

Cabinet Member Decision Note

Homeless Day Centre Lease Extension

To: Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety

Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Operational Excellence

Date: 5th August 2019

Author:	Head of Housing, Head of Property Assets
Wards:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 Following the success of the Temporary Winter Housing Provision (TWHP) which was set up from Dec 17 to Feb 18 Cabinet made a decision on 11th July 2018 to provide a facility over the winter months of 18/19. In 2019 a decision was given to run TWHP in 19/20 and 20/21.
- 1.2 The main driver behind this was to reduce estimated numbers of rough sleepers, thought to be 45 in November 2017 down to a much more manageable level. In the first year the official count number has reduced to 35 (November 2018).
- 1.3 Following this Cabinet meeting, Cabinet Members considered a potential property for the TWHP and an extension of the TWHP to provide a day centre for street homeless.
- 1.4 Cabinet Members supported:-
 - i) the location of the Temporary Winter Housing Provision for 18/19. This is the former Riverside School site off Queens Drive.
 - ii) the option of utilising the same building as a Day Centre to prevent the need to sleep rough along with the Rough Sleeper Charter to ensure a consistent approach across all agencies who will use the Day Centre as a multi-agency hub.
 - iii) the grant of a 3 year lease to a provider for the former Riverside School site which would provide a realistic time span to deliver significant results, with the proviso that the Temporary Winter Housing Provision is reviewed annually and approved by the Council.
- 1.5 In pursuit of delivering the Vision for Swindon, this report links to Priority Three: Ensure Clean and Safe Streets and improve our public spaces, as well as Priority Four: Help People to help themselves while always protecting the most vulnerable children and adults and Pledge 25: Deliver a Borough wide approach to increase volunteering enabling more people to become active citizens.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Arlene Griffin, Housing Business Development Manager, 01793 464387 agriffin@swindon.gov.uk

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2. Recommended Action to be authorised by a Cabinet Member under Delegated Powers

Recommended that:

- 2.1 The Head of Property Assets in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer be authorised to grant an extension of the previously agreed 3 year lease on a peppercorn rent for an additional 5 years to the selected provider, bringing the lease to a total of 8 years and on such other terms and conditions are necessary in order to protect the Councils interests.
- 2.2 The Chief Legal Officer be authorised to complete a Service Level Agreement for an eight year period between the Council and the voluntary sector partner Swindon Night Shelter operating the Temporary Winter Housing Provision and Day Centre. On such terms and conditions as are necessary to protect the Council's interest including an appropriate break clause

3. Detail

Day Centre and Temporary Winter Housing Provision

- 3.1 Following a bid to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government's Rough Sleeper Fund £255,000 was granted to Swindon to provide a range of services to help reduce numbers of rough sleepers in Swindon. Further funding has been received from the Rapid Rehousing Pathway Fund of £172,000.
- 3.2 Within this funding bid there is provision for additional staffing including a Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator role, an Assertive Outreach Team, Rough Sleeper Navigators and overnight shift leads.
- 3.3 The staff will be working on the projects to be delivered which include the TWHP, expanding the Housing First Model, increased 'Move-On' support for clients in the Key Scheme, Personalised Housing Plans and Mental Health training for front line officers and supported housing staff.
- 3.4 All these projects will benefit from a central provision, the proposed day centre will offer this and ensure clients can access and optimise the new initiatives.
- 3.5 The need for a day centre for homeless people in Swindon has been discussed over many years and is one of the priorities from the Homeless Organisations Stand Together Swindon (HOSTS) forums. The day centre will help ensure improved facilities and service for all homeless people or those at risk of becoming street homeless, volunteers and all agencies by providing :-

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- a Hub for homelessness organisations to operate from to support the implementation of the Rough Sleepers Charter. Including the new Assertive Outreach team and all the voluntary sector groups who help support rough sleepers to come off the streets
 - a first point of contact to prevent individuals from sleeping rough in Swindon, where a range of services can be accessed including access to mental health provision, health care and drug and alcohol services
 - a centre for multi-agency advice to deliver a better join up of services and to avoid duplication of provision
 - support to those recently rehoused suffering from isolation or coping with managing their tenancy, ensuring clients do not return to the street
- 3.6 The former Riverside School site ("the Building") had been identified as a suitable location. It's within walking distance to the town centre where the majority of the client group regularly visit and it's not within a residential setting.
- 3.7 The costs of ongoing repairs and maintenance work as determined in the contract and utility charges incurred by the Council will come from the grant funding. The estimated budget cost for utilities is £12k per annum. There is a budget of £10,000 for maintenance work from the Rough Sleeper funding.
- 3.8 The Building was intended to be demolished and options for redevelopment then to be considered. There is no revenue impact as a result of this proposal.
- 3.9 Swindon Night Shelter (SNS) were commissioned to manage both the TWHP and the Day Centre and this provider will take on the responsibilities of the lease. In order to continue providing the service SNS are primarily reliant on grant funding, however many grant providers will not award substantial grants to those projects with a lease of less than 5 years.
- 3.10 Since the close of the TWHP in March 2019 the day centre has been open on average 63 hours per month. They have facilitated access for rough sleepers to, amongst others, Housing Options, Housing First, Turning Point, The Salvation Army, Good Gym, Mental Health, Probation, Police, Forgotten Feet, ESOL, INTEL and mentors.
- 3.11 SNS will also be a provider of Severe Weather Emergency Provision for SBC during the winter months of 19/20 and any subsequent years, reducing the reliance of SBC on costly hotel and Bed & Breakfast accommodation.
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Lease for Riverside

It is proposed to grant a lease at a peppercorn rental to SNS for a further 5 years with a break clause provision capable of being implemented simultaneous with any determination of the Service Level Agreement. The utility bills will be paid by Swindon BC in Year One 2019/20 and the provider will pick up this responsibility for the utility bills for subsequent years. This will help the provider to establish the project.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Service Level Agreement and lease could not be extended however the SNS will then struggle to source additional funding from the larger grant awarding bodies to support this service provision.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 (Include in DRAFT Report Only) Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members are sent this report for consultation and invited to indicate one of the following responses to the Recommendations set out in Section 2 of this report:

Note and support the proposed action – Yes

Councillor Emma Bushell - Further to receiving assurances about the monitoring of service provision and ability of the council to apply the break clause should the provider fail to deliver an adequate level of service I am happy to support the proposed action.

Note and request the proposed action be reconsidered – Yes / No

Reasons for Reconsideration:

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Request Report be Referred to Cabinet - Yes / No

Signed

Opposition Spokesperson / Ward Member

Date

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- 5.2 (Include in Final Report ONLY) The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are also summarised below:

6. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1 Costs are set out in paragraphs 3.7 and funding is available from the Rough Sleeper grant.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 6.2 Planning permission has been granted for the temporary change of use.
- 6.3 The Chief Legal Officer will complete all legal documentation in relation to this matter in order to protect the Council's interests.
- 6.4 The offer of accommodation under this provision is compliant with the current legislation and statutory guidance (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) as will more permanent offers under the Housing Act 1996 ensuring individuals are given the best possible opportunities to access and sustain their home; it is therefore considered that our duty under the Human Rights Act is met.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 6.5 The Housing Options Team will be required to work closely with the winter provision and the day centre.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 6.6 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been carried out on the Homelessness Strategy, this proposal is consistent with the priorities set out in that strategy. A copy of the DIA is available from the report author.

Risk Management

- 6.7 The proposal requires clear risk assessments for the operation of the Building, professional support will be provided to the volunteer organisations involved in the running of this project

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7. Consultees

- 7.1 The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.
- 7.2 Additional consultees and their responses are included at Appendix 1

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 None

9. Appendices

- 9.1 None

10. Declarations of Interest

- 10.1 (Include in Report sent for Consultation ONLY): Opposition spokespersons / Ward Members are reminded to consider whether they have any known interests in any of the matters referred to in this Decision Note. If such an interest exists this should be declared to the Monitoring Officer (or Committee and Member Services Manager), and they should take no part in the consideration of the Briefing Note and should refer the Briefing Note to their Group Leader.
- 10.2 (Include in Final Report ONLY): Cabinet Members are reminded to consider whether they have any known interests in any of the matters referred to in this Decision Note. If such an interest exists this should be declared to the Monitoring Officer (or Committee and Member Services Manager), and they should take no part in the consideration of the Decision Note and should refer the Decision Note to the Leader of the Council instead for consideration.

11. Sign-off

- 11.1 The Cabinet Member is requested to respond with 5 days of the date of this report.
- 11.2 The Cabinet Member is requested to indicate one of the following responses to the Recommendations set out in Section 2 of this report:

Note and support the proposed action to be taken under delegated authority –

☒ Yes / No

Note and request the proposed action be reconsidered – Yes / ☒ No

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Reasons for Reconsideration:

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Request Report be Referred to Cabinet - Yes / ☒ No

NB To protect against identity theft, Cabinet Member's signatures will be redacted on public versions of the signed Briefing Note.

Date 

Signed Cabinet Member 

- 11.3 Decisions of Cabinet Members will rs' Bulletin. The Decision must not be implemented until such time that a five-day "Call-in" period has expired. This date will be specified in the Members Bulletin. If a Decision is "called-in" it will be referred to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration. It must only be implemented if the Scrutiny Committee has raised no objection. If an objection is forthcoming the matter will be referred back to the Decision-Maker.

