



Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED**  
**All Wards**

**OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**COUNCIL**

**14 DECEMBER 2017**  
**25 JANUARY 2018**

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**CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION – REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING  
PERIOD 4 2017/18 – SAVINGS ARISING FROM THE HOMELESSNESS REVIEW**

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**REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

An Executive decision taken by the City Mayor on 23 November 2017 relating to Revenue Budget Monitoring Period 4 2017/18 – savings arising from the Homelessness Review, has been the subject of a five member call-in under the procedures at Rule 12 of Part 4D, City Mayor and Executive Procedure Rules, of the Council's Constitution.

The procedure rules state that a scrutiny committee or any five councillors may request formally that the decision be called-in for a further review by giving notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer within five working days of the decision.

The five Councillors who signed the call in were: Councillor Willmott (proposer), Councillor Chaplin (second), Councillor Kitterick, Councillor Riyait and Councillor Waddington.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Overview Select Committee is recommended to either:

- a) Note the report without further comment or recommendation. *(If the report is noted the process continues and the call in will be considered at Council on 25 January 2018); or*
- b) Comment on the specific issues raised by the call-in. *(If comments are made the process continues and the comments and call in will be considered at Council on 25 January 2018); or*
- c) Resolve that the call-in be withdrawn *(If the committee wish for there to be no further action on the call-in, then they must actively withdraw it. If withdrawal is agreed the call-in process stops, the call-in will not be*

*considered at Council on 25 January 2018 and the original decision takes immediate effect without amendment).*

### **3. REPORT**

#### **3.1 Process**

The call-in submitted to the Monitoring Officer was in the following terms:

*“We the undersigned wish to call in the decision which is part of the Revenue Budget Monitoring Period 4 2017-18; referring to the reductions to the Housing Budget of £250,000 from 2018/19 in respect of further savings arising from the Homelessness review (as detailed in Appendix B, Paragraph 11.2 of the attached report.)*

*We believe that this cut in the budget should be reinvested in services for homeless people.”*

The Monitoring Officer has confirmed that the call-in satisfies the requirements of the procedure rules and it has therefore proceeded as per the process set out at Rule 12 of Part 4D, City Mayor and Executive Procedure Rules of the Council’s Constitution.

Where a call-in has been made, officers are to take no further legally binding action and the matter shall be referred to a meeting of the full Council. Prior to this it shall be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee if one is programmed or a special scrutiny committee if one is convened.

The call-in may however be withdrawn if:

- The decision maker and the relevant scrutiny committee (or via the Monitoring Officer, the scrutiny committee chair and vice chair unanimously) come to an agreement;
- The relevant scrutiny committee makes a resolution to withdraw; or
- The sponsor and seconder of the call-in inform the Monitoring Officer that they wish the call-in to be withdrawn.

Following consideration of a call-in by full Council, the original decision will be deemed to be revived in its entirety. Any agreement by the decision maker to change the original decision will require a further formal Executive Decision.

#### **3.2 Background – Provided by the Director of Housing**

In September 2016 Central Government announced that it was proposing a new model for funding of Supported Housing based on local Housing Allowance rates from April 2019. This placed significant financial risk to Leicester City Council because of the funding risk to this model. This was widely recognised across the Supported Housing sector and has impacted

widely on existing scheme provision and also on many potential new supported housing schemes.

Central Government created uncertainty over the ability to be able to fund this type of accommodation going forward (and they have still not provided clarity on this area even a year or more down the line).

To mitigate this risk, an Executive decision was taken on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016, which gave approval to officer proposals that included the reduction in 60 units of accommodation based supported housing.

The 60 units of accommodation are for single people who are assessed as requiring low-medium support, usually after a period in the Dawn Centre before moving on to independent accommodation. The internal LCC supported Housing was not delivering the necessary stepping stone from temporary accommodation through to permanent accommodation. In essence those that moved in did not generally move on again so blocked up the pathway.

The agreed proposals included the reconfiguration of some of the homelessness services in line with key objectives and in response to legislative changes that could mean the future viability of some of the supported housing models remains dependent upon the government's intention to impose the Local Housing Allowance cap upon supported housing.

In line with the Executive decision, the reduction and closure of 60 units of accommodation based support means that the pool of staff and staffing based within this service area are no longer required. The work to transfer the 60 units was completed by July 2017.

All 60 units continue to deliver social housing for the people of Leicester. Of the 60 units, 29 were retained as supported living for ASC with 12 additional units being transferred for this use, totalling 41 units. The remaining 19 units returned to the general Social Housing stock. All residents were either offered alternative permanent accommodation or where it was appropriate their licences turned into tenancies and they remained in their homes. (permanent homes). Those people requiring ongoing support receiving it through STAR floating support services.

The indirect consequence of this work to mitigate risk to the authority meant that the net budget cost of providing supported housing totalling £250k would no longer be incurred.

**There has been no reduction in the overall number of accommodation units available to Leicester City Council and there has been no reduction in service as a result of this budget reduction.**

Tackling homelessness has been a political commitment and priority for a number of years and it remains a priority. Over £5m a year is invested by the council in services for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

In addition to this funding, two successful Homeless Prevention Trailblazer bids to DCLG in Spring 2017 delivered additional funding towards Homelessness services of over £600,000 to Leicester City Council & County. These bids bring together City, County and District authorities to tackle Homelessness with the aims and objectives to further embed early intervention support.

- Last year over 3,000 households were provided with support to help them maintain their current home or find alternative accommodation with an average of 90% of those who asked for help having their homelessness prevented.
- 1,215 households were supported to stay in their existing home, and 579 households were found a permanent place in social housing.
- Dedicated staff committed to helping those facing homelessness or rough sleeping.
- Strengthened work with the private rented sector; working with landlords and sourcing appropriate and affordable private rented sector accommodation to provide those threatened with homelessness more options to prevent homelessness.
- Assisting homeless families to access a home from the housing register so they do not have to be accommodated in a homeless hostel.
- Strong integrated external agencies, voluntary agencies and service providers all working in a coordinated way to help and support those facing homelessness or rough sleeping.
- Rough sleeping action plan developed to manage the increase in numbers locally which is also reflected in the national picture. The outreach team is out from 6am -10pm every weekday offering help to rough sleepers
- Street lifestyle group established to tackle the issues associated with this of street begging, substance use, and street drinking.
- Excellent health care provision for the homeless in recognition of the complex nature of some of the cases who need support with drug and alcohol services and mental health.

#### **Leicester's services for rough sleepers**

- Excellent health care for the homeless with a dedicated practice including drug and alcohol services to help support those with substance use issues. Specialist teams working with homeless people in Leicester to help them to access mental health services.

- Drop in day services including access to showers, laundry facilities, food, clothing and access to other services including training, education and employment.
- Improved profiles of those rough sleeping in the city and a 'Street Lifestyle Group' to assist in a coordinated approach to tackle the issues of those with street lifestyles such as street drinking, drug use, begging and rough sleeping.
- We know there is a growing issue with begging in the city. Many members of the public assume that those begging are rough sleeping. The overwhelming majority of those begging on the streets are not rough sleeping. We are committed to working with our partners and the Police to tackle begging in the city. Information on whether beggars do have accommodation helps the police take appropriate action against persistent beggars. The police have served community protection notices and criminal behaviour orders to help tackle those persistently begging. We have a public consultation exercise currently open on the issues of street begging.
- We have a dedicated team who work to support those who are rough sleeping off the street from 6am – 10pm every weekday.
- We are supporting as a city the European Ending Street Homeless campaign where our partners in the voluntary sector are coordinating a week of activities involving the local community including a 'street count' of those rough sleeping.
- Before the winter we launched a further initiative to get our known prolific rough sleepers, who want to accept our help off the streets by reviewing our approach and looking to get them fully engaged with the support they need. For those who do not want to accept our help we will work with the Police and other agencies to manage these individuals.
- In the winter the council works with local homeless charities and faith organisations to provide emergency accommodation and food to homeless people during the coldest months of the year to help ensure that no-one has to sleep rough.
- Leicester is committed to ensure that support, advice and assistance is fully available to those that may be facing homelessness in the future, or are homeless or rough sleeping in the city. Leicester has many excellent services already in place to support this.
- Our approach to rough sleeping is that '*no one needs to sleep rough*' with a commitment to provide resolutions for those who want to accept support and services.
- We are proud to work in partnership with Leicester's strong voluntary and community sector to reduce homelessness and to provide the best possible support for those affected by homelessness. Over £5m a year is invested by

the council in housing-related services for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

- Priorities set out in the strategy include increasing support given to single people to prevent them from becoming homeless, as well as improving the help given to all eligible households.
- The council wants to provide more long-term tenancies for those facing homelessness, so they don't have to go into temporary accommodation first. And it plans to improve the way it works with partners, such as schools, prisons, the police and homeless organisations, as well as working with new partners within communities.
- Our aim is to find families good quality, permanent housing so they don't have to go into hostels or temporary accommodation; and we are looking at new and different options for singles, as well as increasing the long term offers made to them

Leicester City Council is currently reviewing the current Homeless strategy that covers the period 2013 to 2018. Consultation on a new proposed Homeless strategy are ongoing. This is open until the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

The new strategy proposes a more targeted approach to supporting rough sleepers. Although some people are difficult to accommodate because of their challenging behaviour, some refuse services, and the council is prevented by law from helping certain categories of foreign nationals, the council always has space for rough sleepers, but wants to do more to stop them going back onto the streets. Sufficient places in hostels exist to ensure no-one needs to sleep rough, there is always more we can do to break down the barriers that sometimes prevent rough sleepers from using them.

The new strategy proposals aim to tackle the increasing legal duties that will be placed on local authorities from April 2018 with the introduction of the Homeless reduction act.

Leicester City Council have already had to remove £122m from General Fund budgets. A further £30m reduction in budgets is required. In order to achieve this services need to become more efficient and effective at what they do and deliver these within the budget constraints we have. Homelessness services are strong in Leicester and the information in this report has demonstrated this.

### **3.3 Executive Decision Report**

The executive decision report (amended to include only the references to the Housing General Fund) and decision notice are attached to this cover report.

#### **4. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

##### **4.1. Financial Implications**

The financial implications are set out in the accompanying Executive decision report. Alison Greenhill, Director of Finance, ext 374001.

##### **4.2 Legal Implications**

The legal implications are set out in the accompanying Executive decision report. Kamal Adatia, City Barrister and Head of Standards, ext. 371401.

##### **4.3 Climate Change**

The climate change implications are set out in the accompanying Executive decision report. Mark Jeffcote, Senior Environmental Consultant, ext. 372249.

#### **5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within the Report
Equal Opportunities	<b>N</b>	
Policy	<b>N</b>	
Sustainable and Environmental	<b>N</b>	
Crime and Disorder	<b>N</b>	
Human Rights Act	<b>N</b>	
Elderly/People on Low Income	<b>N</b>	
Corporate Parenting	<b>N</b>	
Health Inequalities Impact	<b>N</b>	

#### **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**None**

#### **7. CONSULTATIONS**

None.

#### **8. REPORT AUTHOR**

**Matthew Reeves**  
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