. loss of private sector tenancy and 3. Victims of domestic abuse. Underlying these reasons are issues such as mental health and the council has seen significant increases in the numbers of people with a mental health issues approaching the Housing Options Team for housing and advice.

The Council has recognised that reliance on its own stock will not be sufficient to prevent and reduce homelessness in the borough. Other options have now been considered and in 2016 the Council introduced a Private Sector Leasing Scheme (PSLS) to work with local private landlords to help house those who approach the council for housing. This has proved a success and to date the council has secured 20 units of accommodation from landlords, which has helped to reduce the reliance on Bed and Breakfast accommodation which is both unsuitable and costly. It is anticipated that the use of alternative private sector housing options will reduce the Bed and Breakfast budget and its use by over 50% in 2017-18 compared to the previous financial year.

The Council was successful in securing £865,000 from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Trailblazer funding, which requested bids to implement the government's new Homelessness Reduction Bill. Rugby Borough Council is the lead partner for this Warwickshire wide project, which is called the Preventing Homelessness Improving Lives (P.H.I.L.) project. This will prioritise working with agencies across health, employment, housing, voluntary and

community sectors to target those most at risk of homelessness at a much earlier stage than previous prevention work. It is anticipated that this will go live in July 2017.

Both these schemes rely on collaborative partnership working and building good relations with partners including community and voluntary organisations, housing associations and other local authorities. The Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group recognised that these areas were key for the Council and should be prioritised going forward. As part of the groups research into the causes of homelessness a workshop was organised in November 2016, which was well attended by local partners and received positive feedback. It has been recommended to repeat the workshop annually, which will help to build on existing partnerships

1.2 Conclusion

The Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group members will be provided with progress updates on the recommendations on a regular basis.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 4 September 2017

Subject Matter: Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group Recommendations

Originating Department: Communities and Homes

List of Background Papers

Document No.	Date	Description of Document	Officer's Reference	File Reference
Appendices 1: Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group Report.				



REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS

February 2017

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SUB-group membership

The sub-group consisted of the following members:

Councillor **Jerry Roodhouse** (Chair)
Councillor **Claire Edwards**
Councillor **Belinda Garcia**
Councillor **Noreen New**
Councillor **Neil Sandison**

For Further information

Please contact:

John Hier
Housing and Regeneration Manager
Tel: 01788 533 620
Email: john.hier@rugby.gov.uk

Acknowledgements

The Group would like to thank the following for their valuable contribution to this review:

- Bill Basra, Priority Families Co-ordinator, Warwickshire County Council
- Fiona Palmer, Manager of Rugby/Bedworth/Nuneaton/North Warwickshire/Coventry Wellbeing Hubs, Coventry and Warwickshire MIND

Partners present at the scrutiny workshop on 23 November 2016:

- Claire Brindley-Taylor (Bromford)
- Emily Vincent (Chapter 1)
- Carol Gallagher (Doorway)
- Shona Mellor (Doorway)
- Sarah Simpkins (Home Group)
- Brian Coleman (HOPE4)
- Joyce Woodings (HOPE4)
- Esther Barrett (P3)
- Joanne Howes (Rugby Citizen Advice Bureau)
- Emma Brown (St Basils)

The Group are also grateful to John Hier who supported them throughout the review process.

Homelessness, as in other parts of the country, has been increasing and this review has sought to establish what was happening within this borough.

The sub-group has received evidence as to the major causes of homelessness and what actions the Council is taking.

A workshop was held with outside organisations to establish what their views were. As can be seen from the recommendations, they hope that the workshop is held as an annual event.

During the course of the review, the sub-group heard about the Trailblazer project and how Rugby Borough Council will be leading on the work in Warwickshire. Clearly, in the time available and the resources we have we could only look into this issue so far but there is more to do on the causes of homelessness especially around coordinating, prevention and communication with organisations.

Our recommendations are but a starting point and it was clear from the discussions that were held that further work will be needed. This will have an impact on the resources needed in the future as most are for a time limited period only.

I would like to place on record a thank you to our officers, members of the sub-group and organisations that have contributed to this review.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse
Chair

1. recommendations

The Sub-group proposes the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1.	There is a focus on early intervention through the Trailblazer project and work with partners to better understand the complex, multiple issues of people approaching the service.
2.	An annual workshop with partners and organisations be introduced to promote joined up thinking and minimise gaps in services.
3.	The council continue working with local landlords via the Private Sector Leasing Scheme to lessen the need for B&B accommodation.

1.1 Alignment with the Corporate Strategy

The review relates to the following corporate priorities:

Portfolio: Communities and Homes

We will: Ensure residents have a home that works for them and is affordable

2.1 Background

At the overview and scrutiny work programme workshop on 2 March 2016, members considered a proposal for a review about homelessness and rough sleeping. The overview and scrutiny chairs agreed this review should be included in the work programme for 2016/17 and this was approved by Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The one page strategy for the review was agreed by Brooke and Overview Scrutiny Committee on 14 July 2016. A sub-group was appointed and began its work in October 2016.

2.2 The One Page Strategy

The 'one page strategy' is the name given to the scoping document for the review. It defines the task and the improvements being aimed for and how these are going to be achieved. The review's one page strategy, noted by the sub-group at the first meeting in October 2016, is as follows:

What is the broad topic area?

Homelessness

What is the specific topic area?

Exploration of how the council can help to make an impact in the alleviation of homelessness. A particular concern that has prompted the review is the strain placed on night shelters during winter 2015/16.

What is the ambition of the review?

To reduce the pressure on accommodation for homeless people.

How well does the service perform at the moment?

The use of council's Housing Options Team's drop-in service has increased, resulting in an increase in the number of preventions of homelessness. The Private Sector Leasing scheme provides a cheaper and more satisfactory alternative to B&B, and is expected increase turnover in council housing stock. Members should recognise action that the council is taking but the review is not primarily about scrutinising the performance of existing council services. It is instead concerned with seeking new possibilities for improvements outside the present statutory framework: with the council possibly acting as a facilitator or community leader; but possibly as a direct participant too.

Who shall we consult about the current service and about how we can improve it?

Any organisations or individuals active in the field, together with homeless people past and present, will be potential sources of information. Hope4, Citizens' Advice, the Food Bank, Futures Unlocked, the Homelessness Forum and housing-related support providers would be particularly valuable participants.

What other help do we need?

Those described above plus relevant Housing Options staff.

How long should it take?

Report to committee on 8 December 2016 – though the review participants may be able to facilitate some improvements during the life of the review.

What will be the outcome?

This is hard to define beyond a general statement about making improvements to the management of homeless and prevention of rough sleeping during the winter. It is suggested that, at the end of its first meeting, the sub-group selects particular areas of focus where it seems that improvements can realistically be made.

3. Methodology

3.1 Overview

The sub-group met three times between October 2016 and February 2017. The group also held a scrutiny workshop in November 2016. The evidence that the group considered included:

- Introductory briefing setting out the context for the review
- Meeting with Manager of Coventry and Warwickshire MIND
- Workshop with partners and Council officers considering:
 - current issues and potential legislative changes
 - who is at risk of homelessness
 - key projects and work going on in the borough
 - any gaps in services that can be identified
 - ideas going forward to prevent and respond to homelessness
- Written brief from Warwickshire County Council's Priority Families Co-ordinator on linkages between Priority Families Programme and DCLG Homelessness Early Intervention Project.
- P1E statistics

3.2 Access to evidence

The sub-group review papers are available online at www.rugby.gov.uk/meetings in the section '*agendas, reports and minutes*', and can be found by selecting Homelessness Scrutiny Sub-Group.

4. findings

4.1 Policy context

4.1.1 Homelessness duties

Housing Act 1997 – Part 7 – councils have a duty to provide suitable housing for priority need groups such as families with children, disabled households. If settled

accommodation isn't available then accommodation must be made available in the short-term. This only applies to priority groups.

Homelessness Act 2002 – extended priority need groups to include care leavers, 16 and 17 year olds, care leavers, vulnerable as a result of leaving the armed forces, prison or custody and people fleeing violence.

Homelessness Reduction Bill (likely to come into effect in 2018) – emphasis on prevention of homelessness and the new duty to assist those threatened with homelessness within 56 days. New duties to assess, prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants, especially among non-priority households who are currently not entitled to rehousing.

4.2 Introduction

4.2.1 Subject Area

Increase in homelessness and how this can be addressed

4.2.2 Background

The council has seen significant increases in homelessness over the last couple of years. Homeless acceptances were 106 in 2013/14, this increased to 171 in 2014/15 and 179 in 2015/16. The figure is likely to be similar for 2016/17.

Preventing homelessness is key for the council and this is reflected in the Rugby Homelessness Strategy developed with the Homelessness Forum. Priorities are:

1. Understand housing need
2. Sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness
3. Provide more options in the private sector for people in housing need

In terms of figures, please see tables on pages 13 to 21.

4.2.3 Main Issues

- The Housing Options Team is seeing more single people with multiple issues including mental health and substance misuse.
- Large numbers of households losing private sector accommodation – served with Notice to Quit.
- Cost of private sector accommodation
- Limited supply of affordable housing
- Numbers of homelessness in Band 1 has increased to around 100 from around 30 a couple of years ago.
- Numbers in B&B at its peak was 26 in August 2016 and are now down to 10 due to the Private Sector Leasing Scheme.

4.2.4 What we are currently doing

- Introduced a 2-year funded scheme called the ASH Project – floating support for young people and those with mental health issues
- Tenancy Ready training – trained 22 young people so far in 2016

- Employed a Housing Officer in the Estates Team to support people in their tenancies looking at debt management, accessing employment, etc so vulnerable people can sustain tenancies.
- Introduced a Private Sector Leasing Scheme – which includes Houses in Multiple Occupation. We have 15 units of accommodation at present – more due in October and November.
- Using capital receipts (Right to Buy) to consider purchasing properties for using as temporary accommodation in private sector
- Working with partners such as the Citizen Advice Bureau who provide us with a prevention service that compliments ours as part of their Service Level Agreement with the council
- Hope 4 – drop in service we work with the users of the service to try and re-house them. Not always possible if ineligible for housing, history of arrears, anti-social behaviour, criminality.
- New Housing Related Support Providers Home Group, Chapter 1, St Basils and P3 – support for vulnerable groups at risk of homelessness
- Now analysing approaches to understand why they are approaching the service. A six week analysis is underway until end of October – working together with Warwickshire County Council and the other districts and boroughs.

4.2.5 Going Forward

- Prioritise the use of private sector properties through the Council's Private Sector Leasing Scheme.
- Look at options to provide additional units of accommodation through property purchase in the private sector which will include the provision of shared accommodation.
- Prioritise tenancy ready training to sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness.
- Following the receipt of £865,000 government funding for Warwickshire, establish the Trailblazer Project by summer 2017 prioritising the top 3 three reasons for homelessness in Rugby and across the county, which are: loss of private sector accommodation, being asked to leave parental home and domestic abuse.
- Given the significant numbers of households approaching the Housing Options Team who have a mental health issue, work with mental health services to increase the provision of mental health support services for households with mental health issues.

4.2.6 Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer

Government put £20 million into trailblazer pilots to come up with innovative ways to introduce the new legislation. The pilot will need to:

- Collaborate with other services to identify at-risk households and target interventions well before they are threatened with eviction - 56 days;
- Offer help to a wider group of people than just those owed the main homelessness duty; and

- Test new, innovative approaches to preventing homelessness

The Trailblazer bid secured £865,000 across the county for 3-years. Funding will cover 6 posts across the county based in Rugby and will also include new IT equipment and software.

We'll look at early intervention for households including those losing private sector tenancies, violent relationship breakdown, parents no longer willing to accommodate, people with rent arrears, affordability, health issues including mental health and substance misuse.

4.3 Workshop

A workshop took place on 23 November 2016 where representatives from a number of organisations were invited to discuss the following topics:

1. *Current issues and potential legislative changes*
2. *Who is at risk of homelessness*
3. *Key projects and work going on in the borough*
4. *Any gaps in services that can be identified*
5. *Ideas going forward to prevent and respond to homelessness*

The key messages of the workshop are:

- New homelessness legislation highlighted as changes to duty and prevention
- Caps on HB under 35s
- High costs of private accommodation including deposits
- More households with complex needs
- More accommodation for single people
- Mental health
- More support – pre tenancy work and vulnerable groups
- Joint funding approaches partnerships with third sector

The workshop has proven to be a useful tool to gather information and build stronger relationships with partners.

4.4 Linkages between Priority Families Programme and DCLG Homelessness Early Intervention Project

Bill Basra, Priority Families Co-ordinator at Warwickshire County Council, was invited attend the Group's meeting on 27 February 2017. Unfortunately, Mr Basra was unable to attend but provided a briefing paper which was circulated at the last meeting of the sub-group in February 2017. The following was highlighted:

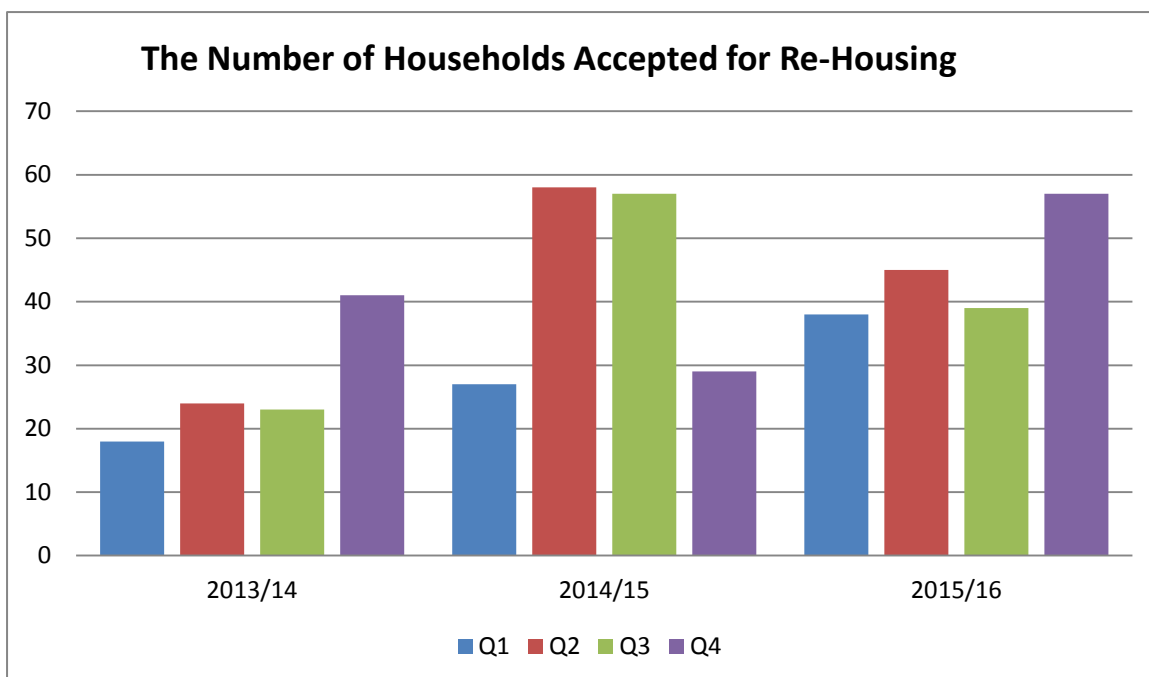
4.4.1 Links with the DCLG Trailblazer Project

Since January and the notification of the successful application, as Priority Families Co-ordinator, Mr Basra has attended the Project Implementation Group as a representative from the Children and Families Unit. The three priority areas:

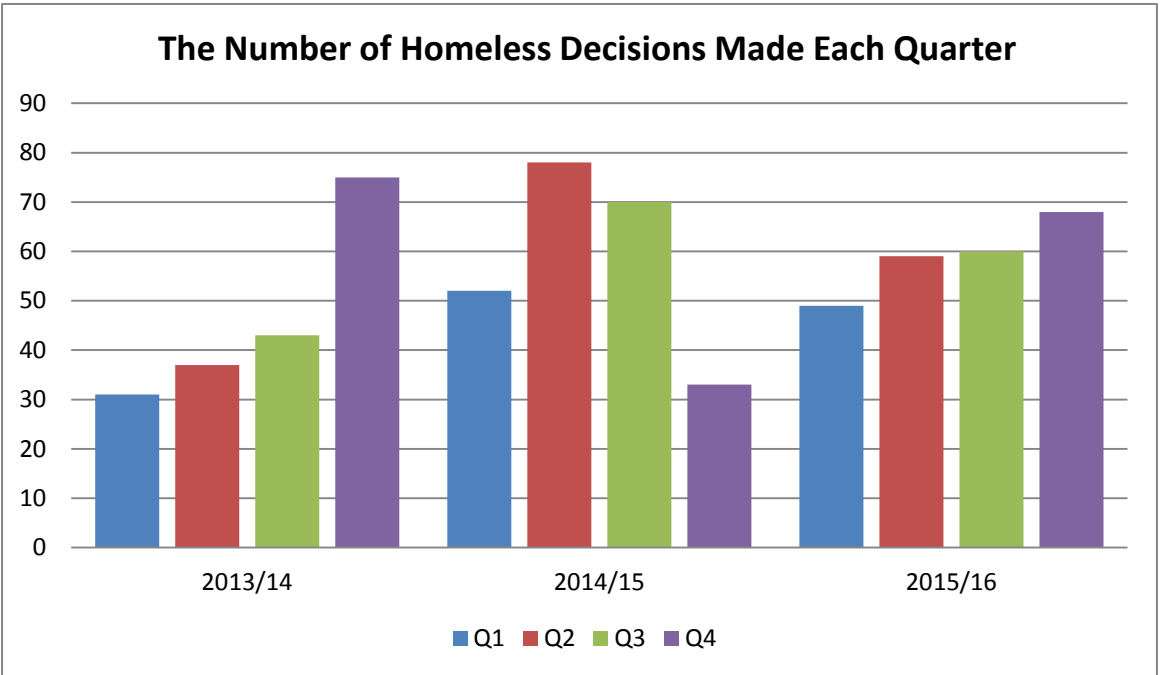
- Termination of Assured Shorthold tenancy
- Violent relationship breakdown, involving partner
- Parents no longer willing to accommodate

At least two of these have direct overlaps with both the Priority Families Programme and on a wider level with the business of the Children and Families Unit. Close co-operation, therefore, within the project is of mutual benefit and it is hoped will lead to a sustainable model of collaborative working in the future.

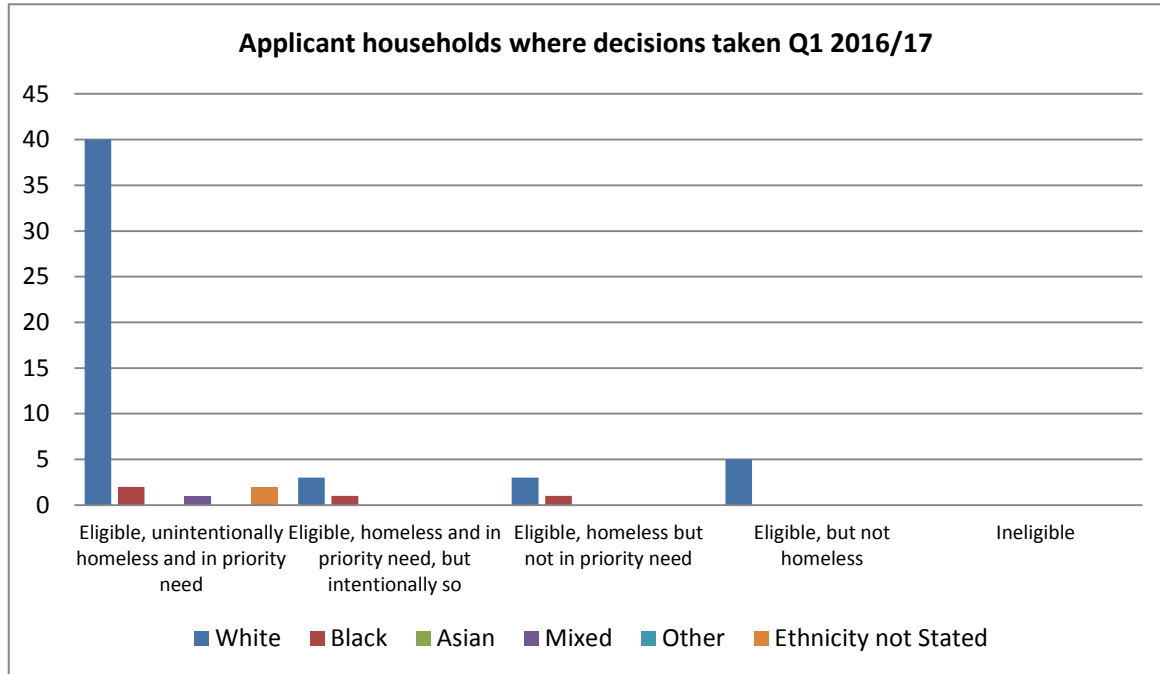
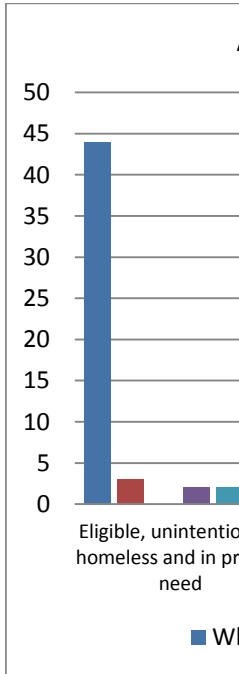
P1E Statistics



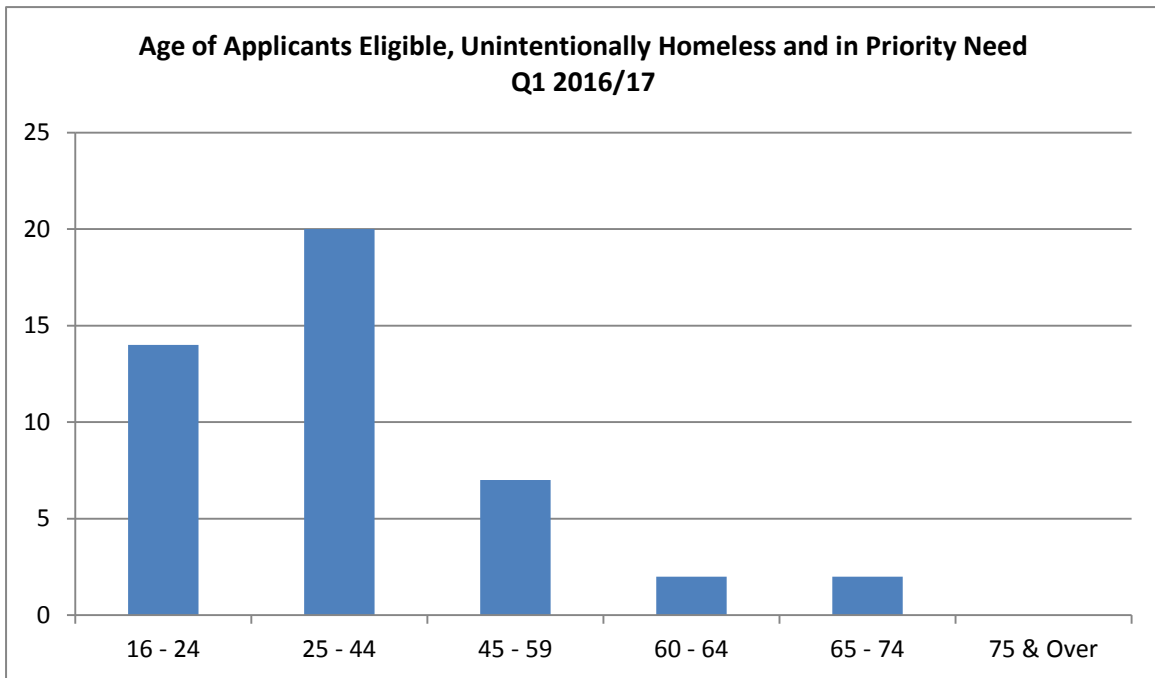
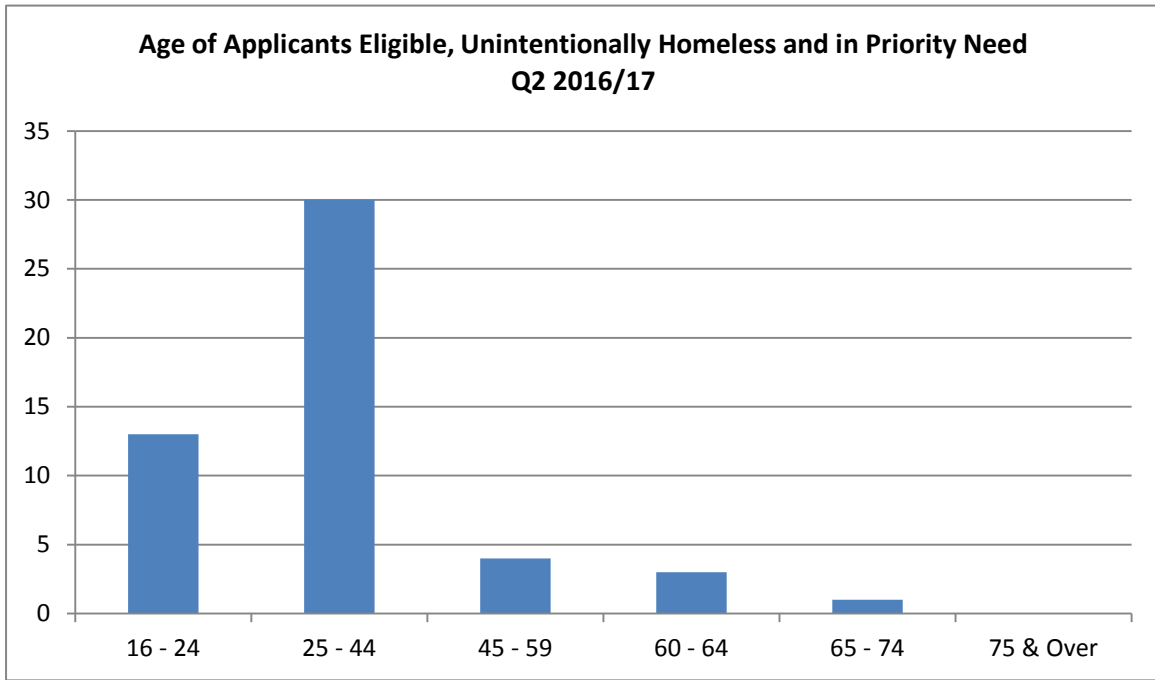
increase in
spikes in
4/15.



As with acceptances, there has been a steady increase in the number of homeless decisions made each quarter, Q4 on 2014/15 saw an unusual dip, bringing figures down to Q1 2013/14 levels, this dip subsequently recovered however.

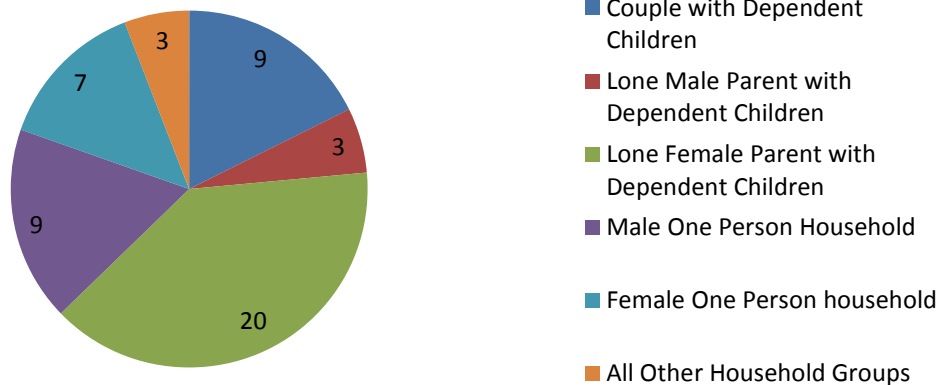


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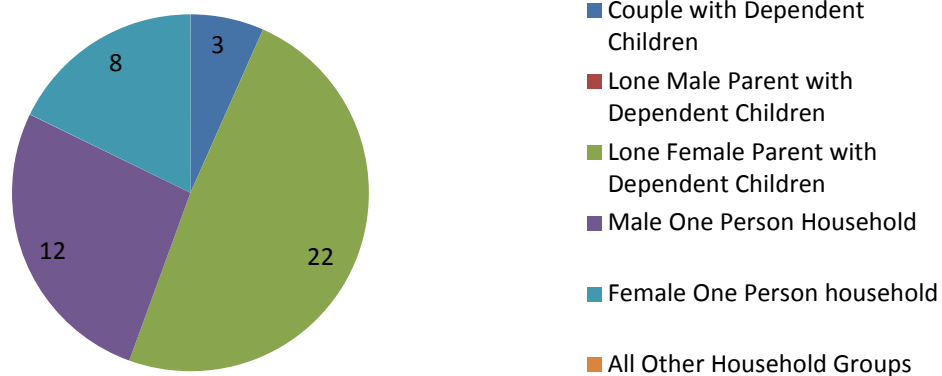


There has been a rise of 6 applicants in Q2 compared to Q1. The most significant change came within the 25-44 age group, there were ten more cases in Q2 than in Q1.

Applicant Households Eligible for Assistance, Unintentionally Homeless and in Priority Need by Household Type Q2 2016/17

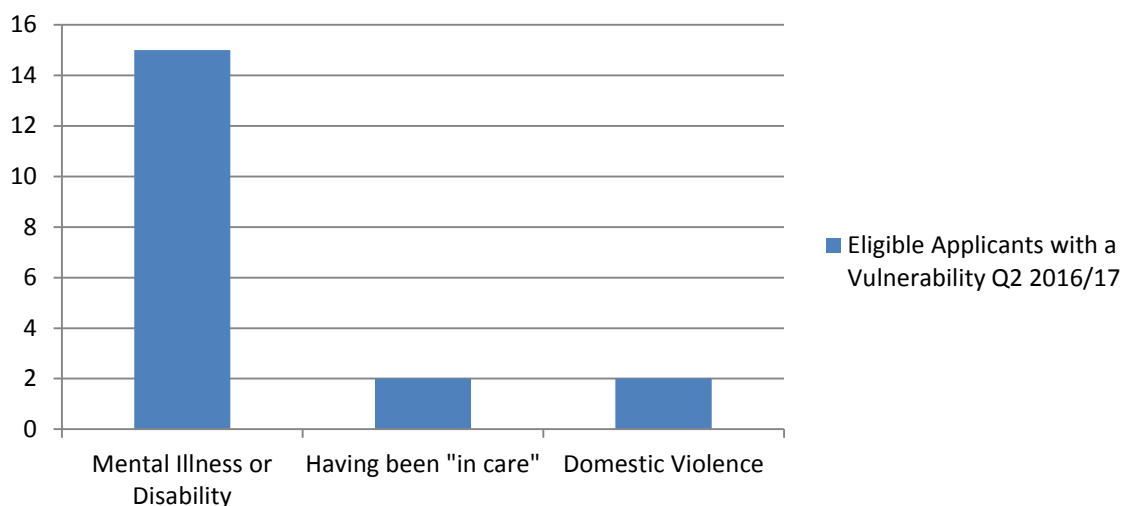


Applicant Households Eligible for Assistance, Unintentionally Homeless and in Priority Need by Household Type Q1 2016/17



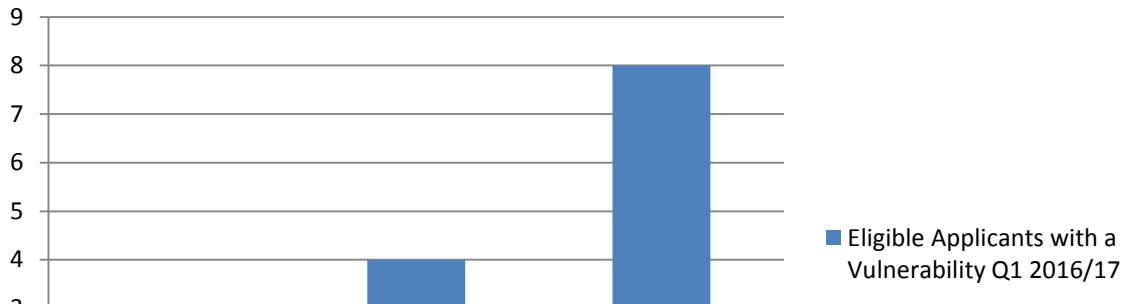
Between Q1 and Q2 there has been a significant increase in the number of couples with dependent children who are eligible; there has also been an increase in lone male parents with dependent children.

Eligible Applicants with a Vulnerability Q2 2016/17

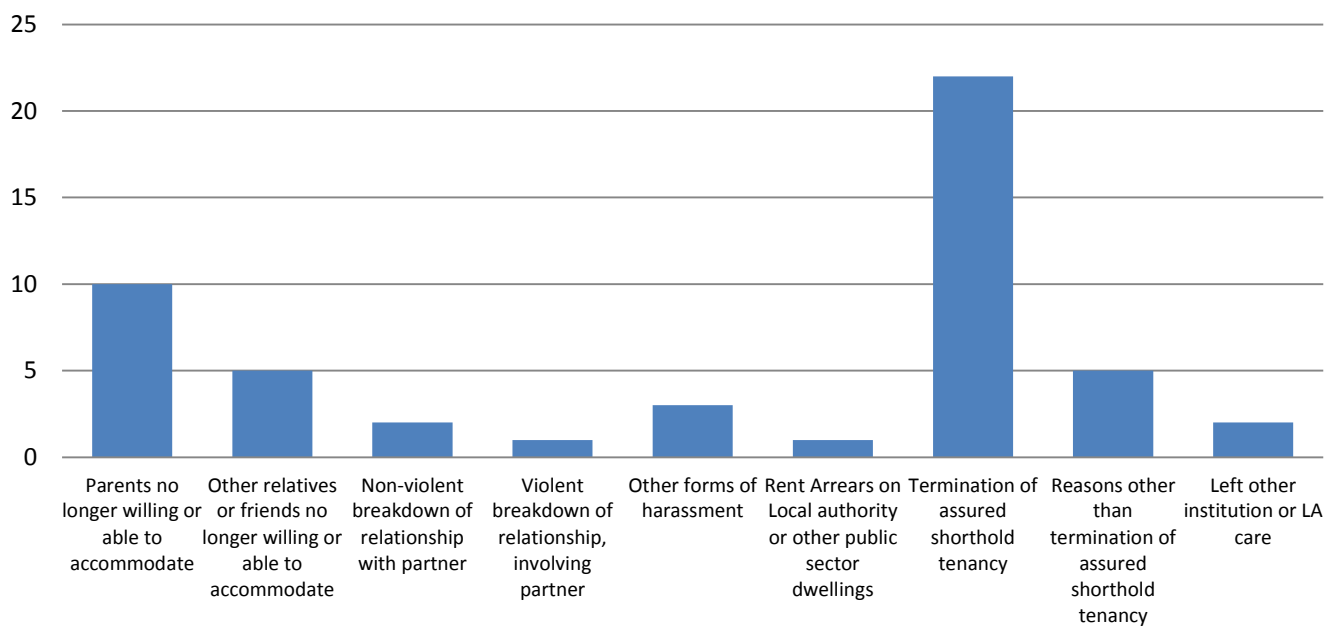


Eligible Applicants with a Vulnerability Q1 2016/17

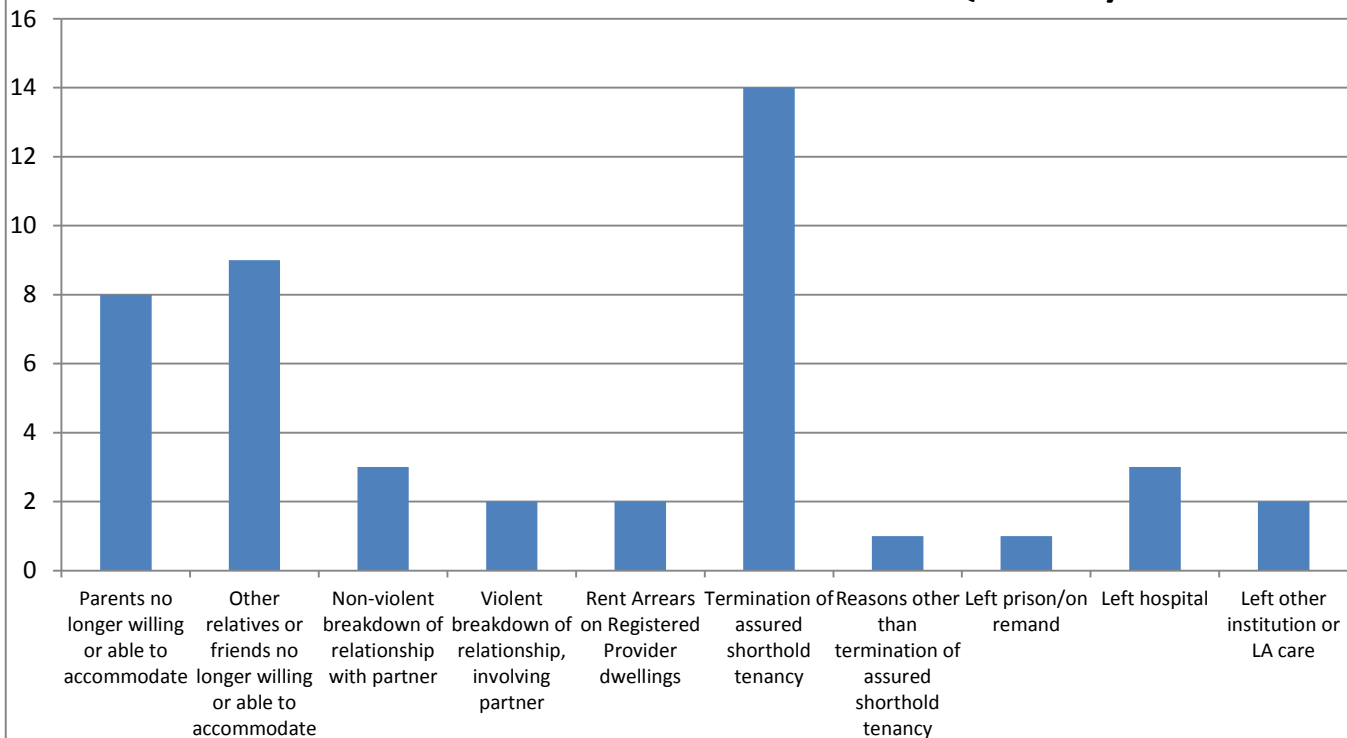
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Reason for Loss of Last Settled Home Q2 2016/17

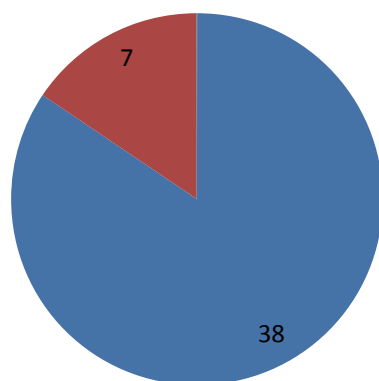


Reason for Loss of Last Settled Home Q1 2016/17



From looking at the period between Q1 and Q2, it is clear that Termination of assured shorthold tenancy is the major reason why people are losing their homes.

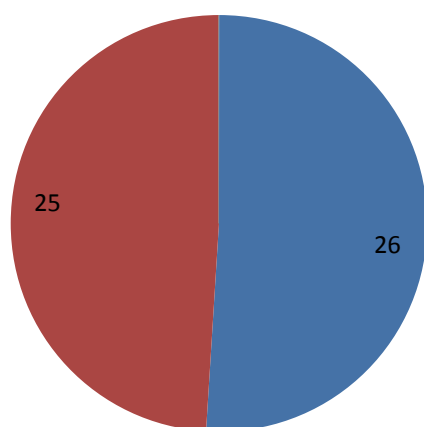
Immediate Outcome Where Applicant Household Found to be Eligible, Unintentionally Homeless and in Priority Need Q1 2016/17



■ Applicant placed in temporary accommodation for the foreseeable future

■ Applicant owed a main duty but either (a) remains in accomm from which accepted as homeless or (b) is making own arrangements for temporary accom (previously "Homeless at home")

Immediate Outcome Where Applicant Household Found to be Eligible, Unintentionally Homeless and in Priority Need Q2 2016/17

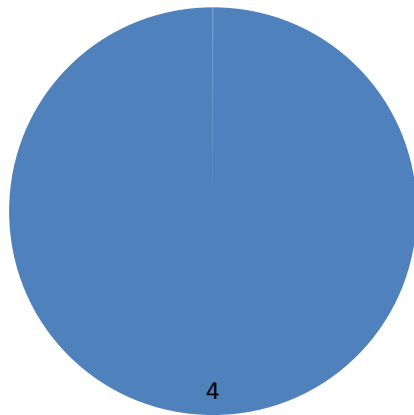


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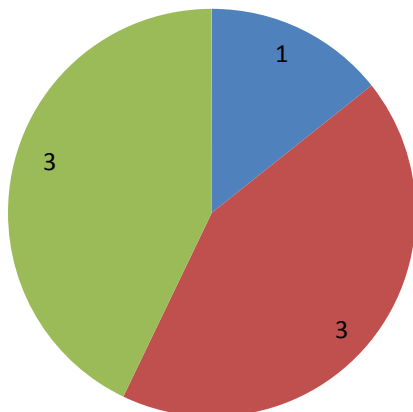
Over the first two Q's of 2016/17, there has only been two immediate outcomes of those found homeless – placed into temporary accommodation or they are owed a main duty, during the last Q the stats showed the two were near enough even.

Homelessness Prevented - Household Able to Remain in Home Q2 2016/17



- Providing other assistance that will enable someone to remain in accommodation in the private or social rented sector

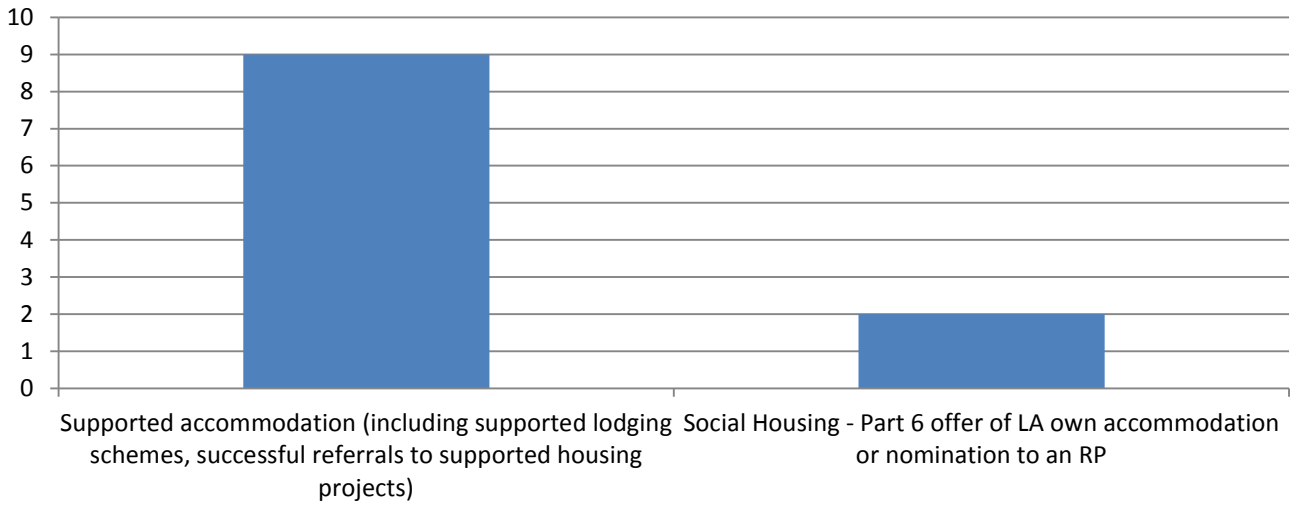
Homelessness Prevented - Household Able to Remain in Home Q1 2016/17



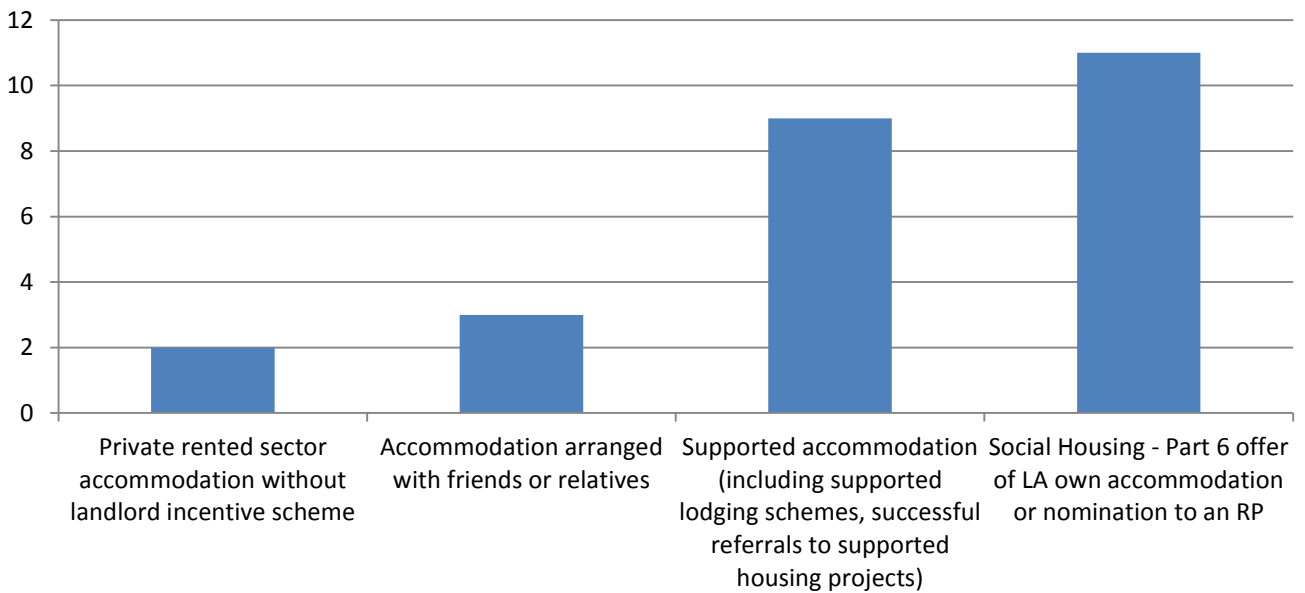
- Mediation using external or internal trained family mediators
- Resolving rent or service charge arrears in the social or private rented sector
- Negotiation or legal advocacy to ensure that someone can remain in accommodation in the private rented sector

Between Q1 and 2 of 2016/17 there has been a drop in the amount of cases of people being able to remain in their own homes, there now seems to be only one main reason however – the people are receiving other assistance to enable them to remain in accommodation.

Homelessness Prevented or Relieved-Household Assisted to Obtain Alternative Accommodation Q2 2016/17



Homelessness Prevented or Relieved-Household Assisted to Obtain Alternative Accommodation Q1 2016/17



There has been a drop in cases of homelessness being prevented via obtaining alternative accommodation, there is however now just two main ways that have been used – supported accommodation and social housing.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The group drew the following conclusions from the evidence that it gathered:

- *Concerns highlighted by partner organisations about the high costs of private rented accommodation, which is making this tenure inaccessible for many households in Rugby on low incomes.*
- *Limited numbers of affordable housing exacerbates the problems of affordability in the private sector.*
- *Increases in households approaching services with mental health issues and other complex needs.*
- *Changes to Benefit regulations including the under 35s Local Housing Allowance cap will restrict options further for younger single people.*
- *The council has seen significant increases in the numbers of homeless households and people accessing B&B accommodation. The council accepted 106 homeless households in 2013-14, by 2016-17 this had increased to 168.*
- *It was agreed that members will be kept informed of the progress of the Trailblazer project via the Housing Member Conversation.*
- *Recommendations and related actions will also be uploaded to the Rugby Performance Monitoring System to allow members to monitor ongoing progress.*
- *'Mental health support in housing' will be submitted as a review topic to the annual Overview and Scrutiny Workshop taking place on Wednesday 8 March.*
- *A report on the outcomes of the review will be submitted for consideration and to Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2017 and to Cabinet in September 2017.*

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Woodside Park – Sewerage Charges/Mobile Homes Regulations
Name of Committee:	Cabinet
Date:	4 th September 2017
Report Director:	Head of Communities and Homes
Portfolio:	Communities and Homes
Ward Relevance:	Dunsmore
Prior Consultation:	Portfolio Holder for Communities and Homes, Head of Communities and Homes, Head of Resources & Chief Financial Officer, Officers
Contact Officer:	Liz Dunlop
Public or Private:	Public
Report subject to Call-In:	No
Report En-Bloc:	Yes
Forward Plan:	Yes
Corporate Priorities:	This report relates to the following priorities: Ensure residents have a home that works for them and is affordable
Statutory / Policy Background:	None
Summary:	It was identified that the sewerage system at Woodside Park required capital works

and increased investment to bring the plant up to standard and maintain the facility correctly for the future. An additional weekly charge is required to cover the increased costs. Changes in the methodology used to increase pitch fees to meet government recommendations using RPI in place of CPI is required. One pitch fee be implemented to cover all weekly costs.

Financial Implications:

A revision of the rent and service charges is required to generate a single Pitch Fee as required by the Mobile Homes Regulations. In line with this review operational and maintenance costs have been assessed including a change of Inflation on the basis of RPI in place of CPI each year.

Risk Management Implications:

If the recommendations are not implemented there may be a risk that the Council is not fully covering its costs of maintenance of the sewerage system if the pitch fee is not increased.

Environmental Implications:

There is a risk if the sewerage plant is not maintained properly to the surrounding area and the Site of Special Scientific Interest adjacent to Woodside Park.

Legal Implications:

If the recommendations are not implemented there may be a risk that the Council is not complying with the Mobile Homes Regulations.

Equality and Diversity:

An equality impact assessment will be carried out and any impacts/risks and mitigation will be captured in the Operational Risk Register and reviewed regularly.

Options:

- (1) Not make any changes or
- (2) Generate a single pitch fee to comply with Regulations and increase charges to cover the

costs of maintaining the sewerage plant

Recommendation:

(1) The new pitch fee of £116 per week be introduced with effect from 1st November 2017; and

(2) the Council uses RPI for the basis of increasing pitch fees in the future and has one pitch fee to cover all costs.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The increase in the pitch fee needs to be implemented to cover the costs of maintaining the sewerage plant to the required standard in the future. Changes in the methodology used to increase pitch fees by RPI in the future is to meet government recommendations and adopting a single pitch fee is to meet the Mobile Homes Regulations.

Cabinet – 4th September 2017

Woodside Park – Sewerage Charges/Mobile Homes Regulations

Report of the Head of Communities and Homes

Recommendation:

- (1) The new pitch fee of £116 per week be introduced with effect from 1st November 2017; and
- (2) the Council uses RPI for the basis of increasing pitch fees in the future and has one pitch fee to cover all costs.

1.1 Background

It was identified that the sewerage system at Woodside Park required capital works and increased investment to bring the plant up to standard and maintain the facility correctly for the future.

A Working Group looked at the situation with the Head of Communities & Homes and Head of Resources & Chief Financial Officer and identified the capital expenditure to upgrade the plant.

Currently the tenants pay an annual cost for rent and service charges of around £109 per week, which includes £4.84 per week for sewerage and £11.08 per week for the warden service.

Legal Services carried out a review of the Mobile Homes Regulations and found:

1. The council had been increasing pitch fees by CPI each year when the government recommendation is that it should be by RPI
2. The Regulations suggested you should have one pitch fee to cover everything per annum and demonstrate to the pitch holders in a recognised way, with a pitch fee review form, how their pitch fees change each year.

1.2 Sewerage Costs

To keep the sewerage plant in a good position and maintain the facility correctly for the future the costs were reviewed.

It was identified to do this that each tenant would need to pay £10 per week.

There are 18 council owned pitches at Woodside Park. The private pitches are being dealt with separately by the council's Legal Services and are to be asked to pay the same amount as the council's tenants.

1.3 Pitch Fees

The current total weekly charge for the pitch fee, inclusive of all charges, was updated by the relevant RPI figure and then checked as to whether it met all required charges to rent the facility and maintain the sewerage plant.

The proposed weekly charge as a result for the current financial year is £116 which includes the sewerage charge.

1.4 Proposal

The new pitch fee of £116 per week be introduced with effect from 1st November 2017 following 28 days' notice being given to tenants using a Pitch Fee Review Form.

The council uses RPI for the basis of increasing pitch fees in the future and has one pitch fee to cover all costs.

Name of Meeting:
Cabinet

Date of Meeting:
4th September 2017

Subject Matter:
Woodside Park – Sewerage Charges/Mobile Homes Regulations

Originating Department:
Communities & Homes

List of Background Papers

Document No.	Date	Description of Document	Officer's Reference	File Reference
1.				

* The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

* Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Document No.	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A
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* There are no background papers relating to this item.

(*Delete if not applicable)

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Risk Management Strategy
Name of Committee:	Cabinet
Date:	4th September 2017
Report Director:	Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Financial Officer
Portfolio:	Corporate Resources
Ward Relevance:	None
Prior Consultation:	Audit and Ethics Committee Strategic Risk Management Group
Contact Officer:	Mannie Ketley - Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer
Public or Private:	Public
Report subject to Call-In:	No
Report En-Bloc:	Yes
Forward Plan:	Yes
Corporate Priorities:	This report is linked to the achievement of all Council priorities
Statutory / Policy Background:	Not Applicable
Summary:	The Council introduced its first Risk Management Strategy in 2003. Since then progress has been made in implementing both operational and strategic risk management across the organisation. The strategy is reviewed annually and this

was last completed earlier this year. This latest version of the strategy identifies the additional work planned to ensure that Risk Management remains embedded within the day to day work of the Council.

Financial Implications:

No direct implications

Risk Management Implications:

1. As contained within the revised Risk Management Strategy dated 2017.
2. If Cabinet does not endorse the recommendation of Audit and Ethics Committee which is to adopt the Strategy, the Council's approach to risk management will not be properly documented and outdated processes could be followed.

Environmental Implications:

No direct implications

Legal Implications:

No direct implications

Equality and Diversity:

No direct implications

Options:

None

Recommendations:

The Risk Management Strategy, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

Reasons for Recommendations:

To ensure that Risk Management remains embedded within the day to day work of the Council, including Members and Officers.

Cabinet - 4th September 2017

Risk Management Strategy

Report of the Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Financial Officer

Recommendation

The Risk Management Strategy, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

1. Background

Risk Management is a business critical aspect for everyone at Rugby Borough Council. It is imperative that RBC demonstrates to the public, and all other stakeholders, that full consideration has been given to all risks when delivering services for the residents and businesses in the local area.

The Risk Management Strategy outlines how the Council will manage risk through identification, analysis, treatment and monitoring of each risk.

The Council introduced its first Risk Management Strategy in 2003. Since then progress has been made in introducing and implementing Operational and Strategic Risk Management across the organisation.

The strategy is reviewed annually and this was last completed earlier this year by Audit and Ethics Committee. The Committee has specific responsibility to oversee the Council's Risk Management arrangements and the framework of policies and standards within which it operates.

The Risk Management Strategy was drafted by the Risk Management and Insurance Officer and considered by the Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder, Executive Director, Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer, and Strategic Risk Management Group.

A copy of the revised Risk Management Strategy dated May 2017 is attached at Appendix 1.

2. Report Details

No major amendments or updates have been made to the Strategy in this review.

Paragraph 5.6 of the Strategy, which explains the link with Emergency Planning and Business Continuity, has been updated as follows:

- To emphasise the Council's responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act;
- To explain that the Warwickshire Local Resilience Forum Risk Group has updated the risk assessment for Warwickshire;
- To highlight that a public facing document on preparing for emergencies was published in January 2017;
- To highlight that the Council's Major Emergency Plan was updated in December 2016 with a public facing version being available on the internet; and
- To emphasise that the Council has a business continuity strategy and plan in place, dated 2015 and 2016 respectively, with service specific business continuity plans also in place.

A minor change has been made to reflect a change in the Chairmanship of the Strategic Risk Management Group during 2016/17.

Name of Meeting:
Cabinet

Date of Meeting:
4th September 2017

Subject Matter: Risk Management Strategy

Originating Department: Corporate Assurance and Improvement

List of Background Papers

Document No.	Date	Description of Document	Officer's Reference	File Reference
Appendix A	May 2017	Risk Management Strategy		



RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

May 2017

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4	Risk Management Process	6
5	Links with Existing Processes	8
6	Information and Communication	10
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2	Strategic Risk Management Group - Terms of Reference	17
3	Contact Information	19
4	Risk Management Action Plan	20

SECTION ONE - Rugby Borough Council Risk Management Statement

Risk Management is a business critical aspect for everyone at Rugby Borough Council. It is imperative that RBC demonstrate to the public, and all other stakeholders, that full consideration has been given to all risks when delivering services for the residents and businesses in the local area.

This Strategy outlines how RBC will manage risk through identification, analysis, treatment and monitoring of each risk. This Strategy also details the roles and responsibilities for all employees and members. Everyone has a part to play.



.....
Adam Norburn
Executive Director

.....
Michael Stokes
Leader of the Council

.....
Date

.....
Date

SECTION TWO - Introduction

2.1 Background

The Council introduced its first Risk Management Strategy in 2003. Since then steady progress has been made in implementing Risk Management throughout the organisation. This latest revision of the Strategy aims to look at the future plans for Risk Management in RBC and the future work planned to ensure that Risk Management becomes embedded in the every day work of the Council.

2.2 What is Risk Management?

Risk Management can be defined as:

‘Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation’s ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies. Risk Management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus, structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements’

Audit Commission 2001

2.3 The Benefits of Risk Management

The benefits of an effective Risk Management programme are numerous, a selection of the benefits are listed below:

- Increased focus on the action(s) that should be taken to meet objectives
- Improved delivery of services
- Effective management of change
- Delivering better Value For Money
- More efficient use of resources
- Supporting innovation
- Reduced complaints
- Protection of, and improved, reputation
- Getting things right first time
- Continual assessment of business opportunities

The term Risk Management also includes the management of opportunities, as risk should not be considered just as a negative. The management of opportunities is as important as the management of risk, and we should always look to see if there is a positive outcome to any risk.

SECTION THREE – Purpose and Objectives

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Strategy is to set out Rugby Borough Council's approach to Risk Management, including outlining roles and responsibilities, reporting and communication methods and a description of the four stages of the Risk Management process.

It is a continuous and developing process, which ultimately aims to create a culture of risk awareness within the Council whereby staff and Members naturally consider risk issues as a part of day-to-day activities.

The Strategy is designed to be a reference source rather than to provide detailed answers to specific questions. It is a foundation for embedding a Risk Management culture across the organisation but is not intended to be a manual.

3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the Risk Management Strategy are to:

- 3.2.1 Develop Risk Management and raise its profile across the Council
- 3.2.2 Integrate Risk Management into the culture of the Council
- 3.2.3 Embed Risk Management through the ownership and management of risk as part of all business planning and decision making processes
- 3.2.4 Manage risks in accordance with best practice
- 3.2.5 Prevent injury, damage and losses and to reduce the cost of risk
- 3.2.6 Raise awareness of the need for Risk Management by all those connected with the Council's delivery of services

See Appendix 4, Risk Management Action Plan, for further details.

These objectives will be achieved by:

- Establishing clear roles and responsibilities and reporting lines within the Council for Risk Management
- Reinforcing the importance of effective Risk Management as part of the everyday work of employees
- Including Risk Management as an agenda item at meetings as appropriate
- Providing relevant training on Risk Management to employees and Members
- Continuing to demonstrate the application of Risk Management principles
- Developing Risk Management toolkits, procedures and guidelines for use across the Council
- Making all partners, providers and delivery agents aware of the Council's expectations on risk, both generally as set out in its Risk Management policy, and where necessary in particular areas of service delivery
- Maintaining a Risk Management framework that will secure the consideration and review on a rolling basis of the Strategic and Operational risks confronted by the Council
- Inclusion of Risk Management in service plans

SECTION FOUR – Risk Management Process

4.1 Process

Risk Management is an ongoing process, which involves continual identification, analysis, treatment and monitoring of the risks and opportunities faced by the Council.

4.2 Risk Identification

The first step is to identify the ‘significant’ risks that could have an adverse effect or prevent business objectives from being met. (*Section 4.3 describes what is classed as a significant risk*). It is important that those involved with the process clearly understand the service or organisation’s key business objectives to be able to identify the barriers to their achievement.

The identification of risk should happen in all business areas.

4.3 Risk Analysis

The information gathered is then analysed by completing a Risk Assessment. The assessment details the risks to the achievement of a specific business objective, the opportunities that can be gained from that risk, the consequences of the risk and any existing internal controls.

The analysis will then consider the likelihood and impact of the risks. An initial score against likelihood and impact is made (see Appendix 1, Risk Matrices).

In order that risks may be prioritised according to their severity, the Council operates a traffic light system. Risks are scored within one of the following levels:

Risk rating:

8–16	High Risk (Red)	Immediate attention
4–6	Medium Risk (Amber)	Moderate risk, mitigation action required
1–3	Low risk (Green)	Regular review

Amber and red risks are classed as ‘significant’ risks. All risks are to be kept under review to ensure that the likelihood of occurrence, or the impact should it happen, does not increase.

4.4 Risk Treatment/Control

Once a risk has been identified and analysed, a decision must be made as to how the Council will react. There are four options:

1. *Tolerate* – Decide to live with the risk and the possibility that it might occur and its possible consequences.
2. *Terminate* – Eliminate the risk, usually by deciding to change a course of action or stop a particular activity.
3. *Transfer* – Some of the financial risk may be transferred and it may be possible to transfer liability through contractual arrangements.
4. *Treat* – Control the risk and take action to reduce the likelihood that an event will occur or the impact if it does.

The existing controls need to be reviewed before considering further action as these controls may no longer be relevant.

The potential for controlling the risks identified further will be investigated through an Action Plan. The implementation of the Action Plan is monitored through RPMS, the Council's performance management system.

4.5 Risk Monitoring and Reporting

Effective Risk Management requires an appropriate reporting and review structure to ensure that risks and opportunities are effectively identified and assessed and that appropriate control measures are in place.

The process requires regular reviews in order to provide the maximum benefit to the Council, including the Strategy, and all the processes and activities outlined within it, to ensure their effectiveness.

A framework of monitoring and reporting has been established to allow regular monitoring to take place.

This requires:

Cabinet – to receive annual updates on the position of the Council's Risk Management programme; to review the Strategic Risk Register and any amendments made to it and to agree the Risk Management Strategy and any changes made. To appraise options contained within submitted reports.

Audit and Ethics Committee – to consider the effectiveness of the Council's Risk Management arrangements. To receive annual reports which provide assurance on the effective management of the Council's 'Top Level' risks and to agree the Risk Management Strategy and any changes made.

Senior Management Team – to review the Strategic Risks on a quarterly basis and respond to any actions for which they are responsible in the interim.

Individual Managers – to regularly monitor Risk Registers and Action Plans at team meetings – making any adjustments within RPMS or reporting them to the Risk Management and Insurance Officer; to implement and monitor outstanding actions and monitor the effectiveness of the actions in controlling the risks; to identify new risks / opportunities and to annually review the Operational Risk Registers.

Strategic Risk Management Group – to consider and discuss regular updates received from the Risk Management and Insurance Officer on outstanding risk actions and to annually review the Risk Management Strategy.

The risk process itself will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is still appropriate and includes learning from other Authorities. Training and research can be applied.

SECTION FIVE – Links with Existing Processes

5.1 Service Planning

Operational Risk Registers are included within Service Plans. The responsibility for managing those risks sits with the Service Managers. The Risk Registers within the plans should be monitored on a quarterly basis during service team meetings.

5.2 Performance Management

The monitoring of the Risk Management action plans is facilitated through the performance management software RPMS. Risk Responsible Officers will monitor and update risk assessments and actions plans on a regular basis.

5.3 Project Management

Work is currently underway to improve the robustness of Risk Management within projects, with project risk registers being used more now than ever before with a register in place for each specific project.

5.4 Partnerships

The definition adopted by Rugby Borough Council is “that a partnership involves working with another organisation to deliver common objectives with a formal agreement of roles (through contract, memorandum of understanding, funding agreement, Service Level Agreement etc)”.

Managing risk within the significant partnerships is currently being reviewed. The aim is to ensure that Rugby Borough Council and its significant partners hold joint Risk Registers, which are effectively managed and monitored.

5.5 Reporting

Each report prepared for Cabinet/Panels requires that the report writer consider the risks and benefits associated with each option presented within the report.

5.6 Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

It is a requirement under the Civil Contingency’s Act that the Council assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning; and put in place emergency plans and business continuity arrangements.

Rugby Borough Council chaired the Warwickshire Local Resilience Forum Risk Group which updated the Warwickshire Risk Assessment (September 2015) and created the public facing ‘Preparing for Emergencies in Warwickshire’ publication (January 2017). The Council has a Major Emergency Plan (December 2016), a public facing version of which can be found on the extranet.

The Council has a Business Continuity Strategy (2015) and a Council wide Business Continuity Plan (May 2016) as well as service specific business continuity plans for ‘critical services’.

5.7 Health and Safety

The Council has demonstrated a commitment to Health and Safety with the development of policies and guidance specifically addressing the management of risk.

It is essential that the established links to the Risk Management process be maintained with emphasis on identification, analysis, treatment/control and monitoring of risks. The commitment and involvement of all employees will be supported at service level by specific training and guidance.

5.8 Corporate Strategy

The Strategic Risk Register aims to address all elements of risk in delivering the Council's corporate objectives. These in turn cascade into the Operational Risk Registers. The Senior Management Team needs to consider the Risk Management Strategy in line with the Corporate Strategy.

5.9 Corporate Assurance and Improvement

The Council is implementing Risk Based Internal Auditing (RBIA), which is recognised best practice. Actions arising from internal audits will be aligned with the corresponding risk, and will be recorded on the RPMS system. The linkages between the results of internal audits, relevant risks, and their mitigating actions will therefore be enhanced. The process will also facilitate more regular and timely updates of the Operational Risk Registers during the course of the year.

SECTION SIX – Information and Communication

6.1 Information

Risk Management information is available from a number of different sources:

- Intranet web page
- Individual managers
- Risk Champions (see Appendix 3, Contact Information)
- Corporate Assurance and Improvement Manager (see Appendix 3, Contact Information)
- Risk Management and Insurance Officer (see Appendix 3, Contact Information)

6.2 Communication

Risk Management at Rugby Borough Council is an evolving process, therefore regular communication with staff and managers is essential to ensure everyone is kept up to date and has the opportunity to further their understanding of the Council's risk programme.

Risk information updates and general awareness are communicated through a number of different sources:

- Intranet updates
- Team meetings
- Workshops and awareness sessions
- New employee induction day
- Members Briefings

SECTION SEVEN – Risk Management Fund

The Corporate Assurance Manager is responsible for a small Risk Management fund. Service areas can 'bid' for full or partial funding for Risk Management initiatives that will benefit the Council as a whole.

SECTION EIGHT – Roles and Responsibilities

The following describes the roles and responsibilities that Members and Officers will play in embedding and owning Risk Management:

8.1 Cabinet and other Elected Members

- To oversee the effective management of risk by Council Officers
- To annually consider the Strategic Risk Register
- To take decisions which are informed by an assessment of associated risks
- To approve overall strategic Risk Management proposals
- To agree the Risk Management Strategy and any changes to the Strategy

8.2 Senior Management Team

- To ensure that the Council manages risk effectively through the development of a comprehensive Risk Management Strategy and the analysis and control of strategic risks
- To take decisions which are informed by an assessment of associated risks
- To provide corporate direction to all Risk Management proposals and to support the Strategic Risk Management Group
- To review the Strategic Risk Register
- To receive and consider an annual report on the Risk Management Strategy
- To identify any emerging strategic risks and report them to the Strategic Risk Management Group
- To identify any movements in the likelihood and/or severity of existing Strategic risks
- To be the service liaison for strategic and operational risks
- To include Risk Management and emerging risks through business planning and decision making

8.3 Strategic Risk Management Group

- To support the Council and its services in the effective development, implementation and review of the Risk Management Strategy
- To review the Risk Management Strategy on an annual basis
- To review the Strategic Risk Register and to identify and support any emerging Strategic risks
- To provide training on and to otherwise facilitate the practice of good Risk Management for Councillors and Officers

8.4 Risk Champions (see appendix 3, Contact Information)

- To be a member of the Strategic Risk Management Group
- To support the Senior Management Team and Service Managers in the effective management of risk
- To champion Risk Management within their service
- To be their service liaison for Strategic and Operational risks
- To disseminate Risk Management information
- To facilitate and encourage good Risk Management practices
- To co-ordinate the Operational Risk Assessment programme for their service

8.5 Service Managers

- To manage their service whilst taking in to account all associated risks
- To consider the positive and negative aspects of risk in all decisions taken
- To consider and produce/review Operational Risk Registers for their service areas during their business planning process and to report these assessments to the Risk Management and Insurance Officer
- To consider and record additional or strengthened controls that are needed to protect their service area and to incorporate these in to their service action and improvement plans
- To report these assessments, actions and improvement plans to the Risk Management and Insurance Officer

8.6 Risk Management and Insurance Officer

- To advise and assist the Strategic Risk Management Group in their functions
- To facilitate meetings of the Strategic Risk Management Group
- To provide day-to-day Risk Management advice to Council Officers and Members
- To assist in the development of the Council's Risk Management programme in association with external advisors and Council Officers
- To advise and assist the Senior Management Team with the quarterly reviews of the Strategic Risk Register
- To maintain a continuous review of the adequacy of the Risk Management programme
- To advise on progress reports to Cabinet and to Audit and Ethics Committee
- To advise on annual reports on the Council's 'Top Level' risks to Audit and Ethics Committee
- To advise on an annual report on the Strategic Risk Register to Cabinet
- To advise on an annual report on the Risk Management Strategy to Cabinet and to Audit and Ethics Committee
- To review systems and procedures for Risk Management and implement improved working practices wherever possible
- To review Strategic and Operational risk registers on a regular basis
- To maintain a continuous review of the adequacy of the Risk Management programme
- To identify instances of best practice through networking and discussions with brokers

8.7 All Employees

- To manage risk effectively in their job
- To report risks to their Service Managers, Risk Champions or the Risk Management and Insurance Officer
- To have an understanding of the risks identified within their service area
- To assist in the identification and control of risk
- To complete the options appraisal on all Senior Management Team, Panel and Cabinet reports

STRATEGIC RISK MATRIX

<u>LIKELIHOOD</u>		
Almost certain	= Strong/very strong/inevitable possibility (over 75%)	Score 4
Possible	= Likely to occur (50% – 75%)	Score 3
Unlikely	= Slight chance/could occur (10% – 49%)	Score 2
Remote	= Almost impossible/only occurring in exceptional circumstances (Below 10%)	Score 1

<u>IMPACT</u>		
Extreme	= Financial loss over £1m, significant service disruption, disabling injury/death, adverse national media coverage, severe stakeholder concern	Score 4
Major	= Financial loss of between £250,000 and £1m, major service disruption, major injury, adverse regional media coverage, significant stakeholder concern	Score 3
Moderate	= Financial loss of between £50,000 and £250,000, moderate service disruption, loss time injury, local media coverage, more service user complaints, moderate stakeholder concern	Score 2
Minor	= Financial loss up to £50,000, short term inconvenience, minor injury, isolated user service complaints, stakeholder concerns	Score 1

	Likelihood				
	1	2	3	4	
Impact	4	M	H	H	H
	3	L	M	H	H
	2	L	M	M	H
	1	L	L	L	M
		1	2	3	4

OPERATIONAL RISK MATRIX

<u>LIKELIHOOD</u>		
Almost certain	= Strong/very strong/inevitable possibility (over 75%)	Score 4
Possible	= Likely to occur (50% – 75%)	Score 3
Unlikely	= Slight chance/could occur (10% – 49%)	Score 2
Remote	= Almost impossible/only occurring in exceptional circumstances (Below 10%)	Score 1

<u>IMPACT</u>		
Extreme	= Financial loss over £250,000, total service loss for a significant period, fatality/disabling injury, adverse national media coverage, severe stakeholder concern, mass complaints	Score 4
Major	= Financial loss of between £75,000 and £250,000, major service disruption, major injury, regional media coverage, significant user complaints, significant stakeholder concern	Score 3
Moderate	= Financial loss of between £10,000 and £75,000, moderate service disruption, loss time injury, local media coverage, more service user complaints, stakeholder concern	Score 2
Minor	= Financial loss up to £10,000, short term inconvenience, minor injury, isolated user service complaints, minor local media coverage, minor stakeholder concerns	Score 1

	Likelihood				
	1	2	3	4	
Impact	4	M	H	H	H
	3	L	M	H	H
	2	L	M	M	H
	1	L	L	L	M
	1	2	3	4	

STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The role of the Strategic Risk Management Group (SRMG) is crucial to the implementation of a successful Risk Management programme.

The SRMG is a facilitating group and will enable and empower all aspects of a Risk Management programme, providing where necessary, links with Insurance, Health and Safety, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity.

The SRMG will be the focal point for co-ordinating the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers.

The terms of reference of the SRMG are:

- To support the Council and its services in the effective development, implementation and review of the Risk Management Strategy
- To identify and monitor key Risk Management indicators and matrices
- To produce an annual report reviewing the Risk Management Strategy to the Senior Management Team and Cabinet
- To identify and support the identification of any emerging Strategic risks
- To review the Strategic Risk Register on a quarterly basis and respond to any actions for which they are responsible in the interim
- To share good Risk Management practice within the Authority
- To provide training on, and to otherwise facilitate, the practice of good Risk Management for Councillors and Service Officers

MEMBERS

The Strategic Risk Management Group comprises of the following staff:

- Senior officer representatives from Growth and Investment, Environment and Public Realm, Communities and Homes, Corporate Resources
- Executive Director
- Risk Management and Insurance Officer
- Safety and Resilience Manager
- The Council's Risk Management and Insurance consultant representative
- The Council's Risk Member Champion (usually the Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder)

The Head of Corporate Resources will act as the Group Chairman. Additional members of staff will attend the Group as and when their expertise is needed.

Each of the representatives is a Risk Champion for their area and will be responsible for co-ordinating the Risk Management programme within their own service. This will include:

- To be a member of the Strategic Risk Management Group
- To support Service Managers in the effective management of risk
- To champion Risk Management within their service

- To be their service liaison officer for Strategic and Operational risks
- To disseminate Risk Management information
- To facilitate and encourage good Risk Management practices
- To co-ordinate the Operational Risk Register reviews for their service are

CONTACT INFORMATION

Risk Champions:

Elected Members	Cllr Carolyn Robbins carolyn.robbins@rugby.gov.uk	Ext: 3401
Communities and Homes	Raj Chand raj.chand@rugby.gov.uk	Ext: 3870
Environment and Public Realm	Sean Lawson sean.lawson@rugby.gov.uk	Ext: 3850
Growth and Investment	Rob Back rob.back@rugby.gov.uk	Ext: 3720
Corporate Resources Group Chairman	Mannie Grewal-Ketley mannie.grewalketley@rugby.gov.uk	Ext: 3430
Health and Safety/Business Continuity	Theresa Summers theresa.summers@rugby.gov.uk	Ext: 3893
Corporate Assurance and Improvement	Chris Green chris.green@rugby.gov.uk	Ext: 3451
Risk Management and Insurance	Verity Knighton verity.knighton@rugby.gov.uk	Ext: 3418

Risk Management Action Plan 2017/2018

Action	Resources required	Lead Officer(s)	Target date	What we want to achieve	How customers will benefit
1. Conduct a review of the Risk Management Strategy	Strategic Risk Management Group (SRMG)	SRMG	March each year	Robust Risk Management Strategy	Clarity as to the roles and responsibilities for risk management Clarity as to methods of communicating the Strategy Officers will be equipped with a current working document in order to assess risk scores
2. Publishing Risk Management Strategy on the Intranet	Internet and Communications Officer Risk Management and Insurance Officer	Risk Management and Insurance Officer	June each year	Publishing the Councils Risk Management Strategy	Clarity as to the roles and responsibilities for risk management across the Council

Action	Resources required	Lead Officer(s)	Target date	What we want to achieve	How customers will benefit
3. Reporting and reviewing structure and working practices to ensure risks and opportunities are effectively identified and assessed to prevent injury and reduce costs	Heads of Service	Heads of Service	Complete annual review of Strategy by March each year	Prevention of injury, damage and loss by reducing costs from acts arising from non identification of risks	Fewer injuries and insurance claims
4. To agree a date for awareness training on the practice of good Risk Management for Councillors	SRMG Risk Management and Insurance Officer	SRMG	March each year	To raise awareness of the need for Risk Management through service delivery Knowledge of the tools available and confidence to use them to take positive action in cases	Officers will have an awareness of Risk Management

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Implementation of recent revisions to the Equality Act 2010

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date: 4th September 2017

Report Director: Head of Environment and Public Realm

Portfolio: Environment and Public Realm

Ward Relevance: All Wards

Prior Consultation: Licensing and Safety Committee

Contact Officer: David Burrows, Regulatory Services Manager
Tel: 01788 533806

Public or Private: Public

Report subject to Call-In: Yes

Report En-Bloc: Yes

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following priority(ies):

ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM - Protect the public

Statutory / Policy Background: Sections 165 and 167 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) came into force on 6 April 2017. They provide local authorities with the power to establish a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles ('designated vehicles'), and to require the drivers of such designated vehicles (unless they have a valid medical exemption) to transport wheelchair users, provide assistance and to ensure that wheelchair users are charged the same fares as

non-wheelchair users.

The Council's Taxi Licensing Policy refers to the use of wheelchair accessible vehicles and requires updating to reflect the inclusion of these provisions.

Sections 165 and 167 of the Act came into effect on 6 April 2007.

This Act includes seeking approval to establish and maintain a list of designated licensed vehicles to enable wheelchair users to be protected from discrimination when using the services of licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles in the borough.

Summary:

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

The establishment of a list of designated licensed vehicles will provide greater protection for wheelchair users in Rugby as the failure to comply with these duties to transport a wheelchair user and provide assistance is now a criminal offence.

Risk Management Implications:

The risk of not approving to establish a list of designated vehicles is that drivers would be able to refuse to take a wheelchair user, and not be legally bound to providing assistance.

Whilst the vast majority of drivers of wheelchair accessible are committed to providing an excellent service to wheelchair users, it is important that the Council takes every opportunity to formally adopt and incorporate provisions wherever possible.

Environmental Implications:

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications:

The Council is under no legal obligation to establish a list of 'designated licensed

vehicles', however, it is considered essential and in the best interests of the public to have such a list.

Any vehicle owner whose vehicle is included on the list has the right of appeal to the Magistrates Court within 28 days of their vehicle being included on the published list.

Equality and Diversity:

The adoption of these provisions not only ensures that wheelchair users are protected when using licensed vehicles, but it also sends out, in the strongest terms, the message that the Council is committed to the principles of equality and diversity and ensuring that licensed drivers may not discriminate on grounds of disability.

Options:

- (1) to agree the recommendations of the Licensing and Safety Committee held on 4 July 2017; or
- (2) to not agree the recommendations made by the Licensing and Safety Committee held on 4 July 2017.

Recommendation:

- (1) The establishment of a list of designated wheelchair accessible licensed vehicles be approved; and
- (2) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -
 - (a) authority be delegated to the Head of Environment and Public Realm to approve any further vehicles to be added to the list of designated licensed vehicles, and to determine applications from drivers for a medical exemption from their duties; and
 - (b) the Council's Constitution be amended accordingly.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To ensure that wheelchair users are afforded every protection when travelling in licensed vehicles in Rugby, and to provide a legal basis for the Council to take enforcement action against any driver who fails to carry out their required duties.

Cabinet – 4th September 2017

Implementation of recent revisions to the Equality Act 2010

Report of the Licensing and Safety Committee

Recommendation

- (1) The establishment of a list of designated wheelchair accessible licensed vehicles be approved; and
- (2) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -
 - (a) authority be delegated to the Head of Environment and Public Realm to approve any further vehicles to be added to the list of designated licensed vehicles, and to determine applications from drivers for a medical exemption from their duties; and
 - (b) the Council's Constitution be amended accordingly.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sections 165 and 167 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) came into force on 6 April 2017. Section 167 of the Act provides local authorities with the powers to establish and maintain a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles ('designated licensed vehicles'), and section 165 then requires the drivers of the 'designated licensed vehicles', unless they have a valid medical exemption issued by the Council, to transport wheelchair users, provide passengers in wheelchairs with appropriate assistance, and to ensure that wheelchair users are charged the same fares as non-wheelchair users.

While the Council is under no legal obligation to establish a list of 'designated licensed vehicles' under section 167 of the Act, it is essential and in the best interests of the public to establish and maintain such a list. Without it, the requirements of section 165 do not apply meaning that drivers may refuse to take wheelchair users, do not have to provide assistance and could charge wheelchair users.

The Department for Transport has issued statutory guidance to local authorities on this matter and this is referred to below.

2. DESIGNATED LICENSED VEHICLES

The Act states that a vehicle can be included on the list of designated vehicles if it conforms to such accessibility requirements as the licensing authority thinks fit, but recommends that vehicles on the list should be those able to carry passengers seated in their wheelchairs.

The statutory guidance, provided as Appendix 1 to this report, states that to be placed on the list a vehicle must be capable of carrying some - but not all - types of occupied wheelchairs. The guidance recommends that a vehicle should only be included on the list if it would be possible for the user of a 'reference wheelchair' to enter, leave and travel in the passenger compartment in safety and reasonable comfort whilst travelling in their wheelchair. A diagram showing the type and dimensions of a 'reference wheelchair' is provided attached to this report as Appendix 2.

A 'reference wheelchair' could be described as an 'average' size manual wheelchair. However, there are a variety of different size and type wheelchairs available on the market, many of which will be larger than the 'reference wheelchair' including the powered wheelchairs.

Due to the wide range of sizes and types of wheelchairs, not all vehicles on the designated licensed vehicle list will be able to safely accommodate all types of wheelchair. The Act recognises this and provides a defence for the driver if the driver has reasonable grounds to believe that it would not have been possible for the particular wheelchair to be carried safely in the vehicle.

The Council already has a list of approved types of wheelchair accessible vehicles (makes and models) that may be licensed as hackney carriages in the borough.

The list upon which this report is focussed, to be introduced under section 165 of the Act, goes further, specifying individual licensed vehicles, together with, among other information, details of their registration numbers, hackney carriage licence numbers and details of the registered owner/keeper of the vehicle and details of the proprietor or company through which the vehicle may be booked, where applicable. A sample list is provided at Appendix 3.

In accordance with the guidance, the owners these vehicles will be advised that, as a fully wheelchair accessible vehicles licensed by Rugby Borough Council, their vehicle is to be included on the list of designated vehicles.

Accordingly, the owner/registered keeper of a listed vehicle will be expected to ensure that any person driving their vehicle has received appropriate training, and is aware of their duty/responsibility under the Act. If an individual driver is unable to fulfil that duty/responsibility then, in accordance with the Act, the driver will be made aware of the procedure for applying for a medical exemption (see below).

The guidance recommends that the implementation of sections 165 and 167 of the Act should take no longer than 6 months. It is therefore proposed that the list of designated vehicles will come into effect on 1 October 2017. This will allow for full

and proper notification to the trade, discussions with interested parties and groups, consideration of any exemptions, and so on.

The Act enables vehicle owners to appeal against the Council's decision to include their vehicles on the designated list. Any such appeal should be made to the Magistrate's Court within 28 days of the vehicle in question being included on the published list.

3. DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 165 of the Act sets out the duties placed on drivers of designated wheelchair accessible taxis and private hire vehicles. The duties are;

- to carry a passenger while in a wheelchair;
- not to make any additional charge for doing so;
- if the passenger decides to sit in a passenger seat, to carry the wheelchair;
- to take steps to ensure passengers are carried in safety and comfort and;
- to give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required.

Mobility assistance is defined as assistance;

- to enable the passenger to get in and out of the vehicle;
- if the passenger wishes to remain in the wheelchair, to enable the passenger to get in and out of the vehicle while in the wheelchair;
- to load the passengers luggage into or out of the vehicle and;
- if the passenger does not wish to remain in the wheelchair, to load the wheelchair into or out of the vehicle.

It will be a criminal offence (unless granted an exemption on medical grounds) for the driver of a vehicle included on the designated licensed vehicle list to fail to comply with the above duties.

Where a driver has a medical condition, disability, or physical condition that makes it impossible, or unreasonably difficult, for them to provide the sort of physical assistance required, the Act makes provision for the Council to grant exemptions to individual drivers from carrying out these duties upon production of satisfactory medical evidence.

If an exemption is granted, then the driver will be issued with an exemption certificate and a notice, which must be displayed in the vehicle to make passengers aware.

The length of the exemption period is at the Council's discretion and will be based on the medical evidence provided.

All drivers will be made aware of the duties and of the medical exemption process. Drivers can appeal against the decision of the Council not to issue an exemption certificate to the Magistrate's Court within 28 days of the refusal.

4. CONCLUSION

Whilst the Council is not legally obliged to establish a list of 'designated vehicles', it is in the best interests of the public to have such a list. Without it, the requirements of section 165 do not apply meaning that drivers may refuse to take wheelchair users, do not have to provide assistance and could charge wheelchair users more.

Delegated authority is sought to enable the Head of Environment and Public Realm to approve any further vehicles to be added onto the designated list, and to consider requests from drivers for a medical exemption. This will provide for an efficient and speedy mechanism to approve.

Further discussions are to be held with representatives of the taxi trade on this matter, and Rugby Disability Forum will also be consulted.

Name of Meeting:
Cabinet

Date of Meeting:
4th September 2017

Subject Matter:
Implementation of the Equality Act 2010

Originating Department:
Environment and Public Realm



Department
for Transport

Access for wheelchair users to Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

Statutory Guidance

Moving Britain Ahead

The Department for Transport has actively considered the needs of blind and partially sighted people in accessing this document. The text will be made available in full on the Department's website. The text may be freely downloaded and translated by individuals or organisations for conversion into other accessible formats. If you have other needs in this regard please contact the Department.

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Ministerial Foreword



This Government is committed to ensuring that transport works for everyone, including disabled people. Since joining the Department for Transport in 2015, and taking on Ministerial responsibility for transport accessibility, I have made it my mission to challenge the status quo and encourage innovative thinking to improve access to transport across the modes.

I know however, that despite the real improvements which have taken place in recent years, some disabled passengers still face discrimination when attempting to travel. I am clear that this is unacceptable.

Owners of assistance dogs are already protected by provisions in the Equality Act 2010 which make it unlawful to refuse or charge them extra. I want similar protections to apply to wheelchair users, which is why I am delighted that we have commenced the remaining parts of sections 165 and 167 of the Equality Act 2010, making it a criminal offence for drivers of designated taxi and private hire vehicles to refuse to carry passengers in wheelchairs, to fail to provide them with appropriate assistance, or to charge them extra. I hope that in so doing we will send a clear signal to the minority of drivers who think it acceptable to discriminate on grounds of disability that such behaviour will not be tolerated – and, more importantly, to enable wheelchair users to travel with confidence.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Andrew Jones MP,
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Transport**

1. Introduction

Status of guidance

- 1.1 This guidance document has been issued in order to assist local licensing authorities (LAs) in the implementation of legal provisions intended to assist passengers in wheelchairs in their use of designated taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) services. It provides advice on designating vehicles as being wheelchair accessible so that the new protections can apply, communicating with drivers regarding their new responsibilities and handling requests from drivers for exemptions from the requirements.
- 1.2 This is a statutory guidance document, issued under section 167(6) of the Equality Act 2010 and constitutes the Secretary of State's formal guidance to LAs in England, Wales and Scotland on the application of sections 165 to 167 of the Equality Act 2010. LAs must have regard to this guidance document.

2. Putting the law into practice

Background

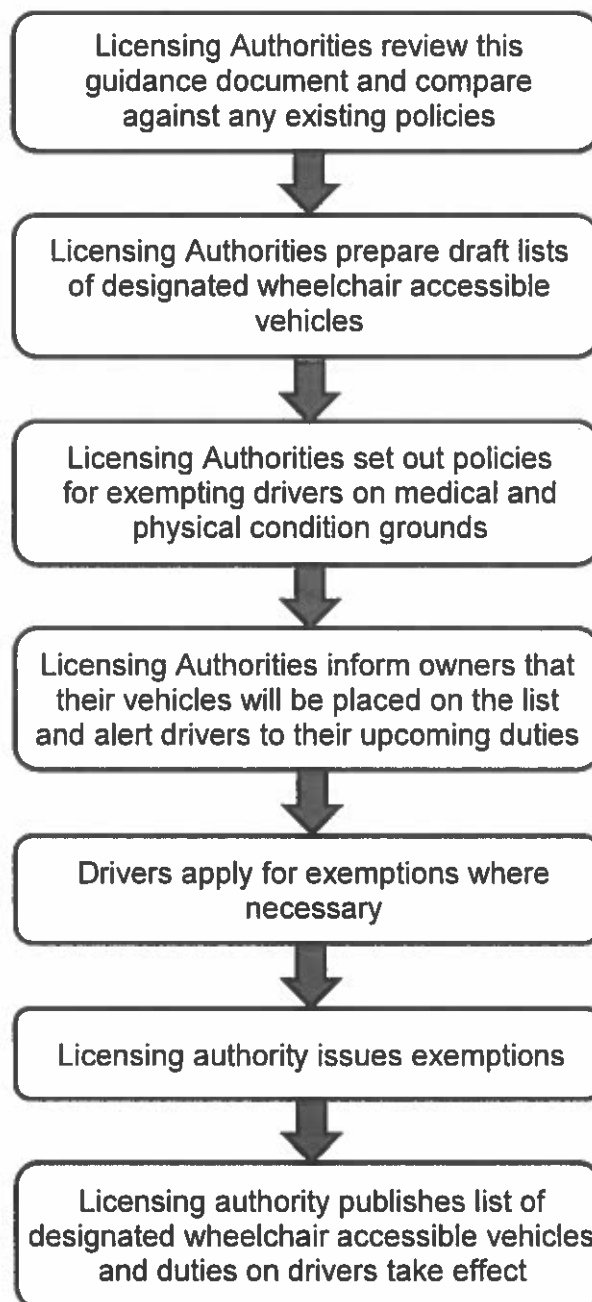
- 2.1 We have commenced sections 165 and 167 of the Equality Act 2010 ("the Act"), in so far as they were not already in force. Section 167 of the Act provides LAs with the powers to make lists of wheelchair accessible vehicles (i.e. "designated vehicles"), and section 165 of the Act then requires the drivers of those vehicles to carry passengers in wheelchairs, provide assistance to those passengers and prohibits them from charging extra.
- 2.2 The requirements of section 165 do not apply to drivers who have a valid exemption certificate and are displaying a valid exemption notice in the prescribed manner. An exemption certificate can be issued under section 166 of the Act, which is already in force. This allows LAs to exempt drivers from the duties under section 165 where it is appropriate to do so, on medical grounds or because the driver's physical condition makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for them to comply with those duties.
- 2.3 On 15th September 2010, the Department for Transport issued guidance on the Act which stated, in relation to section 167, *"although the list of designated vehicles will have no actual effect in law until the duties are commenced, we would urge licensing authorities to start maintaining a list as soon as possible for the purpose of liaising with the trade and issuing exemption certificates"*.
- 2.4 We therefore recognise that many LAs have already implemented some of these provisions, including publishing lists of wheelchair accessible vehicles and exempting drivers. Therefore, there are likely to be a range of approaches being used in practice by LAs across England, Wales and Scotland.

Transitional arrangements

- 2.5 We want to ensure that the commencement of sections 165 and 167 of the Act has a positive impact for passengers in wheelchairs, ensures they are better informed about the accessibility of designated taxis and PHVs in their area, and confident of receiving the assistance they need to travel safely.
- 2.6 But we recognise that LAs will need time to put in place the necessary procedures to exempt drivers with certain medical conditions from providing assistance where there is good reason to do so, and to make drivers aware of these new requirements. In addition, LAs will need to ensure that their new procedures comply with this guidance, and that exemption notices are issued in accordance with Government regulations. This will ensure that we get a consistent approach and the best outcomes for passengers in wheelchairs.
- 2.7 As such, we would encourage LAs to put in place sensible and manageable transition procedures to ensure smooth and effective implementation of this new law. LAs should only publish lists of wheelchair accessible vehicles for the purposes of

section 165 of the Act when they are confident that those procedures have been put in place, drivers and owners notified of the new requirements and given time to apply for exemptions where appropriate. We would expect these arrangements to take no more than a maximum of six months to put in place, following the commencement of these provisions, but this will of course be dependent on individual circumstances.

2.8 A flowchart setting out the sorts of processes that a LA could follow is set out below. This is an indicative illustration, and it will be down to each LA to determine the actions they need to take to ensure this new law is implemented effectively in their area.



3. Vehicles

Overview

- 3.1 Section 167 of the Act permits, but does not require, LAs to maintain a designated list of wheelchair accessible taxis and PHVs.
- 3.2 Whilst LAs are under no specific legal obligation to maintain a list under section 167, the Government recommends strongly that they do so. Without such a list the requirements of section 165 of the Act do not apply, and drivers may continue to refuse the carriage of wheelchair users, fail to provide them with assistance, or to charge them extra.

Vehicles that can be designated

- 3.3 We want to ensure that passengers in wheelchairs are better informed about the accessibility of the taxi and PHV fleet in their area, confident of receiving the assistance they need to travel safely, and not charged more than a non-wheelchair user for the same journey.
- 3.4 The Act states that a vehicle can be included on a licensing authority's list of designated vehicles if it conforms to such accessibility requirements as the licensing authority thinks fit. However, it also goes on to explain that vehicles placed on the designated list should be able to carry passengers in their wheelchairs should they prefer.
- 3.5 This means that to be placed on a licensing authority's list a vehicle must be capable of carrying some – but not necessarily all – types of occupied wheelchairs. The Government therefore recommends that a vehicle should only be included in the authority's list if it would be possible for the user of a "reference wheelchair"¹ to enter, leave and travel in the passenger compartment in safety and reasonable comfort whilst seated in their wheelchair.
- 3.6 Taking this approach allows the provisions of section 165 of the Act apply to a wider range of vehicles and more drivers than if LAs only included on the list vehicles capable of taking a larger type of wheelchair.
- 3.7 The Government recognises that this approach will mean that some types of wheelchair, particularly some powered wheelchairs, may be unable to access some of the vehicles included in the LA's list. The Act recognises this possibility, and section 165(9) provides a defence for the driver if it would not have been possible for the wheelchair to be carried safely in the vehicle. Paragraph 3.10 of this guidance below aims to ensure that users of larger wheelchairs have sufficient information about the vehicles that will be available to them to make informed choices about their journeys.

¹ As defined in Schedule 1 of the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 2000

Preparing and publishing lists of designated vehicles

- 3.8 We want to ensure that passengers in wheelchairs have the information they need to make informed travel choices, and also that drivers and vehicle owners are clear about the duties and responsibilities placed on them.
- 3.9 Before drivers can be subject to the duties under section 165 of the Act, the LA must first publish their list of designated vehicles, and clearly mark it as 'designated for the purposes of section 165 of the Act'.
- 3.10 LAs should ensure that their designated lists are made easily available to passengers, and that vehicle owners and drivers are made aware. Lists should set out the details of the make and model of the vehicle, together with specifying whether the vehicle is a taxi or private hire vehicle, and stating the name of operator. Where possible it would also be helpful to include information about the size and weight of wheelchair that can be accommodated, and whether wheelchairs that are larger than a "reference wheelchair" can be accommodated.
- 3.11 However, we recognise that some passengers in wheelchairs may prefer to transfer from their wheelchair into the vehicle and stow their wheelchair in the boot. Although the legal requirement for drivers to provide assistance does not extend to the drivers of vehicles that cannot accommodate a passenger seated in their wheelchair, we want to ensure that these passengers are provided with as much information as possible about the accessibility of the taxi and PHV fleet in their area.
- 3.12 We would therefore recommend that LAs also publish a list of vehicles that are accessible to passengers in wheelchairs who are able to transfer from their wheelchair into a seat within the vehicle. It should be made clear however that this list of vehicles has not been published for the purposes of section 165 of the Act and drivers of those vehicles are therefore not subject to the legal duties to provide assistance. Authorities may however wish to use existing licensing powers to require such drivers to provide assistance, and impose licensing sanctions where this does not occur.

Appeals

- 3.13 Section 172 of the Act enables vehicle owners to appeal against the decision of a LA to include their vehicles on the designated list. That appeal should be made to the Magistrate's Court, or in Scotland the sheriff, and must be made within 28 days of the vehicle in question being included on the LA's published list.

4. Drivers

Driver responsibilities

- 4.1 Section 165 of the Act sets out the duties placed on drivers of designated wheelchair accessible taxis and PHVs.
- 4.2 The duties are:
- to carry the passenger while in the wheelchair;
 - not to make any additional charge for doing so;
 - if the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat to carry the wheelchair;
 - to take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort; and
 - to give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required.
- 4.3 The Act then goes on to define mobility assistance as assistance:
- To enable the passenger to get into or out of the vehicle;
 - If the passenger wishes to remain in the wheelchair, to enable the passenger to get into and out of the vehicle while in the wheelchair;
 - To load the passenger's luggage into or out of the vehicle;
 - If the passenger does not wish to remain in the wheelchair, to load the wheelchair into or out of the vehicle.
- 4.4 Once the duties are commenced, it will be an offence for the driver (unless exempt) of a taxi or PHV which is on the licensing authority's designated list to fail to comply with them. We encourage LAs to provide drivers of taxis and PHVs who are not exempt from the duties with clear guidance on their duties with respect to the carriage of passengers in wheelchairs, either as part of existing driver-facing guidance, or as supplementary communication. The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee's Disability Equality and Awareness Training Framework for Transport Staff² may provide a useful resource.
- 4.5 Although each situation will be different, we take the view that reasonable mobility assistance will be subject to other applicable law, including health and safety legislation. However, we would always expect drivers to provide assistance such as folding manual wheelchairs and placing them in the luggage compartment, installing the boarding ramp, or securing a wheelchair within the passenger compartment.
- 4.6 Depending on the weight of the wheelchair and the capability of the driver, reasonable mobility assistance could also include pushing a manual wheelchair or

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<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20080804135759/http://www.dptac.gov.uk/education/stafftraining/pdf/trainingframework-nontabular.pdf>

light electric wheelchair up a ramp, or stowing a light electric wheelchair in the luggage compartment.

- 4.7 It is our view that the requirement not to charge a wheelchair user extra means that, in practice, a meter should not be left running whilst the driver performs duties required by the Act, or the passenger enters, leaves or secures their wheelchair within the passenger compartment. We recommend that licensing authority rules for drivers are updated to make clear when a meter can and cannot be left running.

Applying for and issuing exemptions

- 4.8 Some drivers may have a medical condition or a disability or physical condition which makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for them to provide the sort of physical assistance which these duties require. That is why the Act allows LAs to grant exemptions from the duties to individual drivers. These provisions are contained in section 166, and were commenced on 1st October 2010.
- 4.9 Section 166 allows LAs to exempt drivers from the duties to assist passengers in wheelchairs if they are satisfied that it is appropriate to do so on medical or physical grounds. The exemption can be valid for as short or long a time period as the LA thinks appropriate, bearing in mind the nature of the medical issue. If exempt, the driver will not be required to perform any of the duties. Since October 2010, taxi and PHV drivers who drive wheelchair accessible taxis or PHVs have therefore been able to apply for exemptions. If they do not do so already, LAs should put in place a system for assessing drivers and a system for granting exemption certificates for those drivers who they consider should be exempt.
- 4.10 We suggest that authorities produce application forms which can be submitted by applicants along with evidence supporting their claim. We understand that some licensing authorities have already put in place procedures for accessing and exempting drivers, and as an absolute minimum, we think that the evidence provided should be in the form of a letter or report from a general practitioner.
- 4.11 However, the Government's view is that decisions on exemptions will be fairer and more objective if medical assessments are undertaken by professionals who have been specifically trained and who are independent of the applicant. We would recommend that independent medical assessors are used where a long-term exemption is to be issued, and that LAs use assessors who hold appropriate professional qualifications and who are not open to bias because of a personal or commercial connection to the applicant. LAs may already have arrangements with such assessors, for example in relation to the Blue Badge Scheme.
- 4.12 If the exemption application is successful then the LA should issue an exemption certificate and provide an exemption notice for the driver to display in their vehicle. As section 166 has been in force since 2010, many LAs will already have processes in place for issuing exemption certificates, and as such we do not intend to prescribe the form that those certificates should take. We are however keen to ensure that passengers in wheelchairs are able to clearly discern whether or not a driver has been exempted from the duties to provide assistance, and as such will prescribe the form of and manner of exhibiting a notice of exemption.
- 4.13 If the exemption application is unsuccessful we recommend that the applicant is informed in writing within a reasonable timescale and with a clear explanation of the reasons for the decision.

Demonstrating exemptions

- 4.14 In addition to the exemption certificate, exempt drivers need to be issued with a notice of exemption for display in their vehicle.
- 4.15 The Department will soon make regulations which will prescribe the form of and manner of exhibiting a notice of exemption. Where a driver has been exempted from the duties under section 165 of the Act, they must display an exemption notice in the vehicle they are driving in the form and manner prescribed by the regulations. If the notice is not displayed then the driver could be prosecuted if they do not comply with the duties under section 165 of the Act.
- 4.16 The Department aims to distribute copies of the notice of exemption to LAs, but they are of course free to produce their own in accordance with the regulations.
- 4.17 Only one exemption notice should be displayed in a vehicle at any one time.

Appeals

- 4.18 Section 172 of the Act enables drivers to appeal against the decision of a LA not to issue an exemption certificate. That appeal should be made to the Magistrate's Court, or a sheriff in Scotland, and must be made within 28 days beginning with the date of the refusal.
- 4.19 LAs may choose to establish their own appeal process in addition to the statutory process but this would need to be undertaken rapidly in order to allow any formal appeal to the Magistrate's Court to be made within the 28 day period.

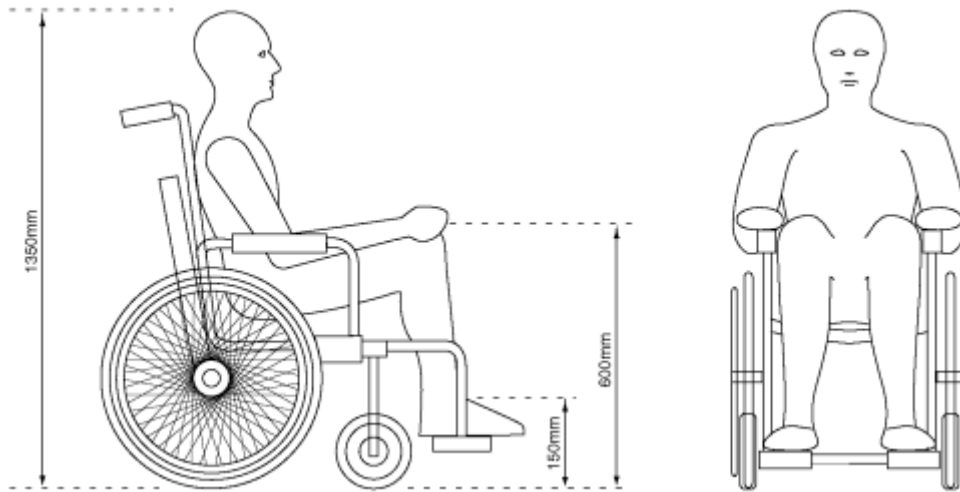
5. Enforcement

Licensing measures and prosecution

- 5.1 It is important to note that a driver will be subject to the duties set out in section 165 of the Equality Act 2010 if the vehicle they are driving appears on the designated list of the LA that licensed them, and the LA has not provided them with an exemption certificate, regardless of where the journey starts or ends.
- 5.2 The Government expects LAs to take tough action where drivers breach their duties under section 165 of the Act.
- 5.3 LAs have wide-ranging powers to determine the rules by which taxis and private hire vehicles within their respective areas may operate. We recommend that they use these powers to ensure that drivers who discriminate against disabled passengers are held accountable.
- 5.4 If a driver receives a conviction for breaching their duties under section 165 of the Act, it would be appropriate for the authority to review whether or not they remained a fit and proper person to hold a taxi or PHV drivers' licence. The Government's presumption is that a driver who wilfully failed to comply with section 165 would be unlikely to remain a "fit and proper person".
- 5.5 Authorities might also apply conditions which enable them to investigate cases of alleged discrimination and take appropriate action, even where prosecution did not proceed.

Appendix 2

Reference Wheelchair Type and Dimensions



Appendix 3

List of designated licensed vehicles provided under section 165 of the Equality Act 2010

Make	Model	Colour	Registration Number	Vehicle Licence No	Registered Keeper	Proprietor
Volkswagen	Caddy Max	White	DF59 RED	398	Mr Jo Bloggs	Abbey Cars
Citroen	Berlingo	White	GH78 YHN	016	Mrs Josephine Bloggs	Spelthorne Cars