

Temporary Accommodation Acquisitions Phase 4

Final Decision-Maker	CHE
Lead Head of Service	John Littlemore
Lead Officer and Report Author	Hannah Gaston
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The three previous phases of acquiring properties for temporary accommodation via the purchase and repair programme have been very successful.

On 22nd January 2020 as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy – Capital Programme we submitted a request for £2.2 million to acquire seven units comprising of six three bedroomed houses and a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) for Rough Sleepers.

We are seeking Committee to agree an amendment that the composition of the accommodation can be different than set out in the original request of six three bedroomed homes and an HMO and that the Director of Finance and Business Improvement has delegated powers to approve the purchase of properties which may not conform to that specification. These purchases will still fit into the financial envelope of £2.2 million.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Communities, Housing & Environment Committee agrees that the composition of temporary accommodation units acquired during phase 4 can differ from that as set out in the Mid Term Financial Capital Programme of 22nd January 2020 within the same budget.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
CHE	30 th June 2020
Council (delete as appropriate)	

Report title here

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>Homes and Communities</p> <p>We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will support the Council's overall achievement of its aims as set out in section 3 [preferred alternative]</p>	Head of Service
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The report recommendation supports the achievement(s) of the Deprivation and Social Mobility cross cutting objectives by supporting those who are homeless and vulnerable to have access to appropriate accommodation, which is of a decent standard.</p>	Head of Service
Risk Management	<p>The risks are limited if we undertake the recommendations. This will enable us to manage our housing stock in the best possible manner to meet the needs of local people.</p>	Head of Service
Financial	<p>The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.</p>	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	<p>We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing regime.</p>	Head of Service
Legal	<p>Accepting the recommendations will fulfil the Council's duties under the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002. Failure to accept the recommendations without agreeing suitable alternatives may place the Council in breach of these Acts.</p> <p>Acting on the recommendations is within the</p>	Team Leader, Property and Regeneration

	Council's powers as set out in the Constitution.	
Privacy and Data Protection	Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Policy & Information Manager
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	The recommendation will have a positive impact on Crime and Disorder with more rough sleepers and homeless people moving away from living on the streets, thus reducing negative street activity.	Head of Service
Procurement	This process will have no impact on procurement requirements.	Head of Service

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Maidstone Borough Council for the preceding few years has been purchasing accommodation on the open market to use as Temporary Accommodation (TA). This formed part of our Temporary Accommodation Strategy which was endorsed by CHE on 13th December 2016 and sought to give the Council more financial control on our statutory provision of TA as well as ensuring a decent standard is provided to those needing emergency accommodation.
- 2.2 Since the strategy in 2016 was ratified we have purchased a number of properties making a total resource of 77 units available to homeless people. On top of this we also lease a further 20 units which we manage directly through our Accommodation Team.
- 2.3 This process has given us confidence and every year we have purchased more properties increasing our portfolio to ensure we can flex our accommodation to meet the needs of those households approaching for assistance.
- 2.4 In January 2020 we requested Capital funding of £2.2 million for six three bedroomed homes and an HMO as we felt this was required. We have reflected on this request and feel that we need more flexibility (i.e. purchasing different sized accommodation) to meet the needs of those approaching seeking support and accommodation.

2.5 These purchases will still sit within the £2.2 million financial envelope.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 The Communities, Housing & Environment Committee agrees that the composition of temporary accommodation units acquired through phase 4 can differ from that as set out in the Mid Term Financial capital Programme of 22nd January 2020.

3.2 The Communities, Housing & Environment Committee agrees that the composition of temporary accommodation units acquired through phase 4 cannot be altered and the continuation of purchasing only three bedroomed properties must still occur. This is not recommended, as it would constrain the Council to purchasing accommodation that might not best suit the emerging need.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Our preferred options is that the Committee endorses the recommendation to alter the composition of the units purchased. This will ensure the Council is responding assertively to current demand and future needs of the housing team.

5. RISK

5.1 We will be applying the same risk formula that was contained within the original report that was approved by P&R committee that was used to agree the additional acquisition of temporary accommodation.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 If the recommendations are approved, then the re-commencement of the Phase 4 will continue via the Economic Development team who are leading on the acquisitions.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Please refer to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Capital Programme that was endorsed by P&R committee on 22nd January 2020.