

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 3rd February 2026

REPORT TO COUNCIL

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Report of: Strategic Director for People and Communities

Title: Temporary Accommodation Allocations Policy

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.1 The report summarises the new Temporary Accommodation Allocations Policy. A copy of the Policy document is appended to the report.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That Executive recommends that Council approve the adoption of the new Temporary Accommodation Policy.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 In April 2025 South West Audit Partnership agency (SWAP) completed an audit on ECC's temporary accommodation service. The audit recommended that ECC develop a formal policy for allocating temporary accommodation; this recommendation was subsequently included on our management action plan

3.2 A temporary accommodation allocations policy establishes a clear, fair and equitable process for the provision of temporary accommodation to eligible people: those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness: and ensures compliance with legislative frameworks.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources:

4.1 The operational elements contained in this policy will be undertaken by existing staff, and resources.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 There are no additional financial implications for Council to consider.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 The internal audit carried out by South West Audit Partnership identified that '[t]he council has not published a policy setting out how the council will allocate temporary accommodation or determine what accommodation is suitable'. Accordingly, this policy is designed to address the issues identified by the internal auditor.

6.2 The Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities advises that housing authorities should '....develop policies for the procurement and allocation of temporary accommodation which will help to ensure suitability requirements are met'. This includes taking into account the distance of accommodation from the district where it is not reasonably practicable to secure accommodation within the district.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 This policy is proposed to members following the recommendations of the council's internal auditors. It reflects good practice and is designed to comply with statutory guidance.

8. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

8.1 In recommending this proposal potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act and an Equality Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention.

9. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

9.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

10. Report details:

10.1 The policy sets out how ECC will allocate temporary accommodation to people who are homeless or owed a homelessness duty in a fair, transparent and effective way, which makes best use of the temporary accommodation available.

10.2 It provides clarity on the process that determines suitability of placements by considering factors such as.

- location;
- size, condition and facilities in the unit;
- individual health needs;
- household educational and employment needs;
- the significance of any disruption to employment, caring responsibilities or education of the person and their household;
- proximity and accessibility of medical facilities and other support which are currently being provided and are essential to well-being;
- proximity and accessibility of local services, amenities and transport; and
- distance from the 'placing' authority

10.3 The policy describes how ECC will prioritise moves between units of temporary accommodation, when temporary accommodation will end, and makes clear the statutory review rights to an applicant.

10.4 As this policy reflects Government's Homelessness Code of Guidance and follows the principles set in caselaw public consultation is not recommended. This reflects the principles in the Council's Consultation and Engagement Charter and the new Consultation and Engagement Strategy

11. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

11.1 Under the priority area of Homes, one of the intended outcomes is:

"Fewer people will be homeless or in temporary housing".

11.2 Providing a transparent and sustainable offer of temporary accommodation is a vital component of an effective housing and homeless prevention system.

12. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

12.1 There are reputational risks in not having this policy in place; challenges one allocation decisions of temporary accommodation without a clear policy in place risk the Council being unable to demonstrate our decision-making process which risks suitability reviews which in turn could proceed to Court under Judicial Review.

13. Are there any other options?

13.1 There are no alternatives to the adoption of this policy as it the requirement for this policy is defined in case law *Nzolameso v City of Westminster* April 2015¹. It ensures compliance with the Homelessness Code of Guidance sections 17.49-17.65²

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

- [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

List of Appendices:

- Appendix A – Temporary Accommodation Allocations Policy; and
- EQIA - Temporary Accommodation Allocations Policy.

¹ *Nzolameso (Appellant) v City of Westminster (Respondent)* - UK Supreme Court

² [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Chapter 17: Suitability of accommodation - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

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