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Democratic Services



COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Tuesday 8 October 2024 at 7.30 pm

Place: Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall

Online access to this meeting is available on YouTube: [Link to online broadcast](#)

The members listed below are summoned to attend the Community and Wellbeing Committee meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Councillor Clive Woodbridge (Chair)	Councillor Alison Kelly
Councillor Bernice Froud (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Rachel King
Councillor Rob Geleit	Councillor Humphrey Reynolds
Councillor Graham Jones	Councillor Kim Spickett

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

For further information, please contact democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk or tel: 01372 732000

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- You should proceed calmly; do not run and do not use the lifts;
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings;
- Once you are outside, please do not wait immediately next to the building, but move to the assembly point at Dullshot Green and await further instructions; and
- Do not re-enter the building until told that it is safe to do so.

Public information

Please note that this meeting will be held at the Town Hall, Epsom and will be available to observe live using free YouTube software.

A link to the online address for this meeting is provided on the first page of this agenda. A limited number of seats will be available on a first-come first-served basis in the public gallery at the Town Hall. If you wish to observe the meeting from the public gallery, please arrive at the Town Hall reception before the start of the meeting. A member of staff will show you to the seating area. For further information please contact Democratic Services, email: democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk, telephone: 01372 732000.

Information about the terms of reference and membership of this Committee are available on the [Council's website](#). The website also provides copies of agendas, reports and minutes.

Agendas, reports and minutes for this Committee are also available on the free Modern.Gov app for iPad, Android and Windows devices. For further information on how to access information regarding this Committee, please email us at democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk.

Exclusion of the Press and the Public

There are no matters scheduled to be discussed at this meeting that would appear to disclose confidential or exempt information under the provisions Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). Should any such matters arise during the course of discussion of the below items or should the Chair agree to discuss any other such matters on the grounds of urgency, the Committee may wish to resolve to exclude the press and public by virtue of the private nature of the business to be transacted.

Questions and statements from the Public

Up to 30 minutes will be set aside for questions and statements from members of the public at meetings of this Committee. Any member of the public who lives, works, attends an educational establishment or owns or leases land in the Borough may ask a question or make a statement on matters within the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

All questions must consist of one question only and cannot consist of multiple parts. Questions and statements cannot relate to planning or licensing committees matters, the personal affairs of an individual, or a matter which is exempt from disclosure or confidential under the Local Government Act 1972. Questions which in the view of the Chair are defamatory, offensive, vexatious or frivolous will not be accepted. Each question or statement will be limited to 3 minutes in length.

If you wish to ask a question or make a statement at a meeting of this Committee, please contact Democratic Services at: democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Questions must be received in writing by Democratic Services by noon on the third working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, Thursday 3rd October**.

A written copy of statements must be received by Democratic Services by noon on the working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, Monday 7th October**.

For more information on public speaking protocol at Committees, please see [Annex 4.2](#) of the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Operating Framework.

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AGENDA

1. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

To take any questions or statements from members of the Public.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other registrable or non-registrable interests from Members in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 8)

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 09 July 2024 (attached) and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

4. NIGHTLY PAID ACCOMMODATION EXPENDITURE UPDATE 2024/25 (Pages 9 - 22)

EEBC continues to have a significant financial outlay on temporary accommodation costs to meet its homelessness obligations under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The level of expenditure exceeded the budget set for 2023/24 and it will be a significant challenge to meet 2024/25 budget targets. This report sets out the anticipated costs for 2024/25 and outlines the actions taken to minimise homelessness expenditure.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE (Pages 23 - 28)

To set out proposals on how the Council will engage with residents to receive feedback on services and better understand residents' needs.

6. 2025/26 BUDGET TARGETS (Pages 29 - 34)

This report informs the Committee of the Council's revenue budget targets presented to the Strategy & Resources Committee in July. The report seeks guidance on the preparation of the Committee's service estimates for 2025/26.

7. URGENT DECISIONS (Pages 35 - 38)

To report to the committee the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution

8. HOUSING REPORTS FROM STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
(Pages 39 - 54)

Strategy and Resources Committee on 17th September 2024 resolved to agree two reports, namely the Temporary Accommodation agreement with Town and Country Housing Association and the lease for 33-39 High Street for use as temporary accommodation and also resolved that these same reports to be brought to this committee to note.

9. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (Pages 55 - 56)

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Committee may pass a resolution to exclude the public from the Meeting for Part Two of the Agenda on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

10. CONTRACTING OUT OF HOMELESSNESS REVIEWS FUNCTION (Pages 57 - 60)

The report has not been published as it deals with information in relation to the financial or business affairs of the Council or a third party.

Minutes of the Meeting of the COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 9 July 2024

PRESENT -

Councillor Clive Woodbridge (Chair); Councillor Bernice Froud (Vice-Chair); Councillors Tony Froud (as nominated substitute for Councillor Graham Jones), Rob Geleit, Alison Kelly, Rachel King and Kim Spickett

Absent: Councillor Graham Jones and Councillor Humphrey Reynolds

Officers present: Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Arjan de Jong (Strategic Housing Manager), Richard Appiah-Ampofo (Senior Accountant) and Dan Clackson (Democratic Services Officer)

1 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions or statements were received from members of the Public.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other registrable or non-registrable interests were declared by Members with respect to any item to be considered at the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16 January 2024 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

4 HOMELESSNESS: ANNUAL ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Committee received a report setting out the actions taken to minimise homelessness expenditure, identifying the funding which was utilised to cover the additional expenditure for 2023/24, and giving an indication of the anticipated costs for 2024/25.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **People housed in temporary accommodation.** In response to a Member, the Strategic Housing Manager explained that a variety of people from a range of life circumstances, including single people and families, are housed in nightly paid accommodation by the Council. He

explained that people housed in nightly paid accommodation are typically those who are considered vulnerable for a number of reasons, such as having young children, or having physical or mental health needs, and to whom the Council duly has a duty towards. He stated that the most expensive accommodation is that for family units, though the Council also provides a large amount of accommodation for single persons.

- b) **Accommodation inside and outside of Epsom & Ewell.** Following a question from a Member, the Strategic Housing Manager explained that the Council has a large amount of temporary accommodation within the Borough, much of which is provided by registered providers, such as 'Town and Country Housing' (formerly by Rosebery Housing). He went on to explain that the Council's nightly paid accommodation, however, is mostly located outside the Borough, and that people are oftentimes housed in such accommodation for 2-3 years at a time. He stated that the Council's temporary accommodation outside of Epsom & Ewell Borough is predominantly located within Thornton Heath, in Croydon Borough. He explained that due to Thornton Heath's close proximity to Epsom, it allows people housed there to maintain their lives and to stay close to their support networks in Epsom & Ewell.
- c) **Recruitment.** The Strategic Housing Manager confirmed that two posts had been recruited within the housing team over the past 18 months, one of which was the Single Persons Officer, who works closely with people in need of single person temporary accommodation.
- d) **Collaboration with other authorities.** In response to a question from a Member in relation to the possibility of partnering with other authorities in order to mitigate the increasing costs for nightly paid accommodation caused by the inherent competition between authorities, the Strategic Housing Manager stated that he was aware that conversations on the topic had been had between Epsom and Surrey County Council, and that the Housing Solutions Manager would be able to provide further details. He said that he would contact the Housing Solutions Manager in order to provide the Member with further information after the meeting.
- e) **Accommodation rates and Homelessness Prevention Grant.** In response to a question from a Member, the Strategic Housing Manager explained that the rates set by Government at which the Council can charge for temporary accommodation was low and had remained unchanged since 2011. He explained that the Council consequently has to spend a large portion of the Homelessness Prevention Grant received from Government on covering the shortfall on the accommodation rent.
- f) **Temporary accommodation tenants moving into privately rented accommodation.** The Strategic Housing Manager explained that the rates for properties within the private rental sector are set at open market rates. He explained that the Council can assist people with rent deposits and advance rent in order to help them to move into privately rented properties but will always consider the long-term sustainability of the

arrangement to ensure that the tenant(s) will be able to afford the rent for the property in question.

- g) **Encouraging landlords to increase the length of tenancies.** In response to a question from a Member in relation to Appendix 1, Key objective 3, section 3.19, the Strategic Housing Manager explained that shorthold tenancies can be as short as 6 months. He stated that rising interest rates and higher mortgage rates had seen a rise in the number of landlords selling their properties, resulting in an increase in section 21 evictions. He explained that the Council seeks to build relationships with landlords, many of whom the Council places within the 'rent in advance' and 'rent deposit' schemes to provide stability for landlords and to encourage lengthier tenancies periods.
- h) **Correction to be made to appendix 1.** It was highlighted by a Member that each objective spreadsheet within appendix 1 contained an entry for Severe Weather Emergency Provisions, but the progress status was not consistent across the different objectives. The Strategic Housing Manager took note of this and explained that the progress status for Severe Weather Emergency Provisions should have been listed consistently across all the objectives, and that he would amend the spreadsheet accordingly.
- i) **Empty properties.** In response to a Member, the Strategic Housing Manager explained that multiple properties had been identified as having been empty for more than two years, and the owners had been written to encouraging them to contact the Council. He explained that he was hopeful that this may result in some properties being offered to the private sector lease scheme.
- j) **The Epsom and Ewell Hub.** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Housing and Community explained that for people who are unemployed and not exempt from from application of the benefit cap, the benefits received with the cap in place are too low to afford rent on properties within the borough, frequently resulting in such people being housed in temporary accommodation. He explained that the Epsom and Ewell Hub plays a key part in the homelessness strategy by assisting people in finding employment, consequently becoming eligible for full benefits or coming off benefits entirely, and being able to afford to move out of temporary accommodation.
- k) **Fairview Road and Stoneleigh Library.** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Housing and Community advised that the application for the proposed microhomes on Fairview Road was expected to go to Planning Committee in the coming months. He explained that microhomes provide temporary accommodation at a fraction of the cost of standard housing. He explained that discussions had been had with Surrey County Council (SCC) regarding Epsom & Ewell Council bringing two vacant flats owned by SCC near Stoneleigh Library into its private

sector leasing scheme. SCC, however, had withdrawn their offer as they wished to make use of the properties themselves.

- l) **Town & Country Housing.** In response to a Member, the Strategic Housing Manager explained that Town & Country Housing were looking into potentially diverting some of their funding from their other stock holding area (Tunbridge Wells) to the Epsom & Ewell area, following their acquisition of the Epsom & Ewell area housing stock from Rosebery Housing.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Agree the priority actions points which have been taken to manage homelessness over the past 18 months.**
- (2) Note the use of Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) and homelessness grant reserves to cover the increase in expenditure, during 2023/24, to enable the Council to meet its duties under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.**
- (3) Agree that a further update regarding nightly paid accommodation (NPA) expenditure be provided at the Community & Wellbeing Committee in October 2024.**

5 URGENT ITEMS

The Committee received a report on the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the urgent decisions taken and the reasons for those decisions, since the last meeting of the Committee.**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.13 pm

COUNCILLOR CLIVE WOODBRIDGE (CHAIR)

NIGHTLY PAID ACCOMMODATION EXPENDITURE 2024/25 UPDATE REPORT

Head of Service:	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
Report Author	Arjan de Jong
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1: Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan update May 2024

Summary

EEBC continues to have a significant financial outlay on temporary accommodation costs to meet its homelessness obligations under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The level of expenditure exceeded the budget set for 2023/24 and it will be a significant challenge to meet 2024/25 budget targets. This report sets out the anticipated costs for 2024/25 and outlines the actions taken to minimise homelessness expenditure.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the use of Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) and reserves to cover the anticipated expenditure, for 2024/25, to enable the Council to meet its duties under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.**
- (2) Agree that a further update regarding nightly paid accommodation (NPA) expenditure be provided at the Community & Wellbeing Committee in March 2025.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to assist homeless households under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. If we do not meet our statutory obligations, then the Council will be in breach of its obligations and open to legal challenge.

2 Background

- 2.1 Following on from July's report to the Community & Wellbeing Committee updating on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan and the level of expenditure on nightly paid accommodation to meet homelessness obligations, this report sets out the anticipated spend for 2024/25.
- 2.2 The climate in which officers operate remains incredibly challenging. This includes a rise in the number of homeless approaches, the complexity of cases as well as dealing with people's expectations regarding the type and location of their temporary accommodation.
- 2.3 The demand on the small number of private rented properties remains high, increasing costs and thereby inaccessibility for many.
- 2.4 Affordable housing options in Epsom & Ewell remain limited, as demonstrated by the low number of social lettings, which were down from 21 in Q1 2023/24 to 16 in Q1 2024/25.
- 2.5 The housing options and solutions team continue to work extremely hard to limit the impact of the high number of approaches to the service. However, despite their positive performance the number of households in temporary accommodation, including expensive nightly paid, is still increasing.
- 2.6 That said, the relatively steady state of numbers of households in nightly paid accommodation over the past 12 months has been achieved despite a 95% increase in homelessness approaches, from 57 applications in Q1 of 2023/24 to 111 applications in Q1 2024/25.

3 Priority action points

- 3.1 As outlined in previous reports, the establishment of the Private Sector Leasing (PSL) scheme has had a positive impact on reducing nightly paid expenditure and officers held a Landlord Forum late September to further promote the PSL scheme and the Rent Deposit scheme, which helps households to access the private rented sector.
- 3.2 Preventing homelessness is a key area of focus and the success of the Housing Options (Move On) Officer, recruited in June 2023, in helping to move-on over 76 homeless households into temporary accommodation and a further 11 into private rented accommodation, has demonstrated the critical importance of this part of the service. Officers are looking at options to make this role permanent and also to expand this area to increase resources on proactively preventing people losing their accommodation.
- 3.3 The Strategic Housing Manager has liaised with the Planning Policy Manager regarding the council's response to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation, to ensure robust policy is in place to increase affordable housing delivery.

4 Next steps

- 4.1 Officers continue to focus on meeting the objectives as set out in the attached Action Plan. Specifically, officers are concentrating on homelessness prevention based activity and assisting households to move on from nightly paid accommodation into more secure and settled alternatives. Officers also continue to develop relationships with statutory partners, to clearly define areas of responsibility and reduce inappropriate referrals.
- 4.2 The issues faced by the Council in accommodating homeless households are unlikely to dissipate over the coming 12 months. It is therefore likely that despite continued positive performance from officers, the number of households in temporary accommodation will remain high for the foreseeable future.
- 4.3 Officers will continue to report temporary expenditure and progress against the Action Plan objectives, monthly to the Chair and Vice Chair of this committee.

5 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

5.1 Equality Impact Assessment

- 5.1.1 Minimising homelessness will have a positive impact on inequalities.

5.2 Crime & Disorder

- 5.2.1 None for the purposes of this report.

5.3 Safeguarding

- 5.3.1 Assisting homeless households to access safe and secure accommodation will have a positive impact on safeguarding.

5.4 Dependencies

- 5.4.1 Expenditure will continue to be monitored closely and adverse variances reported to Audit & Scrutiny Committee through the Council's agreed budget monitoring procedures, and to the Chair and vice Chair of this committee.

5.5 Other

- 5.5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The original budget for 2024/25 was based on 70 families in nightly paid accommodation but throughout the first five months of 2024, the Council was regularly supporting in excess of 90.
- 6.2 As reported to Audit & Scrutiny Committee in September, the net expenditure on nightly paid accommodation is forecast to exceed budget by £375,000 by the end of the year. This expenditure will be met through the original budget, homelessness grant reserve and the Council's contingency for inflationary pressures and general fund balance.
- 6.3 For 2024/25, the Council has been awarded £649,727 Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG). It is hoped that with pressures remaining so consistently high additional HPG funding may be awarded.
- 6.4 Should demand pressures continue throughout 2024/25, it is anticipated that in the absence of further government funding, there may be a continued need to apply the reserve while the service progresses initiatives to bring demand down to levels manageable within the budget.
- 6.5 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The budget position will continue to be monitored closely, with forecasts updated and reported to members accordingly through the year.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council's obligations, powers and duties in relation to homeless households are contained within the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. If we do not meet our statutory obligations, then the Council will be in breach of its obligations and open to legal challenge.
- 7.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None other than as set out in this report.

8 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 8.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

Safe & Well: Work with partners to improve health and wellbeing of our communities, focusing in particular on those who are more vulnerable.
- 8.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 8.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** Not applicable.
- 8.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**
- 8.5 **Partnerships:** Registered Providers, in particular Town & Country Housing (formerly Rosebery) and Transform, East Surrey Outreach Service (ESOS), local letting agents, private sector landlords, Surrey Housing authorities

9 Background papers

9.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous Reports:

- [Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022/27](#) - Community & Wellbeing Committee November 2022

Other papers:

- none

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Key Objective 1 - The early identification, intervention & prevention of homelessness

No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
1.1	Review, evaluate and monitor data to predict future trends of Homelessness, identify households at risk of homelessness and to inform new service improvements	Housing Solutions Manager	Quarter 1/ Annually	Year 1	Slippage	Delayed due to staff shortages in the team. New target Q1 2024/25
1.2	Identify the specific triggers, risk factors and causes of homelessness at different points in people's lives. Building on that, we will develop a range of interventions specifically targeted at addressing these	Housing Solutions Manager	Quarter 1/ Annually		Slippage	Follow on work from 1.1 Scheduled for Q1 2024/25
1.3	Research customer journeys into homelessness to identify early opportunities to prevent their homelessness and any barriers to doing	Housing Options Manager	2024/5		Slippage	As above
1.4	Housing Services to deliver briefings to colleagues, professionals and elected members to provide up to date information about housing and homelessness to ensure that correct information is disseminated to residents	Strategic Housing Manager	Annually		On Track	Several articles published in Staff Update during 2023/24 outlining the work of the housing team. Two Member briefings held, one relating to homelessness November 2023 and the other to Affordable Housing delivery February 2024.
1.5	Further develop partnership working with the DWP and local jobcentre plus to strengthen referrals and manage the impact of universal credit	Housing Options Manager	On-going		On Track	Regular partnership meetings with DWP are ongoing
1.6	Encourage early identification and interventions from public sector partners, community and voluntary sector organisations who are able to effectively inform those at risk of homelessness to seek advice from EEBC	Housing Options Manager	2023/4	Year 1	Completed	Surrey wide Mental Health protocol launched January 2023 and training rolled out March 2023, although adherence to the protocol remains a challenge. Follow up meeting held September 2024 to discuss performance of protocol. Regular operational meetings with Town & Country Housing (TCH) and also the CAB. Meeting with food bank (Good Company) held April 2023. Surrey wide young person & care leavers protocol finalised.
1.7	Review and update housing options information & pathway plans ensuring the customer has access to accurate, useful and comprehensive information about housing options	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Pathway plans updated Sept 22 and published on Homechoice website
1.8	Review & simplify the tasks for PHPs and accompanying advice literature.	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Homechoice and Personal Housing Plans updated.
1.9	Publicise and promote the Council's prevention services more effectively in an accessible format and encourage residents to contact us early and before a crisis, ensuring customers know how and where to approach and what to expect from the service	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		On Track	Review website with Communications.
1.10	Review use of social media and how we communicate our services to the wider general public for example Facebook, twitter, chat pages	Housing Options Manager	2024/25		On Track	Review with Communications
1.11	Devise an early identification & intervention protocol with all Registered Providers to address factors such as arrears, anti-social behaviour and tenancy sustainment	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/5		Completed	Commitment to refer' is in place.
1.12	Work with Private Sector Landlords and Lettings Agents to develop early signposting protocols for tenants with arrears or other tenancy concerns, to the Housing Options Service, to prevent homelessness	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/5		On Track	Landlord Forum scheduled for Autumn 2024
1.13	Review the referrals received through Duty to Refer to establish where further work needs to be completed in terms of links and training	Housing Options Manager	2023/24		Completed	All agencies except General Hospitals using the 'Jisaw' Duty to Refer system. Most referrals are considered an appropriate use of the Process. General Hospitals ICT systems will not allow access to this site, however template referrals working generally well. We are offering further training to Epsom GH.
1.14	Explore a trauma-informed & motivational interviewing approach to the delivery of homelessness services	Housing Options Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	SCC & EEBC training of trauma-informed approach identified as part of safeguarding training .All housing officers attended a training session 'working with people with personality Disorder' in February 2024.

1.15	Identify training needs and delivery training to meet any skill gaps and updates on new legislation and case law	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	Unintegral component of MPCs where needs and appropriate training are identified. Ongoing process & discussed at MPS's.
1.16	Ensure flexible use of the Council's Homelessness Prevention fund	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	Flexibly used of HPF is in bedded in options work. For example assisting clients with moving costs so they can downsize to free up larger social housing property.

Key Objective 2 - Reduce Rough Sleeping

No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
2.1	Further develop the Ending Rough Sleeping Plan	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Submitted and signed off by the Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government (CLG) July 2024 jointly with East Surrey D&B's.
2.2	Continue to work with ESOS partners to maintain the provision of effective Outreach Services	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	Procurement for new contract successful and contract in place from July 2024. Thames Reach to continue to provide. Single Persons Officer meets with ESOS monthly
2.3	Deliver SWEP provision annually to prevent rough sleeping during severe weather	Housing Options & Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	Implemented annually where appropriate
2.4	Provide ESOS assessment beds	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	3 Assessments available. £30K RSI funding awarded for 24/25.
2.5	Explore a 'Housing First' model for the most vulnerable homeless applicants	Housing Solutions Manager	2022/23 2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Two RSAP Housing First properties provided by Transform.
2.6	Conduct a promotional campaign to the residents of EEBC to provide information and awareness on rough sleeping and promote good practice amongst the general public to prevent people becoming entrenched into street life	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		On Track	ESOS/Streetlink poster displayed at points around the borough - Rough Sleeper page added to website
2.7	Review accommodation and health support needs of single people with complex needs or challenging behaviours who experience recurring homelessness	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		Completed	The creation of the Single Person Officer post has enabled Housing Services to routinely review accommodation and health support needs of single people with complex needs with Hep C Trust to engage rough sleepers.
2.8	Develop a No Second Night Out approach to prevent all rough sleeping	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Assessments beds provided in conjunction with ESOS. £30K assessment bed funding granted by RSI
2.9	Apply for Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding to create a new post of Single Person Homeless Support Officer to work solely with Rough Sleepers and single homeless people at risk of rough sleeping	Housing Solutions Manager	Jun-22		Completed	RSI 2022-25 bid submitted Feb 22 and in June 22 EEBC were awarded £128,370 over 3 years to fund Single Person Housing Options officer post. Recruited Nov 22. No further funding required onwards.
2.1	With our East Surrey Partners apply for Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding to enhance the ESOS Outreach Service	Housing Solutions Manager	Jun-22		Completed	EEBC submitted a joint RSI bid with MVDC, TDC, RBBC & ESOS and the partnership successfully secured £636,036 of RSI funding. This funding enhances our existing ESOS Outreach Service by fund the existing East Surrey Outreach Service Navigator Officer role for a further 3 years; Create 2 new East Surrey Outreach Service Support Officer roles for 3 years (£30k per LA each year); Provide money for personalised budgets for rough sleepers. (This is used for items like mobile phones or to purchase white goods/furniture w
2.11	Look to implement corporate "sponsorship" of up to 5 people with more complex and longer-term patterns of rough sleeping at requested by DLUHC	Strategic Housing Manager	2024/25		On Track	Working with Hope into Action

Key Objective 3 - Increase accommodation options: Social Rented Housing; Private Rented Accommodation; Supported and move-on Accommodation; In-borough Temporary Accommodation

No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
Social Renting						
3.1	Address the housing needs of the borough, including affordable housing needs, through the development of our Local Plan.	Strategic Housing Manager	On-going	Year 4	On Track	Draft Local Plan anticipated to be adopted 2026/27
3.2	Review of planning policies to be addressed through Local Plan to deliver more social/affordable, supported & temporary accommodation.	Strategic Housing Manager	Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	Strategic Housing Manager has quarterly meetings with the Planning Policy Manager to contribute to shaping AH policy.
3.4	Work with Homes England to identify opportunities for the use of the Affordable Homes Programme 2021 to 2026 to fund Council developments of new affordable housing.	Strategic Housing Manager	Ongoing	Year 1	On Track	On going discussions with local RP's. RPs report development conditions currently difficult.
3.5	Identify opportunities for the development of social/affordable/temporary accommodation on Council owned sites. List of sites being prepared.	Strategic Housing Manager	On-going	Year 3	On Track	Micro Homes proposed for two sites Fairview Road and Depot rd car park. Estates team leading on both projects & planning applications anticipated Q1/2 2024
3.6	Purchase residential street properties to provide social/affordable, supported & temporary accommodation.	Head of Housing & Community	On-going	Ongoing	On Track	2 RSAP properties purchased with Transform. TCH purchasing former leasehold properties which are in redevelopment areas for short-term use as TA. 1 x prop
3.7	Explore opportunities for joint working with housing providers to create additional social/affordable, supported & temporary accommodation.	Strategic Housing Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	On Track	Potential Mount Green property conversion on Grove Rd, progress delayed to due internal NHS comms. East St site of 31 homes (16 AR) received planning per delivered as affordable.
3.8	Develop a programme for the dispersal of s106 affordable housing funding to provide additional, social/affordable, supported and temporary accommodation.	Strategic Housing Manager	Ongoing	Year 3	On Track	Discussions ongoing with relevant provider where appropriate.
3.9	Review nomination agreements.	Housing Solutions Manager (HSM) / Strategic Housing Manager (SHM)	2025/26	Year 3	On Track	HSM liaising with key RPs.
3.10	Investigate ways to assist and / or incentivise social housing tenants under occupying larger family homes to downsize.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 2	On Track	Joint work with Housing Services, Housing Benefit & TCH has led to 11 households being downsized. Freeing up larger family sized social housing. Policy to be a
Private Rented Accommodation						
3.11	Review and update Rent Deposit Scheme policy, procedures and scheme documents.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	
3.12	Introduce rent in advance as a loan.	Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25	Year 1	On Track	Rent In Advance process and documentation set up. Roll out planned for Autumn 2024.
3.13	Set up e-learning pre-tenancy training and life skills to those threatened with homelessness or in temporary accommodation.	Housing Solutions Manager	2025/26		On Track	HSM has identified elearning
3.14	Review the current private rented sector (PRS) offer and explore/trial landlord incentives with a view to increasing local PRS opportunities.	Housing Solutions Manager/ Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Bench marking undertaken with 10 other District and Boroughs. AS to update
3.15	Provide enhanced information and support to customers on how to search for PRS properties to enable them to undertake future searches independently.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Move-on Officer providing enhanced support to homeless households to find private rented accommodation
3.16	Arrange and co-ordinate an annual Private Sector Landlords forum.	Homelessness working group	2024/25, then annually		On Track	Forum held September 2024.
3.17	Work across the housing market to maximise opportunities to increase the range of accommodation options for those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	RIA. New Move-On officer has develop links with organisations that assist our client to relocate to other parts of the county with support package to help them
3.18	Support and advise private sector landlords to understand the implications of Universal Credit and develop appropriate strategies to encourage landlords to accept customers in receipt of welfare benefits .	Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		On Track	Landlord forum September 2024
3.19	Encourage landlords to increase the length of tenancies to provide stability and security to tenants.	Housing Solutions Manager	2025/26		On Track	as above
3.20	Encourage landlords to offer more affordable rents - closer to LHA rates.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going		On Track	as above
3.21	Facilitate the use of empty properties.	Head of Housing and Community	On-going		On Track	Empty property group formed autumn 2023. Exploring joint resource with Mole Valley. Wrote to long-term (2yr+) in February. Held session with empty prop
3.22	Investigate the feasibility of rent guarantee/ insurance schemes for tenants and landlords.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	This will be undertaken as part of 3.14

Supported and move-on Accommodation						
3.23	Review our current provision of supported accommodation and explore the need for specialist supported accommodation for clients that have multiple and complex needs.	Housing Solutions Manager/ Strategic Housing Manager	2024/25		On Track	Exploratory discussions with Riverside and TCH re: medium need supported accommodation units & housing first type model. SCC to be contacted re: revenue
3.24	Look to increase supported accommodation in partnership with other boroughs/districts, public bodies and Housing Associations.	Strategic Housing Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	As above. No current government funding available.
3.25	Work with local social landlords to investigate developing a trial of a Housing First style approach.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Two RSAP Housing First properties purchased by Transform in 2023.
3.26	Work with Transform Housing & Support to deliver 4 units of supported move- on accommodation for Rough Sleepers, funded through Rough Sleeper Accommodation Program (RSAP) and the Homes England Move-On Fund.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Completed	Two RSAP Housing First properties purchased by Transform in 2023. Two properties in South Street completed
In-borough Temporary Accommodation						
3.27	Review the supply of temporary accommodation and identify future local temporary accommodation needs and how these can be best met.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Discussions ongoing with THC regarding the future use of temporary accommodation units at West Hill Court. Upper High St decommissioned but alternative which may include medium support units. Reviewing TA agreement with TCH with intention to renew.
3.28	Review and update temporary accommodation procurement plan.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 1	Slippage	SHM to complete by Q2 2024/25.
3.29	Review and update the temporary accommodation placement process.	Housing Solutions Manager / Strategic Housing Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	HSM reviewed in RSL TA process in July 2023 and TA process in February 2024 .
3.3	Increase the number of private sector leasing scheme properties.	Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Temporary Accommodation Appentice started April 2024, which will help expand scheme. Additional PSL taken on in March 2024 and new comms added to w
3.31	Work with Sanctuary Housing to develop up to 14 units of in-borough temporary accommodation at Defoe Court.	Housing Solutions Manager	2022/23		Completed	Lease expires 2026. Initial discussions to renew July 2024.

Key Objective 4 - Improve the Health & Wellbeing of homeless people						Key
No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
4.1	Develop a make every contact matter ethos across the service and with partners.	Housing Options Manager	2026/27		On Track	
4.2	Work with applicants to build on their own skills and strengths to develop their resilience and self-sufficiency.	Housing Solutions Manager	2025/26		On Track	
4.3	Work closely with the SCC Public Health and Health Services to improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable homeless people, especially those with multiple & complex needs through the work of the Surrey Homeless Multi-Agency Group (MAG).	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Work with SCC Public Health has enabled greater access to GP's for homeless households
4.4	Work in partnership with Surrey Adults Matter (SAM) to focus on delivering better coordinated services to improve the lives of adults facing Severe Multiple Disadvantage.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Ongoing work in relation to Surrey Adults Matter (SAM).
4.5	Work with SCC Public Health/SAM to pilot the "Bridge the Gap" trauma informed Outreach Support Service for homeless people.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Ongoing work in relation to Bridge the Gap. SCC looking for funding to expand scheme in future years

On track
Slippage
Off Track
Completed

Key Objective 5 - Ensuring sufficient support is available for homeless people						
No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
5.1	Ensure there is a clear documented housing pathway for groups who need specialist support, including each of the specified groups.	Housing Solutions Manager	2022/23	Year 1	Completed	Pathway plans updated Sept 22 and published on Homechoice website
5.2	Review the internal and external support services provided and explore opportunities to provide a more targeted and efficient service, particularly to those with complex needs to intervene early to prevent recurring homelessness.	Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		On Track	Single Persons Housing Officer will be leading on this.
5.3	Continue to fund and work with our East Surrey partners and Thames Reach to provide a specialist outreach support services for rough sleepers.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	East Surrey contract with ESOS/Thames Reach extended to September 2024. Procuring for nex contract from September.
5.4	Continue to support those households to access employment, education and training through continuing to fund ETHOS and through working with the Employment Hub.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	ETHOS contract renewd for 2023. March 2023 started working with Successful Mum to help parents into work - further updates?
5.5	Ensure that homeless households have the skills required to maintain a tenancy.	Housing Solutions Manager	2025/26		On Track	Set up e-learning pre-tenancy training and life skills to those threatened with homelessness or in temporary accommodation as in 3.13
5.6	Continue to work with tenancy sustainment and floating support services to ensure that those households placed in temporary accommodation are receiving appropriate support and assistance.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	The Move-On officer post is supporting homeless households in temporary accommodation and ensuring that households have a move on plan.
5.7	Work with SCC to review our current provision of Housing Related Support provision.	Housing Solutions Manager	Annually			Joint meetings with SCC relating to Safe Accommodation for survivors of DA- workshop held 16/04/24. On going work with SCC commissioners.
5.8	Proactively work with households in temporary accommodation to identify and secure suitable alternative accommodation and ensure that each household has a move on plan. Investigate options of having a dedicated Housing Officer to support homelessness households once in temporary accommodation	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2023/24	Year 1	On Track	Move-On officer supports homeless households move on from both nightly paid accommodation and temporary accommodation.
5.9	For some homeless households there are issues that prevent move on from temporary accommodation. There are a variety of reasons for this which include; the benefit cap, history of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, offending, complex health issues and other risk issues that make both social and private landlords reluctant to accept them as tenants. We will identify these issues and put in place measures to try to address them.	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/5		On Track	as above
5.10	Continue to support homeless household to find and secure private rented accommodation through the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Rent Deposit Officer has assisted 8 homeless households into private rented accommodation. 6 additional properties lined up.
5.11	Offer tenancy support and sustainment to households who are assisted to access private rented accommodation via the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Rent Deposit Officer provides on-going support to those homeless households assisted via Rent Deposit scheme.
5.12	Continue to support individuals and families that experience domestic abuse.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Referrals / IDVAs etc
5.13	Continue to fund the Sanctuary Scheme to help victims of domestic abuse safely to remain in their homes.	Housing Solutions Manager	On-going	On-going	On Track	Surrey Wide Sanctuary Scheme operational. Partnership meetings held since June 23 with North Surrey DA service (NSDA).
5.14	Identify support needs at an early stage and refer to appropriate services (drug/alcohol, mental health, young persons, domestic abuse, ex-offenders, money advice, employment support, floating support, foodbank, CAB).	Housing Options Manager	2023/4	Year 1	On Track	Linked to 5.2. Single Person Officer post has created capacity to enable Housing Services to identify support needs and refer to appropriate services.
5.15	Promote resilience and support to those who are or used to be homeless, to improve their resilience and reduce the risk of them from becoming homeless again.	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2025/6			
5.16	Work with Children's Services and the Family Support team to identify families who need some additional help beyond accommodation needs and ensure arrangements are in place to refer households with children to Early Help/Family Support as early as possible.	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/5		On Track	Quarterly meetings held with Look After Children & Care Leavers Teams to plan move ons & prevent Homelessness.
5.17	Work with partners to identify tenants at risk of "cuckooing" and ensure rapid interventions are in place to support them.	Housing Options Manager	On- going		On Track	Regular meetings with key RP partners and Community Safety Officer.
5.18	Work in partnership with Surrey Adults Matter (SAM) to focus on delivering better coordinated services to improve the lives of adults facing Severe Multiple Disadvantage		2023/4	Year 1	On Track	Ongoing work in relation to Surrey Adults Matter (SAM) & Bridge the Gap. SCC looking for funding to expand scheme in future years
5.19	Make referrals to furniture projects to ensure that homeless households have a furniture offer when moving into new accommodation	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	Referrals to furniture project embeded into Housing Options/ RDS/ nominations process to ensure homeless households have a furniture offer (if needed)

Key
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Key Objective 6 - Partnership working						
No.	Action: What we will do?	Lead Officer	Target Date	Year	Rag Status	Narrative
6.1	Increase partnership working and make "homelessness Everybody's Business", raise awareness of the impact homelessness can have on households and ensure that all agencies know how to appropriately refer households into the Housing Options Service.	Housing Options Manager & Housing Solutions Manager	2024/25		Slippage	Articles in Eborough and My Council Services
6.2	Host an annual Homelessness forum with partner agencies.	Strategic Housing Manager	2023-24, then annually	Year 1	Slippage	Stakeholder analysis Q3 2024
6.3	Host an annual Registered Provider Forum with a focus upon support for tenants at risk of homelessness.	Strategic Housing Manager	2023-24, then annually	Year 1	On Track	Meetings held with individual local RP's - RHA (TCH), Mount Green, Orbit, PA.
6.4	Host an annual Private Landlord's Forum to increase the availability of private rented accommodation in the borough and to encourage good practice.	Homelessness working group	2024-25, then annually			Scheduled for Autumn 2024. DWP have confirmed willingness to attend.
6.5	Work in partnership to ensure appropriate multi-agency joint working and referral arrangements are in place for Housing Options Service and to explore how preventative services can be developed and improved.	Housing Options Manager	On-going	On-going	Completed	Protocols in place. Duty to Co-operate with RSL partners . Ongoing work with EGH
6.6	Promote more joined up working with, health, prison and probation services to prevent homelessness on discharge or release from an institution	Housing Options Manager	2022-23/ Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	Surrey wide Mental Health protocol launched Jan 2023. Training rolling out March 2023. New Care Leavers protocol about to be launched. On going part
6.7	Work closely with the SCC Public Health and Health Services to improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable homeless people	Housing Options Manager	2022-23/ Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	Ongoing work in relation to Surrey Adults Matter (SAM), Bridge the Gap, Mental Health Protocol
6.8	Further develop partnership working with the DWP and local Jobcentre plus to ensure the Housing Options Service has access to information and receive regular updates, including training on UC and other benefits.	Housing Options Manager	2022-23/ Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	Regular partnership meetings with DWP are ongoing
6.9	Maximise funding opportunities through partnership working to identify and bid for new initiatives, building upon recent successes (e.g. MEAM, Housing First, RSI, Next Steps and RSAP).	Strategic Housing Manager	2023-24/ Ongoing	Year 1	Completed	National funding not currently available. To contact SCC
6.10	Work with partners to identify how those with lived experience of homelessness can be included in the design and delivery of services.	Housing Options Manager	2024/25			
6.11	Campaign and raise awareness of issues of homelessness that are linked to affordability and to LHA rates and Benefit Cap.	Strategic Housing Manager	2024/25			
6.12	Work with our Surrey partners in implementing the Domestic Abuse Act	Housing Options Manager	2022-23/ Ongoing	Year 1	On Track	NSDA (North Surrey Domestic Abuse Service) & SCC have now set up County wide Sanctuary Scheme - replacing local Sanctuary Scheme. Work shop he provisions
6.13	Work with our Surrey partners and Children Services in reviewing and implementing the Joint Housing Protocol for 16 & 17 year olds & the Care Leavers Protocol	Housing Options Manager	2022-23	On-going	Completed	Joint Housing Protocol for 16 & 17 year olds now Live. Care Leavers Protocol about to be launched
6.14	Work closely with our Surrey partners and Health Services to review and implement the Mental Health Protocol and the Hospital Discharge Protocol	Housing Options Manager	2022/3	On-going	Completed	Surrey wide Mental Health protocol launch Jan 2023. Training rolling out March 2023

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Head of Service:	Andrew Bircher, Interim Director of Corporate Services
Report Author	Andrew Bircher
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision? (yes/no)	no
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	

Summary

To set out proposals on how the Council will engage with residents to receive feedback on services and better understand residents' needs.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) **Endorse the approach taken to consultation.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The reason for the recommendation is to take forward a renewed approach to community engagement using a variety of methods as set out below.

2 Background

- 2.1 As a public service organisation we want to hear from the communities we serve about the impact of what we do, how well we do and whether we are doing the things they want us to do. This will assist the Council by informing its strategic aims and policy development.
- 2.2 We need to consider the best ways of doing this. The Council used to have a citizens' panel a number of years ago, but this is no longer active and the person who used to run it no longer works for the council. This was part of the communications team.
- 2.3 There is a lot of work involved in the creation and maintenance of a citizens' panel. This involves making sure it has sufficient numbers and that it is

representative of the profile of the borough. It should also be refreshed on a regular basis to ensure that those on the panel are providing fresh insights.

- 2.4 As a result, the re-establishment of a stand-alone citizens panel is not considered the most appropriate way to get feedback from residents / customers / service users. Instead, we would like to consider an alternative approach.

3 Proposed way forward for engagement with residents / customers / service users

- 3.1 We recognise that we represent varied and diverse communities and demographics and therefore one single approach is not appropriate for all circumstances and that a variety of techniques and audiences would be most appropriate to cover off the various types of engagement required. The following are the kinds of techniques which would be considered:

3.1.1 Obtaining regular feedback on council services / customer satisfaction.

3.1.2 Run public consultations on particular issues, e.g. new services, strategies/plans and policies.

3.1.3 Deliver targeted engagement on particular issues, e.g. products and software, design / improvement projects where user testing is required.

3.1.4 Deliver targeted community engagement with seldom heard groups.

- 3.2 Exactly how we engage and in what format will be considered by the relevant parts of the business that are taking forward the change / initiative. For example, a change to some software could be best done with a user group who experience and use the software. This could mean smaller numbers with more hands-on consultations and engagement as this could work better than a wide scale high-level engagement. However as is the case with the Local Plan the ambition is to include as many people as possible so road shows, online marketing, publicity campaigns etc were appropriate.

- 3.3 Each consultation is tailored to the specific activity and group or groups of people we want to engage. We undertake stakeholder mapping and audience analysis for consultations to help identify all the groups we want to engage including hard-to-reach groups, and plan how best to reach them.

- 3.4 A tiered approach could help us focus resource and ensure that we are consistent with our approach. E.g.

- 3.4.4 High priority or Gold - many people in the borough will be highly impacted – would entail multiple opportunities for people to engage across all our channels, including a media release, outreach as above, focus groups, direct mail and paid promotion. Partnership working.
- 3.4.5 Medium priority or Silver - few people are impacted but to a high degree – targeted outreach would include fewer opportunities to engage via our broader owned communications channels (website, social media, eborough insight, borough boards), but still targeted outreach and potentially paid promotion e.g. boosted social media posts, direct mail and possibly focus groups.
- 3.4.6 Low priority or Bronze – few people are impacted to a low degree - perhaps a more standard approach e.g. comms through our own channels and other activity depending on target audiences.
- 3.5 Our communications strategy also outlines how we aim to engage our residents and partners ongoing. There are many opportunities for residents to feedback to us including on social media, via our e-newsletter, by contacting us directly.
- 3.6 Examples of consultations that we have carried out recently are:
 - 3.6.4 Draft Local plan consultation (Regulation 18) undertaken in 2023, which generated over 1700 responses – one of the best response rates we have had to a consultation. Although this is an important subject, and would be well supported, we encouraged participation through a series of consultation events / roadshows (in the Ashley centre) and made use of on-line, digital consultation and an external agency to help promote this.
 - 3.6.5 When considering changes to dog walking arrangements at Nonsuch, in addition to our usual web and social media presence for the consultation, the team engaged with dog walkers in the park on a face to face basis and with local resident groups. In addition, a public session was run in Bourne Hall with commercial dog walkers to gain their feedback.
 - 3.6.6 Consultation on the proposed changes to taxi licences and the changes to environment impacts of taxis was an important subject that affected taxi companies and drivers as well as users of taxis. The consultation ran for six weeks and engaged 22 residents.
 - 3.6.7 When carrying out a review of the Community Safety partnership, a survey was used to gauge the opinions from all partners and residents. Although a far-reaching survey the response rate was low.

3.6.8 We asked people, particularly women, in a queue for a nightclub to scan a QR code and fill out a survey about night-time safety in Epsom Town Centre

3.6.9 With the recent Corporate Peer Challenge audit, we worked with partners and customers to provide feedback on our services to the peer team.

3.6.10 We have also explored “live scribing” which is a way of creating a visual summary of keynote speeches and workshops, particularly useful for people who take in information in different ways to the usual format.

3.6.11 We have refreshed our complaints reporting so that we can better understand what customers are contacting us about and how we can improve what we do.

4 Working with partners

4.1 One of the things we have struggled with and which many organisations find difficult is how best to engage with those groups that are seldom heard.

4.2 Our work with ‘the Good Company’ has been an example of where we have used a key community partner that has far better engagement with our target group to act on our behalf to deliver the outcomes we are seeking.

4.3 An exhibition at Bourne Hall marking 50 shapers of the LGBTQI+ movement was well received.

4.4 We attend events such as careers days at Nescot so that the work of the council can be better understood and shared, in this case by younger people who are considering future career options but it is still a good opportunity to showcase what a local authority does.

5 Way forward

5.1 The council considers that the approach taken to engagement as set out above is the correct approach to ensure that residents can feed back on services and help to inform what we do.

5.2 Going forward we propose to continue with this diverse approach to engagement rather than relying on a single citizens’ panel.

5.3 We will look for opportunities to run engagement events and campaigns with specific target groups as well as the general population as and when required, or we feel it would be beneficial or considered advisable depending on the subject matter.

6 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

6.1 Equality Impact Assessment

6.1.1 One of the objectives from engagement is to establish what impacts we may have on different parts of the community so an active engagement programme helps to support this

6.2 Crime & Disorder

6.2.1 None directly arising from this report

6.3 Safeguarding

6.3.1 None directly arising from this report

6.4 Dependencies

6.4.1 None

6.5 Other

6.5.1 None

7 Financial Implications

7.1 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** There is no budget for consultation although the council does use a small number of SNAP consultation licences. Costs for any consultation would be met through existing budgets.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 **Legal Officer's comments:** The council needs to consider the impact that its policy making could have on the public especially those with protected characteristics. An active engagement programme supports this duty.

9 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

9.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged: None

9.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

9.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None

9.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None

9.5 **Partnerships:** Other than as set out above

10 Background papers

10.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- Community Engagement - Community and Wellbeing Committee 22 June 2023

Other papers:

2025/26 BUDGET TARGETS

Head of Service:	Brendan Bradley, Chief Finance Officer
Report Author	Richard Appiah-Ampofo, Senior Accountant
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

This report informs the Committee of the Council's revenue budget targets presented to the Strategy & Resources Committee in July. The report seeks guidance on the preparation of the Committee's service estimates for 2025/26.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the implications of the budget targets presented to Strategy & Resources Committee on 23 July 2024.
- (2) Support the changes to services and savings previously identified in Table 1 of this report and that these are included within the budget presented to this Committee in January 2025.
- (3) Consider how additional income or savings can be generated to address the projected Council wide funding gap of £573,000 in 2025/26, rising to £720,000 per annum by 2028/29.
- (4) Note that owing to the Council's projected budget deficit, any additional new revenue growth items (i.e. service enhancements resulting in increased net expenditure) supported by Policy Committees will need to be fully funded from existing budgets.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The recommendations will provide a clear framework for officers to develop a balanced budget for 2025/26, which is a statutory requirement.

2 Background

- 2.1 Since the Covid pandemic, the Council has been required to use one-off reserve funding to support its services and produce a balanced budget. This practice is unsustainable as reserve balances reduce, and the Council must find additional annual income or expenditure savings to address the budget shortfall.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 23 July 2024, Strategy and Resources Committee agreed the budget targets and workstreams to enable the Council to work towards setting a balanced budget for 2025/26.
- 2.3 The committee noted that excluding any new growth in expenditure, additional annual income/savings of £573,000 are projected to be needed to achieve a balance budget for 2025/26, increasing to £720,000 by 2028/29.

3 Full Proposals

- 3.1 For financial planning purposes, latest forecasts show that the Council faces a projected budget deficit of £573,000 in 2025/26, rising to £720,000 by 2028/29.
- 3.2 To address this deficit, Strategy & Resources Committee agreed that the following workstreams should be progressed by Directors and Heads of Service:
 - 3.2.1 Service reviews focusing primarily on discretionary services to be considered at Strategy & Resources in July 2024, with the aim of increasing efficiencies and effectiveness whilst reducing cost.
 - 3.2.2 Ongoing review of existing asset utilisation to realise cost reductions in Council operational buildings and increased income from investment properties.
 - 3.2.3 Officers to be tasked with identifying further efficiencies and opportunities, although these are becoming harder to achieve after over a decade of austerity.
 - 3.2.4 A base review, which entails reviewing the year end position for 2023/24, identifying any potential savings, additional cost pressures and areas where savings can be developed.
 - 3.2.5 Continue to investigate and bring forward income streams which maximise revenue from new and existing services, such as invest to save opportunities. Ensure any new powers are considered to generate additional income for the Council, such as any new charging policy for waste.

- 3.2.6 Undertake a review of reserves to be reported to Financial Strategy Advisory Group to seek support for recommended minimum reserve balances.
- 3.2.7 A target to increase fees and charges income by 6% in 2025/26 (as previously agreed at Full Council in February 2024), then by CPI+1% from 2026/27 onwards. Increased income can come from higher volumes and does not necessarily have to be through increasing the published fee. Heads of Service review fees and charges annually to ensure any increases are achievable and report to policy committees for approval.
- 3.2.8 To maximise external funding and partnership opportunities, for example submitting grant applications as opportunities arise.
- 3.3 Officers will maintain engagement with policy chairs and members throughout the budgeting process, and budget forecasts and assumptions will continue to be reviewed and updated throughout the process.
- 3.4 Delivery of previously agreed additional income/savings totalling £30,000 within this Committee are also required for a balanced budget to be achieved for 2025/26:

Table 1 – Summary of Previously Agreed Additional Income Target for 2025/26		2025/26
		£000
Additional net income from Community & Wellbeing Centre	C&W	30
Total		30

- 3.5 The Q1 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for 2024/25 considered by Audit & Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 26 September 2024 highlights a forecast under-recovery of income at the Wellbeing Centre and the expectation that the £30,000 additional income target set for 2024/25 will not be met.
- 3.6 At its meeting on 23 July 2024, S&R Committee approved a programme of service reviews including the community services offering and facilities at the Community & Wellbeing Centre. This review will need to consider how this target can be achieved for 2025/26 and if necessary, any alternative options.

- 3.7 Furthermore, owing to the Council's projected budget deficit, for any additional new revenue growth items (i.e. service enhancements resulting in increased net expenditure) supported by policy committees, the committee or Council will need to identify how these can be fully funded from existing budgets.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

4.1 Equality Impact Assessment

4.1.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4.2 Crime & Disorder

4.2.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4.5 Other

4.5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget each year, demonstrating how planned expenditure on services will be fully funded.

4.5.2 Should the Council not progress the proposed budget strategy and fail to achieve a significant net reduction in its cost of services, and/or the savings identified in Table 1, there is a clear risk that reserves will continue to diminish with the Council eventually becoming unable to set a balanced budget.

4.5.3 Financial risk assessments will be completed with service estimates for this Committee in January 2025 and for Council in February 2025.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 Financial implications are set out in the strategic financial planning report to Strategy & Resources Committee of 23 July 2024.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** It is important that the budgets target recommendations be agreed to maintain the future financial health of the Council.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility to set a balanced budget each year.

6.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None from this report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- Effective Council.

7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None for the purposes of this report.

7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None for the purposes of this report.

7.5 **Partnerships:** None for the purposes of this report.

8 Background papers

8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- 2025/26 Strategic Financial Planning report to Strategy & Resources 23 July 2024.

Other papers:

- Budget Book 2024/25.
- [Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-28](#)

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URGENT DECISIONS

Head of Service: Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
Report Author Andrew Bircher
Wards affected: (All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no) no
If yes, reason urgent decision required:
Appendices (attached):

Summary

To report to the committee the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the urgent decision taken and the reasons for that decision, since the last meeting of the committee.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To report to the committee the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

2 Background

- 2.1 The scheme of delegation sets out that the Chief Executive and Directors are authorised to take decisions on grounds of urgency regarding matters which would otherwise be reserved for determination by a Committee or Council. A matter can be deemed urgent if, in the reasonable opinion of the officer concerned, a delay would seriously prejudice the interest of the Council or of the public and it is not practicable to convene a quorate meeting of the relevant decision-making body in sufficient time to take the decision.

2.2 Since the last meeting of the Committee, one urgent decision has been taken by the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Chair, Cllr Clive Woodbridge, and published in Member News in line with the Council's Constitution, Appendix 2, Paragraph 3.1. iii. The decision is set out below:

2.2.1 **Decision 134** – Authorise a neighbouring authority to conduct a fresh statutory Housing Act 1996 s202 Decision on behalf of Epsom & Ewell Council.

2.2.2 **Urgency reason for decision 134** – This needs to be completed within an eight week period or face further penalties

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None arising directly from this report.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None arise from this report.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arise from this report.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None arise from this report.

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Finance are consulted as part of the urgent decision-making process.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 **Legal Officer's comments:** Legal are consulted as part of the urgent decision-making process.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- N/A

6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations –** None.

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** - None.

6.5 **Partnerships:** N/A

7 **Background papers**

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- None.

Other papers:

- None.

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HOUSING REPORTS FROM STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Head of Service:	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
Report Author	Rod Brown
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 S&R report on Temporary Accommodation agreement with Town and Country Housing Association Exempt Appendix 2 S&R report on lease for 33-39 High Street for use as temporary accommodation

Summary

Strategy and Resources Committee on 17th September 2024 resolved to agree two reports, namely the Temporary Accommodation agreement with Town and Country Housing Association and the lease for 33-39 High Street for use as temporary accommodation and also resolved that these same reports to be brought to this committee to note.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the two reports attached as **Appendix 1** and **Exempt Appendix 2**.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To fulfil the decision made on the 17th September 2024 meeting of the Council's Strategy and Resources Committee, in relation to the Temporary Accommodation agreement with Town and Country Housing Association and the lease for 33-39 High Street for use as temporary accommodation

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution sets out the scope of decision making and responsibilities of all committees.

- 2.2 The reports attached as Appendix 1 and Exempt Appendix 2 were duly considered by the Strategy and Resources Committee at their meeting on 17th September 2024 and were both unanimously resolved to support the recommendations as set out in each report.
- 2.3 In addition, the Committee also unanimously resolved an additional recommendation that the same reports be brought to the Community and wellbeing Committee at its next meeting to note.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The decision from the Strategy and Resources Committee on 17th September 2024 was for this committee to note these two housing related reports and the decisions taken by them in relation to both matters:

Appendix 1 –

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Agree that the Council updates and amends the terms of the management of temporary accommodation agreement, with Town & Country Housing (TCH) as outlined in the report.
- (2) Agree that the Council release the restrictive covenant on 58 Upper High Street in return for a payment from TCH, to be set by the district valuer.
- (3) Nominate and authorise the Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration in consultation with the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee, to take all necessary actions to implement this Committee's decision as necessary and appropriate.
- (4) That this same report be brought to Community and Wellbeing Committee at its next meeting to note.

Exempt Appendix 2 –

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved:

- (1) To agree to enter into a lease for a period of up to 10 years with Town & Country Housing (TCH) on the terms set out in the report.
- (2) That this same report be brought to Community and Wellbeing Committee at its next meeting to note.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

4.1 Equality Impact Assessment

4.1.1 None

4.2 Crime & Disorder

4.2.1 None

4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 None

4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 None

4.5 Other

4.5.1 None

5 Financial Implications

5.1 These two reports set out in Appendix 1 and Exempt Appendix 2 are presented to this Committee with a recommendation note. The financial implications for the resulting decisions are contained within the original reports.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 These two reports set out in Appendix 1 and Exempt Appendix 2 are presented to this Committee with a recommendation note. The legal implications for the resulting decisions are contained within the original reports.

6.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None arising from the content of this report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- Safe and Well

7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None

7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None

7.5 **Partnerships:** None

8 Background papers

8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports: N/A

Other papers:

- Relevant reports attached in Appendices

TOWN & COUNTRY HOUSING TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION AGREEMENT

Head of Service:	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
Report Author	Arjan de Jong
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	n/a
Appendices (attached):	

Summary

The Council has a significant number of temporary accommodation units located in the borough, of which more than 50% is owned and managed by Town & Country Housing (TCH). The agreement which covers this arrangement requires updating.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Agree that the Council updates and amends the terms of the management of temporary accommodation agreement, with Town & Country Housing (TCH) as outlined in the report.**
- (2) Agree that the Council release the restrictive covenant on 58 Upper High Street in return for a payment from TCH, to be set by the district valuer.**
- (3) To nominate and authorise the Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration in consultation with the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee, to take all necessary actions to implement this Committee's decision as necessary and appropriate.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to assist homeless households under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. If we do not meet our statutory obligations, then the Council will be in breach of its obligations and open to legal challenge.

2 Background

- 2.1 In 2000 the Council looked to transfer the ownership and management of their temporary accommodation portfolio for the purposes of closing the Council's Housing Revenue Account.
- 2.2 After a competitive tender process Town & County Housing (formerly Rosebery Housing Association) were successful and the temporary accommodation properties were sold and transferred, and the temporary accommodation management agreement was entered into. This agreement was revised in 2004.
- 2.3 The management agreement now requires review and amendment with some commercial changes.
- 2.4 In summary the main aspects of the current agreement include the following:
- 80-year duration
 - Has unit type requirements as follows: 28% studios, 28% 1 bed flats, 14% 2 bed units, 17% 3 bed units and 13% to be flexibly provided.
 - Requires at least 65 units of TA as per an appended schedule - working practice is that they can be swapped for other stock.
 - Units can be added by way of written agreement - this has occurred over the years and has now reached 95.
 - TCH covers all aspects of management and maintenance.
 - Repair standards and response times are included in the agreement.
 - Most properties are owned by TCH, but some are leased to TCH by the Council (such as 33-39 High Street).
 - The Council covers 'lettable' void period.
 - TCH covers 'repair' void period.
 - Void losses are claimed by TCH via invoice quarterly.
 - The Council retains 100% nomination rights.
- 2.5 There are 95 properties within the temporary accommodation (TA) list that TCH are managing for the Council. This includes several blocks plus an additional 16 x flats and 17 x houses which are located in other mixed general needs blocks. 26 of these properties were temporarily turned from general needs to TA during the covid pandemic and have yet to be returned to general needs as was anticipated.

- 2.6 In the context of the blocks, 1-9, 58 Upper High Street, is the most pressing given it is void and boarded up. Its central location and layout (bedsits) led to serious management issues including anti-social behaviour, incurring damage and significant void loss. It was part of the original transfer that comprised the first 65 homes, acquired from the Council, and there is a restriction on title stating that the property can only be used for the purposes of accommodating homeless households.
- 2.7 TCH offered the property to supported housing providers, in order to try to find an alternative use for the property for the benefit of local people, but no offers were forthcoming. TCH has therefore proposed that disposal is the most appropriate option, and officers agree this is the most sensible solution, given the lack of alternatives and the prohibitive cost of renovation. TCH are currently suffering the void and security costs. Further detail on the covenant release is in the proposal section below.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 This report proposes that the Council accept the updating of the current Temporary Accommodation Management Agreement the Council has with TCH on the following basis:
- the restriction is removed for 58 Upper High Street and the title is removed to enable this. In return the Council will receive a one off payment from TCH set by the district valuer.
 - The new temporary accommodation agreement is revised to a total of 65 properties.
 - 21 of the 26 'covid conversions' are returned back to general needs.
 - 7 conversions have been identified as households whose size reflects the size of their current accommodation and thus their tenancy can switch from temporary accommodation to an assured long-term tenancy.
 - The additional 14 conversions would return to general needs once an appropriate long-term property becomes available. This will be done on a slow 'drip feed' basis due to the slow turnover of tenancies, to ensure there is a minimal uplift in TA costs, to manage the void costs and to ensure that decant costs are not incurred. This process will take several years due to the low number of properties available for re-let.
 - The new agreement is for a period of 80 years.
 - The agreement be generally updated to make it fit for purpose, including removing redundant terms such as data protection and replacing with new such as General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- 3.2 In return for the removal of the restrictive covenant, TCH will pay the Council a one-off sum set by the district valuer.

- 3.3 TCH has verbally confirmed that as the Large-Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) Registered Provider in both Epsom & Ewell and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, these are the councils which are the core operating areas for investment. Furthermore, TCH has committed significant investment in its 2024/25 and 2025/26 maintenance programmes on its stock within Epsom & Ewell, some of which has been switched from its other main area of operation.
- 3.4 Officers are satisfied that TCH's proposal to dispose of 58 Upper High Street and remove the restriction is the most appropriate option so long as the Council receives an appropriate sum as set by the district valuer.
- 3.5 As outlined above TCH is currently providing significantly more than the level of TA units in relation to the original agreement, predominantly due to switching a number of units during the covid pandemic – although there is a provision in the current agreement to add more units by mutual consent so there has been no breach of this agreement with the current increased number of 95.
- 3.6 TCH's wish to convert 21 units back to general needs is in line with the operating principles of Registered Providers to predominantly manage general needs stock.
- 3.7 Given the time which has elapsed since the last agreement, it is an opportune moment to amend and update.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

4.1 Equality Impact Assessment

4.1.1 Minimising homelessness will have a positive impact on equalities.

4.2 Crime & Disorder

4.2.1 58 Upper High Street is currently void and boarded up.

4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 Assisting homeless households to access safe and secure accommodation will have a positive impact on safeguarding.

4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 The TA budget is closely monitored, reported at monthly Community & Wellbeing meetings and at Community & Wellbeing committee half yearly.

4.5 Other

4.5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 TCH has offered the Council the opportunity to purchase 58 Upper High Street, but given the prohibitive costs associated with purchase and renovation, this option has been rejected as it is not considered good value for money.
- 5.2 In return for the removal of the restrictive covenant, TCH will pay the Council an appropriate sum, set by the district valuer. This sum will be used to fund the Council's estimated external legal costs for finalising the agreement of c.£6,000, with any remaining balance ringfenced for future re-investment in the housing service.
- 5.3 A decrease in the number of TA units has the potential to slightly increase TA costs in out of borough accommodation in the long-term. However, this cost will be mitigated to some extent by the following:
- Nine of the additional 30 additional TA properties are currently provided at Upper High Street, which has been out of use since late 2023 due to anti-social behaviour as outlined above, so these have in practice already been cut from the TA portfolio.
 - The conversion from TA to general needs will provide a small saving to the Council, as the Council will no longer be required to subsidise the gap between the rent charged and the amount received from the Government and provide greater security for those households currently in occupation of the affected properties.
- 5.4 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The housing service will need to manage the transition to the new agreement within existing budgets.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council and TCH will agree a level of compensation to remove the restrictive covenant as set by the district valuer. The conversion of 21 properties from temporary accommodation to general needs represents a small cost saving as set out in 5.3 and benefits the households by providing settled and secure accommodation.
- 6.2 Members attention is brought to paragraph 3.3 and 3.4 above and that TCH's proposal is not legally binding so the Council is at risk should they fail to honour what they have said to officers and is noted within those aforementioned paragraphs.
- 6.3 **Legal Officer's comments:** Members are invited to note the need to ensure that the decision taken complies with the Council's Best Value duty mindful of the comments set out in paragraph 6.2 above.

- 6.4 Under the Duty of Best Value, local authorities should consider overall value, including economic, environmental, and social value, when reviewing service provision. That would include the proposed updates to such a agreement as the one outlined in this report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

7.1.1 **Safe & Well:** Work with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, focussing on particular on those who are more vulnerable.

- 7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

- 7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** Not applicable.

- 7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**

- 7.5 **Partnerships:** Town & County Housing

8 Background papers

- 8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- None

Other papers:

- None

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EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Committee may pass a resolution to exclude the public from the Meeting for Part Two of the Agenda on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The following documents are included on Part Two of the agenda and have not been published:

Item 8: Housing reports from Strategy and Resources Committee - Appendix 2
This appendix deals with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.
Item 10: Contracting out of Homelessness Reviews Function
This report deals with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.

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