

NOTICE OF MOTION REGARDING TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Cabinet	26 January 2023
Report Author	Bob Porter (Acting Corporate Director of Place)
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Jill Bayford, Cabinet member for Housing
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	No
Reasons for Key	N/A
Previously Considered by	Council - 13 October 2022
Ward:	N/A

Executive Summary:

Council considered a Notice of Motion regarding the provision of temporary accommodation at its meeting on 13 October 2022. Council decided not to debate the motion; therefore the motion was forwarded to Cabinet without debate as it related to a Cabinet function.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Reject the notice of motion, and
2. Support the response to the Notice of Motion on Temporary Accommodation set out in this report.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

The proposals set out in this report are in line with the draft 2023/24 budget considered at Cabinet on 12 January 2023 and recommended for approval at council on 9 February 2023.

Legal

In deciding whether accommodation is suitable the authority must have regard to the provisions in Parts 9 and 10 of the Housing Act 1985 (on slum clearance and overcrowding) and Parts 1 to 4 of the Housing Act 2004 (on housing conditions, licensing of houses in multiple occupation, selective licensing of other accommodation, and other control provisions in respect of residential accommodation).

As a minimum, authorities should ensure that any accommodation is free of category 1 hazards, and is fit for human habitation. It is the council's statutory duty to secure temporary

accommodation for eligible homeless households in priority need, under the terms of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Risk Management

Homelessness has been identified as a significant corporate risk to the council. This is based both on the costs of providing temporary accommodation to homeless households, and the impact on homeless households waiting for a permanent home.

The council has adopted a housing, homelessness and rough sleeping strategy and taken action to manage, and reduce the risks associated with homelessness. This includes increasing the supply of permanent affordable rented housing and increasing the supply of council owned temporary accommodation.

Corporate

The Council's adopted Corporate Statement specifically includes an aim to prevent homelessness and increase housing options including additional social housing.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Homelessness services are provided to all eligible households who are homeless or are at risk of homelessness. This includes the provision of temporary accommodation to households that contain a person with defined protected characteristics, and procedures are in place to assess the needs of households in need of temporary accommodation, so that the most suitable arrangements can be made. Increasing the supply of council owned temporary accommodation will support this work.

Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- Communities

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Council considered a Notice of Motion at its meeting held on 13 October 2022. The motion read as follows:

"As we are all aware there is a spiralling housing crisis in Thanet, and levels of private sector evictions are increasing, especially within low income households.

In light of this rise in evictions, and the impossibility of finding and maintaining a private rental property on the current LHA allowance, our need for temporary housing to keep families in the area is continually growing. As a Council we acknowledge and recognise the need for further temporary housing units now, before further inflation makes the necessary growth of our in house provision impossible, and urge Cabinet to bring forward such plans."

- 1.2 The Council members voted not to debate the motion; therefore the motion was forwarded to Cabinet without debate as it related to a Cabinet function. This report therefore provides the Cabinet with an opportunity to consider the motion.

2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 The Council has recently completed its first temporary accommodation project, providing eight one and two bedroom flats. The project was delivered as part of the council's general fund capital programme at a total cost, including building purchase and conversion, of approximately £1.6m.
- 2.2 The revenue costs of operating this new project, including providing housing management and support service, repairs and maintenance and other associated costs, such as utilities and cleaning of communal areas will be met from the council's approved general fund revenue budget for temporary accommodation. The project will deliver some savings from the existing temporary accommodation arrangements for the Council, estimated in the original business case at £25-30k p.a.
- 2.3 It was always considered, as part of the business case for this project, that further projects would increase the potential savings, as a larger portfolio of accommodation would be able to share some costs, such as, for example, a project manager. Further projects would also continue to improve the outcomes for homeless households as they would enhance the supply of temporary accommodation within the district.
- 2.4 On this basis a further business case was prepared for a phase 2 project, and £2.22m was included within the draft 2023/25 general fund capital programme for an additional temporary accommodation scheme. Spread over two financial years the funding will enable the purchase of an additional building or land for conversion or new build construction of phase 2. Included within this funding is the 2023/24 allocation of New Home Bonus, totalling £415k.
- 2.5 In addition to the above capital programme proposals, the draft revenue budget includes growth of £800k in the temporary accommodation budget, together with a further £100k from the homelessness reserve. This funding is the result of growing pressures on homelessness services, both locally and nationally and will support the

revenue costs of temporary accommodation. In addition to the additional units delivered through the capital programme above, officers will consider options to lease or rent accommodation where it is cost effective to do so.

- 2.6 The draft capital and revenue general fund budgets were considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 12 January 2023 and are due to be considered by council at its meeting on 9 February 2023.
- 2.7 The actions already taken by Cabinet in preparing the draft 2023 budget support the intention of the Notice of Motion that was presented to council on 13 October 2022. This report recommends that the Notice of Motion is rejected as Cabinet has already brought forward plans to extend the council's portfolio of temporary accommodation. The delivery of these plans is dependent upon the adoption of the 2023/24 budget at council.

3.0 Options

The options available to Cabinet are:

- 3.1 To reject the motion. This option is recommended as Cabinet has already brought forward plans to extend the council's portfolio of temporary accommodation.

Or

- 3.2 To agree the motion. This option is not recommended for the same reason.

Contact Officer: *Bob Porter (Acting Corporate Director of Place) Tel: 01843-577006*
Reporting to: *Colin Carmichael (Interim Chief Executive)*

Annex List

None

Background Papers

None

Corporate Consultation

Finance: *Chris Blundell (Acting Deputy Chief Executive)*
Legal: *Sameera Khan (Interim Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer)*