

Members are reminded that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests relating to any items of business to be discussed at this meeting. If a pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not speak or take part in that agenda item. Any declarations will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CABINET

**Tuesday, 19 April 2016 at 1000 hours
in Committee Rooms 3 and 4,
Council House, Birmingham**

PUBLIC AGENDA

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING

Chairman to advise/meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (www.birminghamnewsroom.com) and members of the press/public may record and take photographs. The whole of the meeting will be filmed except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Attached

3. CONTINUATION OF THE DELIVERY OF THE BIRMINGHAM JOBS FUND (BJF) FROM 2016/17 THROUGH TO 2018/19

Report of the Strategic Director for Economy.

Attached

4. CHESTER ROAD HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS – FINANCIAL UPDATE

Report of the Strategic Director of Economy.

Attached

5. PROPOSAL TO MAKE PRESCRIBED CHANGES AT BRAYS SPECIAL SCHOOL BY INCREASING THE NUMBER OF PLACES BY PROVISION OF AN ADDITIONAL SITE AND CHANGE OF SEN DESIGNATION TO INCLUDE AUSTITIC SPECTRUM CONDITION (ASC)

Report of the Strategic Director for People.

Attached

6. HOMELESS AND HOUSING ADVICE – ONE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE PROPOSAL

Report of the Strategic Director for People.

(Copies of the consultation response documents will be available to view in the HMS Daring Room prior to and during the meeting.)

Attached 7. **BIRMINGHAM CULTURAL STRATEGY 2016-19 – IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY AND ENTERPRISE**

Report of the Acting Strategic Director of Place.

Attached 8. **PLANNED PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES (JUNE 2016 – AUGUST 2016)**

Report of the Strategic Director for Economy.

9. **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items of business by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) that, in the opinion of the Chairman, are matters of urgency.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

That in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, which includes exempt information of the category indicated, the public be now excluded from the meeting:-

(Exempt Paragraph 3)

PRIVATE AGENDA

Attached 11. **CHESTER ROAD HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS – FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Report of the Strategic Director of Economy.

(Exempt Paragraph 3)

Attached 12. **PLANNED PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES (JUNE 2016 – AUGUST 2016)**

Report of the Strategic Director for Economy.

(Exempt Paragraph 3)

13. **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS (EXEMPT INFORMATION)**

To consider any items of business by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) that, in the opinion of the Chairman, are matters of urgency.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC

Report to:	CABINET	
Report of:	Strategic Director for Economy	
Date of Decision:	19 April 2016	
SUBJECT:	CONTINUATION OF THE DELIVERY OF THE BIRMINGHAM JOBS FUND (BJF) FROM 2016/17 THROUGH TO 2017/18	
Key Decision: Yes	Relevant Forward Plan Ref: 001511/2016	
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
	O&S Chairman approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Member(s) or Relevant Executive Member(s)	Councillor Tahir Ali, Cabinet Member for Development, Transport and the Economy	
Relevant O&S Chairman:	Councillor Victoria Quinn, Economy, Skills and Sustainability	
Wards affected:	All	

1. Purpose of report:
<p>1.1 To set out the proposed arrangements for a continuation of delivery of the Birmingham Jobs Fund (BJF) during 2016/17 and 2017/18. The initiative will target the creation of routeways to a minimum of 1,000 additional jobs and apprenticeships per year for unemployed 16-24 year olds (850 apprenticeships and 150 jobs). The Fund will operate through a multi-organisational partnership team providing enhanced, tailored packages of support to employers to capture vacancies, which will then be matched to young people through an intensive package of personalised coaching and upskilling support.</p> <p>1.2 The report sets out the funding arrangements for BJF during the requested next two years of operation.</p>

2. Decision(s) recommended:
That Cabinet,
<p>2.1 Approves expenditure up to an annual limit of £1.65m for 2016-17 and 2017-18 totalling £3.3m, as the City Council's contribution to the delivery and employer incentive costs of the proposed Birmingham Jobs Fund.</p> <p>2.2 Notes that the fund will seek to achieve additional job and apprenticeship starts per year for up to 1,000 unemployed young people (16-24 year olds).</p> <p>2.3 Agrees the continuation of the partnership delivery for the Birmingham Jobs Fund and the Council's role as lead accountable body for the fund.</p>

- 2.4 Delegates the authority to the (Acting) Strategic Director for Economy in conjunction with the Strategic Director – Finance and Legal, to develop, finalise and manage the Council's involvement in the Birmingham Jobs Fund including expenditure of up to £1.65m per year and agreement of joint working protocols, and/or the letting of contracts or grant arrangements with external agencies as required, within the parameters of the Council's financial procedures and standing orders, with a view to commencing delivery from April 2016.
- 2.5 Authorise the City Solicitor to sign, seal and execute legal documentation in relation to the proposals set out in this report.

Lead Contact Officer(s):	Shilpi Akbar, Assistant Director for Employment
Telephone No: E-mail address:	0121 303 4571 shilpi.akbar@birmingham.gov.uk

3. Consultation

Consultation should include those that have an interest in the decisions recommended

3.1 Internal

This report has been shared with the Cabinet Member for Skills, Learning and Culture who supports the proposal coming forward for executive decision. Officers in Legal and Finance have been involved with the production of this report.

3.2 External

City Council officers consulted with the key partner Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Jobcentre Plus Birmingham & Solihull District Office in respect of the proposed service delivery. Employment support providers (colleges, private and voluntary sector) already involved in the delivery of Birmingham Jobs Fund have also been consulted and their view is continuation of the Birmingham Jobs Fund would help further Apprenticeships take-up by employers.

4. Compliance Issues:

4.1 Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?

By seeking to support currently unemployed people into sustainable employment and provide financial incentive to employers, the project activity will contribute directly to the following key outcomes as part of the Council Plan and Budget 2016+. Outcome 1: A strong economy and its sub-outcome, "An integrated skills system that reduces the skills gap, supports employers to take on people furthest from the labour market and drives down unemployment." And in the Sustainable Community Strategy: Succeed Economically, has as one of its outcomes that "more people, including people with disabilities, will be in work - unemployment and worklessness will be reduced significantly". The project will also contribute to the Birmingham Skills Investment Plan 2016-2026 approved by Cabinet on 16 February 2016 – The Birmingham Skills Investment Plan sets out the skills challenge for Birmingham over the coming decade. Delivering strong economic growth, improved productivity and full employment in Birmingham will, in part, be dependent on how Birmingham responds to the skills challenge. The Birmingham Skills Investment Plan is backed up by the best information available on what employers are demanding now and what they will need in the future. The project activity will also work well alongside the recently agreed Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) report.

4.2 Financial Implications (Will decisions be carried out within existing finance and Resources?)

Management, administration and payments to employers will be managed within the Council's approved policy contingency allocation of £1.65m per year to the Birmingham Jobs Fund (BJF) in years 2016/17 and 2017/18. No further payments will be made once the available funding is committed. All delivery will be managed and monitored through existing staff within the Economy Directorate's Employment and Skills Service team. DWP staff, as part of the Multi-agency Team, have aligned resources to work alongside the Council's staff.

4.3 Legal Implications

The Council has power to enter into this activity in accordance with the general power of competence conferred by Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (LA 2011). The proposed activity is within the boundaries and limits on the general power of competence set out in Sections 2 and 4 LA 2011 respectively.

4.4 Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Analysis Ref No. EA001203)

4.4.1 All activity will focus upon supporting young unemployed people aged 16 to 24 in communities where there is demonstrable exclusion from the labour market and as such the activity will contribute directly to the Directorate's Equality Impact objectives. Any company or external body selected to deliver elements of the project will be required to have a policy that complies with the West Midlands' Common Standard for Equalities in Public Procurement and the City Council's Equal Opportunities policy.

- 4.4.2 The requirements of Standing Order No. 11 in respect of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy will be incorporated into the Contract / Grant conditions documentation. The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 will be specifically included in Contract / Grant conditions to draw provider's attention to the detail of, and the need to comply with the Act.
- 4.4.3 Initial officer assessment is that the service will continue to address barriers and create equality of access to employment support services for residents and communities in demonstrably deprived communities with high and persistent levels of youth unemployment. Feedback from the partners consulted during the preparation of this report indicated that the programme would be valuable in directly addressing inequality and exclusion from the labour market for specific target groups. Birmingham Jobs Fund will be monitored closely on a monthly basis and feedback from this will inform continuous service improvement as delivery progresses. It will also be aligned to the Youth Employment Initiative to enhance the raft of provision and specifically engage / incentivise employers to work with us in tackling youth unemployment.

5. Relevant background/chronology of key events:

- 5.1 The Birmingham Jobs Fund (BJF) was originally set up in response to the recommendations of the Birmingham Commission on Youth Unemployment (2013), and has proved to be effective.
- 5.2 During 2013/14 the BJF (comprising £2m BCC funds; and the alignment of DWP's Wage Incentive and NAS AGE Grant) succeeded in placing 1,336 young people into employment. Following on from this achievement Birmingham City Council invested funds for a second year to support delivery in 2014/15.
- 5.3 On 6 August 2014 DWP nationally withdrew their Wage Incentive (which was aligned with the BJF) and this affected the 'offer to employers' with the potential to impact on the numbers of young people starting work through the campaign.
- 5.4 In September 2014 a Joint Report of the Cabinet Member for Development, Transport and the Economy; the Cabinet Member for Skills, Learning and Culture; and Deputy Chief Executive authorised the continuation of the BJF without the alignment to DWP's Wage Incentive scheme and the continuation of the payment of £2,275 for 26 weeks of job sustainability and a cap on the payment for Apprenticeships at £1,500, again paid at 26 weeks of sustainability.
- 5.5 The latest reports show take up of BJF remains strong and that targets are being achieved. The number of apprenticeship jobs has been higher than non-apprenticeship jobs over the last 18 months under this programme.
- 5.6 Between August 2013 (the project start) and 10 March 2016 (latest produced data):
- 679 Non-Apprentice jobs had been achieved, of which 36% were from Priority Wards

- 2,657 Apprenticeship 'jobs' had been achieved, of which 21% were from Priority Wards
- The above two figures combined total is 3,336 jobs (Apprenticeship and Non-Apprenticeship), of which 24% in total are in Priority Wards. This is equivalent to an average cost per job outcome of £1,550.
- The total achieved so far equates to 83% of the target (4,000 jobs starts between August 2013 and end of March 2016). There is always a lag in receiving official job start paperwork and therefore the final position is expected to increase.

- 5.7 A sample job sustainability exercise was undertaken in partnership with DWP in November 2015 and it was found that for both apprentice (of 1,827 apprentice positions supported by BJF at the time) and non-apprentice jobs (471 non-apprentice positions supported by BJF) *85% were still 'off register', i.e. taken as still in employment.*
- 5.8 The targeting of the provision via eligibility criteria, guarantees that it is 16-24 year olds that are benefitting and therefore BJF forms an essential employer-facing and business support part of the Birmingham Youth Promise. Long term data for the employment status of young people in the city shows an encouraging trend upwards, with the latest quarter's data continuing this. The claimant count has fallen for the second consecutive month, and the overall trend is down.
- 5.9 Seven of Birmingham's 40 wards are deemed to be priority – Aston, Bordesley Green, Lozells and East Handsworth, Nechells, Sparkbrook, Soho and Washwood Heath – and in 2014/15 28% of the BJF beneficiaries have been from the Priority Wards. The council is reliant on a wide range of intermediary partners to deliver the fund, and the importance of geographical targeting is emphasised on an ongoing basis. The target for the priority wards going forward will be to reduce youth unemployment by 40%.
- 5.10 A total of 136 people with a disability have been supported through the initiative. Data is collected where people have agreed to disclose their disability.
- 5.11 An analysis of young beneficiaries' ethnicity, age and gender highlighted the following:
- *Ethnicity:* most supported group of young people have been White – British (51%), followed in second place by Asian – Pakistani (18%)
 - *Age:* statistics show that the most supported age bracket under BJF has been the 18 year olds (21%), followed by 17 year olds (18%) and then 19 year olds (14%) in third place
 - *Gender:* more females (57%) than males (43%) have been supported
- 5.12 As well as the young people benefitting from across Birmingham, BJF has also supported employers from across the city (and sectors), although there is a bigger concentration of employers benefitting based in the city centre (Ladywood district).

- 5.13 There are currently 47 Training Providers signed up to promote and deliver Birmingham Jobs Fund Apprenticeship payment to employers.
- 5.14 The letting of contracts or grant arrangements with external agencies will be in line with Procurement Governance Arrangements.
- 5.15 Delivery of the Birmingham Jobs Fund (BJF) during 2016/17 and 2017/18 will target the creation of routeways to a minimum of 1,000 additional jobs and apprenticeships per year for unemployed 16-24 year olds (850 apprenticeships and 150 jobs). Current training providers will be given the opportunity to sign-up to agreements covering the next two years. New training providers will also be welcomed and their targets negotiated. The Department for Work and Pension's Jobcentres will continue to support with trying to fulfil the non-apprenticeship job starts target, as well as apprenticeships.

6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):

- 6.1 The alternative to this approach would be to rely on existing employer incentives available through the National Apprenticeship Service capped at £1,500 for employers with a workforce of fewer than 50 employees. Employers can be paid a maximum of five grants in total. However, given the disproportionate levels of unemployment and worklessness that exist in specific wards, it is felt that the deployment of BJF as recommended above represents the best way of effectively alleviating the levels of youth unemployment prevalent in these communities.
- 6.2 Not to continue with the payments to the fund. This would impact efforts to tackle youth unemployment in Birmingham.

7. Reasons for Decision(s):

- 7.1 To allow for the effective and timely deployment of available BJF resource to support the progression into work of local residents in disadvantaged communities across Birmingham.

Signatures

Date

Councillor Tahir Ali, Cabinet
Member for Development,
Transport and the Economy

.....

Waheed Nazir, Strategic
Director for Economy

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List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Birmingham Commission on Youth Unemployment report, January 2013.2. A separate Cabinet Report for the YEI was approved 16/02/16 (Forward Plan Ref 000295/2015).3. Detailed statistics of young people beneficiaries (ward analysis, disability information, ethnicity, age and gender) and employer beneficiaries (geographical and sector analysis) can be made available upon request. |
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List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):
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Nil

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 1 The public sector equality duty drives the need for equality assessments (Initial and Full). An initial assessment should, be prepared from the outset based upon available knowledge and information.
- 2 If there is no adverse impact then that fact should be stated within the Report at section 4.4 and the initial assessment document appended to the Report duly signed and dated. A summary of the statutory duty is annexed to this Protocol and should be referred to in the standard section (4.4) of executive reports for decision and then attached in an appendix; the term 'adverse impact' refers to any decision-making by the Council which can be judged as likely to be contrary in whole or in part to the equality duty.
- 3 A full assessment should be prepared where necessary and consultation should then take place.
- 4 Consultation should address any possible adverse impact upon service users, providers and those within the scope of the report; questions need to assist to identify adverse impact which might be contrary to the equality duty and engage all such persons in a dialogue which might identify ways in which any adverse impact might be avoided or, if avoidance is not possible, reduced.
- 5 Responses to the consultation should be analysed in order to identify:
 - (a) whether there is adverse impact upon persons within the protected categories
 - (b) what is the nature of this adverse impact
 - (c) whether the adverse impact can be avoided and at what cost – and if not –
 - (d) what mitigating actions can be taken and at what cost
- 6 The impact assessment carried out at the outset will need to be amended to have due regard to the matters in (4) above.
- 7 Where there is adverse impact the final Report should contain:
 - a summary of the adverse impact and any possible mitigating actions (in section 4.4 or an appendix if necessary)
 - the full equality impact assessment (as an appendix)
 - the equality duty – see page 9 (as an appendix).

Equality Act 2010

The Executive must have due regard to the public sector equality duty when considering Council reports for decision.

The public sector equality duty is as follows:

1	<p>The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
2	<p>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
3	<p>The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.</p>
4	<p>Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.
5	<p>The relevant protected characteristics are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) age (b) disability (c) gender reassignment (d) pregnancy and maternity (e) race (f) religion or belief (g) sex (h) sexual orientation

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC REPORT

Report to:	CABINET
Report of:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF ECONOMY
Date of Decision:	19th April 2016
SUBJECT:	CHESTER ROAD HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS – FINANCIAL UPDATE
Key Decision: Yes	Relevant Forward Plan Ref:
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	O&S Chairman approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Members:	Councillor Tahir Ali – Cabinet Member, Development, Transport and the Economy Councillor Stewart Stacey – Cabinet Member, Commissioning, Contracting & Improvement
Relevant O&S Chairman:	Councillor Victoria Quinn – Transport, Connectivity and Sustainability Councillor Waseem Zaffar – Corporate Resources
Wards affected:	Tyburn and Hodge Hill

1. Purpose of report:

- 1.1 To provide an update on the Chester Road Highways Improvements project.
- 1.2 The private report contains commercially sensitive information relating to the contract.

2. Decision(s) recommended:

That the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Notes the contents of this report.

Lead Contact Officer(s):	Varinder Raulia – Head of Infrastructure Projects
Telephone No:	0121 303 7363
E-mail address:	varinder.raulia@birmingham.gov.uk

<div> <h3>3. Consultation</h3> </div> <div> <h4>3.1 <u>Internal</u></h4> </div> <div> <p>3.1.1 Officers from Legal Services and City Finance have been involved with the preparation of this report.</p> </div> <div> <h4>3.2 <u>External</u></h4> </div> <div> <p>3.2.1 There is no requirement to undertake any further public consultation in respect of the recommendations in this report as the scheme has been consulted on and is currently being delivered.</p> </div>
<div> <h3>4. Compliance Issues:</h3> </div> <div> <h4>4.1 <u>Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?</u></h4> </div> <div> <p>4.1.1 The Full Business Case report of the former Strategic Director of Development and Culture to Cabinet, 29th July 2013 advised which policies, plans and strategies the project supports.</p> </div> <div> <h4>4.2 <u>Financial Implications</u></h4> </div> <div> <p>4.2.1 The Full Business Case for the Chester Road Highway Improvement Works was approved by the Cabinet on 29th July 2013. The latest funding strategy for this project was approved by Cabinet on 16th February 2016.</p> </div> <div> <h4>4.3 <u>Legal Implications</u></h4> </div> <div> <p>4.3.1 The City Council is undertaking these works under powers to carry out transportation and highway infrastructure work under the Highways Act 1980 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.</p> </div> <div> <h4>4.4 <u>Public Sector Equality Duty (see separate guidance note)</u></h4> </div> <div> <p>4.4.1 An initial assessment was carried out prior to the submission of the Full Business case and identified no adverse implications for those persons with the relevant protected characteristics as identified under the Equalities Act 2010. The initial screening has been reviewed during the project and no circumstances have occurred which require an amendment of the outcome of that initial screening.</p> </div>

5.	Relevant background/chronology of key events:
5.1	The A452 Chester Road between the Tyburn Road junction and Junction 5 of the M6 forms part of the strategic highway network within north-east Birmingham. Traffic travelling along Chester Road and traffic crossing at the major junctions is subject to significant delays throughout the day. There are a number of businesses in the area and the congestion can add significantly to business costs and discourage businesses from investing in the area.
5.2	<p>The project involves the upgrading of a 2km stretch of the A452 Chester Road to provide additional capacity to main junctions and links, improvements to pedestrian and cycle facilities, benefit to public transport and an improved local environment The project will provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signalisation and widening of the M6 Junction 5 roundabout; • signalisation and widening of the Chester Road / Fort Parkway junction; • widening of the carriageway between the Fort Parkway and Kingsbury Road junctions; • widening of approaches to the Chester Road / Kingsbury Road junction; and reshaping of the Chester Road / Tyburn Road junction.
5.3	The Full Business Case for the Chester Road Highway Improvements was approved by Cabinet on 29th July 2013 and following approval of the Contract award on 30th October 2013 the scheme commenced in January 2014 with work due to complete in July 2015.
5.4	<p>During construction, a number of unforeseen events were encountered that are likely to increase costs. The areas of potential increased costs and delays are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays by some Statutory Undertakers in providing the required information to support the Contractor led design process, • Delays caused by Statutory Undertakers changing their designs whilst on site, • Clashes between Statutory Undertakers work due to the changes in design, • Issues caused by Highways England using the Chester Road as a diversionary route for their remedial works on the M6 which was not allowed for in the contract, • Considerable changes to the drainage design to ensure compliance with new regulations issued in April 2015, • Upgrade of the traffic signal specification to enable remote control and better detection at junctions.
5.5	In order to mitigate the impact of the potential increases in the cost of the project Officers have undertaken a de-scoping exercise to remove any non-essential elements of the works and worked with the Contractor to modify the design so that more cost efficient solutions are provided.

5.6	The project is now practically complete on site other than for landscaping and remedial works and whilst the costs are being finalised no further fundamental issues are anticipated. It is necessary however, under the terms of the works contract and other agreements to make payments above the expenditure originally approved in the Full Business Case.
5.7	A full update on the project to comply with the Council's governance requirements will be given in due course.

6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):
6.1 Refer to the Private Report.

7. Reasons for Decision(s):
7.1 The report is for information and the decisions are detailed in the private report.

Signatures	Date
Councillor Tahir Ali Cabinet Member for Development, Transport and the Economy	
.....
Councillor Stewart Stacey Cabinet Member for Commissioning, Contracting & Improvement	
.....
Waheed Nazir Strategic Director of Development	
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List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:
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- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A452 Chester Road Improvements – Full Business Case, report of the Strategic Director of Development and Culture to Cabinet, 29th July 2013.2. A452 Chester Road Improvements – Contract Award Public Report to the Cabinet Member for Commissioning, Contracting and Improvement jointly with Strategic Director of Development and Culture 30th October 20143. Updated Transportation and Highways Capital Funding Strategy 2015/16 to 2020/21 Project Definition Document to Cabinet 16th February 2016 |
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List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):
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None

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC REPORT

Report to:	CABINET
Report of:	Strategic Director for People
Date of Decision:	19th April 2016
SUBJECT:	PROPOSAL TO MAKE PRESCRIBED CHANGES AT BRAYS SPECIAL SCHOOL BY INCREASING THE NUMBER OF PLACES BY PROVISION OF AN ADDITIONAL SITE AND CHANGE OF SEN DESIGNATION TO INCLUDE AUTISTIC SPECTRUM CONDITION (ASC)
Key Decision: Yes	Relevant Forward Plan Ref: 001543/2016
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved <input type="checkbox"/> O&S Chairman approved <input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Member(s) or Relevant Executive Member(s):	Councillor Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member, Children's Services
Relevant O&S Chairman:	Councillor, Susan Barnett Education and Vulnerable Children
Wards affected:	Sheldon and Shard End

1. Purpose of report:
<p>1.1 To seek determination of the statutory proposal to increase the number of places offered at Brays School from 138 to 220 through the provision of an additional site at Leycroft Building, Gressell Lane, Birmingham B33 9UF and to change the Special Education Needs (SEN) designation to include Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) with effect from 1st September 2016.</p>

2. Decision(s) recommended:
Cabinet is recommended to: -
<p>2.1 Approve, having taken account of the statutory guidance, the statutory proposal to increase the number of places offered at Brays School from 138 to 220 through the provision of an additional site at Leycroft Building, Gressell Lane, Birmingham B33 9UF and to change the Special Education Needs (SEN) designation to include ASC with effect from 1st September 2016.</p> <p>2.2 Note that this proposal meets the needs of the SEN Improvement Test to improve access to a range of high quality provision.</p>

Lead Contact Officer(s):	Mary Lowe
Telephone No:	0121 464 2463
Email address:	mary.lowe@birmingham.gov.uk

3. Consultation

3.1 Internal

Information about the proposal was sent to all City Councillors including the Executive Member and MP for Yardley and Hodge Hill, Ward Councillors for Sheldon and Shard End, together with relevant officers across Birmingham City Council. A copy of the full proposals can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2 External

These proposals have been fully consulted upon in line with the requirements set out in statutory guidance "School Organisation Maintained Schools-Guidance for proposers and decision makers" published by the Department for Education (DfE) in January 2014. A copy of the full proposals and supporting documentation can be found in Appendix 1 & 2. The proposals were shared with parents, staff and governors through the statutory consultation period and local schools have been invited to comment on the proposal. In addition, the proposals have been shared with representatives from the professional associations and other key stakeholders including surrounding Local Authorities and The Archdiocese and The Anglican Diocese of Birmingham. A public notice was published on 28th January 2016, in the local paper, on the Birmingham.gov.uk website and at the school entrances. Full information has been provided on Birmingham.gov.uk webpages as specified in the public notice and respondents were asked to reply through the BeHeard online consultation system. Four responses have been received during the representation period in favour of the proposal (see Appendix 3).

4. Compliance Issues:

4.1 Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?

Once implemented, these proposals will support the Local Authority to enable additional special school places to be available to the local and wider community and would contribute to the aim to ensure that every pupil in Birmingham has the opportunity to access an appropriate school which meets their needs. The proposal for the increase in pupil numbers through the provision of an additional site at Brays School and the change to the SEN designation to include pupils with ASC falls in line with the Special School Additional Places Programme to enhance the school offer and the overall school accommodation solution, as set out in the Education Development Plan (EDP). Implementation of these proposals will result in the creation of additional school places for pupils requiring specialist education. The site at Gressel Lane site is fully accessible to meet the needs of children, staff and visitors with physical disabilities and sensory difficulties. The Gressel Lane site is the preferred site to meet the needs of a whole school solution and accommodate additional pupils at Brays School and is 1.9 miles from the main school site on Brays Road. The school is currently operating from this site on a temporary basis. These proposals seek to make this permanent. The Gressel Lane site is currently part of The International School and is being utilised in line with our Basic Need Strategy to make effective and efficient use of our school sites.

4.2 Financial Implications (Will decisions be carried out within existing finance and Resources?)

The proposed increase of pupil numbers at Brays School including refurbishments of the Gressel Lane site will be funded through the DfE capital allocation for Basic Need

during Stage 4 of the programme. The site at Gressel Lane is part of The International School Site and is owned by the Local Authority. All project costs will be confirmed as part of the Project Definition Document which will be submitted for approval in due course. In terms of revenue funding, Brays School will continue to receive funding for its registered pupils as it does currently through the Local Authority higher needs block.

4.3 Legal Implications

This report exercises powers contained within sections 19 and 21 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 (the “Prescribed Alterations Regulations”), by which the Local Authority has the power to make statutory proposals affecting schools in its area and to determine them. In order to ensure that these changes are being proposed in line with the statutory guidance, the proposal has been developed to improve access to a high quality educational provision, providing additional ASC places in line with parental preference. Further details of how the SEN Improvement Test has been considered can be found in paragraphs 18H and 20 of the full proposal document in Appendix 1 of this report.

4.4 Public Sector Equality Duty

An updated Equality Assessment initial screening was carried out in December 2013 against the School Organisation Change process, which identified that a full impact assessment was not required. No events have occurred since then which would require the preparation of a fresh screening in respect of these recommendations.

5. Relevant background/chronology of key events:

- 5.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to not only provide pupil places but also to promote diversity and increase parental choice in planning and securing the provision of school places (Section 14 Education Act 1996 and Education & Inspections Act 2006).
- 5.2 Annual receipts of birth data provided by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) have evidenced that the trend of birth rate in Birmingham has been of sustained increase and therefore the population of young people in the city has increased considerably. The Birmingham Education Sufficiency Requirements document has published three editions to date, one in November 2013, one in February 2015 and one in November 2015 (requirements for mainstream places). Edition 2 of the Education Sufficiency document demonstrates the need for additional special school places, particularly ASC provision, and in response a planned programme of additional places is being implemented.
- 5.3 Brays School is designated to provide education for children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care Plan for Physical Medical Learning Difficulties and Complex Medical Need.
- 5.4 Following publication of Edition 2 of the Education Sufficiency requirements in February 2015, all schools were invited to submit a proposal if they were interested in providing additional school places. The governing body of Brays School submitted an Expression of Interest for an increase of the number of pupil places offered by the provision of an additional site and for a change of their special educational needs designation to include ASC. The Expression of Interest was evaluated using the Basic Need criteria

approved by Cabinet Member for Children and Families as outlined in the EDP and was approved following evaluation.

- 5.5 The current main school site at Brays Road is unsuitable for further expansion and so it was agreed as a reactive measure that additional pupils would be accommodated on a temporary basis at accommodation identified at Leycroft Building, Gressel Lane. The Gressel Lane site has now been identified as having enough space to accommodate additional classrooms to provide a permanent improved accommodation solution for current and future pupils. The Gressel Lane site is currently part of The International School and is being utilised in line with our Basic Need Strategy to make effective and efficient use of our school sites.
- 5.6 Brays School was given an outstanding ranking in their last OFSTED inspection. The two sites (Brays Road and Gressel Lane) will enable a greater number of pupils to access the successful provision with an increase in the number of pupil places that Brays School can offer across the two sites from 138 to 220 from 1st September 2016. The school currently has 176 pupils on roll, this has been possible through the temporary solution.
- 5.7 This proposal will not only help address the shortage of primary places for children with statements of needs or Education, Health and Care Plans Physical, Medical and Learning Difficulties and Complex Medical needs but also seeks to change the SEN designation to include pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care Plan for ASC.
- 5.8 Consultation on the expansion proposal was carried out in line with DfE guidance and the views of parents, staff and governors of the school were sought. The Head Teacher of Brays School sent out a letter to the parents/carers of all registered pupils to inform them of the proposed changes during the week commencing 18th January 2016. A statutory notice was published on 28th January 2016 and a four week representation period followed where objections to or comments on the proposals could be submitted. A copy of the public notice can be found within Appendix 2. The notice was displayed at the main entrance of the school, in the Birmingham Post and online on the birmingham.gov.uk webpages with a BeHeard survey opened to receive comments. The stakeholders outlined in 3.1 and 3.2 were issued notification of the consultation by email and advised how to obtain full information on the proposals and encouraged to provide comment.
- 5.9 Officers offered representation at a meeting with parents on 2nd February 2016 but no parents attended the meeting. The consultation document and public notices were published on Birmingham's Education Noticeboard for view by all schools. Due to the level of projected need for additional special school places, this proposal is not expected to cause any negative impact on any other special school.
- 5.10 Four responses (three from the same respondent) have been received in the consultation period to Brays School proposal –see Appendix 3. All responses have been in favour of the proposal. One respondent (who sent their response thrice) although in favour of the proposal raised concerns that the proposal may result in the closure of the main Brays Road site. An email response was sent on 11.2.16 to advise that there were no current plans for this.

- 5.11 Consideration has been paid to the travel arrangements of existing pupils across the two sites. Education Transport has been advised of the proposed changes and continues to work with EdSI and the school. Education Transport will continue to provide the home school transport level of provision that the children need to ensure that they can attend the two sites. The Local Authority's transport arrangements will apply where applicable. The School Travel Plan will be updated following the implementation of the changes to promote sustainable transport and reduce car use where possible and is currently in the process of being updated with the Local Authority in readiness
- 5.12 Regulation 7 of the Prescribed Alterations Regulations provides that the Local Authority is required to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State when taking a decision on such proposals. The relevant extract of the statutory guidance is attached at Appendix 4. Paragraph 5 of Schedule 3 to the Prescribed Alterations Regulations allows for the proposals to be approved, approved with modification, approved subject to meeting a prescribed condition, or rejected.

6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):

- 6.1 The recommendation is for this proposal to be approved; alternatively, in line with the statutory guidance, the proposal may be approved with modification, approved subject to meeting a specific condition or rejected.
- 6.2 Should the proposal be rejected, the number of places available at Brays School will remain at the current level and the school will need to identify suitable alternative accommodation which could be unsettling for existing pupils.

7. Reasons for Decision(s):

- 7.1 To enable Brays School, a community special school, to offer additional special school places in permanent improved accommodation circumstances.
- 7.2 To ensure that the needs of the children attending special schools in Birmingham are met in the best possible way, enabling additional places to be available for pupils requiring specialist education.

Signatures

Date

Cabinet Member, Children's Services

Cllr Brigid Jones:

.....

Strategic Director for People

Peter Hay:

.....

List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2013
- Education Development Plan (Jan 2015)
- Edition 1 & 2 Birmingham Education Sufficiency Requirements (Nov 2013 / Jan 2015)
- School's Capital Programme 2015 – 2017

List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):

1. Copy of the full proposals
2. Copy of the public notice
3. Copy of consultation responses
4. Relevant Extract from Statutory Guidance on 'School Organisation – Maintained Schools: Annex B: Guidance for Decision Makers' issued by the DfE in January 2014

Report Version	7	Dated	30th March 2016
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SCHOOL ORGANISATION PROPOSALS

Prescribed Alterations to a Community Special School

Brays School

Date of Proposal: 28th January 2016

School Organisation
Education & Skills Infrastructure
PO Box 15843
Birmingham
B2 2RT

Telephone: 0121 303 8847
email: eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk
Web: www.birmingham.gov.uk
Postcode for Sat Nav: B4 7DJ

PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS OTHER THAN FOUNDATION PROPOSALS: Information to be included in a complete proposal.

Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

In respect of a Governing Body Proposal: School and governing body's details

1. The name, address and category of the school for which the governing body are publishing the proposals.

Not applicable

In respect of an LEA Proposal: School and local education authority details

1. The name, address and category of the school.

Birmingham City Council, Education & Skills Infrastructure, PO BOX 15843, Birmingham B2 2RT

School Name: Brays School

School Address: Brays Road, Sheldon, Birmingham B26 1NS

Category: Community Special School

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

2. The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages, a description of what is planned for each stage, and the number of stages intended and the dates of each stage.

1st September 2016

Objections and comments

3. A statement explaining the procedure for making representations, including —

- (a) the date prescribed in accordance with paragraph 29 of Schedule 3 (GB proposals)/Schedule 5 (LA proposals) of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), by which objections or comments should be sent to the local education authority; and
- (b) the address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals (28th Jan 2016), any person may object to or make comments on any or all of the proposals by visiting www.birmingham.gov.uk/schools/brays or by writing to School Organisation Team, Education and Skills Infrastructure, PO Box 15843, Birmingham B2 2RT. The last date for comments is 25th February 2016. A copy of the public notice can be found on the above website and in the Birmingham Post.

Alteration description

4. A description of the proposed alteration and in the case of special school proposals, a description of the current special needs provision.

The proposed changes are as follows:

- 1. Increase in the number of pupils 138 to 220 by provision of an additional site at;

Leycroft Building, Gressel Lane, Tile Cross, Birmingham B33 9UF

2. Change of Special Educational Needs designation to include Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Brays School educates pupils of 2 – 11 years. The school educates children with a statement of need or Education, Health and Care Plan of Physical Medical Learning Difficulties and Complex Medical Need.

School capacity

5.—(1) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1 to 4, 8, 9 and 12-14 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/paragraphs 1-4, 7, 8, 18, 19 and 21 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), the proposals must also include —

- (a) details of the current capacity of the school and, where the proposals will alter the capacity of the school, the proposed capacity of the school after the alteration;

Brays School currently has 176 pupils on roll; these places have been provided on a temporary basis at Leycroft Building. Birmingham City Council seeks to make this arrangement permanent to enable the school to offer 220 places by 1st September 2016 on a permanent basis.

- (b) details of the current number of pupils admitted to the school in each relevant age group, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of pupils to be admitted in each relevant age group in the first school year in which the proposals will have been implemented;

Special schools do not have an admission number per year group. The pupils attending the school will have a statement of special education needs that will name the school. The pupils are not admitted solely in a specific year group. The current numbers on roll, per year group are as follows:

NURSERY	10
RECEPTION	19
YR 1	31
YR 2	43
YR 3	30
YR 4	22
YR 5	13
YR 6	8
TOTAL	176

- (c) where it is intended that proposals should be implemented in stages, the number of pupils to be admitted to the school in the first school year in which each stage will have been implemented;

The school are using the site on a temporary basis.

- (d) where the number of pupils in any relevant age group is lower than the indicated admission number for that relevant age group a statement to this effect and details of the indicated admission number in question.

Not applicable – special schools do not have admission numbers.

(2) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1, 2, 9, 12 and 13 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals) /paragraphs 1, 2, 8, 18 and 19 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), a statement of the number of pupils at the school at the time of the publication of the proposals.

At the time of publication, the total number of students on roll across the two sites is: 176

pupils.

Implementation

6. Where the proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary controlled school a statement as to whether the proposals are to be implemented by the local education authority or by the governing body, and, if the proposals are to be implemented by both, a statement as to the extent to which they are to be implemented by each body.

Not applicable

Additional Site

7.—(1) A statement as to whether any new or additional site will be required if proposals are implemented and if so the location of the site if the school is to occupy a split site.

The school's main site operates from Brays Road, Sheldon, Birmingham B26 1NS.

In order to cope with the demand for places at the school, the school has been operating from an additional site which is Leycroft Building, Gressel Lane, Tile Cross Birmingham B33 9UF.

This building has now been identified as being able to provide a permanent solution for this proposal seeks to make the Gressel Lane site a permanent split site for Brays School.

(2) Where proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary school a statement as to who will provide any additional site required, together with details of the tenure (freehold or leasehold) on which the site of the school will be held, and if the site is to be held on a lease, details of the proposed lease.

Not applicable

Changes in boarding arrangements

8.—(1) Where the proposals are for the introduction or removal of boarding provision, or the alteration of existing boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) —

(a) the number of pupils for whom it is intended that boarding provision will be made if the proposals are approved;

Not applicable

(b) the arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children at the school;

Not applicable

(c) the current number of pupils for whom boarding provision can be made and a description of the boarding provision; and

Not applicable

(d) except where the proposals are to introduce boarding provision, a description of the existing boarding provision.

Not applicable

(2) Where the proposals are for the removal of boarding provisions or an alteration to reduce boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) —

- (a) the number of pupils for whom boarding provision will be removed if the proposals are approved; and

Not applicable

- (b) a statement as to the use to which the former boarding accommodation will be put if the proposals are approved.

Not applicable

Transfer to new site

9. Where the proposals are to transfer a school to a new site the following information—

- (a) the location of the proposed site (including details of whether the school is to occupy a single or split site), and including where appropriate the postal address;

Part of the proposal is to increase the pupil places at Brays School by the provision of an additional site. This site is 1.97 miles from the main site and is situated at:

Leycroft Building, Gressel Lane, Tile Cross, Birmingham B33 9UF.

The school will operate permanently across the split site if the proposal is approved.

- (b) the distance between the proposed and current site;

Leycroft Building Gressel Lane, Tile Cross Birmingham B33 9UF is 1.97 miles (3.17 KM) from the main site at Brays Road, Sheldon, Birmingham B26 1NS

- (c) the reason for the choice of proposed site;

Following the publication of our Education Sufficiency Requirements in February 2015 (Appendix 1), all schools were invited to submit a proposal if they were interested in expansion. The Governing Body of Brays School submitted an expression of interest for an expansion and also to change their special educational needs designation to include Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

The EOIs were evaluated against the Basic Need criteria as follows:

- i) Location in relation to Basic Need (type of need)
- ii) Standards in the school: it is expected that schools that expand will be Outstanding or Good
- iii) The capacity of the school to provide suitable accommodation on the site, within existing space and within planning / buildability constraints
- iv) Popularity of the school and ability to meet pupils' needs
- v) Potential of any expansion to create overprovision or reduce diversity of provision in an area

Brays School has received a judgement of "outstanding" in their last Ofsted inspection and we believe the school will be able to sustain the planned growth. The site identified at Gressel Lane has been accommodating the school on a temporary basis and has been identified as having enough space to accommodate additional classrooms. The building programme will improve the accommodation provision for current and future pupils. This proposal will help to address the shortage of primary places for children with statements of need or Education and Health Care Plans of Physical Medical Learning Difficulties and Complex Medical Need and also will allow the school to also accommodate pupils with statements of need or Education and Health Care Plans for Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

- (d) the accessibility of the proposed site or sites;

The site complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and is fully accessible.

(e) the proposed arrangements for transport of pupils to the school on its new site; and

Education Transport has been advised of the proposed changes and continues to work with EDSI and the school. They will continue to provide the home school transport level of provision that the children need to ensure that they can attend all three sites. The Local Authority's transport arrangements will apply where applicable.

(f) a statement about other sustainable transport alternatives where pupils are not using transport provided, and how car use in the school area will be discouraged.

The School Travel Plan will be updated following the implementation of the changes to promote sustainable transport and reduce car use where possible. This is currently in the process of being updated with the Local Authority in readiness.

Objectives

10. The objectives of the proposals.

Birmingham City Council is proposing the above prescribed changes, in line with our Special Schools Additional Places (SAPP) Programme. The changes are considered appropriate for the current pupils at the school in order to provide an improved school solution and better meet the needs of its growing numbers of pupils.

Birmingham City Council as the local authority for Birmingham has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. The city of Birmingham has a growing population with one of the youngest populations in Europe and the number of births in the city has risen rapidly over the last few years. To compound this Birmingham is also experiencing high levels of in year growth due to net migration into the city.

Pressure for places is at its most severe over some of our special schools; reactive measures have been implemented over a number of years to accommodate growth in demand for special school and resource base places and a planned programme of additional special places is being implemented as a priority. Brays School has had to accommodate pupils in temporary accommodation in order to ensure demand is met. The proposal is for Brays School to expand by the provision of a permanent additional site at Leycroft Building, Gressell Lane, Tile Cross, Birmingham B33 9UF in which the school has been accommodated on a temporary basis.

The increase in the number of places that can be offered on a permanent basis by having the additional site will enable a greater number of pupils to access the successful provision. The school was given an outstanding ranking on their last OFSTED inspection.

Approval of the proposal will enable the Council to meet its statutory duty to not only provide pupil places but also promote diversity and increase parental choice in planning and securing the provision of school places.

The proposed changes will offer professional development and improve retention and recruitment of the school's high quality teaching and non-teaching staff.

Consultation

11. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including—

- (a) a list of persons who were consulted;
- (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- (c) the views of the persons consulted;

- (d) a statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with; and
- (e) copies of all consultation documents and a statement on how these documents were made available.

All statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with. Due regard and careful consideration was given to the guidance contained within 'School Organisation - Maintained Schools, Guidance for Proposers and Decision-Makers' document, Jan 2014. All individuals or bodies suggested in the guidance are being consulted and their views considered.

A letter was sent out to parents/carers of all pupils registered at Brays School w/c 18th January 2016 explaining the proposals and the process that was to follow. Officers have offered the school the opportunity for parents meeting during the representation period and a meeting is scheduled for 2nd February 2016. A web page www.birmingham.gov.uk/school/brays has been setup providing information on the proposal as well as copies of public notices. An online BeHeard survey is in place for consultees to respond during the representation period.

Project costs

12. A statement of the estimated total capital cost of the proposals and the breakdown of the costs that are to be met by the governing body, the local education authority, and any other party.

This project is part of the Special Schools Additional Places programme.

The costs for the reconfiguration and expansion are to be confirmed as part of the Full Business Case which will be submitted for Cabinet approval in due course. Please contact eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk if you require any additional information.

13. A copy of confirmation from the Secretary of State, local education authority and the Learning and Skills Council for England (as the case may be) that funds will be made available (including costs to cover any necessary site purchase).

All costs will be met by Birmingham City Council through their Basic Need funding allocation. All projects costs will be included in a Full Business Case and scheduled for Cabinet.

Age range

14. Where the proposals relate to a change in age range, the current age range for the school.

Not applicable

Early year's provision

15. Where the proposals are to alter the lower age limit of a mainstream school so that it provides for pupils aged between 2 and 5—

- (a) details of the early years provision, including the number of full-time and part-time pupils, the number and length of sessions in each week, and the services for disabled children that will be offered;

Not applicable

- (b) how the school will integrate the early years provision with childcare services and how the proposals are consistent with the integration of early years provision for childcare;

Not applicable

- (c) evidence of parental demand for additional provision of early years provision;

Not applicable

- (d) assessment of capacity, quality and sustainability of provision in schools and in establishments other than schools who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage within 3 miles of the school; and

Not applicable

- (e) reasons why such schools and establishments who have spare capacity cannot make provision for any forecast increase in the number of such provision.

Not applicable

Changes to sixth form provision

16. (a) Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school provides sixth form education or additional sixth form education, a statement of how the proposals will—

- (i) improve the educational or training achievements;
- (ii) increase participation in education or training; and
- (iii) expand the range of educational or training opportunities for 16-19 year olds in the area;

Not applicable

- (b) A statement as to how the new places will fit within the 16-19 organisation in an area;

Not applicable

- (c) Evidence —

- (i) of the local collaboration in drawing up the proposals; and
- (ii) that the proposals are likely to lead to higher standards and better progression at the school;

Not applicable

- (d) The proposed number of sixth form places to be provided.

Not applicable

17. Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school ceases to provide sixth form education, a statement of the effect on the supply of 16-19 places in the area.

Not applicable

Special educational needs

18. Where the proposals are to establish or change provision for special educational needs—

- (a) a description of the proposed types of learning difficulties in respect of which education will be provided and, where provision for special educational needs already exists, the current type of provision;

The school provides education for children with a statement of need or Education Health

and Care Plan for Physical Medical Learning Difficulties and Complex Medical Need. Part of the proposal is to change this designation to include provision for children with a statement of need or Education Health and Care Plan for Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC.)

(b) any additional specialist features will be provided;

Not applicable

(c) the proposed numbers of pupils for which the provision is to be made;

The school will have 220 commissioned places by September 2016.

(d) details of how the provision will be funded;

All costs will be met by Birmingham City Council through their Basic Need funding allocation. All projects costs will be included in a Full Business Case and scheduled for Cabinet.

(e) a statement as to whether the education will be provided for children with special educational needs who are not registered pupils at the school to which the proposals relate;

The school will continue to accommodate all of its current pupils.

(f) a statement as to whether the expenses of the provision will be met from the school's delegated budget;

Not applicable

(g) the location of the provision if it is not to be established on the existing site of the school;

An additional permanent site is to be provided at:

Leycroft Building, Gressell Lane, Tile Cross, Birmingham, B33 9UF

This site is 1.97 miles (3.17 KM) from the main site.

The school have been operating from the Gressell Lane site on a temporary basis; these proposals seek to make this permanent.

(h) where the provision will replace existing educational provision for children with special educational needs, a statement as to how the local education authority believes that the new provision is likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children; and

The proposal means that some pupils will be accommodated at different sites now and in the future. The proposals are conducive with the school's aspirations to improve the standard and quality of educational provision for its current and future children. The expansion will allow more children to access the outstanding provision at the school.

(i) the number of places reserved for children with special educational needs, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of such places.

The school will have 220 commissioned places by September 2016.

19. Where the proposals are to discontinue provision for special educational needs—

(a) details of alternative provision for pupils for whom the provision is currently made;

Not applicable

(b) details of the number of pupils for whom provision is made that is recognised by the local education authority as reserved for children with special educational needs during each of the 4 school years preceding the current school year;

Not applicable

- (c) details of provision made outside the area of the local education authority for pupils whose needs will not be able to be met in the area of the authority as a result of the discontinuance of the provision; and

Not applicable

- (d) a statement as to how the proposer believes that the proposals are likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children.

Not applicable

20. Where the proposals will lead to alternative provision for children with special educational needs, as a result of the establishment, alteration or discontinuance of existing provision, the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of—

- (a) improved access to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment with reference to the local education authority's Accessibility Strategy;
- (b) improved access to specialist staff, both educational and other professionals, including any external support and outreach services;
- (c) improved access to suitable accommodation; and
- (d) improved supply of suitable places.

The changes are considered appropriate for the current pupils at the school in order to provide an improved accommodation solution and better meet the needs of its pupils. The addition of the second site is part of a programme to enhance the overall school accommodation solution for its current and future pupils. The main Brays site is not suitable for expansion. The Gressel Lane site was identified as a suitable alternative accommodation - subject to refurbishment- which would allow Brays School to transfer some of its pupils and have enough capacity to allow Brays School to increase its pupil numbers to 220.

The addition of the Gressel Lane site and the change to special educational needs designation will help the school support additional children including those with high and complex Autistic Spectrum Conditions. The proposal will help to create additional special school places in line with demand so more pupils going forwards have access to suitable places.

Sex of pupils

21. Where the proposals are to make an alteration to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of one sex only becomes an establishment which admits pupils of both sexes—

- (a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single sex-education in the area;

Not applicable

- (b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education; and

Not applicable

- (c) details of any transitional period which the body making the proposals wishes specified in a transitional exemption order (within the meaning of section 27 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975).

Not applicable

22. Where the proposals are to make an alteration to a school to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of both sexes becomes an establishment which admits pupils of one sex only—

- (a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single-sex education in the area; and

Not applicable

- (b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education.

Not applicable

Extended services

23. If the proposed alterations affect the provision of the school's extended services, details of the current extended services the school is offering and details of any proposed change as a result of the alterations.

Not applicable

Need or demand for additional places

24. If the proposals involve adding places—

- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the need or demand for the particular places in the area;

Birmingham City Council is proposing the above prescribed changes, in line with our Special Additional Places (SAP) Programme. Please find here a link to the Education Development Plan www.birmingham.gov.uk/edp and Education Sufficiency Requirements document published in February 2015 (Appendix 1).

The headlines are as follows:

- Birmingham City Council as the local authority for Birmingham has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.
- The city of Birmingham has a growing population with one of the youngest populations in Europe and the number of births in the city has risen rapidly over the last few years.
- To compound this Birmingham is also experiencing high levels of in year growth due to increased levels of cohort growth into the city.
- On the basis of current demand for special school places, without factoring in trends in complex needs, our model indicates the need for an additional 554 places from 2012–20 based purely on growth and assuming that the proportion of young people with complex needs remains constant and the proportion of those young people educated in special schools remains constant.
- Pressure for places is at its most severe in a number of our Special Schools. Our programme of expanding special school provision will continue. We want to ensure there is a good spread of specialist provision for children with complex needs so that every child can be offered an appropriate place close to home.
- Additional places for pupils with Cognition and Learning needs, Autistic Spectrum Conditions and Social Emotional Mental Health conditions are required.

- (b) where the school has a religious character, a statement and supporting evidence of the demand in the area for education in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination;

Not applicable

- (c) where the school adheres to a particular philosophy, evidence of the demand for education in accordance with the philosophy in question and any associated change to the admission arrangements for the school.

Not applicable

25. If the proposals involve removing places—

- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the reasons for the removal, including an assessment of the impact on parental choice; and

Not applicable

- (b) a statement on the local capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

Not applicable

Expansion of successful and popular schools

25A. (1) Proposals must include a statement of whether the proposer considers that the presumption for the expansion of successful and popular schools should apply, and where the governing body consider the presumption applies, evidence to support this.

(2) Sub-paragraph (1) applies to expansion proposals in respect of primary and secondary schools, (except for grammar schools), i.e. falling within:

(a) (for proposals published by the governing body) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 2 or paragraph 12 of Part 2 to Schedule 2;

(b) (for proposals published by the LA) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 4 or 18 of Part 4 to Schedule 4 of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

Not applicable

Appendix 1: Extract of Education Sufficiency Requirements, February 2015

Projected Special Place Requirements

There is an imperative to address immediate shortfalls in the sufficiency, suitability and appropriate location of physical spaces available to meet demand in special provision.

Special School Requirements

2015 Special School Additional Space requirements (Immediate Pressures)

SSAP 2015	Planned and continued reactive work	For planned developments please see Appendix 3a Places required to meet immediate pressure in C&L, ASC and BESD provision across all key stages
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2016 Special School Additional Space requirements

SSAP 2016	Forecast an expectation of 120 pupils with SEND as a result of population growth.	We forecast an increase of 120 additional pupils from May 14 to May 16 across ASC, C&L and BESD areas of need
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Specific Measures to increase capacity for special provision places 2015 & 2016

The following measures will be used to address immediate shortfalls in the sufficiency, suitability and appropriate location of physical spaces available to meet demand in special provision.

a) Balance supply and demand:

- Consider flexible commissioning in response to the changing demand and need in order to meet a local education offer
- Develop the education infrastructure to provide sufficient school places for children and young people with SEND across the range of education settings, making best use of capital investment to align the infrastructure to the growing demand in particular areas of need

b) Make optimum use of existing space:

- Continue to refurbish/redesign/expand to create additional capacity within existing estate
- Explore and invite alternative models for special school provision on mainstream school sites where space is available
- Provide a short-term solution of essential temporary accommodation on existing school sites to meet immediate demand

c) Schools Capital Programme:

- Invite expressions of interest from primary or secondary special providers who wish to expand to meet Basic Need and would require a level of capital investment from the Local Authority
- Invite expressions of interest for resource bases in mainstream schools from September 2015, particularly for ASC and C&L provision
- Identify additional spaces and/or buildings for immediate refurbishment for use by existing special schools and allocate necessary capital investment
- Deliver additional places through re-location of either whole or part of an existing special school on an alternative site

Please contact eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk if you would like a Full Copy of the document.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**Proposal to Make Prescribed Alteration****Brays School**

Notice is given in accordance with Section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Regulation 6 of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that Birmingham City Council proposes to make prescribed alterations to Brays School as follows:

- To increase the number of pupil places by the provision of an additional site with effect from 1st September 2016 and;
- Change of Special Educational Need Designation to include Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Brays School is a community special school at Brays Road, Sheldon, Birmingham B26 1NS for pupils aged 2 – 11 years who have a statement of need or Education, Health and Care Plan of Physical Medical Learning Difficulties and Complex Medical Need.

The current number of places offered is 138

The proposed number of places is 220

The current special educational need designation is Physical Medical Learning Difficulties and Complex Medical Need

The proposed special educational needs designation is Physical Medical Learning Difficulties and Complex Medical Need and Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)

An additional site has been identified for the expansion of the school at:

Leycroft Building, Gressel Lane, Tile Cross, Birmingham B33 9UF.

This site is approximately 1.97 miles (3.17 kilometres) from the main site.

Remodelling work will be carried out at the Gressel Lane site to provide the additional classrooms and ancillary space required to implement the proposal.

The school is currently operating from this site on a temporary basis. This notice seeks to make this permanent

This notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be found at www.birmingham.gov.uk/schools/brays

If you require a hardcopy this can be obtained by writing to: School Organisation Team, Education and Skills Infrastructure, PO Box 15843, Birmingham B2 2RT. Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending their representations through the web site or by writing to the School Organisation Team at the above postal address by 25/02/2016

Signed: Peter Hay, Strategic Director for People

Date: 28/01/2016

APPENDIX 3 – Consultation Responses

Email response 1)

From: PHILLIPS, Jess [<mailto:jess.phillips.mp@parliament.uk>]

Sent: Monday, February 01, 2016 5:43 PM

To: Edsi Enquiries

Subject: RE: Notice of variation to admission numbers for Brays School (comments by 25th February 2016)

I am delighted that we will be extending provision and including Autistic Spectrum conditions which are under resourced.

Jess

BeHeard Response (same response sent thrice)

Response ID ANON-R1XE-FQWN-V

Submitted to School Organisation Brays School
Submitted on 2016-01-31 11:39:54

Introduction

1 What is your name?

Name:
Elaine harris

2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:
art_guitar@live.co.uk

3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Staff Member

other, please specify:

4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

Yes

Please give details:

I think it is a good idea as long as it is an additional site and doesn't mean closing of the main Bray's Road site. It is good to have the schools in different communities as it heightens awareness of special needs.

Response ID ANON-R1XE-FQW4-2

Submitted to School Organisation Brays School
Submitted on 2016-01-31 11:39:19

Introduction

1 What is your name?

Name:

Elaine harris

2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

art_guitar@live.co.uk

3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Staff Member

other, please specify:

4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

Yes

Please give details:

I think it is a good idea as long as it is an additional site and doesn't mean closing of the main Bray's Road site. It is good to have the schools in different communities as it heightens awareness of special needs.

Response ID ANON-R1XE-FQW6-4

Submitted to School Organisation Brays School
Submitted on 2016-01-31 11:38:50

Introduction

1 What is your name?

Name:

Elaine harris

2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

art_guitar@live.co.uk

3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Staff Member

other, please specify:

4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

Yes

Please give details:

I think it is a good idea as long as it is an additional site and doesn't mean closing of the main Bray's Road site. It is good to have the schools in different communities as it heightens awareness of special needs.



School Organisation

Maintained Schools

Annex B: Guidance for Decision-makers

January 2014

Summary

Key points

1. This Annex is for local authorities, the Schools Adjudicator and governing bodies in their roles as decision-makers. It is relevant to the 2013 School Organisation Regulations¹. Decisions on proposals published before 28 January 2014 must be made with regard to the previous Decision-makers Guidance.
2. The table in [Annex A.5](#) sets out the decision-maker for each type of school organisation proposal. The department does not prescribe the exact process by which a decision-maker carries out their decision-making function; however, decision-makers must have regard² to this guidance when making a decision.
3. The decision-maker should consider the views of those affected by a proposal or who have an interest in it, including cross-LA border interests. The decision-maker should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view. Instead, they should give the greatest weight to responses from those stakeholders likely to be most directly affected by a proposal – especially parents of children at the affected school(s).

Related proposals

4. Any proposal that is 'related' to another proposal must be considered together. A proposal should be regarded as 'related' if its implementation (or non-implementation) would prevent or undermine the effective implementation of another proposal. Where proposals are 'related', the decisions should be compatible.
5. Where a proposal is 'related' to another proposal to be decided by the Secretary of State (e.g. for the establishment of a new academy) the decision-maker should defer taking a decision until the Secretary of State has taken a decision on the proposal, or where appropriate, grant a conditional approval for the proposal.

Conditional approval

6. Decision-makers may give conditional approval for a proposal subject to certain prescribed events³. The decision-maker must set a date by which the condition should be met but can modify the date if the proposer confirms, before the date expires, that the condition will be met later than originally thought.

1 In the case of the removal of a Foundation or Foundation majority this guidance is relevant to The School Organisation (Removal of Foundation, Reduction in Number of Foundation Governors and Ability of Foundation to Pay Debts) (England) Regulations 2007.

2 Under paragraphs 8(5) and 17 of Schedule 2 to the EIA 2006 and regulation 7 of the Prescribed Alterations Regulations.

3 The prescribed events are those listed under paragraph 8 of Schedule 3 to the Prescribed Alterations Regulations (for prescribed alterations), regulation 16 of the Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations (for closures and new schools) and paragraph 16 of Schedule 1 to the Prescribed Alterations Regulations (for foundation and trust proposals).

7. The proposer should inform the decision-maker (and the Secretary of State via schoolorganisation.notifications@education.gsi.gov.uk in the case of school closures) when a condition is modified or met. If a condition is not met by the date specified, the proposal should be referred back to the decision-maker for fresh consideration.

Publishing decisions

8. All determinations (rejected and approved – with or without modifications) must give reasons for such a decision being made. Within one week of making a determination the decision-maker must arrange (via the proposer as necessary) for the decision and the reasons behind it to be published on the website where the original proposal was published. The decision-maker must also arrange for the bodies below to be notified of the decision and reasons⁴:

- the LA (where the Schools Adjudicator or governing body is the decision-maker);
- the governing body/proposers (as appropriate);
- the trustees of the school (if any);
- the local Church of England diocese;
- the local Roman Catholic diocese;
- the parents of every registered pupil at the school – where the school is a special school;
- any other body that they think is appropriate; and
- the Secretary of State via schoolorganisation.notifications@education.gsi.gov.uk (in school opening and closure cases only).

Factors to consider

9. Paragraphs 10 to 78 of this annex set out some the factors that decision-makers should consider when deciding a proposal. Paragraphs 10 to 29 are relevant to all types of proposals. Paragraphs 30 to 78 are more relevant to certain types of proposals (as specified). These factors are not exhaustive and the importance of each will vary depending on the type and circumstances of the proposal. All proposals must be considered on their individual merits.

⁴ In the case of proposals to change category to foundation, acquire/remove a Trust and/or acquire/remove a Foundation majority the only bodies the decision-maker must notify are the LA and the governing body (where the Schools Adjudicator is the decision-maker).

Factors relevant to all types of proposals

Consideration of consultation and representation period

10. The decision-maker will need to be satisfied that the appropriate consultation and/or representation period has been carried out and that the proposer has had regard to the responses received. If the proposer has failed to meet the statutory requirements, a proposal may be deemed invalid and therefore should be rejected. The decision-maker must consider all the views submitted, including all support for, objections to and comments on the proposal.

Education standards and diversity of provision

11. Decision-makers should consider the quality and diversity of schools in the relevant area and whether the proposal will meet or affect the aspirations of parents, raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps.

12. The decision-maker should also take into account the extent to which the proposal is consistent with the government's policy on academies as set out on the department's website.

Demand

13. In assessing the demand for new school places the decision-maker should consider the evidence presented for any projected increase in pupil population (such as planned housing developments) and any new provision opening in the area (including free schools).

14. The decision-maker should take into account the quality and popularity of the schools in which spare capacity exists and evidence of parents' aspirations for a new school or for places in a school proposed for expansion. The existence of surplus capacity in neighbouring less popular schools should not in itself prevent the addition of new places.

15. Reducing surplus places is not a priority (unless running at very high levels). For parental choice to work effectively there may be some surplus capacity in the system as a whole. Competition from additional schools and places in the system will lead to pressure on existing schools to improve standards.

School size

16. Decision-makers should not make blanket assumptions that schools should be of a certain size to be good schools, although the viability and cost-effectiveness of a proposal is an important factor for consideration. The decision-maker should also

consider the impact on the LA's budget of the need to provide additional funding to a small school to compensate for its size.

Proposed admission arrangements (including post-16 provision)

17. In assessing demand the decision-maker should consider all expected admission applications, not only those from the area of the LA in which the school is situated.

18. Before approving a proposal that is likely to affect admissions to the school the decision-maker should confirm that the admission arrangements of the school are compliant with the School Admissions Code. Although the decision-maker cannot modify proposed admission arrangements, the decision-maker should inform the proposer where arrangements seem unsatisfactory and the admission authority should be given the opportunity to revise them.

National Curriculum

19. All maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum unless they have secured an exemption for groups of pupils or the school community⁵.

Equal opportunity issues

20. The decision-maker must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of LAs/governing bodies, which requires them to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination;
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations.

21. The decision-maker should consider whether there are any sex, race or disability discrimination issues that arise from the changes being proposed, for example that where there is a proposed change to single sex provision in an area, there is equal access to single sex provision for the other sex to meet parental demand. Similarly there should be a commitment to provide access to a range of opportunities which reflect the ethnic and cultural mix of the area, while ensuring that such opportunities are open to all.

⁵ Under sections: 90, 91, 92 and 93 of the Education Act 2002.

Community cohesion

22. Schools have a key part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other; by encouraging, through their teaching, an understanding of, and respect for, other cultures, faiths and communities. When considering a proposal, the decision-maker must consider its impact on community cohesion. This will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the community served by the school and the views of different sections within the community.

Travel and accessibility

23. Decision-makers should satisfy themselves that accessibility planning has been properly taken into account and the proposed changes should not adversely impact on disadvantaged groups.

24. The decision-maker should bear in mind that a proposal should not unreasonably extend journey times or increase transport costs, or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable walking or cycling routes.

25. A proposal should also be considered on the basis of how it will support and contribute to the LA's duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport to school.

Capital

26. The decision-maker should be satisfied that any land, premises or capital required to implement the proposal will be available and that all relevant local parties (e.g. trustees or religious authority) have given their agreement. A proposal cannot be approved conditionally upon funding being made available.

27. Where proposers are relying on the department as the source of capital funding, there can be no assumption that the approval of a proposal will trigger the release of capital funds from the department, unless the department has previously confirmed in writing that such resources will be available; nor can any allocation 'in principle' be increased. In such circumstances the proposal should be rejected, or consideration deferred until it is clear that the capital necessary to implement the proposal will be provided.

School premises and playing fields

28. Under the School Premises Regulations all schools are required to provide suitable outdoor space in order to enable physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and for pupils to play outside safely.

29. [Guidelines](#) setting out suggested areas for pitches and games courts are in place although the department has been clear that these are non-statutory.

Factors relevant to certain types of proposals:

Expansion

30. When deciding on a proposal for an expansion on an additional site (a 'satellite school'), decision-makers will need to consider whether the new provision is genuinely a change to an existing school or is in effect a new school (which would trigger the academy presumption in circumstances where there is a need for a new school in the area⁶). Decisions will need to be taken on a case-by-case basis, but decision-makers will need to consider the following non-exhaustive list of factors which are intended to expose the extent to which the new site is integrated with the existing site, and to ensure that it will serve the same community as the existing site:

- The reasons for the expansion
 - What is the rationale for this approach and this particular site?
- Admission and curriculum arrangements
 - How will the new site be used (e.g. which age groups/pupils will it serve)?
 - What will the admission arrangements be?
 - Will there be movement of pupils between sites?
- Governance and administration
 - How will whole school activities be managed?
 - Will staff be employed on contracts to work on both sites? How frequently will they do so?
 - What governance, leadership and management arrangements will be put in place to oversee the new site (e.g. will the new site be governed by the same governing body and the same school leadership team)?
- Physical characteristics of the school
 - How will facilities across the two sites be used (e.g. sharing of the facilities and resources available at the two sites, such as playing fields)?
 - Is the new site in an area that is easily accessible to the community that the current school serves?

⁶ Or require an proposal under section 11 of the EIA, 2006 for a new maintained school.

Changes to special educational need provision – the SEN improvement test

39. In planning and commissioning SEN provision or considering a proposal for change, LAs should aim for a flexible range of provision and support that can respond to the needs of individual pupils and parental preferences. This is favourable to establishing broad categories of provision according to special educational need or disability.

Decision-makers should ensure that proposals:

- take account of parental preferences for particular styles of provision or education settings;
- take account of any relevant local offer for children and young people with SEN and disabilities and the views expressed on it;
- offer a range of provision to respond to the needs of individual children and young people, taking account of collaborative arrangements (including between special and mainstream), extended school and Children's Centre provision; regional centres (of expertise) and regional and sub-regional provision; out of LA day and residential special provision;
- take full account of educational considerations, in particular the need to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, within a learning environment where children can be healthy and stay safe;
- support the LA's strategy for making schools and settings more accessible to disabled children and young people and their scheme for promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people;
- provide access to appropriately trained staff and access to specialist support and advice, so that individual pupils can have the fullest possible opportunities to make progress in their learning and participate in their school and community;
- ensure appropriate provision for 14-19 year-olds; and
- ensure that appropriate full-time education will be available to all displaced pupils. Their statements of special educational needs must be amended and all parental rights must be ensured. Other interested partners, such as the Health Authority

should be involved. Pupils should not be placed long-term or permanently in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) if a special school place is what they need.

40. When considering any reorganisation of provision that the LA considers to be reserved for pupils with special educational needs, including that which might lead to children being displaced, proposers will need to demonstrate how the proposed alternative arrangements are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for those children. Decision-makers should make clear how they are satisfied that this SEN improvement test has been met, including how they have taken account of parental or independent representations which question the proposer's assessment.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC REPORT

Report to:	CABINET
Report of:	Strategic Director for People
Date of Decision:	19th April 2016
SUBJECT:	HOMELESS & HOUSING ADVICE – ONE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE PROPOSAL
Key Decision: Yes	Relevant Forward Plan Ref: 001772
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved <input type="checkbox"/> O&S Chairman approved <input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Member(s) or Relevant Executive Member	Councillor John Cotton, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Management & Homes
Relevant O&S Chairman:	Councillor Zafar Iqbal, Chair of Neighbourhood and Community Services
Wards affected:	All

1. Purpose of report:
1.1 To seek approval to re-configure the delivery of the statutory homeless and housing advice service.

2. Decision(s) recommended:
That Cabinet:-
2.1 Notes the proposal to move to the one Housing Advice Centre (HAC) Centre of Excellence model based at the Newtown Customer Service Centre.
2.2 Notes the concerns raised in the various consultations on the proposal and agree to the implementation of the mitigating factors to support the move.
2.3 Delegates to the Strategic Director of People in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Management & Homes the authority to implement the proposals contained in the report with an update progress report to Cabinet in July 2016.

Lead Contact Officer(s):	Jim Crawshaw Head of Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Service
Telephone No: E-mail address:	0121 675 2154 jim.crawshaw@birmingham.gov.uk

3. Consultation

Consultation on the one HAC proposal has taken place with both internal and external stakeholders.

3.1 Internal

3.1.1 All Cabinet Members were consulted on the one HAC proposal alongside consultation on an Integrated Advice Strategy for the city.

3.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Management & Homes gave agreement to commence consultation on an outline operating model for Homelessness Services on the 2nd December 2015.

3.1.3 Additionally, the proposal to consult on the one HAC proposal was presented to Executive Members for Local Services on 26th November 2015.

3.1.4 Informal consultation commenced with trade unions and staff on the proposal in October 2015. Formal consultation with staff and Trade Unions commenced on the 4th January 2016. There are on-going discussions with staff, including a staff working group, and with Trade Union colleagues. There have been meetings with staff in October 2015 and January 2016. The key issues raised are:

- The suitability of Newtown as an office for a one HAC model and in particular regarding the size of the office and the anticipated footfall;
- Concerns regarding customers being able to access the service;
- Concerns relating specifically to the impact on the staff affected by this change including the health and safety of staff, car parking arrangements, building capacity and changing office location.

3.1.5 The proposals are likely to impact on existing staff. If they move from their current work location to be based at Newtown HAC, with the back office space being located in Lancaster Circus, it is proposed that mitigation will be provided in line with the Council's disturbance allowance, which is paid to eligible employees. Individual circumstances will be considered including working patterns and caring responsibilities as a result of individual meetings with affected employees. Appendix 2 sets out the staff consultation responses.

3.2 External

3.2.1. The public consultation on proposals to restructure the Housing Advice Service, including the statutory homeless service, from its present 4 location delivery model (excluding the Youth Hub); to a single centre model based at Newtown Customer Service Centre, opened on 4th December 2015 and ran for 7 weeks before closing on 21st January 2016. The consultation report, including an executive summary can be found at Appendix 1.

3.2.2 External consultation was undertaken utilising three different methods:

- A. Consultation A; A paper based questionnaire that was handed out to Housing Advice Centre (HAC) users (between 7th December 2015 and 15th January 2016). 495 responses were received from HAC customers.

- B. Consultation B; An online consultation through the Council's 'Be Heard' site. Respondents included citizens who may or may not have used the service and from those answering in a professional capacity. A total of 65 responses, excluding abandoned transactions were received.
- C. Consultation C; Four public meetings – one in each quadrant of the city – with an independent chair open to professionals and citizens. In total 21 people attended these sessions. Levels of attendance varied.

3.2.3 Key themes and Findings

Appendix 1 sets out, in detail, the responses to the consultation with a few key responses noted below:

- When asked if they felt they would still be able to get to the centre in Newtown more than 50% of respondents in Consultation A agreed that they would.
- Professionals were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the proposals to centralise the Housing Advice Service at Newtown. 27 responses were received to this question, all of whom disagreed with the proposal. In respect of this it should be noted that 46% of all responses from professionals came from staff within the Homelessness and Pre-Tenancy Service who are impacted in regards to this proposal by having to move work location.
- Consultation A shows Newtown has the highest proportion of people accessing the centre on foot, totalling 48% of all respondents accessing HACs on foot and equal to totals of the remaining 3 centres combined. 73% of all persons currently accessing Housing Advice centres do so by car, bus or rail. This figure is mirrored when this data is limited to Homeless Applicants only.

3.2.4 In summary, three clear themes emerged from the consultation:

1. Accessibility – Concerns that providing the service from a single location in Newtown would result in homeless households having to travel across the city to access the service. In particular, issues related to disabled customers and the cost of transport was raised. A perception is that this model would be less accessible than either the current 4 HAC model or a single HAC in a city centre location.
2. Safety – Concerns that some households – principally those experiencing Domestic Violence – would be at risk as a result of a perpetrator knowing which office a victim would attend or if the office is a risk area for a customer.
3. Capacity – Staff are concerned that the demand placed on a single location would be too great.

3.2.5 We will mitigate against the concerns expressed through the consultation by:

1. Enhancing access to phone advice and information on the Council's website to ensure households only travel to the HAC if necessary. Whilst the core service will be delivered from Newtown, other advice locations in the city will still provide initial contact and phone access to the specialist homeless team. The intention is to ensure that only those households who have to travel to Newtown do so and any

query that can be dealt with on the phone, the website or even by other partners prior to a household travelling to the HAC is done so.

2. Providing bus tickets available from key BCC offices and a limited number of Third Sector providers to aid citizens getting to the HAC. In exceptional circumstances, we will provide taxis (as we currently do) in order to facilitate access to the service.
3. Arranging travel for households where there are exceptional circumstances e.g. are housebound,
4. Undertaking home visits or interviews in a safe location for households unable to visit Newtown due to risks related to Domestic Violence or other vulnerabilities.
5. Contacting households to see if a service is still required where there are “no shows” for appointments (including when people have attended another centre and are expected to be making their way to the HAC).
6. Increasing the number of available appointments and ensuring that where possible we give choice to households to ensure the time/date are appropriate.
7. Developing a detailed staff training plan as part of the proposed move to a single HAC to improve the service delivered and resolve concerns promptly.
8. Providing training for key partners within the Council and in Third Sector organisations on Housing Advice to enhance the advice and support they currently give to their clients which may be able to resolve issues without needing to visit a HAC.

3.2.4 Conclusions from Consultation

It has always been accepted that the proposed restructure of Housing Advice and Homelessness to a single centre based at Newtown is a contentious one. Robust mitigations have been developed to address the concerns raised during the consultation process. Analysis revealed several respondents misinterpreting the proposal as removal of front facing services in favour of just a call centre.

A comprehensive communications plan will be devised and implemented if the decision to move forward with this proposal is agreed.

4. Compliance Issues:

4.1 Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council’s policies, plans and strategies?

- 4.1.1 The provision of the statutory homeless and housing advice services supports the priorities of both a fair and prosperous city.

4.2 Financial Implications

- 4.2.1 The only financial implication as a result of the proposal to move to one HAC is related to disturbance allowance being paid to the affected GR2 & GR3 officers due to changing work location; this is estimated to be £4k.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The Council provides the statutory homeless and housing advice service in line with the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.

4.4 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 4.4.1 An Equalities Analysis has been undertaken for the operating model, this is attached in Appendix 3.

5. Relevant background/chronology of key events:

- 5.1 The Homeless and Pre Tenancy Service (H&PTS) is currently based in 4 Housing Advice Centres across the city – Erdington, Newtown, Northfield and Sparkbrook as well as at the Youth Hub based in Digbeth. Three of the current offices operate on both a drop-in and appointment system whilst Newtown has for over a year provided an appointment only system for homeless households. The proposed changes to service delivery do not impact on the Youth Hub. From the 1st May 2016 there will also be a specialist homeless prevention welfare service for single people and childless couples who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Prior to the current model being implemented in March 2011 the service was delivered across all of the Council's 32 neighbourhood offices.
- 5.2 Consistency of service is the key driver for this proposal alongside the desire to create a Centre of Excellence for Homelessness and Housing Advice in the city. As with all services within the Council the H&PTS is continually seeking to improve the service it provides to citizens. We are confident that the proposed changes to the service will bring about a number of improvements including allowing the service to increase the availability of appointments as well as improving the level of service for households threatened with homelessness by increasing our work on preventing homelessness when appropriate. By concentrating all staff in one building there is the opportunity to ensure consistency, increase appointment availability, undertake increased training and learning activities and to meet our statutory duties in the most effective way.
- 5.3 Legal advice recommends a move to a single point of delivery. The service has recently been subject to a significant and costly Judicial Review (Edwards v BCC). Fundamentally this challenge was about consistency in the application of policies and procedures in regards to homelessness and focussed on the accusation that we systemically failed to assist homeless people and therefore avoided our statutory duties. Whilst the council received a positive judgement in February 2016, our QC has given very clear advice to move to one centre for the delivery of the service in order to mitigate against any future challenges. This advice has been shared with the appropriate Cabinet Member and is supported by the Council's Legal Services. Although the service was successful in defending this JR there were of course some improvements that were highlighted through both the judgement and recognised by the management of the service who attended the trial. The implementation of these, to ensure consistency, would be easier and more effective through the one centre of excellence.

- 5.4 The development of the proposed one HAC model was crystallised following discussions regarding the new advice model for the city. The proposal to operate homeless services from Newtown, removes significant pressure from the wider Neighbourhood Advice & Information Service (NAIS) enabling it to focus on its core advice services. Due to the expertise of the NAIS staff it has been decided that there will be six NAIS staff located within the new model in order to provide advice and assistance on welfare benefits, debt etc. to households in housing need. It should be recognised that the principal benefit will be in terms of improvements to the homeless service, ensuring that the service is refocused to comprehensively support homeless households from one central location. The skills and expertise of the NAIS officers, alongside a voluntary sector presence in the HAC will enable us to move towards a centre of excellence that is comparable with the Youth Hub that the council runs in partnership with St. Basil's.
- 5.5 Whilst the core service will be delivered from Newtown, other advice locations in the city will still provide initial contact and phone access to the specialist homeless team and where necessary arrange appropriate transport to the Newtown office. The intention is to ensure that only those households who have to travel to Newtown do so and any query that can be dealt with on the phone, the website or even by other partners prior to a household travelling to the HAC is done so.
- 5.6 The service undertook a benchmarking exercise in relation to the core cities in England and how they provide their service. All the core cities, excluding Liverpool provide their service from one office. This includes Leeds and Sheffield - both cities with a greater geographical size than Birmingham and longer travelling times to access it. Additionally other Authorities in the West Midlands conurbation also provide their service through one location.
- 5.7 The Council already successfully operates a homeless service, since November 2010, to single young people (under 25) from a single point of delivery at the Youth Hub in Digbeth, in partnership with St Basil's. This is considered to be an example of national best practice. The current proposal extends this approach to all age groups and seeks to replicate, where appropriate, the excellent service that young people in housing need receive in the city.

6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):

- 6.1 A model of four Housing Advice Centres (combining Neighbourhood Advice and Homeless) was considered, however the number of welfare advice appointments available in this model would be limited due to the high demand for drop-in homeless services. It would also not have delivered the improvements in service required.
- 6.2 A number of alternative solutions have been considered including whether or not the service could continue to run from four locations, two locations or whether it needed to be centralised into one location. The decision was made that in order to meet the key objectives a one centre model was appropriate. Options for a city centre location were extensively explored however there wasn't an office of a similar size and configuration to Newtown available from within the BCC portfolio or available from the Private Sector.

Signatures		<u>Date</u>
Cabinet Member Cllr John Cotton, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Management & Homes
Chief Officer Peter Hay, Strategic Director for People

List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:

List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):
1. Consultation Feedback Report 2. Reports by external consultant on the face-to-face consultation meetings 3. Equalities Analysis

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Housing Advice Service

- Citizen Consultation Feedback Report

February 2016

Andrew Clarke
Business Analyst
Business Change Team
Birmingham City Council
Andrew.j.clarke@birmingham.gov.uk

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Document Version Control

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0.2	12.02.2016	Andrew J Clarke	Amended with comments from SJF
0.3	15.02.2016	Andrew J Clarke	Amendments from Jim Crawshaw review
0.4	15.02.2016	Andrew J Clarke	Track changes accepted and disabled
1.0			Baselined version

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Chart 3	Consultation A: Respondents by means of travel (Pg 23)	Chart 4	Consultation A: Homeless Respondents by means of travel (Pg 24)
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1. Executive Summary:

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- 1.1. The consultation on proposals to restructure the Housing Advice Service, including the statutory homeless service, from its present 4 location delivery model (excluding the Youth Hub); to a single centre model based at Newtown Customer Service Centre opened on 04th December 2015 and ran for 7 weeks before closing on 21st January 2016.
- 1.2. Consultation involved three main tools, Consultation A; a paper based questionnaire that was handed out to Housing Advice Centre (HAC) users (between 07th December 2015 and 15th January 2016), Consultation B; An online consultation through the councils 'Be Heard' online consultation site and Consultation C; 4 face to face sessions across the city open to professionals and members of the public.

1.3. People consulted and means of consultation

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- 1.3.1. A total of 495 responses were received to the paper based questionnaire handed out within HAC's. These are all believed to be direct HAC customers.
- 1.3.2. A total of 125 responses were received to the online consultation. However over 50 of these were 'Abandoned transactions' with no information that could be used for analysis, these were removed from the consultation. 3 of the abandoned transactions did contain partially complete data and were included. After removals the number of responses that were included as part of this consultation report totalled 65.
- 1.3.3. The majority of responses to the Be Heard Consultation were 'Organisations or professionals delivering advice' (43%). Birmingham Residents who did not use the service but commented on the proposals were the second largest group (45%). Only a small number of service users (who had accessed Housing Advice Services in the last 12 months) responded (12% - equal to 8 people).
- 1.3.4. Responses were received from a wide variety of professionals however the significant majority (11 of 24) were received from staff within the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy service itself (46% of all responses). In total 63% of all professional responses came from within Birmingham City Council.
- 1.3.5. 4 public meetings were held and facilitated by an independent chair.
 - 1.3.5.1. The North Birmingham Consultation event was attended by only 3 people (excluding council staff supporting). Attendees included staff from the YMCA and Stoneham Housing.

- 1.3.5.2. The South Birmingham Consultation event was slightly better attended with 7 people in attendance. This included representatives from Northfield Community Partnership, Northfield Baptist Church, a local Methodist Church, the Northfield Town Centre Manager, Freshwinds, the Northfield Constituency's MP's office, and a local City Council Councillor.
 - 1.3.5.3. The West & Central Birmingham Consultation event was well attended by 11 people. This included staff and volunteers from Shelter, the Longhurst Group, Midland Heart, West Midlands Police, Catalysts Mutual CIC, Ashram Moseley and the Northfield Baptist Church.
 - 1.3.5.4. The East Birmingham Consultation Event had no attendees. It is notable that this was the only event taking place at a Housing Advice Centre (Sparkbrook). Members of the public who were queuing to access the Neighbourhood Advice Service were invited to join the event however none did so.
 - 1.3.5.5. While attendance from Housing Professionals and Partner Agencies was generally good, there was no attendance from members of the public despite advertisement of the event in Housing Advice Centres (as well as numerous other locations).
- 1.4. Given that the proposed reorganisation entails the removal of Housing Advice Centres from 3 Neighbourhood Offices, it is noted that users of these centres may be more impacted than those of the centre proposed to remain open due to potential additional travel requirements. Therefore consideration has been given to this in analysis of consultation responses and the responses of the three centres where withdrawal of Housing Advice Services is proposed have, on occasion, been separated from Newtown responses.
- 1.5. **Proposal for a single HAC based at Newtown:** [Back to Contents Page](#)
- 1.5.1. Broadly speaking this proposal is not widely supported by respondents to the consultation.
 - 1.5.2. When asked if they felt they would still be able to get to the centre in Newtown more than 50% of respondents in Consultation A agreed that they would. However it was noted that Newtown responses formed 36% of all respondents in Consultation A. Across the remaining 3 centres 48% either disagree or strongly disagreed that they would be able to make it to a Newtown based centre, the large majority strongly disagreeing ([Chart 12](#), Pg 33).

- 1.5.3. However, when this question was limited to only Homeless Households at the remaining 3 HAC's the split between those agreeing to (some extent) and those disagreeing (to some extent) that they could reach a centre in Newtown narrows considerably with only 40% disagreeing and 35% agreeing ([Chart 13](#), Pg 34).
- 1.5.4. In Consultation B (Online Consultation via Be Heard), customers and concerned citizens were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the proposals for a Centralised Homeless Centre at Newtown. A total of 34 responses were received to this question. 6 responses agreed with the proposal and 19 disagreed ([Chart 22](#), Pg 44).
- 1.5.5. Respondents in Consultation B were also asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that they would still be able to reach a single centre in Newtown. 36 responses were provided showing a slight increase in the proportion of respondents disagreeing (to some extent) and a slight decrease in those agreeing (to some extent). However 'Strongly' disagreeing reduced (in percentage terms) from that in Consultation A responses, falling from 32% to 28% ([Chart 24](#), Pg 46).
- 1.5.6. Professionals were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the proposals to centralise the Housing Advice Service at Newtown. 27 responses were received to this question, all of whom disagreed with the proposal. In respect of this it should be noted that 46% of all responses from professionals came from staff within the Homelessness and Pre-Tenancy Service (1.3.4).
- 1.5.7. A Neighbourhood Advice & Information Service (NAIS) consultation also asked to what extent their customers agreed or disagreed with the proposals to centralise the Housing Advice Service at Newtown. 1141 responses were received to this question with the large majority (597 – 52%) strongly disagreeing. Only 29% (328) agreed (to any extent) with this proposal ([Chart 35](#), Pg 61).

1.6. Alternate proposals:

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- 1.6.1. Respondents in Consultation A were not directly asked to comment on alternate proposals that had been considered (for reasons outlined in 3.7). However in responding to questions about their concerns regarding a single HAC and in suggesting improvements to the service ([Chart 11](#), Pg 31 & [Chart 15](#), 36), numerous responses expressed a preference (in some way) to keep services local (retaining a 4 HAC model) or open additional HAC's to provide a more local service.

When members of the public were asked to comment on alternative proposals in Consultation B ([Chart 21](#), Pg 43), A two HAC model was identified as preferential (six favour this) with a city centre single HAC narrowly behind (five preferences). However few viable suggestions were made by persons favouring these options as to how the issues that caused their dismissal as original options could be overcome.

- 1.6.2. The Council House & it's Margaret Street extension, were suggested as alternatives however these have already been considered and deemed non-viable. One respondent alluded to BCC having *"many occupied and vacant buildings in the City Centre which I don't see why they could not have been used"* however no detail was given on these buildings to advise property services on a location that may have been overlooked. However extensive property searches had been undertaken by the corporate BCC property team and no suitable sized buildings had been identified.
- 1.6.3. A suggestion was made to utilise Housing Association offices for provision of HA Services in order to keep services local which may be worthy of further consideration moving forward however, does not address immediate concerns requiring the removal of HAC's from Neighbourhood Offices.
- 1.6.4. When professionals were asked to comment on the previously considered alternatives ([Chart 30](#), Pg 52), opposition to the Newtown proposal was high. A two HAC approach was favoured by most. Four respondents favoured a city centre location with one suggesting that desk space could be freed at Lancaster Circus or Woodcock Street However this option was explored and deemed non-viable.

1.7. Key Concerns:

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- 1.7.1. A number of key concerns were identified among both professionals and members of the public. These concerns reoccurred across a number of questions and responses and are outlined here.
- 1.7.2. The accessibility of the single centre to vulnerable individuals who rarely travel outside their own local area. In responding to this it should be considered whether sufficient mitigation exists (or is planned) in order to remove barriers to access for this service for such vulnerable persons. In considering this point the following information is also noted:
 - At present four HAC's serve 40 wards within Birmingham. The geographical size of Birmingham is 267.8SqKm meaning that each HAC could serve (approximately) 66.95sqkm if distributed evenly. Therefore many vulnerable persons will already have no local HAC to visit, therefore

the concern raised will apply more so to those living within the immediate vicinity or ward of an existing HAC only.

- With particular regard to Newtown, this centre does not currently provide a 'roofless on the day' service and homeless customers are seen by appointment only. Clients in this situation are required to travel to other HAC's on order to make these types of application.
- Data within Travel Analysis (7.26) shows the majority of respondents to consultation (meeting the criteria outlined at 7.2), did not live within the immediate locality of the HAC they visited (six respondents out of 98 lived within one mile of the HAC they visited, only five more lived within 1.5 miles of the HAC they visited).
- Birmingham is presently one of only two core cities that continues to deliver Homelessness services from multiple locations (with the second being Liverpool).

1.7.3. Accessibility of a single HAC at Newtown due to additional travel distance for clients of all types. It is a concern for respondents that many people will be unable to travel the additional distance to a HAC at Newtown. In responding to this it should be considered whether sufficient mitigation exists (or is planned) in order to remove barriers to access for people who, for any reason, may be unable to travel to Newtown. In considering this point the following information is also noted:

- The present four HAC system serves 40 Wards and it is therefore likely that a great number of clients will already be required to travel some distance to access their local HAC. Additionally approximately 12% of homeless applications made in Birmingham are from households whose previous address is outside of Birmingham..
- A general lack of knowledge of the Newtown area may contribute to fears about travelling to Newtown. A study of data detailed at 7.7-7.9 shows that many clients who already use cars or public transport will, when using the same means as that which they used when responding to consultation A, experience a shorter period of travel when accessing a centre at Newtown. Many others will experience only a short increase in journey time.
- Data detailed at 8.7-8.9 also shows that a large number of customers will experience a significant increase in journey time when accessing a centre based in Newtown.

Those people currently accessing a Housing Advice Centre on foot are potentially most impacted by increased travel distance. Consultation A shows Newtown has the highest proportion of people accessing the centre on foot, totalling 48% of all respondents accessing HAC's on foot and equal to totals of the remaining 3 centres combined ([Chart 3](#), Pg 23).

- 73% of all persons currently accessing Housing Advice centres do so by car, bus or rail. This figure is mirrored when this data is limited to Homeless Applicants only ([Chart 4](#), Pg 24).

1.7.4. Safeguarding victims of Domestic Abuse (DA) in a single centre approach. A number of concerns were raised relating to DA victims accessing Homelessness and Housing Advice through a single centre. These concerns related to potential, in a once centre approach, for perpetrators of DA to be able to locate their victims if homelessness is only delivered from one centre. In responding to this it should be considered whether sufficient mitigation exists (or is planned) in order to safeguard such victims in a single centre approach. In considering this point attention is drawn to the comments and observations below:

- Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid (BSWAID) presently deliver advice services from a single centre.
- Is analysis of previous DA Homeless Applicants required to determine if they presently attend their local HAC in the first instance?

1.7.5. Accessibility of the centre for people who may be unable to attend the Newtown locality due to gang activity, affiliation or threats of gang violence. The concern primarily relates to those who may be unable to attend the area due to previous encounters with or activity in gangs based in the Newtown area. It is feared that, for such persons, entering areas where opposing or former gang associations claim 'territory' could pose a risk to these clients and therefore exclude them from seeking help. In responding to this it should be considered whether sufficient mitigation exists (or is planned) in order to safeguard such victims in a single centre approach. In considering this point the following information is also noted:

- This risk is considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment (EA). At that time it was felt that the majority of the 'Gang Demographic' would be under 25 and thus required to attend the Youth Hub rather than the single HAC, which is currently in place.

It was considered that the remainder would be sufficiently small in number as to be covered within existing mitigation (visiting officers, Part VI online, interviews at alternate locations etc). Is this position still held?

- Telephone Interviews and pre-arranged call-backs (developed post EA) will improve accessibility for those unable to reach a single HAC in Newtown.

1.7.6. Travel to the new Single HAC for those with a disability preventing travel.

This concern primarily relates to the Single HAC being inaccessible to those with a disability due to distance of travel. In responding to this it should be considered whether sufficient mitigation exists (or is planned) in order to remove barriers to service that these groups may encounter within a single HAC model. In considering this point the following information is also noted:

- This risk was previously considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment (EA). At that time it was felt that planned and existing mitigation was sufficient to ensure accessibility of the service for disabled persons who were unable to reach the Newtown site (visiting officers, Part VI online, interviews at alternate locations etc). Is this position still held?
- Telephone Interviews and pre-arranged call-backs (developed post EA) will improve accessibility for those unable to reach a single HAC in Newtown.

1.7.7. Increased travel cost for customers preventing accessibility. This concern related to the potential for increased travel costs for customers to reach a single centre in Newtown. In responding to this it should be considered whether sufficient mitigation exists (or is planned) in order to remove or mitigate against such costs in a single centre approach. In considering this point the following information is also noted:

- This risk was previously considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment (EA). At that time it was felt that planned and existing mitigation was sufficient to ensure accessibility of the service for persons 'destitute' and having insufficient funds to reach single HAC at Newtown.
- Bus Tickets presently issued at Neighbourhood Offices and at The Council House to those with insufficient funds to travel to a HAC in an emergency will continue to be issued from these locations (subject to outcomes of the NAIS Consultation on future proposals).

There is also scope to increase the network of sites where these can be issued from to maximise accessibility. These increases may form part of the future development of Housing Advice.

- 73% of all persons currently accessing Housing Advice centres do so by car, bus, rail or other means of public transport. This figure is mirrored when this data is limited to Homeless Applicants only ([Chart 4](#)).
- Those currently accessing a Housing Advice Centre on foot are potentially most impacted by increased travel cost. Consultation A shows Newtown has the highest proportion of people accessing the centre on foot, totalling 48% of all respondents accessing HAC's on foot and equal to totals of the remaining 3 centres combined ([Chart 3](#)).
- Information detailed within the travel analysis (8.13-8.35) shows that the vast majority of those already utilising public transport (buses) to access a HAC will experience no increase in cost for travel to Newtown due to the fare structures. The small number who may experience a negative cost implication (Chart [TA5](#), Pg 75 & [TA7](#), Pg 77), will only do so under certain conditions which, for the most part will be avoidable, and all must be met simultaneously.
- There is potential for those accessing HAC's by car to experience a marginal cost implication due to additional fuel costs for additional travel distance.

1.7.8. Concerns that the single centre will be too busy. A number of concerns were raised by respondents that the proposed single centre option will be unable to cope with the high level of footfall expected and that this will result in longer waits, fewer available appointments and a general reduction in the quality of service provided. In responding to this it should be considered whether sufficient mitigation exists (or is planned) for the centre to cope with expected footfall while ensuring a sufficient level of quality service is provided. In considering this point the following information is also noted

- The maximisation of appointments is made possible within a single centre option. Additional back office staff can be ready to address overbookings planned to address the number of Do Not Attend cases for Part VII interviews.
- Floor Walkers form an integral part of the Future Operating Model (FOM) who will be able to 'Queue Bust' by signposting and answering general queries to achieve quicker turnaround on enquiries.

- Improved Homelessness Prevention through Housing Options Interviews and use of the Housing Options Toolkit is expected to increase the number of Homelessness Preventions in the long term.
- Alternate ways of dealing with enquiries such as web, phone (inc the possibility of undertaking Part VII interviews by phone) will reduce the pressures expected by footfall on the centre.

1.8. Conclusions:

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- 1.8.1. The proposed restructure of Housing Advice to a single centre based at Newtown is a contentious one, generally unpopular to customers and professionals who have raised numerous concerns regarding this.
- 1.8.2. Many of the concerns identified have already been identified as part of preparation work in advance of consultation and mitigations have been developed to address these concerns. The veracity of these mitigations however is unlikely to be effectively tested until any decision to proceed to a single HAC is implemented.
- 1.8.3. There does appear to be some resistance based on misunderstanding of the proposals. Analysis revealed several respondents misinterpreting the proposal as removal of front facing services in favour of a call centre. Others may not realise that Newtown HAC is actually closer and possibly more accessible than the centre they currently use because they do not know the area.
- 1.8.4. Extensive commentary has been provided on alternate options that were considered and deemed non-viable. A number of suggestions regarding these alternate options have been received (such as Lancaster Circus, Woodcock St or Margaret Street for a City Centre HAC), however for the most part, all have already been explored previously and deemed non-viable. Others do not provide the benefits that are expected from the proposed model (such as maximisation of interviews/appointments).
- 1.8.5. There are identified negative impacts on client groups due to additional travel distance and time as well as potential barriers for accessing the service. Whether planned and current mitigation is sufficient to negate these impacts is a decision to be taken in view of evidence contained within the consultation report, Equality Analysis, cabinet report and any other relevant documentation.

- 1.8.6. A decision to move to a single HAC is likely to cause upset to some parties therefore it is essential that effective communications are planned detailing how clients may access the housing advice they need in the event of any such decision. It is also essential that we work closely with other professionals and partner agencies to ensure that the best possible Housing & Homeless Advice continues to be delivered.
- 1.8.7. It is also important that, in the event of a decision to provide homelessness services from a central location, BCC works with interested partner agencies who deliver housing advice (as well as other groups) to develop capacity for provision of Housing Advice through such agencies/groups, locally where possible.

2. Introduction:

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- 2.1. On 30th November 2015 the Homelessness & Pre Tenancy Service received Cabinet Member approval to consult on the reorganisation of the Housing Advice Service¹.
- 2.2. Public Consultation of the proposed reorganisation of Housing Advice Centres (HAC's) commenced 04th December 2015 and ran until 21st January 2015 (7 weeks including the Christmas period).
- 2.3. During this time customers, citizens and professionals were offered the opportunity to provide feedback on the councils preferred option for service redesign, this being the removal of Housing Advice Centres from 3 of the current 4 neighbourhood offices they are based at (currently located in Northfield, Erdington & Sparkbrook) and the transfer of all staff, face to face Housing Advice functions and Homelessness Services to a newly commissioned Centre of Excellence located at the remaining HAC location situated in Newtown.
- 2.4. Customers, citizens and professionals were also invited to express their views on the alternate options considered by the Council but dismissed.
- 2.5. The aim of this consultation was to establish the views of the public on the proposed revisions to the Housing Advice service in order to establish the viability of the proposal, any barriers to its implementation and any additional mitigation required to ensure the service remains accessible to all (in the event that the proposal was approved to move forward).
- 2.6. Consultation was undertaken via three primary exercises which are detailed below:
 - A) Consultation A: A paper based 'Snapshot' Survey provided to all HAC customers accessing one of the 4 current centres.
 - B) Consultation B: An online survey utilising the 'Birmingham Be Heard' consultation tool, available to all customers, concerned citizens and professionals.
 - C) Consultation C: 4 facilitated face to face meetings across the city of Birmingham where members of the public and professionals were invited to attend and discuss/ask questions of the responsible officers. From these meeting reports were prepared detailing the findings.
- 2.7. This report contains analysis of the findings from this consultation.

¹ [Consulting on a Way Forward for Homelessness Services \(Ref 001113/2015\), Birmingham City Council](#)

3. Methodology

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- 3.1. It was recognised that any proposal to reduce the number of Housing Advice Centres was likely to be contentious however for this reason it was also decided that consultation must be as comprehensive and inclusive as reasonably practicable. It was for this reason that the 3 means of consultation outlined in 2.5 (A-C) were adopted.
- 3.2. Consultation A (The Snapshot Survey) was undertaken via a paper based questionnaire that was provided to all persons accessing Housing Advice Services at a Housing Advice Centre. This particular consultative channel was chosen for its ability to reach a large number of direct housing advice customers who may be affected by the proposed changes.
- 3.3. This piece of work was initially limited to 2 weeks due to the resource intensive nature of the work including explaining the purpose (if required) and answering any questions asked within an extremely busy office environment. The additional pressures on staff to collate and process these questionnaires was an additional consideration limiting the exercise to two weeks (Commencing 07th December 2016).
- 3.4. However this position was subsequently reviewed in view of initial low response rates and issues managing the issuing of questionnaires to customers. Following discussion with the relevant Cabinet Member this consultation was extended until 15th January 2016.
- 3.5. During this time all Housing Advice customers visiting a Customer Service Centre (identified through reception triage process to distinguish from Neighbourhood Advice Service customers) would be issued with 2 documents. The first of these documents was a consultation brief detailing the proposed changes to the service as well as the alternate options which were no longer under consideration. The second document was a short 2 page questionnaire asking for comment on these proposals as well as information about how they used the service currently and how they could be better assisted in the future (these documents can be found at Appendix 1A & 1B to this report).
- 3.6. In consultation A, although some free text responses were encouraged (rather than limiting responses to multiple choice) the questionnaire was limited in the scope of data it gathered due to its short length (Unlike Consultation B [3.8] it did not specifically ask for comment on alternate options and did not gather demographic data on users completing questionnaires).

- 3.7. The questionnaire was limited to two sides in order to encourage completion. A more comprehensive questionnaire, it was felt, would result in lower response rates. Although this is a somewhat simplistic view, research exists to support this². This was mitigated by information in the consultation brief which directed customers to the Birmingham Be Heard site (Consultation B) should customers wish to provide more comprehensive commentary on the proposed changes.
- 3.8. A copy of the Consultation Brief can be found at Appendix 1A of this report. A copy of the Consultation A questionnaire can be found at Appendix 1B.
- 3.9. Customers were asked to complete this questionnaire and return it to a member of staff. Following which a member of Housing Advice Staff would enter the written information (verbatim) into the SurveyMonkey online tool for storage and analysis.
- 3.10. Consultation B (the Birmingham Be Heard Survey) was a comprehensive online consultation that ran from 04th December 2015 to 21st January 2016 (7 weeks including a 1 week break over the Christmas period). A specific and searchable consultation was opened using the Birmingham Be Heard consultation website (www.birminghambeheard.org.uk). This webpage provided a brief of the proposed changes, the reasons for the proposals, what we hoped to achieve and also detailed information on the alternate proposals that had been considered and rejected.
- 3.11. A document was attached to this page showing the geographical spread of Homeless Applicants by ward to allow customers to better understand the decision to choose the Newtown Site as the preferred option.
- 3.12. Having read these details viewers were then invited to complete an online questionnaire detailing their views on the proposals.
- 3.13. The online questionnaire was designed to be more comprehensive and gather data in greater detail than that that could be provided in Consultation A. The SurveyMonkey tool supporting the online questionnaire uses question logic to tailor the type of questions to the respondent ensuring that customers, concerned citizens and professionals are asked appropriate questions to their experience.

² Bogen K, THE EFFECT OF QUESTIONNAIRE LENGTH ON RESPONSE RATES - A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE, U.S. Bureau of the Census

- 3.14. This questionnaire gathers both demographic data for respondents as well as asking for specific comment on alternate proposals that had been considered and rejected. Many of the questions asked within Consultation A (the 'Snapshot' survey) are repeated here to increase inclusivity but allow for more detail to be entered more easily within free text fields.
- 3.15. Birmingham Be Heard is Birmingham City Council's primary consultative tool. However it is also recognised that one consultation among many is unlikely to gain significant reach unless its presence is known and publicised. To that end the existence of the Housing Advice online consultation was communicated via numerous means reaching a large audience. This included (amongst others) the following:
- A) Birmingham City Council Facebook page (5,696 followers at 22/12/15) – Post 18/12/2015
 - B) Birmingham City Council Twitter account (49,900 followers at 22/12/2015) – Post 17/12/2015
 - C) Birmingham Voluntary Service Council (BVSC) E-Bulletin (Approx 3,000 subscribers)
 - D) Letters to MP's, Members, Partner Agencies
 - E) Article in 'Your Weekly News' bulletin 17/12/15 (9,000+ BCC staff)
 - F) Directorate for People Special Leadership Team Briefing article 16/12/2015
 - G) Link in Consultation A 'Consultation Brief' (Distributed to all HAC customers for 2 weeks).
 - H) Briefing to Housing Liaison Boards
 - I) Via email to Birmingham Social Housing Partnership (BSHP)
 - J) Via email to advice providers
- 3.16. Copies of the Be Heard Front Page, Associated documents and a paper based version of online the questionnaire³ can be found at Appendix 1C of this report.

³ The paper based version of this survey does not include the question logic that sits behind the electronic version. Please note that Respondents will be asked different questions from within this survey dependant on their answers to previous questions.

3.17. Consultation C (Public Face to Face Events) were held as a final means of customer engagement and consultation. Consultation C involved the arranging and holding of 4 face to face meetings across Birmingham, with sessions in North, South & East Birmingham with a further session covering the West & Central area.

3.18. These sessions were held in January 2016 and took place as follows:

East Birmingham Event:

Monday 11 January 2016 (1000-1230hrs) @ Room B, Sparkbrook Community Centre, 34 Grantham Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, B11 1LU

South Birmingham Event:

Monday 11 January 2016 (1400-1630hrs) @ Northfield Baptist Church, 789 Bristol Road South, Northfield B31 2NQ

North Birmingham Event:

Monday 18 January 2016 (1000-1230hrs) @ YMCA, The Coppice, 300 Reservoir Road, Erdington, Birmingham, B23 6DB

West & Central Birmingham Event:

Monday 18 January 2016 (1400-1630hrs) @ Community Hall, St Luke's Church Centre, Great Colmore Street, Lee Bank, Birmingham, B15 2AT

3.19. These sessions were advertised and promoted as widely as practicable with a view to maximising public and partnership attendance. To achieve this, a variety of promotional methods were engaged. These are listed below:

3.19.1. A press release was issued by the Birmingham City Council Press Office detailing the times, dates and locations of the proposed events.

3.19.2. Emails were sent to MP's, Local Councillors and Partner Agencies detailing times and dates of the events and encouraging attendance.

3.19.3. Posters for all four events were displayed prominently in Housing Advice Centres (and events were timed so many customers may have knowledge of the proposals as the paper based survey in HAC's had been taking place for some weeks).

3.19.4. Flyers were handed out at Housing Advice Centres

3.19.5. Posters were displayed by partner agencies including displays at Citizen's Advice Bureau's and Police Stations (including Steelhouse Lane as the only remaining 24hr station).

- 3.19.6. Details of the events were loaded onto the Housing Advice Service's 'Be Heard' online consultation page.
- 3.19.7. Posters were displayed In BCC Temporary 'Accommodation Centres' for Homeless Persons.
- 3.19.8. Details of the events were 'Tweeted' by Birmingham Newsroom and Cllr Stacey.
- 3.19.9. Details of the events were included in internal publications 'Weekly Staff News' and the fortnightly 'Leadership Bulletin'.

4. Assumptions & Constraints

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- 4.1. There are known discrepancies in the application of Consultation A. When this consultation channel went live two of the four HAC's experienced difficulties in implementing it. This resulted in a disproportionately low number of responses from these centres initially. As a result these centres were given additional time (8 days) to obtain additional responses. This was felt necessary as both of these were centres proposed for closure and thus these customer groups were most affected.
- 4.2. The Housing Advice consultation was launched simultaneously with the Neighbourhood Advice Service consultation as the two services are both co-located and both subject to service redesign. Both consultations follow the same model and Neighbourhood Advice also undertook an exercise identical to Consultation A & B. Thus the possibility exists that, during the triage process (outlined in 3.3), some Housing Advice customers may have been provided with the wrong survey. This is a 'known unknown' and thus the impact on overall results cannot be quantified.
- 4.3. No demographic information for the customer base consulted within Consultation A was gathered. This was an intentional act rather than an oversight and is rationalised at 3.5 as a means to maximising responses. The broad demographic of the HAC customer group is already known and it is felt that the impact of this on the results is minimal when considered against maximising responses.
- 4.4. Although this is consultation on a preferred option, respondents to all forms of consultation are made aware of the alternate options that were considered and Consultation B directly asks for feedback on these options that are no longer under consideration⁴.
- 4.5. The review of large volumes of free text data is required within this report. The interpretation of this data is a responsibility of the person preparing the report. Although review and interpretation is impartial this process is not infallible and therefore copies of all free text responses are available for review at Appendix 1D to this report.

⁴ Good practice when consulting on preferred options within *R (on the application of Moseley (in substitution of Stirling Deceased)) (AP) (Appellant) v London Borough of Haringey*, UKSC 2013/0116

5. Results and Analysis

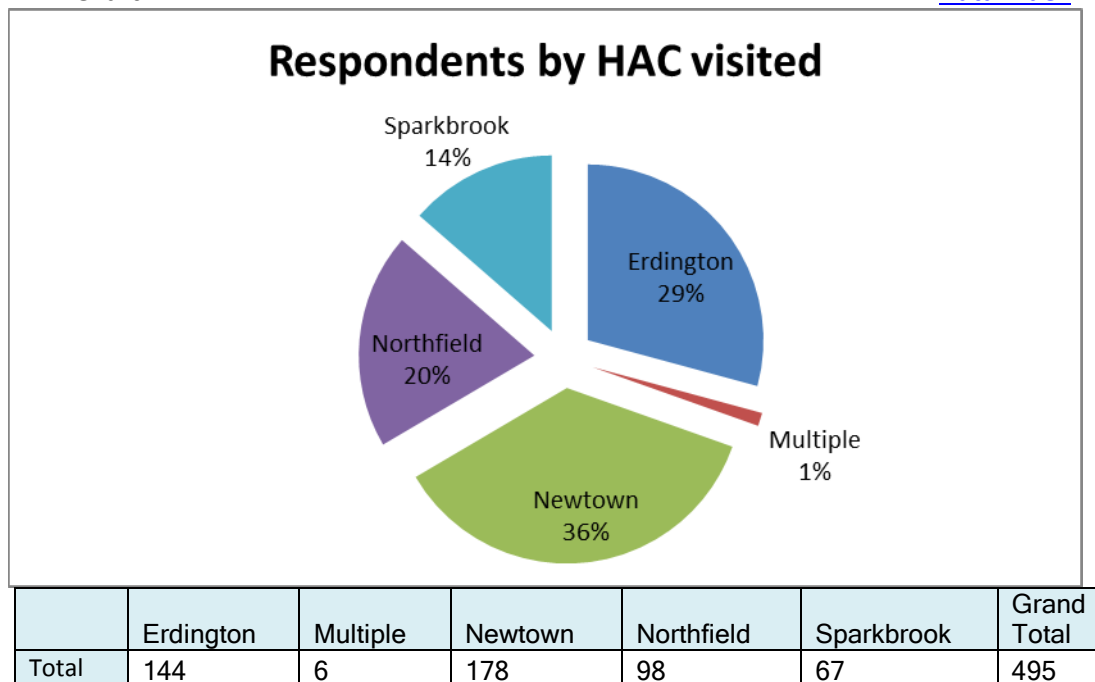
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5.1. Consultation A - All HAC's

5.1.1. The graph below (Chart 1) shows the respondents to the questionnaire by the centre they visited. From this data it shows that 3 of the 4 current HAC's were well represented with only Sparkbrook providing less than 20% of the responses (14% only). Newtown and Erdington were the best represented centres providing 36% and 29% of all responses respectively. Northfield was well represented with 20% of all responses being provided from there.

Chart 1:

[Data Index](#)



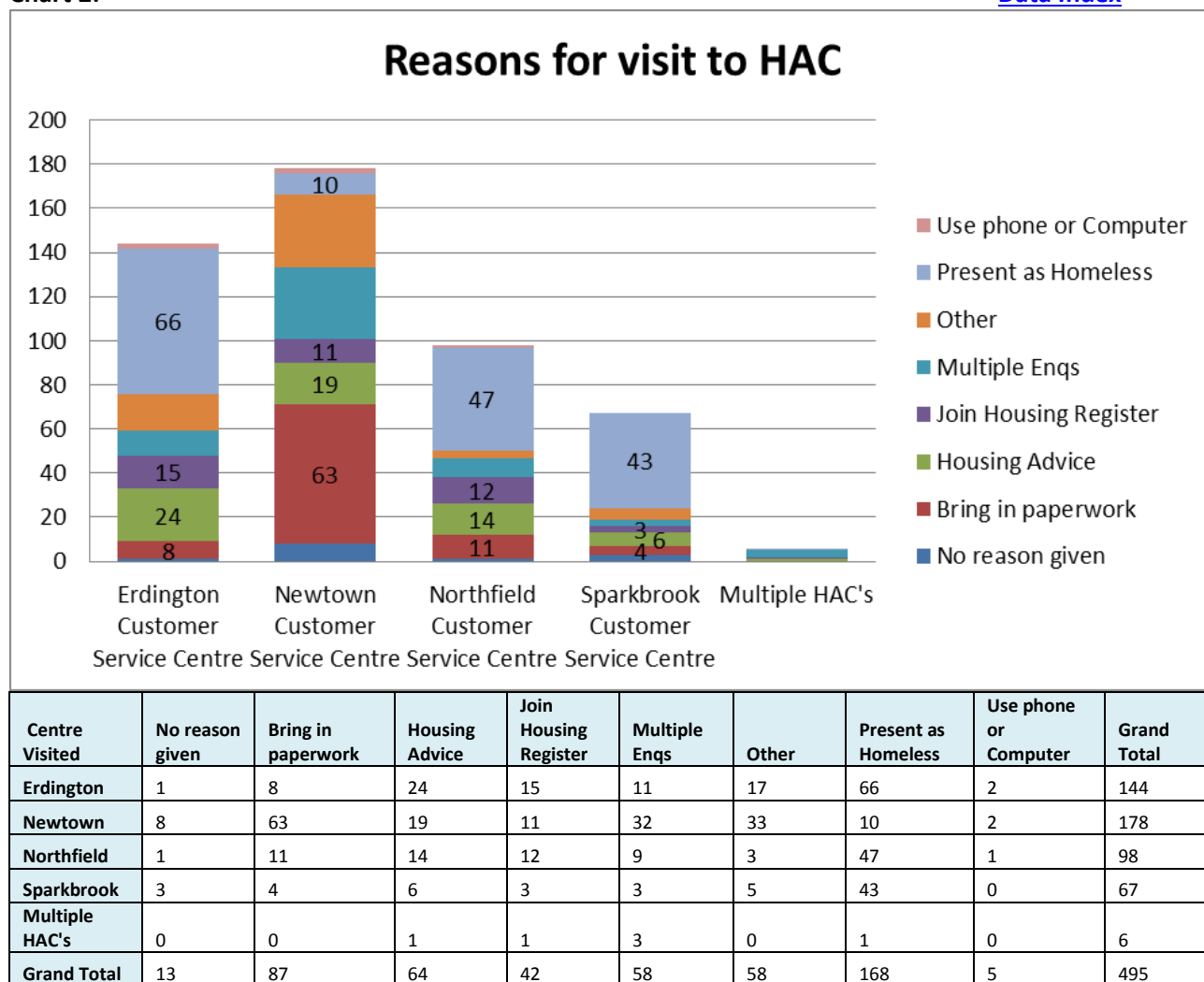
5.1.2. The graph below (Chart 2) shows the responses of customers asked their reason for attending the HAC on that particular occasion. The responses show that in 3 of the 4 centres 'Presenting as Homeless' was the most popular reason for visiting the centre.

5.1.3. Newtown was the notable exception to this pattern however this is explained as Newtown does not presently administer 'Roofless' (Homeless on the day) presentations, which account for more than 50% of all Homeless Applicants (from previous demand analysis). Newtown's customer base includes a much larger proportion of customers presenting with 'Multiple' Enquiries (55% of all 'Multiple Enquiries'). Further analysis of this shows that 53% of those attending Newtown with 'Multiple Enquiries' are seeking Housing Advice.

- 5.1.4. Chart 2 also shows that respondents from Newtown were primarily attending to 'Bring in Paperwork' (35% of respondents). Future plans to move to self-service and allow the acceptance of scanned or emailed documents and proofs should reduce this traffic and allow the centre to better accommodate additional customers.

Chart 2:

[Data Index](#)



- 5.1.5. The data below (Chart 3) shows the means of transport respondents have used to access the HAC's on the day of their visit. From this data Newtown has the highest proportion of people accessing the centre on foot (48% of all respondents accessing on foot and equal to totals of the remaining 3 centres combined).

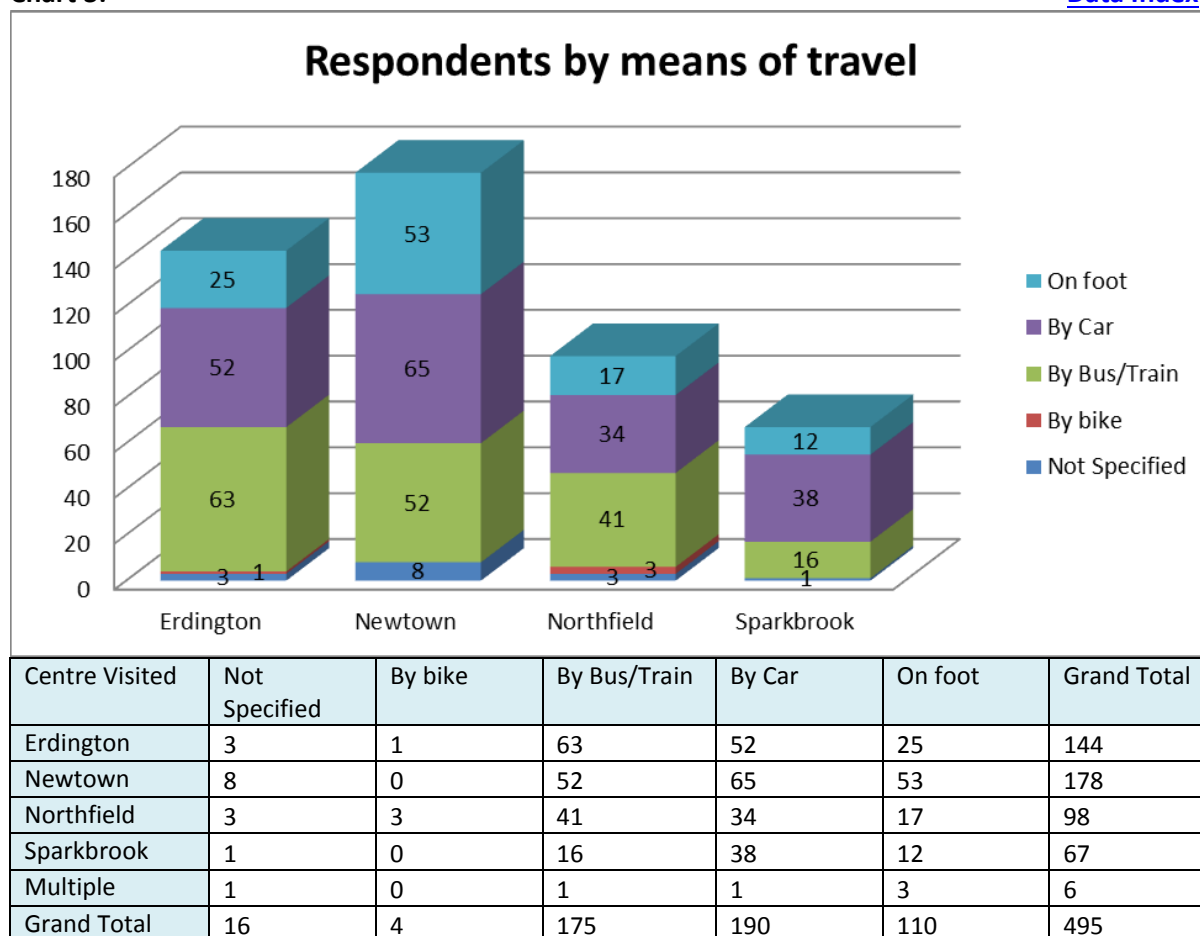
- 5.1.6. This data shows that presently 73% of respondents currently use some form of vehicular transport (bus/rail/car) to access a Housing Advice Centre. This percentage increases at the centres most affected by the proposed changes

with 81% of Erdington Customers, 79% of Northfield Customers and 81% of Sparkbrook Customers all presently using vehicular transport to visit these centres.

- 5.1.7. Notable was the higher than expected proportion of customers accessing a HAC by car. 35-36% of respondents at Newtown, Erdington & Northfield accessed HAC's by means of a car with this figure rising to 57% of respondents at Sparkbrook.

Chart 3:

[Data Index](#)



- 5.1.8. Homeless households are amongst the most vulnerable customers accessing the centre. Moving forward the service intends to focus on this client group specialising in Homelessness Prevention and dealing with Homeless applications. Chart 4 shows respondents who have cited presenting as homeless as the reason for their visit (including where homelessness is one of 'multiple' reasons for visiting) and analyses the means by which they accessed the HAC on the day they completed the questionnaire.

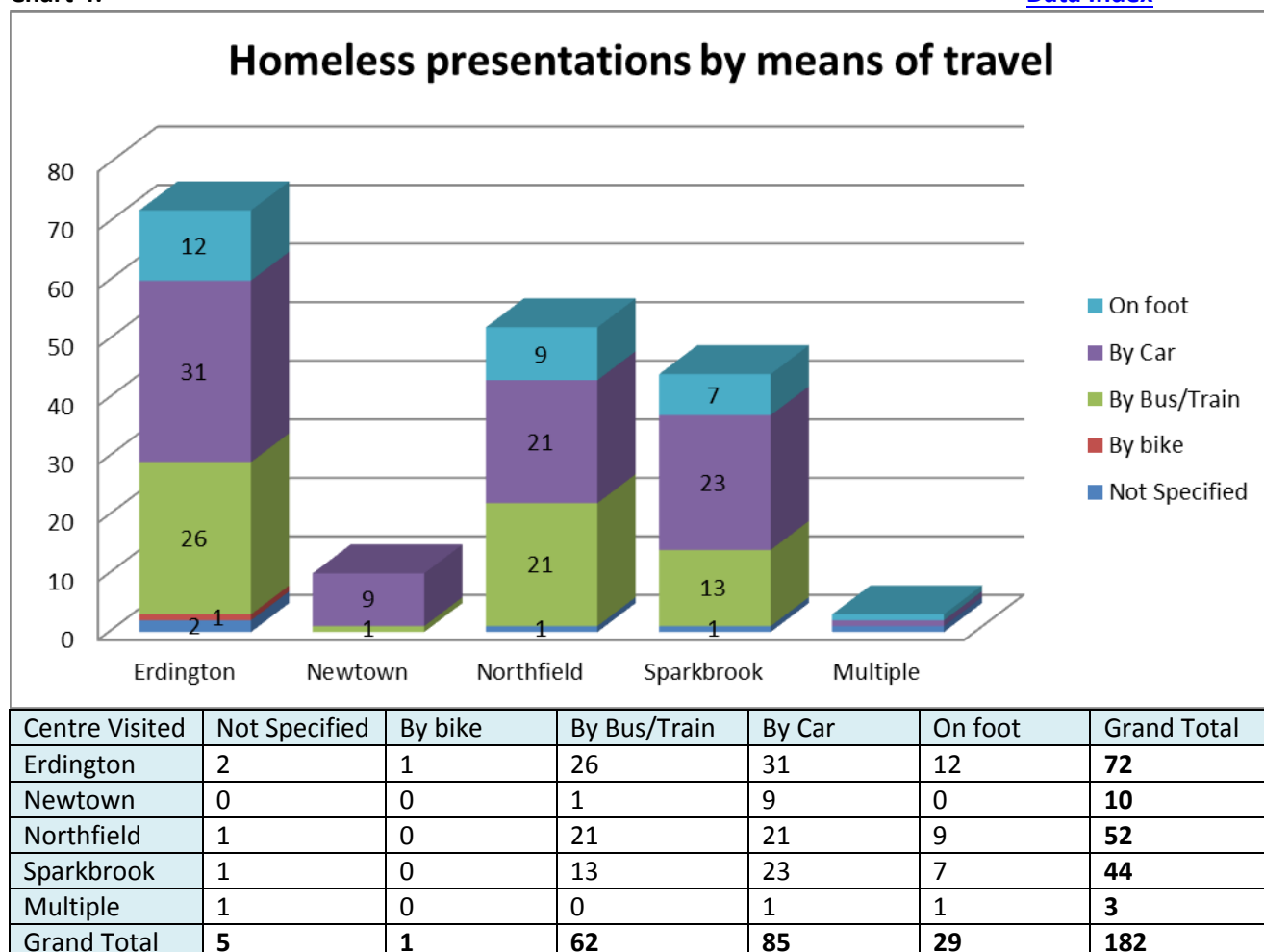
- 5.1.9. Chart 4 shows that only a small number of respondents presenting as homeless access a Housing Advice Centre on foot. Overall 81% of all respondents presenting as Homeless access a HAC by Car, Bus or Rail. This

overall figure is mirrored at the 3 most impacted centres. 79% of Erdington Homeless Respondents accessed the HAC by Car, Bus or Rail with 81% doing so at Northfield and 82% doing so at Sparkbrook.

5.1.10. Again notable was the higher than expected number of Homeless applicants who accessed the centre by car. At the most affected HAC's this figure was between 40-52% (40% at Erdington, 40% at Northfield and 52% at Sparkbrook).

Chart 4:

[Data Index](#)

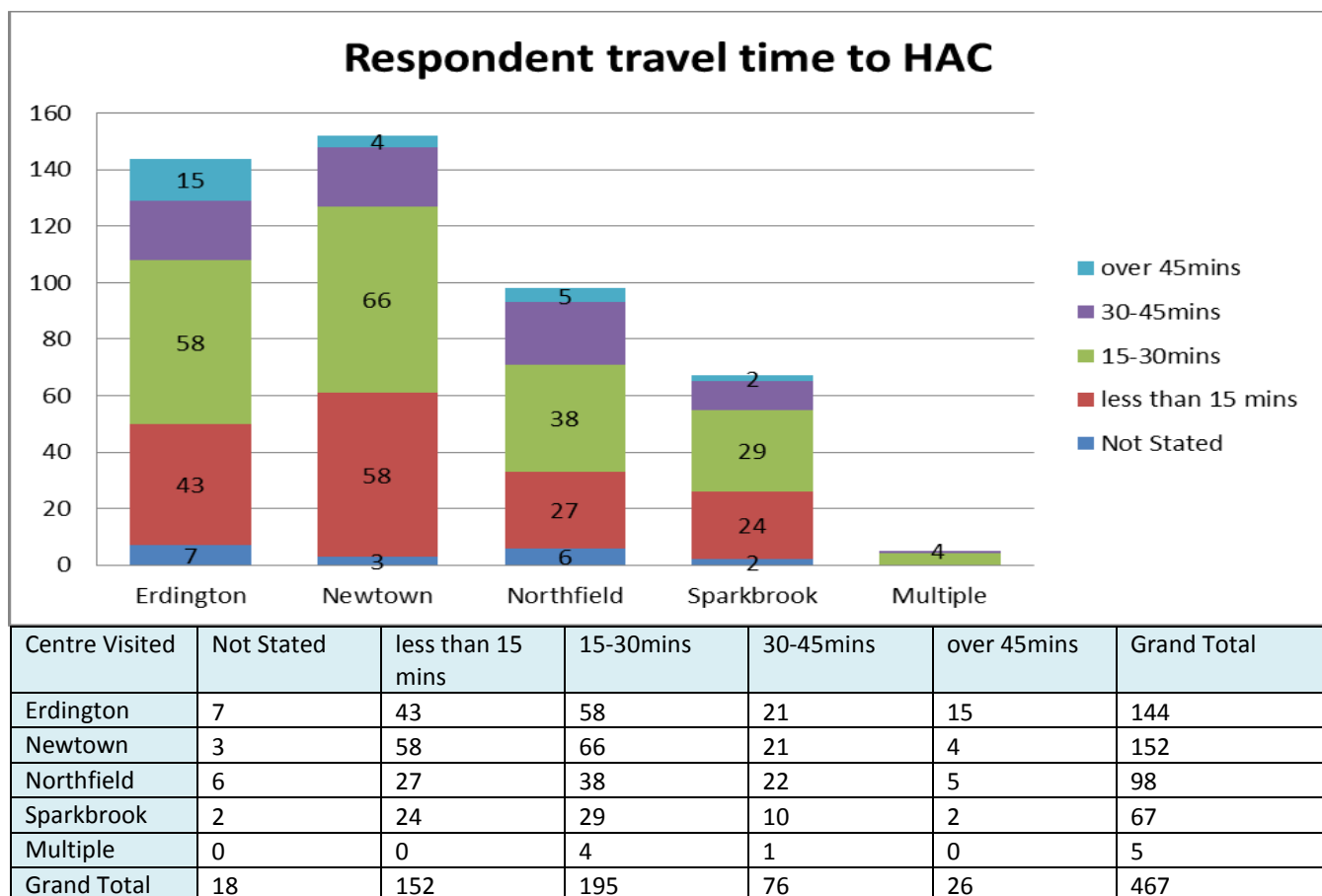


5.1.11. Respondents were asked to provide an estimate for the time it took them to reach the HAC on the day of their visit. The data gathered here is outlined in Chart 5.

5.1.12. Of the most affected HAC's 25% of Erdington Customers, 28% of Northfield Customers and 16% of Sparkbrook Customers presently travel 30+ mins to reach the centre.

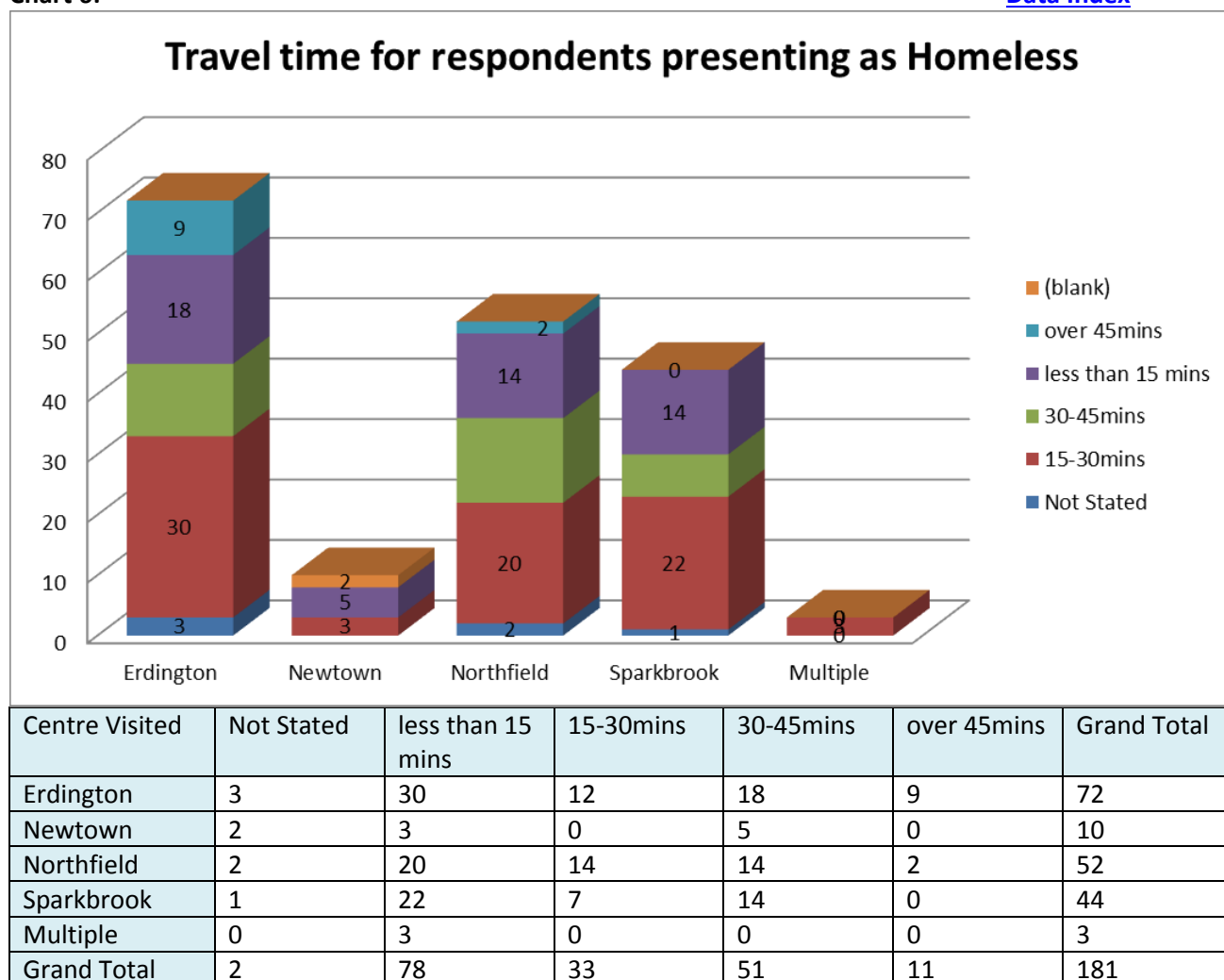
Chart 5:

[Data Index](#)



5.1.13. When travel time for respondents is limited to those presenting as Homeless this picture remains similar. 25% of respondents travel in excess of 30minutes to reach a HAC, 43% take 15-30 mins and 29% can access one in less than 15mins. This data is shown in Chart 6.

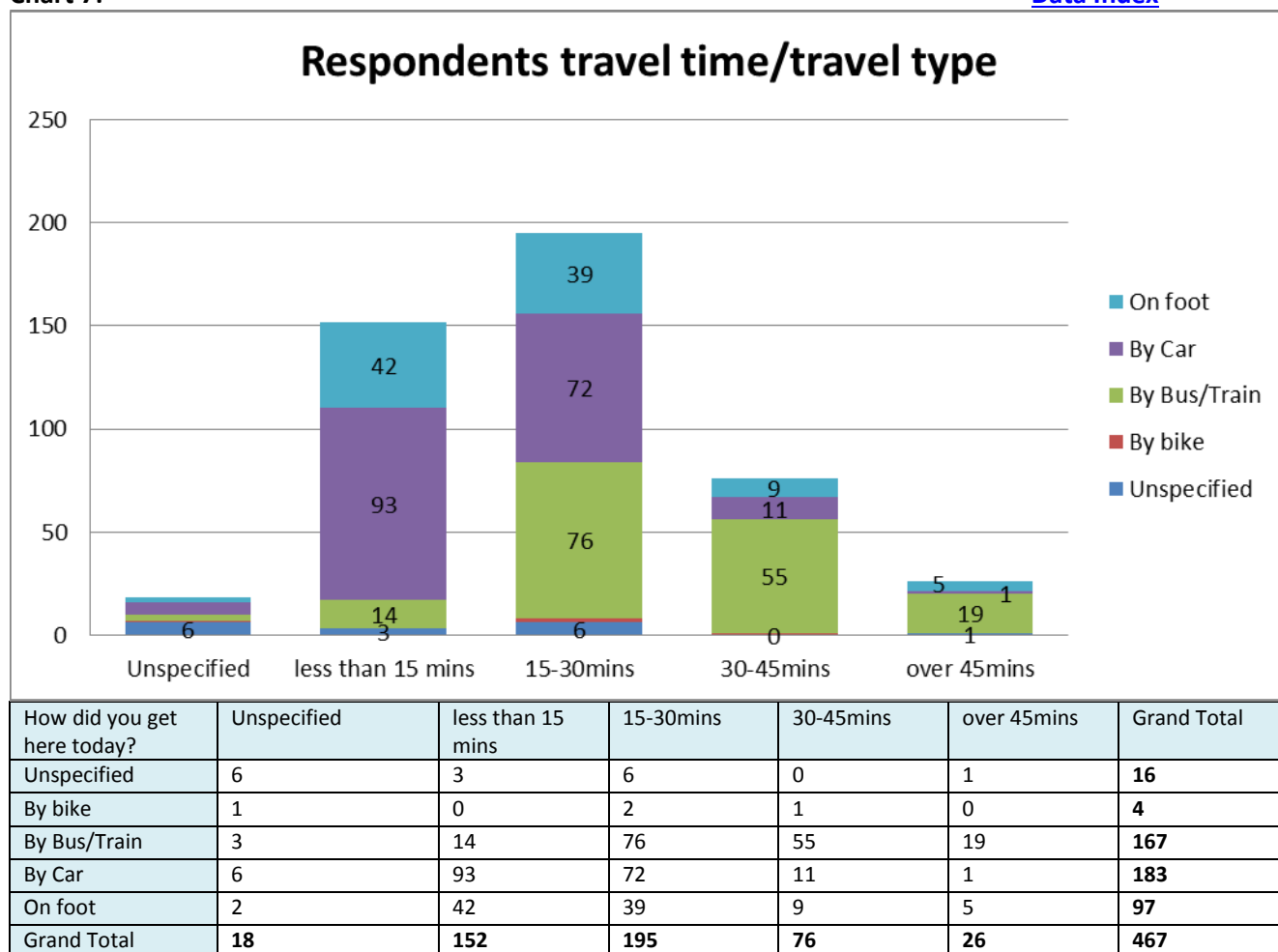
Chart 6:

[Data Index](#)

5.1.14. When Travel Time and method of Travel are analysed the responses appear within anticipations. The majority of journeys within 30 minutes are undertaken by Car or on foot. Only around 6% of all journeys are by car or foot exceeding 30 minutes. A small number (3%) accessed a HAC via Public Transport in less than 15 minutes.

5.1.15. 39% of all journeys were undertaken via car with over half of these being short journeys of 15 mins or less. and 17% of respondents reached a HAC on foot, the majority of these journeys took less than 15 minutes however a significant number took between 15 and 30 mins. 34% of all respondent journeys to HAC's took place on Public Transport taking above 15 minutes. Of this total 48% of journeys took 15-30mins, 32% took 30-45 mins and 11% travelled in excess of 45 mins. Data relating to this can be found in Chart 7.

Chart 7:

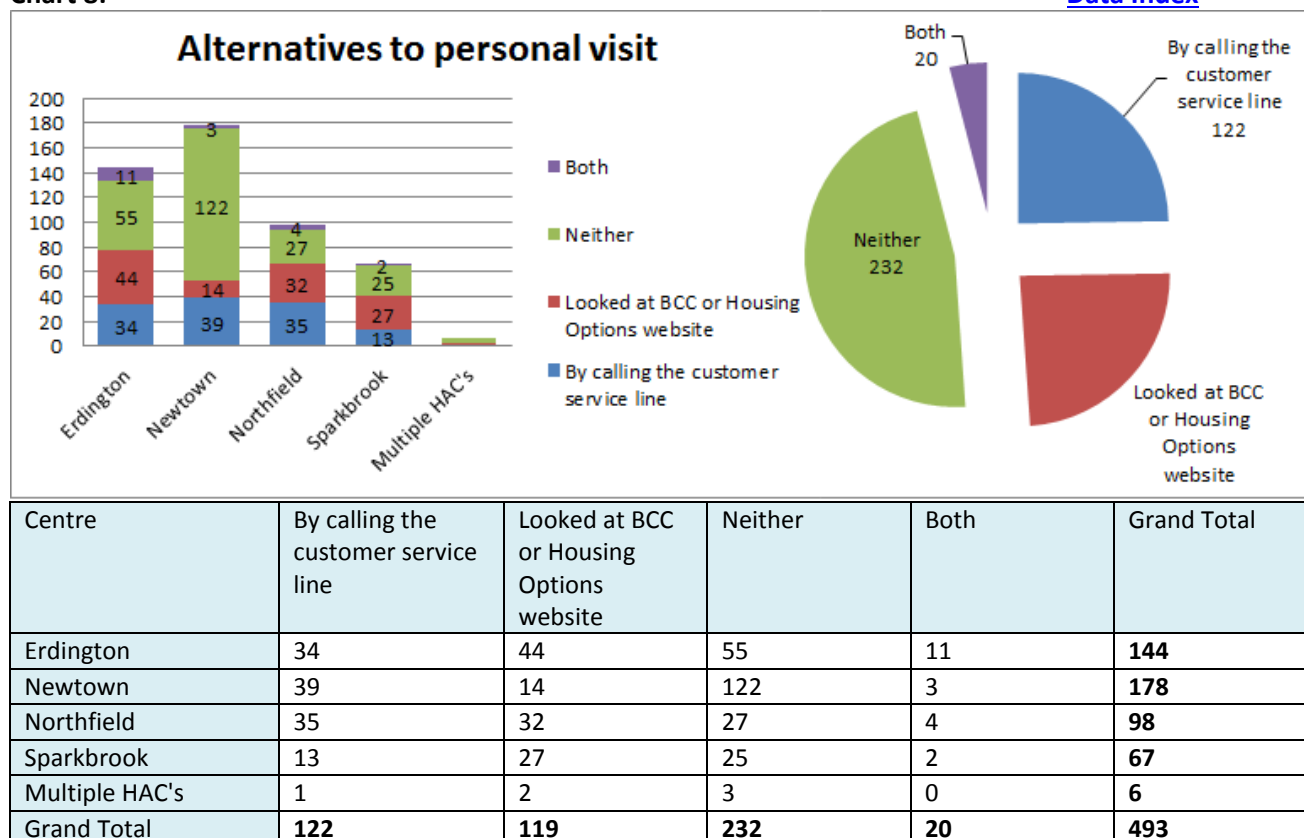
[Data Index](#)

5.1.16. Currently, those seeking Housing Advice can seek this via a personal visit to a Housing Advice Centre, by calling the customer service line, by visiting the corporate Birmingham.gov website or by visiting the Birmingham Housing Options website. Respondents in this survey were asked which of the alternatives they had tried before visiting a HAC.

5.1.17. Just over 50% of all respondents had sought assistance through the customer service line, website(s) or both before personally visiting a HAC. However this also means that nearly 50% of respondents had not sought assistance through other means before visiting a centre. 53% of all respondents who did not seek advice elsewhere first were visitors to Newtown

5.1.18. The data regarding alternatives to personal visit can be found in Chart 8.

Chart 8:

[Data Index](#)

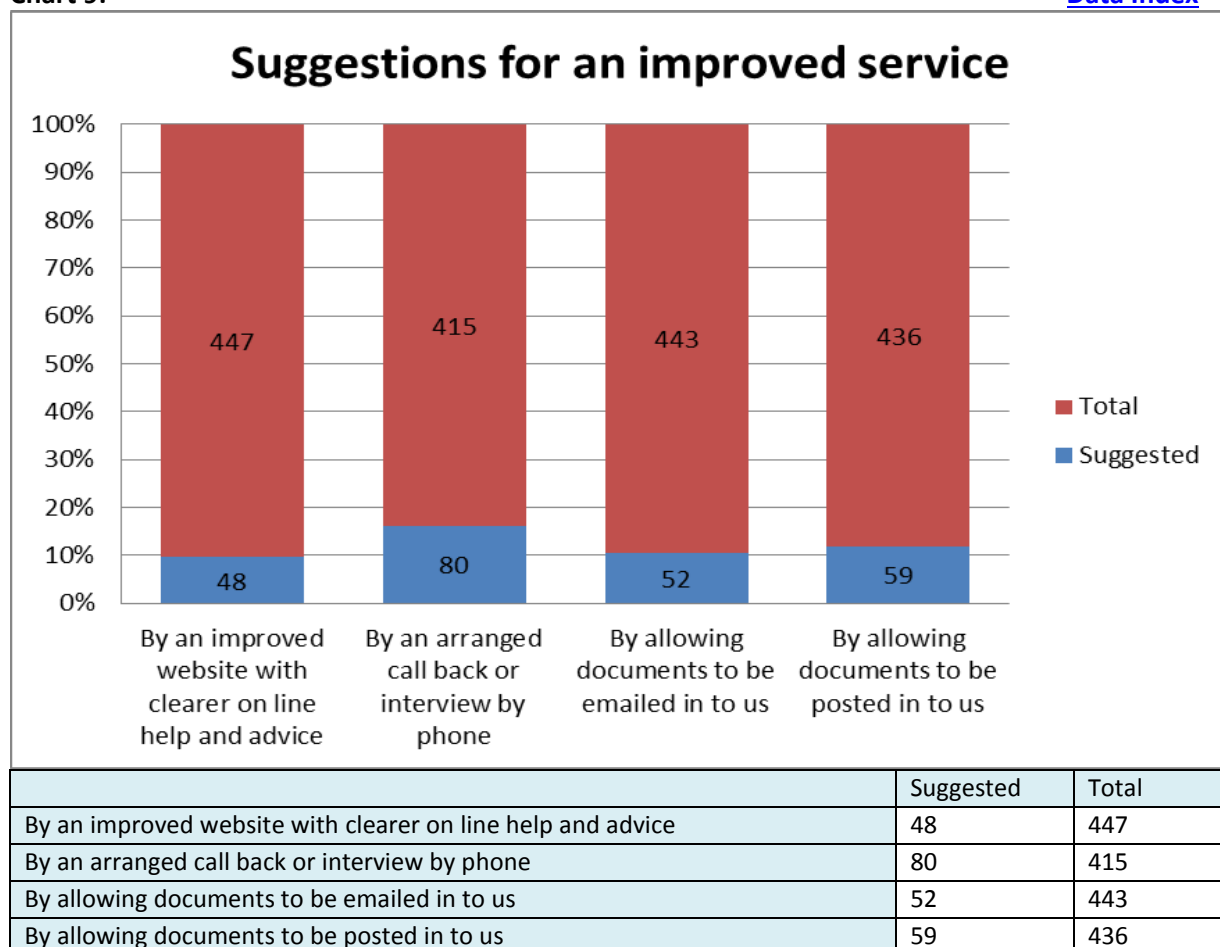
5.1.19. As part of consultation A respondents were asked “Thinking about what you came in for today could we have dealt with this in any other way” and were given 4 options which the service is considering to make improvements in.

5.1.20. Of these 4 suggested areas for improvement only the option for an arranged call back showed significantly more positive responses than the others with around 15% of respondents believing this could have resolved their requirement to personally visit. All three remaining options received around a 10% favourable response⁵.

5.1.21. It is therefore apparent that of all respondents, the large majority do not feel that their situation could have been resolved by other means than personal visit. However, in considering the small numbers that feel their issue could have been dealt with in an alternate way this could still impact significantly on HAC footfall. Those believing that their issue could have been resolved by an arranged call back or telephone interview represent 19% of all respondents. Dependant on how many respondents selected multiple alternate options this figure could reach 55% (from 239 alternate option selections) This information is displayed in Chart 9.

⁵ Respondents asked this question were allowed to select multiple suggestions for improvement.

Chart 9:

[Data Index](#)

5.1.22. Again in considering that Homeless Households are amongst the most vulnerable that will present to the service, analysis was undertaken to determine the number of visits each respondent undertook to a HAC in the last year. Of those presenting as Homeless 32% were visiting for the first time in 12 months. Of this same group a total of 69% had visited 1-3 times in total over the last 12 months.

5.1.23. The homeless group shows a downward trend in repeat visits indicating that Homeless households make fewer visits overall.

5.1.24. Among the most frequent reasons for multiple visits to a HAC were those with Multiple/Other Enquiries however 'Bringing in Paperwork' was the most common reason for persons advising that they had visited a HAC in excess of 6 times over the last 12 months⁶.

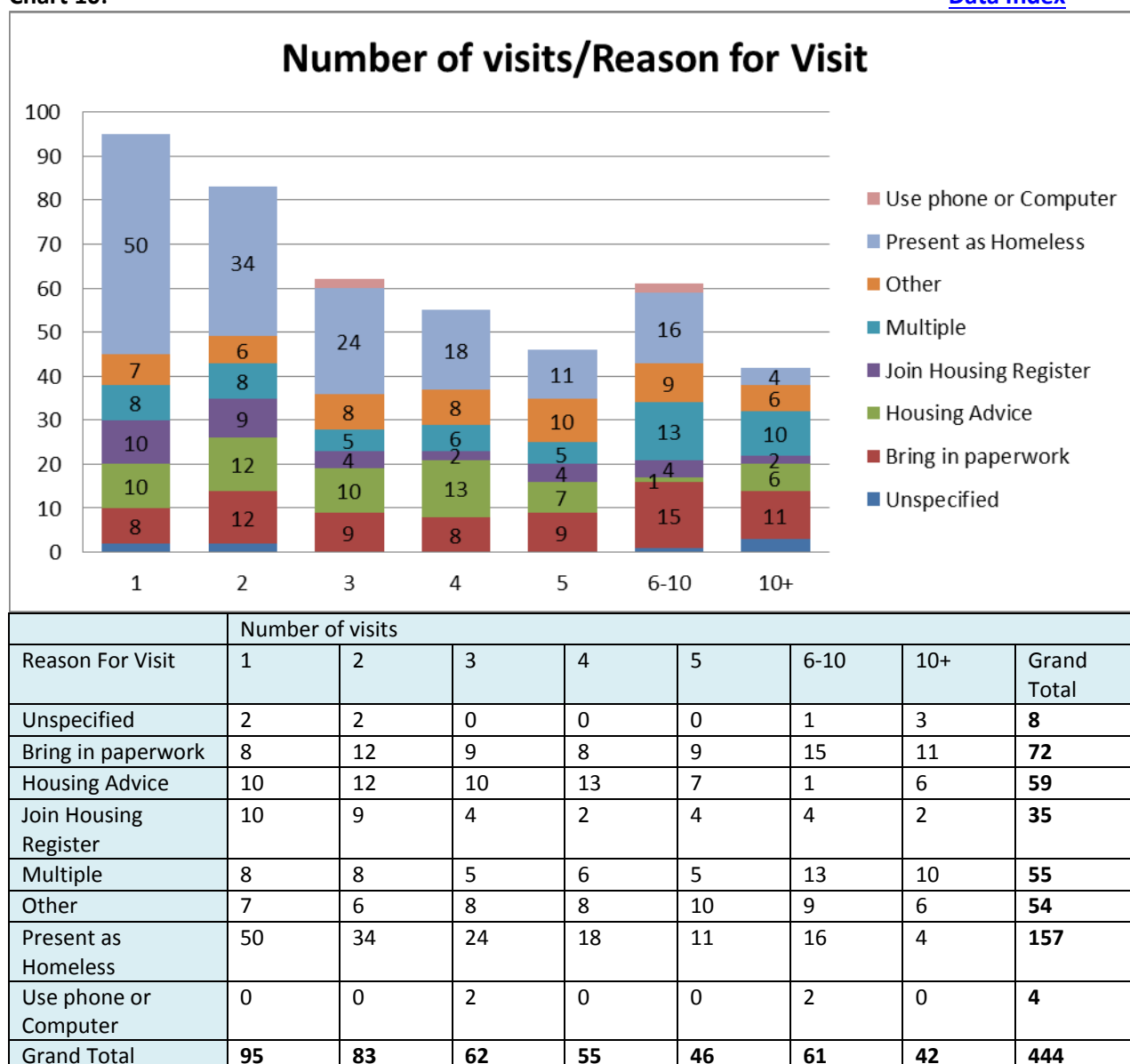
⁶ The data analysis in 6.1.23-6.1.25 is based on best interpretation of data however assumes a trend of repeat visits related to an original enquiry or issue. Data was not gathered on the reason for each of multiple visits and may vary.

5.1.25. It is important to note that, of the identified number of respondents who have visited HAC's 6 or more times in 12 months, these repeat visitors are likely to represent a large proportion of the overall HAC footfall. Targeting these repeat visitors by removing reasons for repeat visits (such as providing Online Part VI applications and allowing documentation to be emailed or scanned) may impact significantly on reducing the need for such repeat visits.

5.1.26. Chart 10 below shows a graphical representation of visits against the reason for the respondent's most recent visit.

Chart 10:

[Data Index](#)

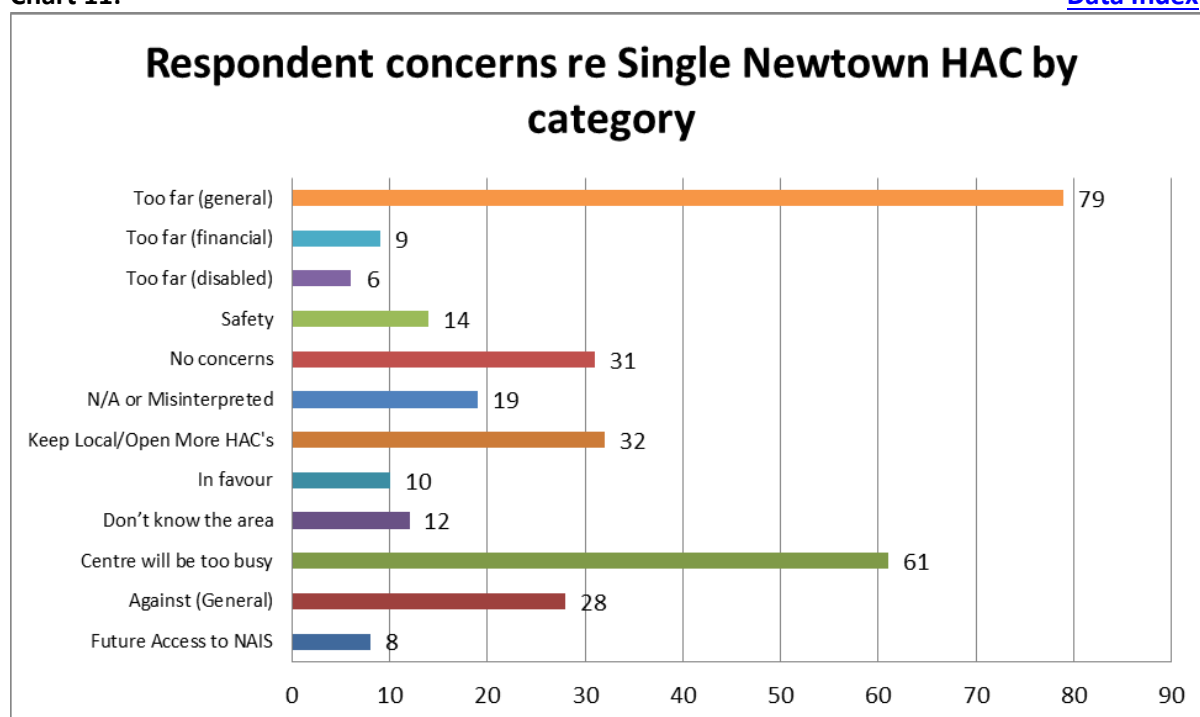


5.1.27. Customers were asked to outline any concerns they had regarding proposals for a single housing advice centre based at Newtown. Respondents were given the opportunity to provide free text responses to this question.

5.1.28. 266 responses were received to this question. A full list of these responses can be found at Appendix 1D of this report. For the purposes of analysis these 266 responses have been reviewed and categorised into 12 broad categories. Responses provided may, due to free text, fit into two or more categories and therefore the number of categorised responses (Chart 11) does not correlate directly with the 266 responses provided.

Chart 11:

[Data Index](#)



5.1.29. In addition to the data above a word-cloud analysis has been undertaken scanning the free text responses for keywords. The results can be found below with data confirming the number of occurrences.

Appointment Benefit Advice STAFF Office Open Children
Good Idea Difficult Disabled Newtown
Overcrowded Centre PHONE Far PLACE
Travel FACE to FACE Waiting Prefer
Access Not AGREE Think Not WORK Issues CAUSE
Housing Officer Long Queues Safety

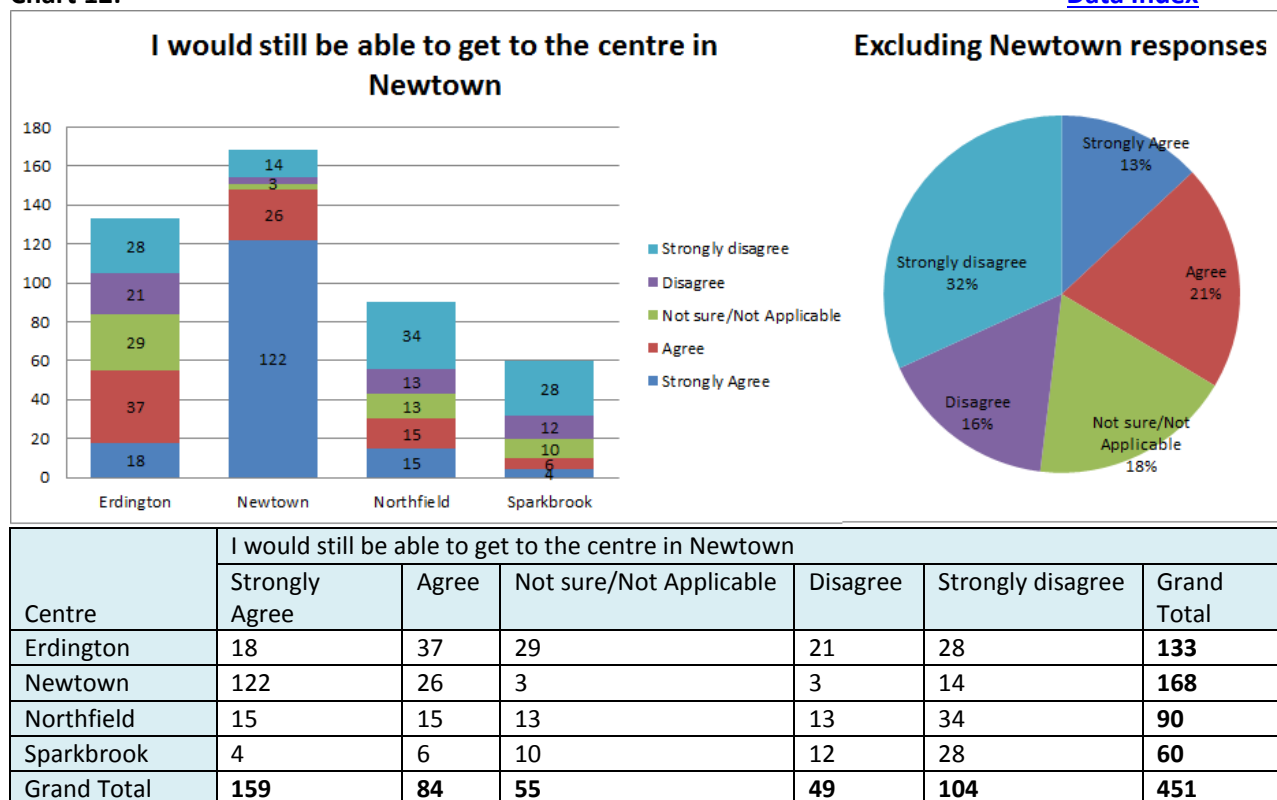
Travel	<div><div></div></div>	22.56%	60
Far	<div><div></div></div>	11.65%	31
Waiting	<div><div></div></div>	11.65%	31
Centre	<div><div></div></div>	9.02%	24
Access	<div><div></div></div>	5.26%	14
Newtown	<div><div></div></div>	5.26%	14
Think	<div><div></div></div>	5.26%	14
Difficult	<div><div></div></div>	4.51%	12
Issues	<div><div></div></div>	3.38%	9
Children	<div><div></div></div>	3.01%	8

5.1.30. Respondents were asked if they felt they would still be able to get to the centre in Newtown. Analysis of the results of this question shows that, overall more than 50% of respondents agreed that they would. However it is noted that respondents from Newtown form 36% of all respondents ([Chart 1](#)). Therefore further analysis was undertaken restricting responses to those centres where closure is proposed.

5.1.31. Upon this further analysis the trend changes. 48% either disagree or strongly disagree that they would be able to make it to a Newtown based centre (the large majority of these strongly disagreeing). 18% of respondents were unsure or felt it did not apply and 34% agreed (to some extent) that they would be able to reach the proposed new centre. This data can be found in Chart 12 .

Chart 12:

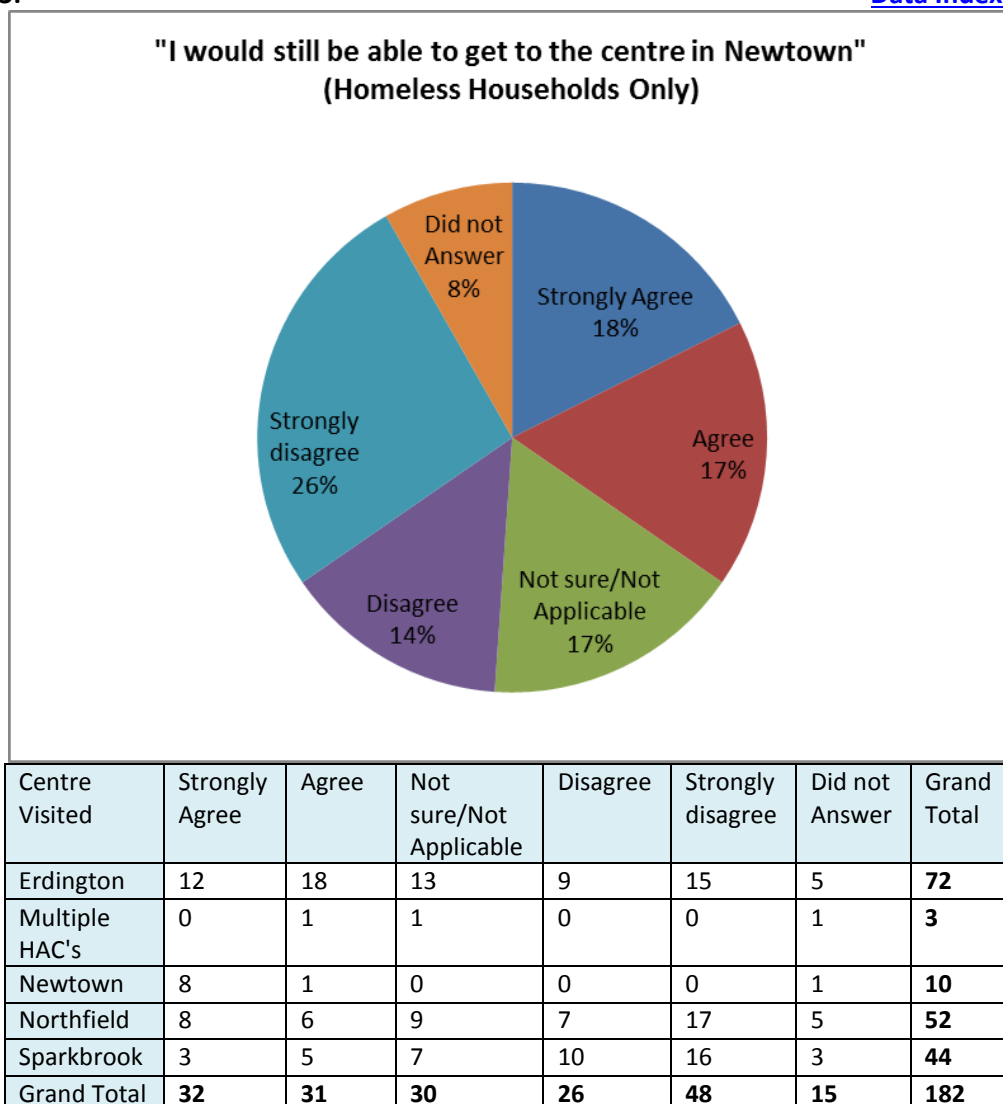
[Data Index](#)



5.1.32. Again considering the particular vulnerability of Homeless Households the data considered above was limited to Homeless Households only. When this filtered data was analysed 26% of homeless respondents strongly disagreed that they would be able to reach Newtown with a further 14% disagreeing. 18% of respondents strongly agreed that they could reach Newtown and a further 17% agreed.

5.1.33. No additional analysis of Homeless households exclusive of Newtown data is shown as, due to the low number of respondents presenting as Homeless from Newtown, this did not significantly impact on findings and the trend remained the same. A breakdown of responses by all homeless applicants can be found in Chart 13.

Chart 13:

[Data Index](#)

5.1.34. In considering potential mitigation for those who may be unable to access the service in its proposed future form, customers were asked to what degree they agreed or disagreed with 3 statement regarding alternate ways they could access the service or an alternate service.

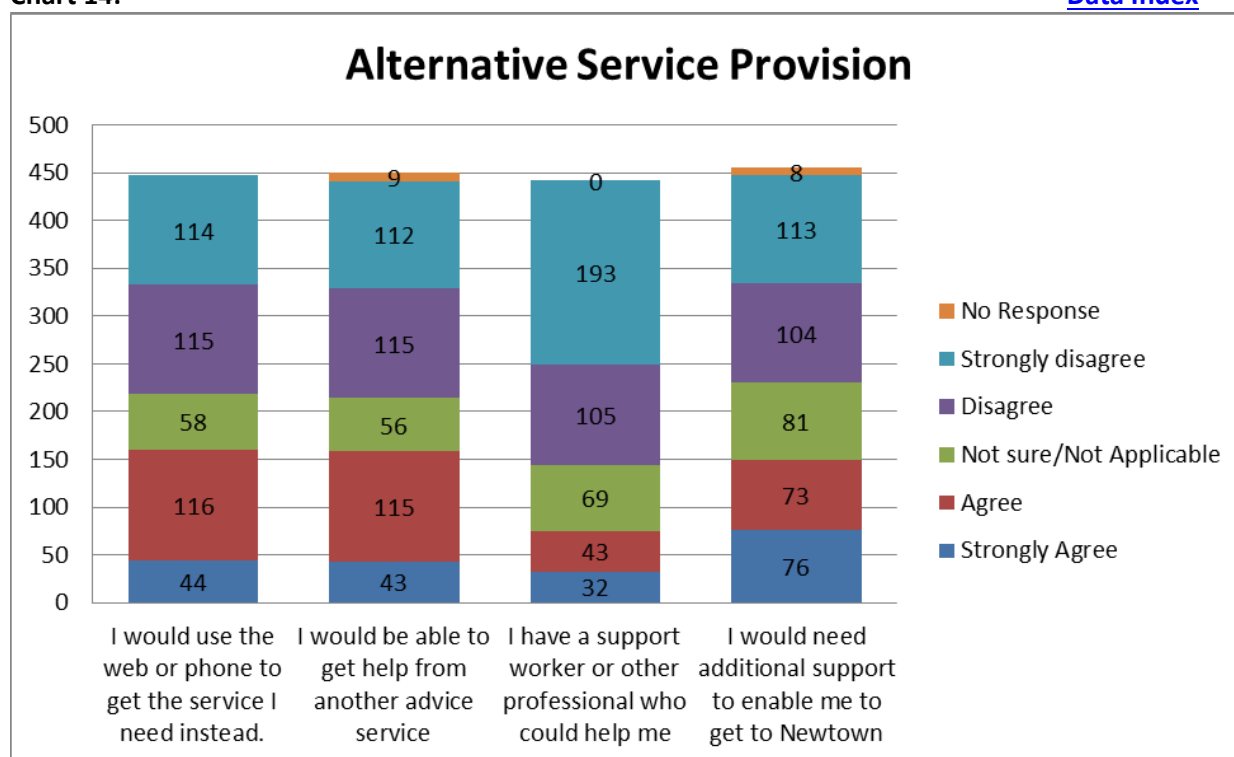
5.1.35. The results (shown in Chart 14) show, as anticipated, a large number of people do not feel that they could access the service in an alternate way or similar service. However there is still a significant number who would. 36% of respondents agreed (to some extent) that they would use the phone or web to get the assistance that they required. 35% of respondents felt that they could get advice from an alternate advice service and 17% agreed that they had a support worker or alternate professional that could help them.

5.1.36. The majority did not indicate that they would need additional support to reach Newtown (49%). 32% agreed (to some extent) that they would require such assistance and a remaining 18% were unsure if they would require any additional assistance.

5.1.37. The smaller proportion of respondents identifying that they would need additional assistance to reach Newtown diverts from the established trend (In [chart 12](#)) where 48% disagreed (to some extent) that they would be able to reach the proposed Newtown Centre while only 32% believe that they would require assistance to do so.

Chart 14:

[Data Index](#)



5.1.38. A further free text response was invited in response to the question “How do you think we could make it easier for you to get the housing and homelessness support you might need?”

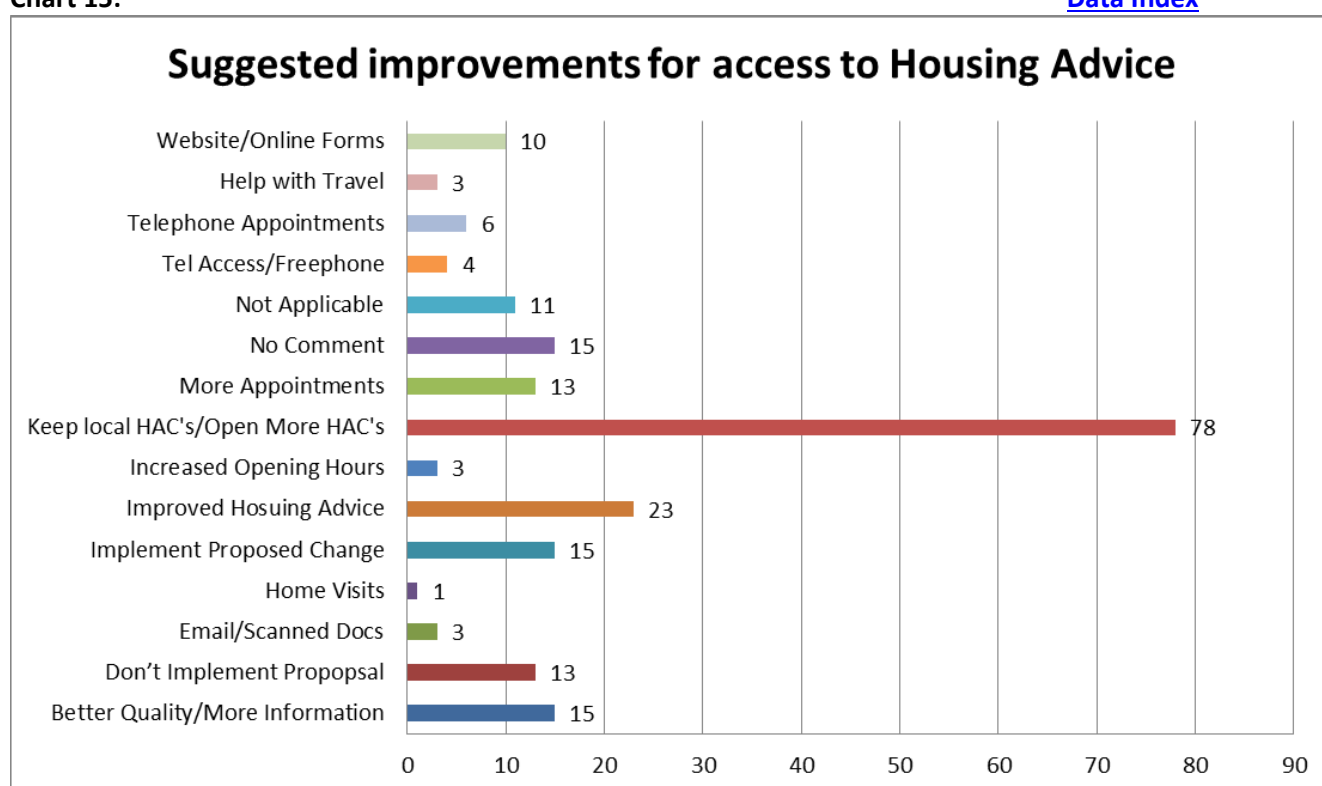
5.1.39. A total of 188 responses were provided to this question. Analysis of this data allowed these responses to be grouped broadly into 14 categories (as with 5.1.28) with responses potentially fitting into multiple categories dependant on content. It was notable that keeping the current number of (or opening additional) HAC’s featured very prominently again, having previously appeared as a prominent category in analysis of responses at 5.1.28.

5.1.40. Although keeping existing or opening additional HAC's was by far the most frequently categorised response (41%), other frequent responses were noted as being similar to improvements already being worked on as part of the Homelessness Transformation Programme in general and the proposed Newtown centre in particular. This includes Better Quality Information (8%), Improved Housing Advice (12%), More appointments (7%), Telephone Appointments (3%) and an improved website/online forms (5%).

5.1.41. The data gathered from this question can be found demonstrated graphically, in Chart 15. A full copy of free text responses can be found at Appendix 1D of this report.

Chart 15:

[Data Index](#)



5.1.42. A Wordcloud analysis was also undertaken showing the most commonly used words within these free test responses. This can be found overleaf along with data showing the frequency of use of the top 10 words.

Advice WORSE ABLE PAY Centre Open Issues
 Newtown Contact Access LIVE
 Sparkbrook Interview Service Calling
 Office Open Bus Housing ALLOW
 Local Clear Support Northfield Open Homeless
 THINK STAFF Disagree Appointments Phone

Office Open	<div><div></div></div>	18.62%	35
Service	<div><div></div></div>	7.98%	15
Housing	<div><div></div></div>	7.98%	15
Sparkbrook	<div><div></div></div>	7.98%	15
Local	<div><div></div></div>	7.45%	14
Access	<div><div></div></div>	5.85%	11
Support	<div><div></div></div>	5.32%	10
Newtown	<div><div></div></div>	5.32%	10
Homeless	<div><div></div></div>	4.79%	9
Centre Open	<div><div></div></div>	4.26%	8

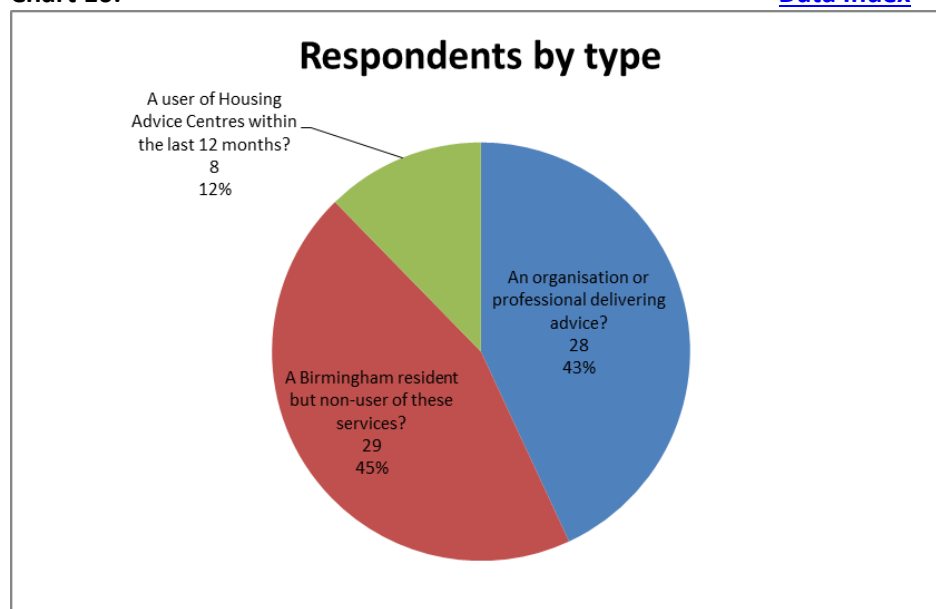
5.2. Consultation B

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- 5.2.1. Of the total responses to Consultation B (the online Be Heard Consultation) 63 were only 'Partially Complete', these responses were individually reviewed. Of the 63 Partially complete responses 4 only detailed the respondents answer to question 1 (In what capacity they were responding) and questions 24 and/or 25 (age and sex). These responses provide no real data or opinion on the proposals and as such they were discounted from the results.
- 5.2.2. Of the remaining partially completed responses 3 did provide data of use and as such these were included. The remaining 56 'Partially Complete' responses only provided an answer to Q1 (in what capacity they were responding). It appears that these were 'Abandoned' responses and as such no useful information could be obtained from this data. This data was therefore also excluded from the final analysis.
- 5.2.3. This results in a total of 65 responses for analysis in relation to Consultation B. The majority of these were 'Organisations or professionals delivering advice' (43%) or 'Birmingham Residents but non users of HAC Services' (45%). Only a small number of respondents were persons who had accessed Housing Advice Services in the last 12 months (12% - equal to 8 people). This data is summarised in Chart 16.

Chart 16:

[Data Index](#)



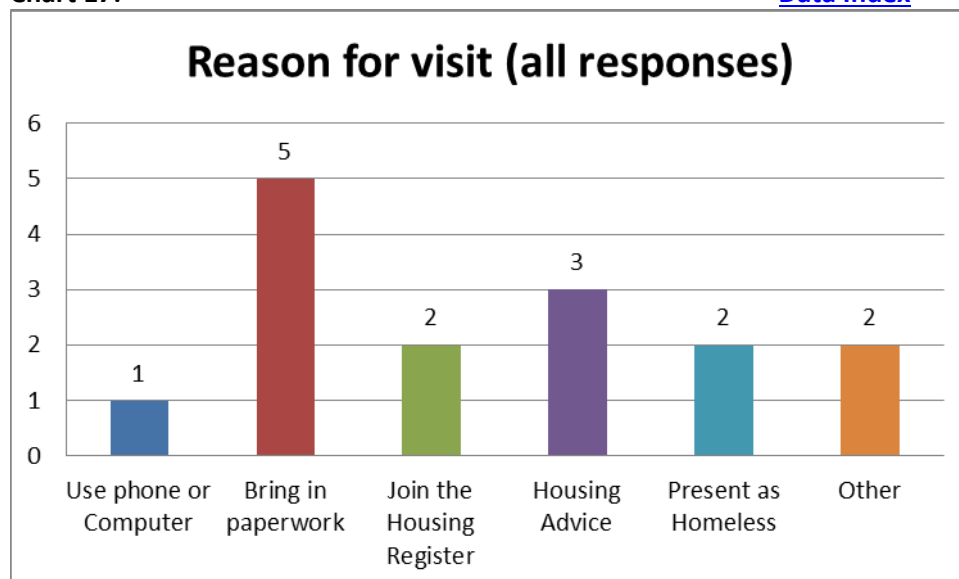
- 5.2.4. Of respondents who had accessed Housing Advice services in the past 12 months they were asked to describe the reasons for their visit and allowed to select multiple reasons. The options provided were the same as those offered in Consultation A.

Of these responses only 2 respondents had visited a HAC to present as Homeless. The majority (5) had visited a HAC to bring in Paperwork.

- 5.2.5. The data is summarised in Chart 17 (below), and presents as contrary to the findings of the same question in Consultation A ([Chart 2](#)) however due to the small sample accurate trends should not be inferred from this data.

Chart 17:

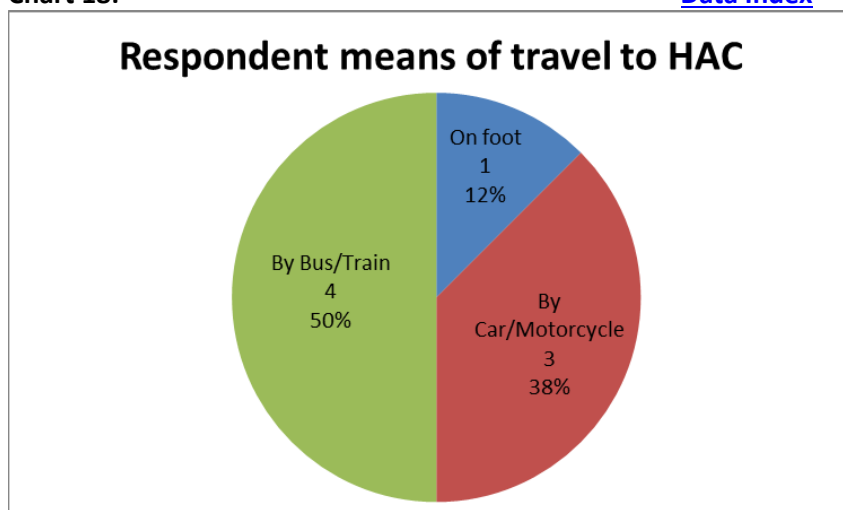
[Data Index](#)



- 5.2.6. Respondents were asked to describe how they had accessed a Housing Advice Centre (means of travel) on previous visits. The options provided were the same as those offered in Consultation A ([Chart 3](#)).
- 5.2.7. Although the small sample here does preclude the drawing of reliable assumptions or inferences as to trends, it is worthy of note that this data does match the trends identified in its Consultation A counterpart. The majority of respondents accessing a HAC via a car or some means of public transport. Respondent data can be found below in Chart 18.

Chart 18:

[Data Index](#)

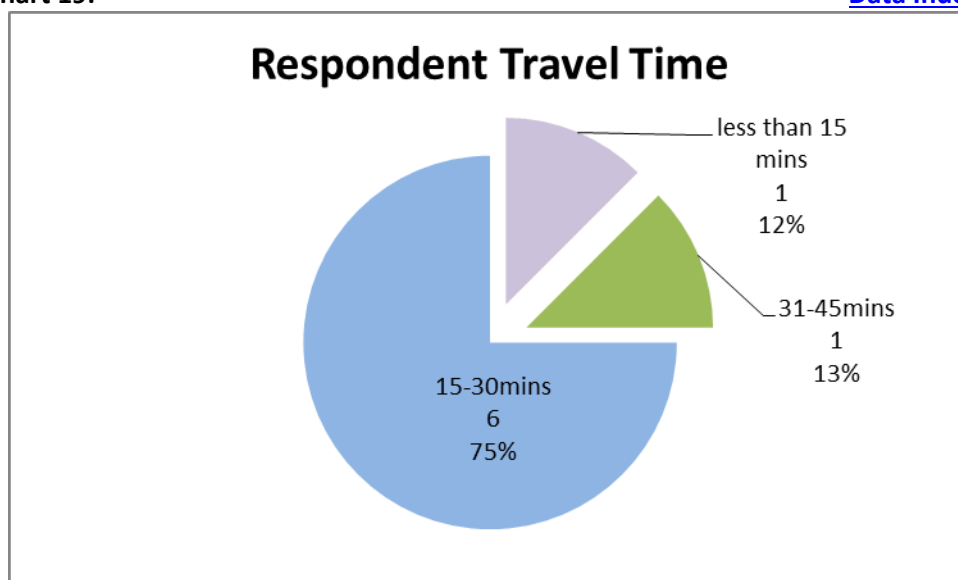


5.2.8. As with Consultation A, respondents accessing services were asked to detail how long their journey took when they last visited a Housing Advice centre. Again the small sample precludes the drawing of reliable conclusions or inferences however the responses do follow the same pattern as their counterparts in Consultation A ([Chart 5](#)).

5.2.9. Again the large majority of respondents accessed a HAC within 15-30 minutes with small numbers taking less than 15 mins and 31-45mins. The respondent data is shown in Chart 19.

Chart 19:

[Data Index](#)



5.2.10. Respondents in consultation B were asked what alternatives they had attempted before visiting a HAC. Of 8 responses, 5 had both called a BCC Contact Centre and consulted BCC Websites for advice.

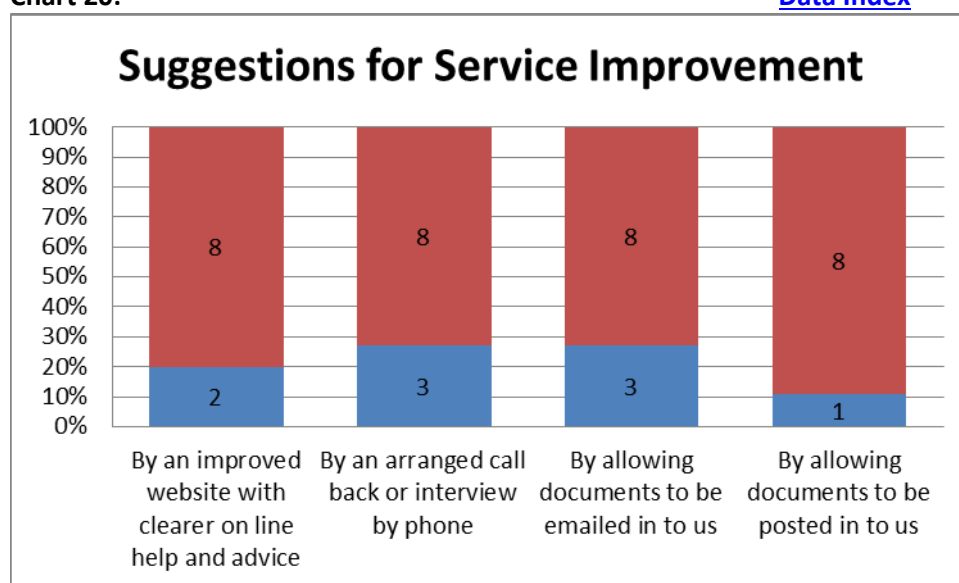
A further respondent had only called a contact centre and 2 respondents had not attempted either option.

5.2.11. These responses show more respondents exploring alternative options than their Consultation A counterparts ([Chart 8](#)) however the small sample group again prevents reliance on this data in the drawing of conclusions.

5.2.12. Respondents were also asked to select from a range of options for an improved service (mirroring [Chart 9](#)). 8 responses were received with 2 respondents selecting none of the suggested improvements. An arranged call back or telephone interview proved to be the (joint) most popular suggestion (mirroring Consultation A). Graphical data is found at Chart 20:

Chart 20:

[Data Index](#)



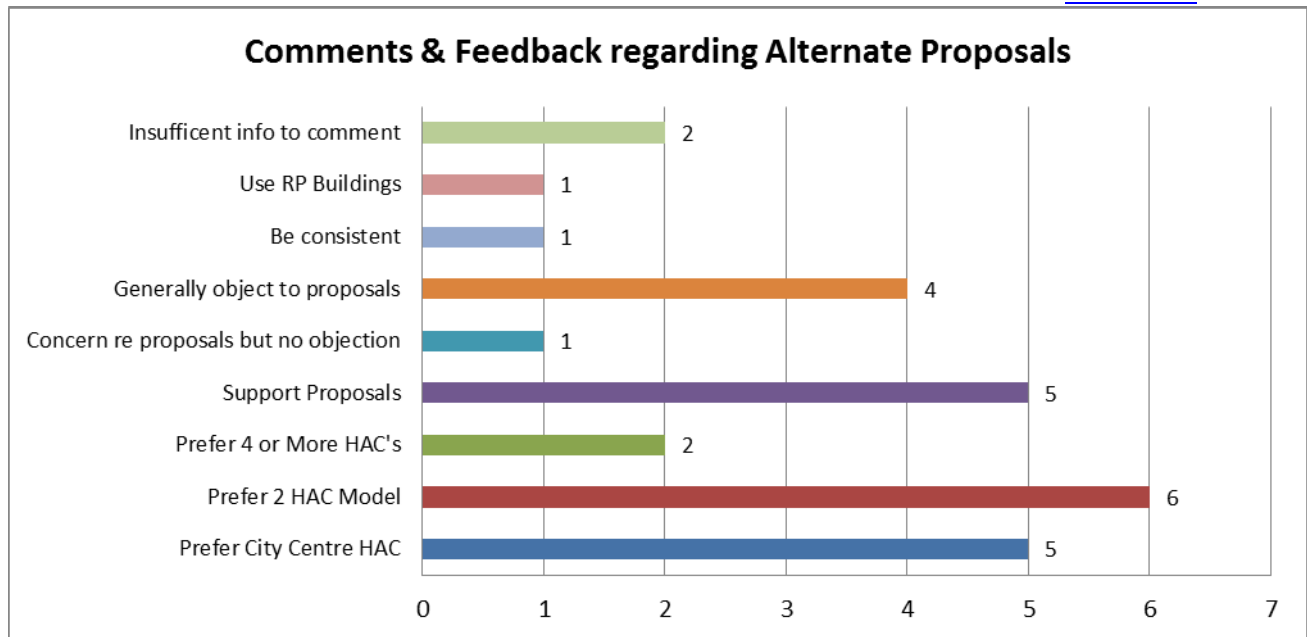
5.2.13. As in Consultation A ([Chart 10](#)), Consultation B also requested information about repeat visitors to HAC's. 7 out of a potential 8 respondents answered this question. 2 had visited a HAC for the first time, 2 had visited twice within the last 12 months. 1 respondent had visited four times, 1 had visited five times and a final respondent had visited between 6-10 times in 12 months.

5.2.14. Both HAC customers and concerned citizens were given the opportunity to consider and provide responses to the alternate proposals that had been considered. Free text comment responses were invited on these.

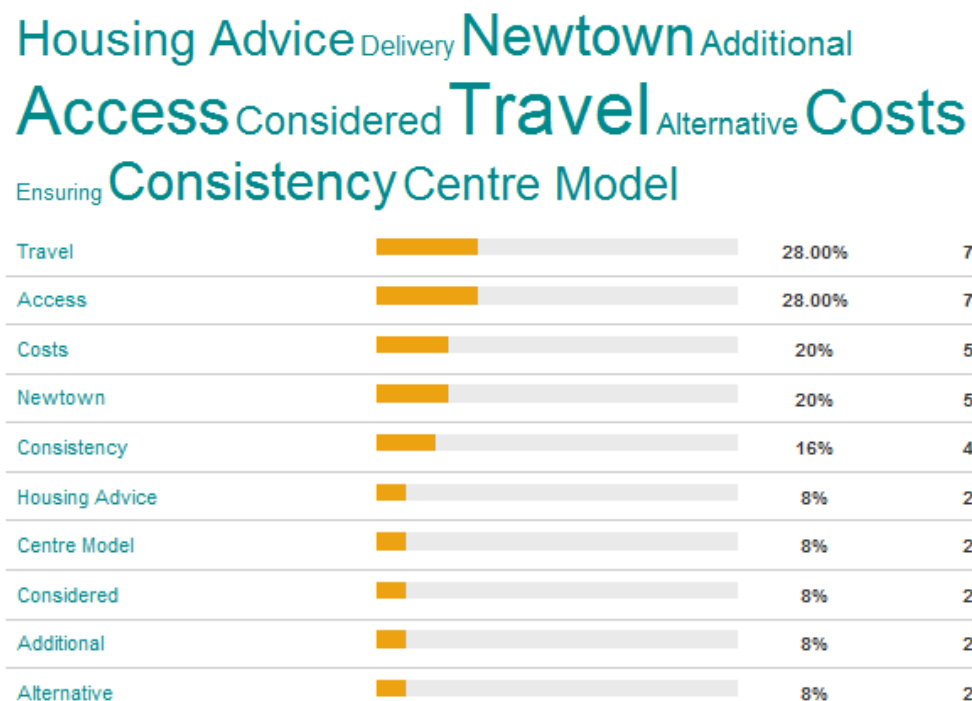
5.2.15. 25 out of a possible 40 respondents provided comments regarding the alternative proposals. Analysis of this data has taken place and these comments can broadly be separated into 11 categories.

- 5.2.16. Analysis of the free text responses shows that a 2 HAC model is the preferred option amongst respondents (6 favour this). However consideration should be given as to the viability of the suggestions that were made by persons favouring this option and how the issues that caused it's dismissal as an original option could be overcome.
- 5.2.17. Those preferring a City Centre option and those supporting the proposed Newtown Option are joint second in terms of numbers citing this as a preference (5 respondents each). One respondent preferring the city centre option suggested The Council House (with Margaret Street) being considered as an option.
- 5.2.18. The suggestion of The Council House & Margaret Street, while sensible and a good alternative in principle were already reviewed and deemed non-viable as there was insufficient office space, customer waiting areas and customer contact points to accommodate a single HAC option at the location.
- 5.2.19. Another proponent of the city centre option stated *"BCC has many occupied and vacant buildings in the City Centre which I don't see why they could not have been used despite any initial cost outlay"*. However this respondent did not specify any specific locations.
- 5.2.20. The Housing Advice Service reviewed all vacant or available city centre locations within the BCC Property portfolio when seeking a city centre location and none could be found meeting the space and front facing requirements of a Single HAC option.
- 5.2.21. One respondent to this question suggested that *"Perhaps Housing Associations could use there office base and have dual links if Neighbourhood Offices are reduced, this would reduce/spread costs"*. This suggestion would seem to suggest a potential for outposted services and may be worthy of consideration if any local Housing Advice service is to be retained. However this does not overcome the resource requirements that categorised 'Stay as we are' (the 4 centre model) as not being viable in the first instance.
- 5.2.22. A copy of all free text responses relating to Consultation B can be found at Appendix 1D of this report. Chart 21 shows the free text responses by category.

Chart 21:

[Data Index](#)

5.2.23. A wordcloud analysis of the free text responses was also undertaken identifying frequently used words in responses. This can be found below, with data identifying the frequency of word use (top 10):



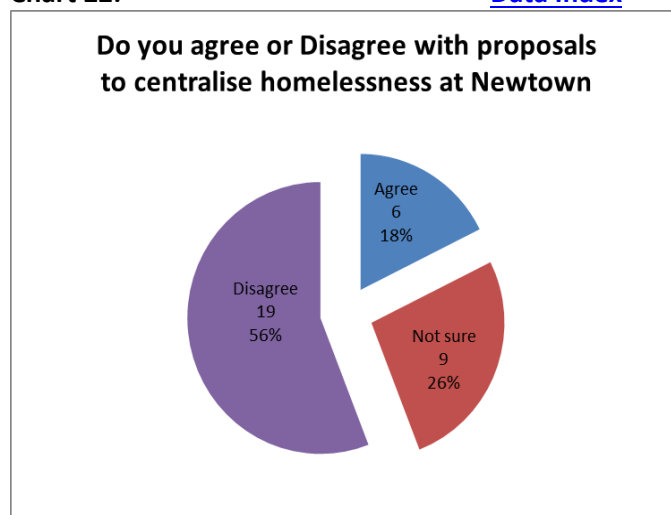
5.2.24. Both HAC customers and concerned citizens were asked to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with the proposals to centralise Homelessness at Newtown. This question was not mirrored in Consultation A for reasons already outlined (3.6).

5.2.25. A total of 34 responses were received out of 37 possible respondents. Here a clear majority disagreed with the proposals. Again the small sample size should be noted when considering the reliability of drawing accurate trends and patterns. In this case responses do match the general theme of the resistance to this option found throughout Consultation A.

5.2.26. The responses can be found represented graphically at Chart 22, Full text can be found at Appendix 1D.

Chart 22:

[Data Index](#)



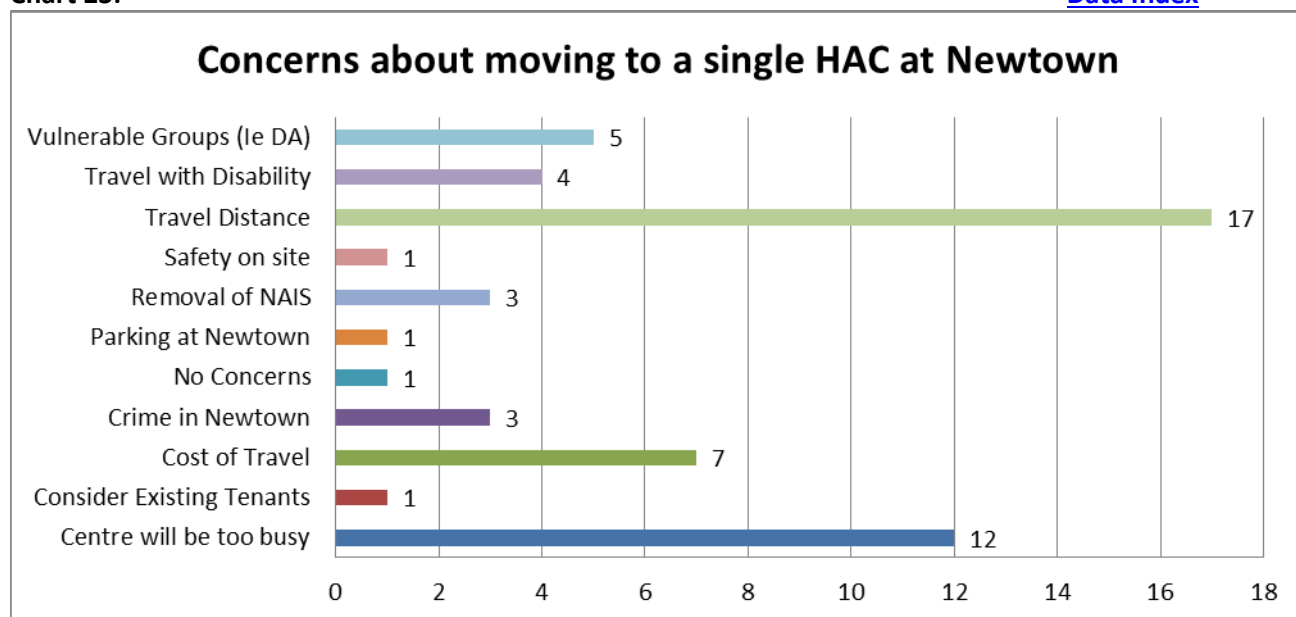
5.2.27. Both Customers and concerned members of the public were asked to provide free text responses as to any concerns that they would have about moving to a single HAC at Newtown.

5.2.28. Analysis of these responses allowed them to be grouped into 13 broad categories. As with Consultation A, where the same question was asked ([Chart 11](#)), the same concerns were prevalent, particularly Travel Distance (17 occurrences) and concerns that the centre will be too busy (12 occurrences).

5.2.29. It is worthy to note that further analysis of these free text responses (specifically reviewing terminology and language used) indicates that a number of professionals may have answered as a member of the public rather than as a professional or member of staff.

5.2.30. These categories are graphically represented in Chart 23.

Chart 23:

[Data Index](#)

5.2.31. A Wordcloud analysis of the free text responses was also undertaken identifying frequently used words in responses. This can be found below, with data identifying the frequency of word use (top 10).

Birmingham Seeking Concerns Difficult Service
Issues Travel Amount Newtown Location

Travel	<div><div></div></div>	48.48%	16
Service	<div><div></div></div>	33.33%	11
Newtown	<div><div></div></div>	27.27%	9
Concerns	<div><div></div></div>	24.24%	8
Location	<div><div></div></div>	21.21%	7
Birmingham	<div><div></div></div>	15.15%	5
Issues	<div><div></div></div>	12.12%	4
Difficult	<div><div></div></div>	9.09%	3
Amount	<div><div></div></div>	6.06%	2
Seeking	<div><div></div></div>	6.06%	2

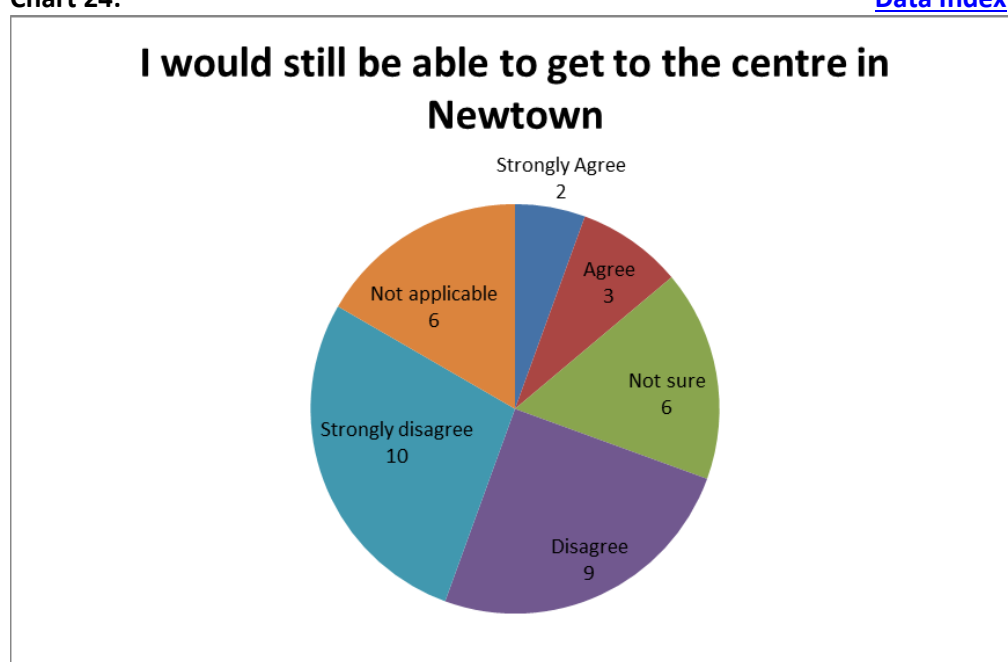
5.2.32. As with Consultation A ([Chart 12](#)), respondents in B were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that they would still be able to reach a single centre in Newtown.

5.2.33. 36 out of a possible 37 responses were provided and, although the relatively small sample size should again be noted when considering reliable conclusions, the results are comparable to the same question in Consultation A. Attention is drawn to the slight increase in the proportion of respondents disagreeing (to some extent) and a slight decrease in those agreeing (to some extent).

5.2.34. However it is also noteworthy that the number of people 'Strongly' disagreeing also reduced overall (in percentage terms) within Consultation B responses (falling from 32% to 28%). The data from this question can be found below within Chart 24.

Chart 24:

[Data Index](#)

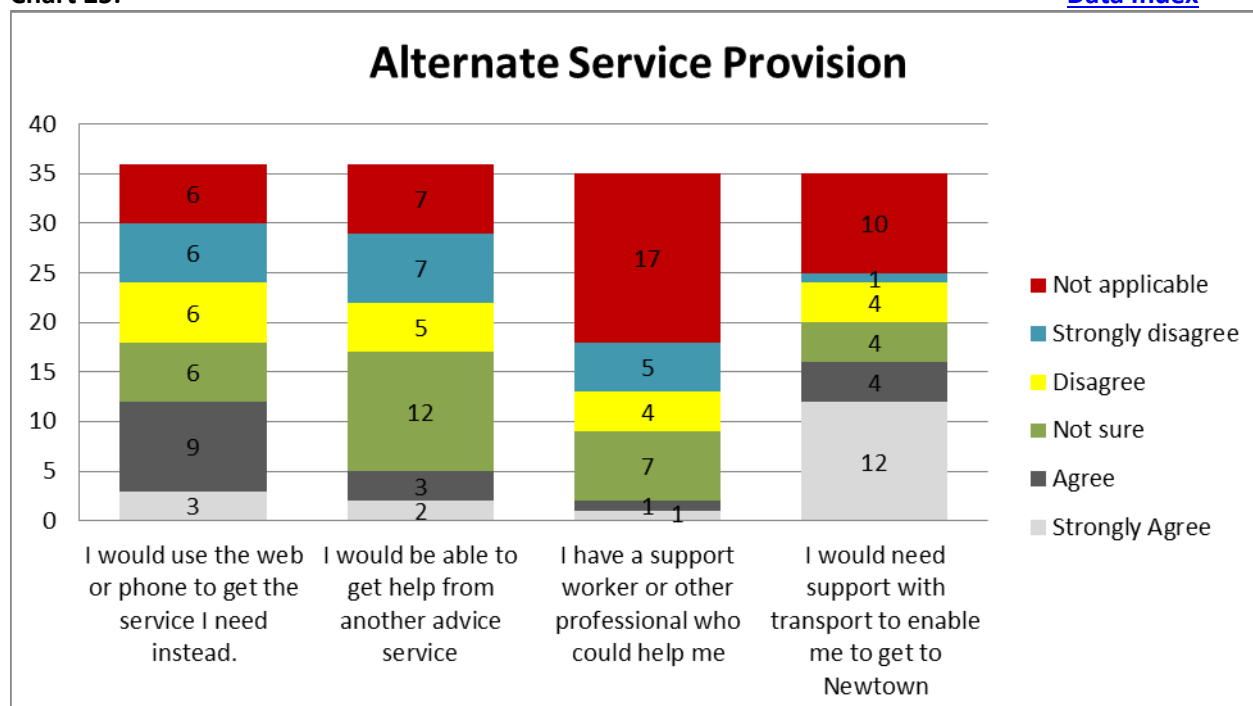


5.2.35. Duplicating Consultation A's [Chart 14](#) respondents were asked how else they may be able to access the service in future.

5.2.36. One third of the 36 total respondents agreed that they would use the phone or the web to get the service that they need. Only 14% felt that they could get advice from another service. Only 6% had a support worker to assist them and 44% stated that they would need additional assistance to reach Newtown.

5.2.37. The results from this question can be found at Chart 25.

Chart 25:

[Data Index](#)

5.2.38. Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for how we might better allow them to access the homelessness and housing support they may need. In the same manner as in Consultation A ([Chart 15](#)), these were free text responses.

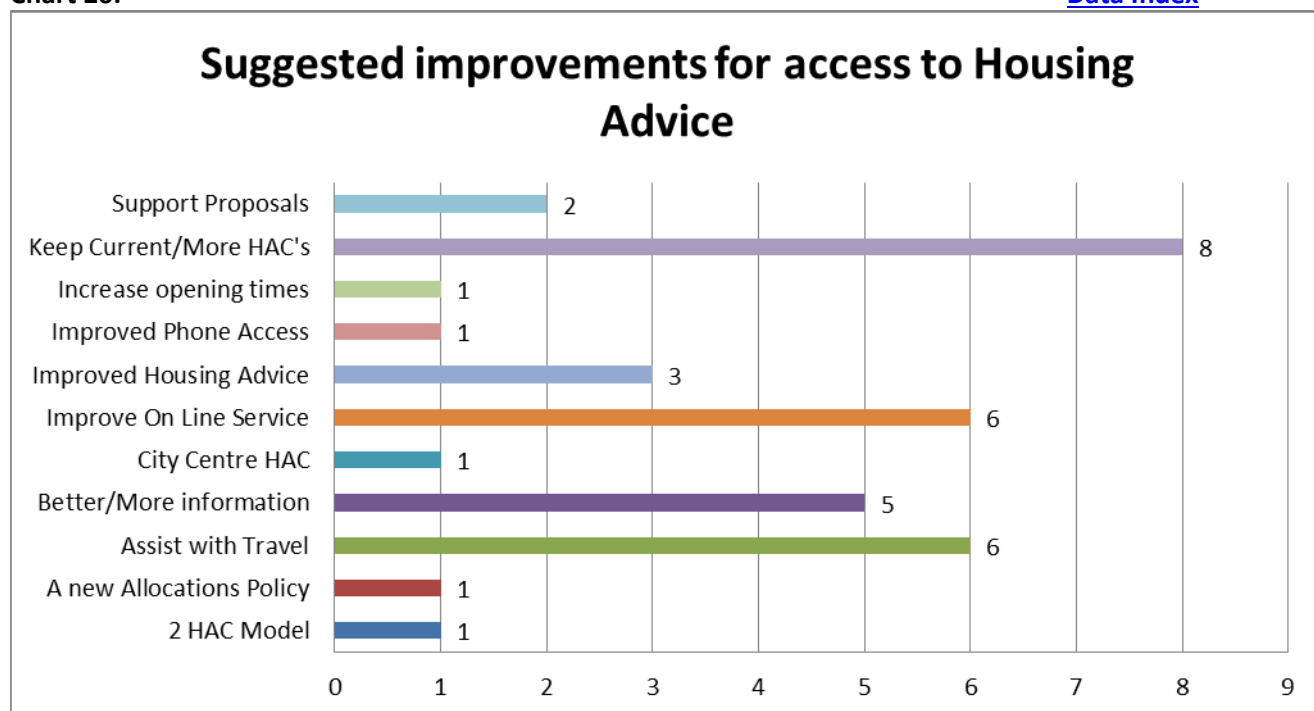
5.2.39. A total of 30 responses were received. Analysis of these responses allowed them to be grouped into 11 broad categories (responses may fit into more than one category).

5.2.40. Despite the small sample group a comparison can be drawn with the consultation A comparator question in the large number of respondents indicating that they felt keeping the current number of HAC's (or opening additional HAC's) would improve access to the service.

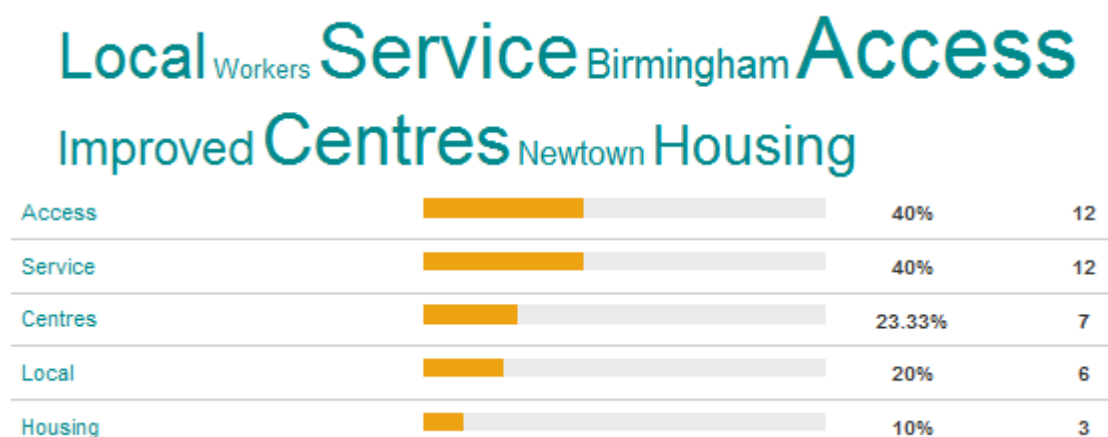
5.2.41. Providing assistance with travel and improving online access were also categories in which a large number of respondents indicated that this would improve accessibility.

5.2.42. A full breakdown of responses to this question can be found in Chart 26.

Chart 26:

[Data Index](#)

5.2.43. A Wordcloud analysis of the free text responses was also undertaken identifying frequently used words in responses. This can be found below, with data identifying the frequency of word use (top 5).



5.2.44. The final question for customers and concerned citizens was for them to provide any closing comments on our proposals or what benefits they may bring.

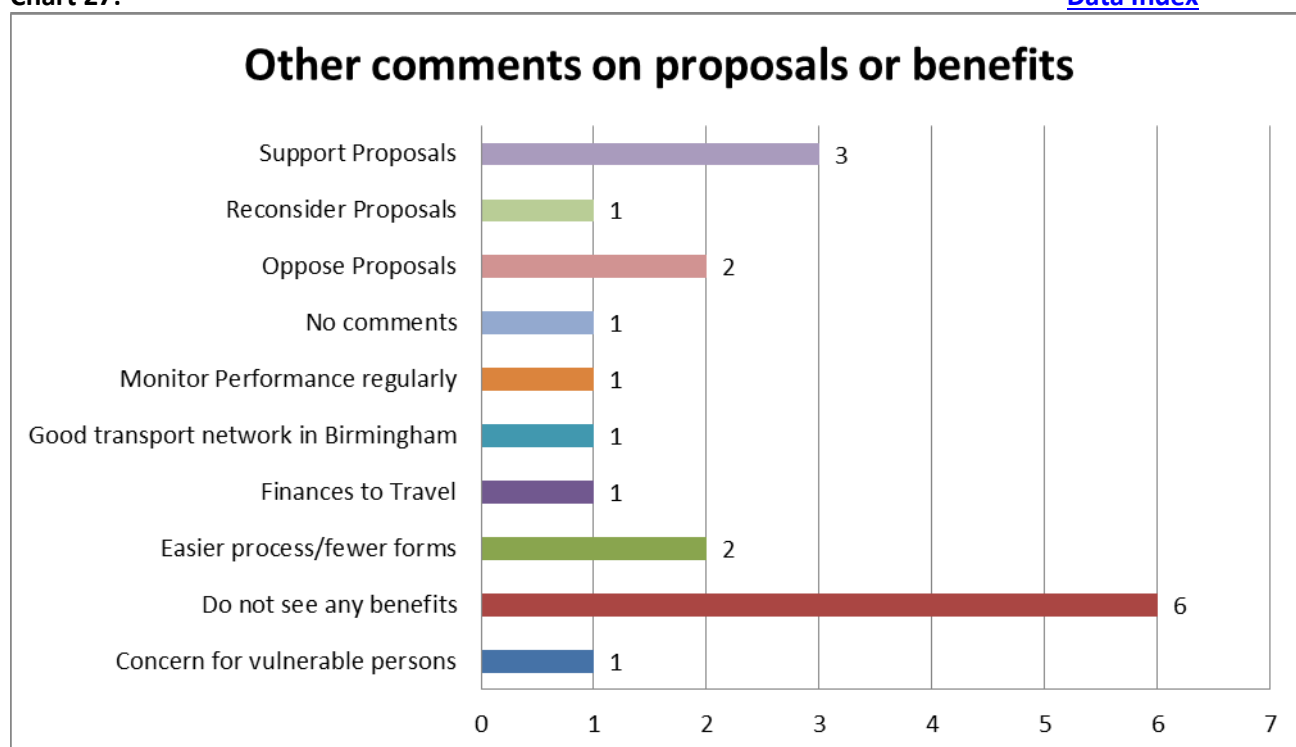
5.2.45. In response to this question 17 responses were provided. Analysis of these responses allowed them to be grouped into 11 broad categories (responses may fit into more than one category).

5.2.46. While the small sample provides limited reliable data, a significant majority of those responding stated that they could not see any benefit in the proposals (6). However, it was also worthy of note that persons expressing direct support for the proposal (3) exceeded those expressing direct opposition to the proposal (2).

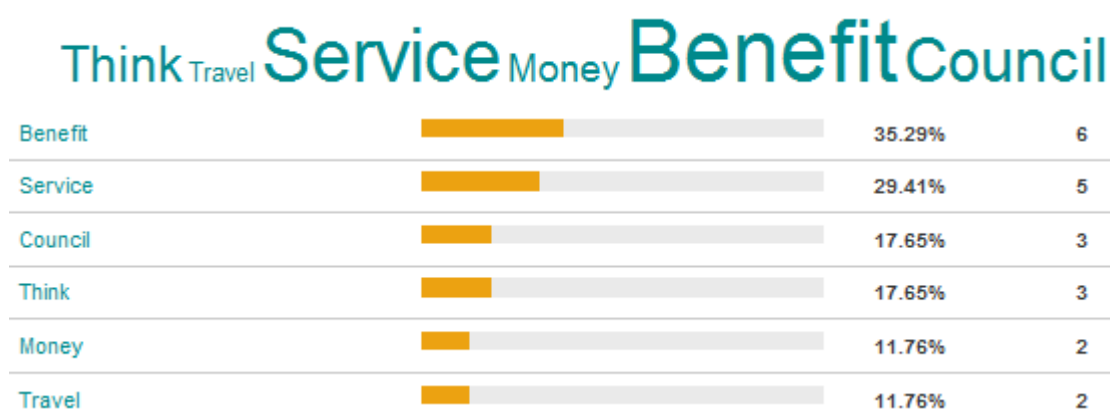
5.2.47. Responses from this question can be found represented in Chart 27 (below).

Chart 27:

[Data Index](#)



5.2.48. A Wordcloud analysis of the free text responses was also undertaken identifying frequently used words in responses. This can be found below, with data identifying the frequency of word use (top 6).

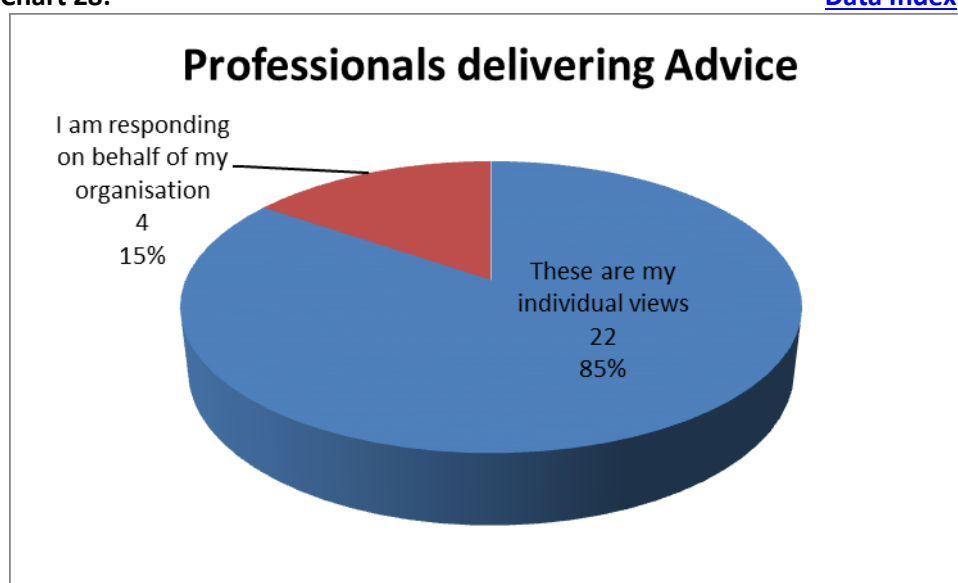


5.2.49. The remainder of Consultation B drew responses from 'Organisations and Professionals delivering advice'. This group was initially asked to confirm if they were responding on behalf of their organisation or providing their individual views on the proposals. 26 responses were received to this question.

5.2.50. The vast majority (85%) provided their own personal views however 4 responses (15%) responded on behalf of their organisation. This is demonstrated in Chart 28 (below).

Chart 28:

[Data Index](#)



5.2.51. Respondents were asked to provide some detail about their organisation and the type of advice it provides.

5.2.52. Responses were received from a wide variety of services however the significant majority (11 of 24) were received from staff within the homeless and pre tenancy service itself (46% of all responses). A further 4 were received from employees from other areas of BCC outside the homeless & pre tenancy service. In total 63% of all responses came from within Birmingham City Council.

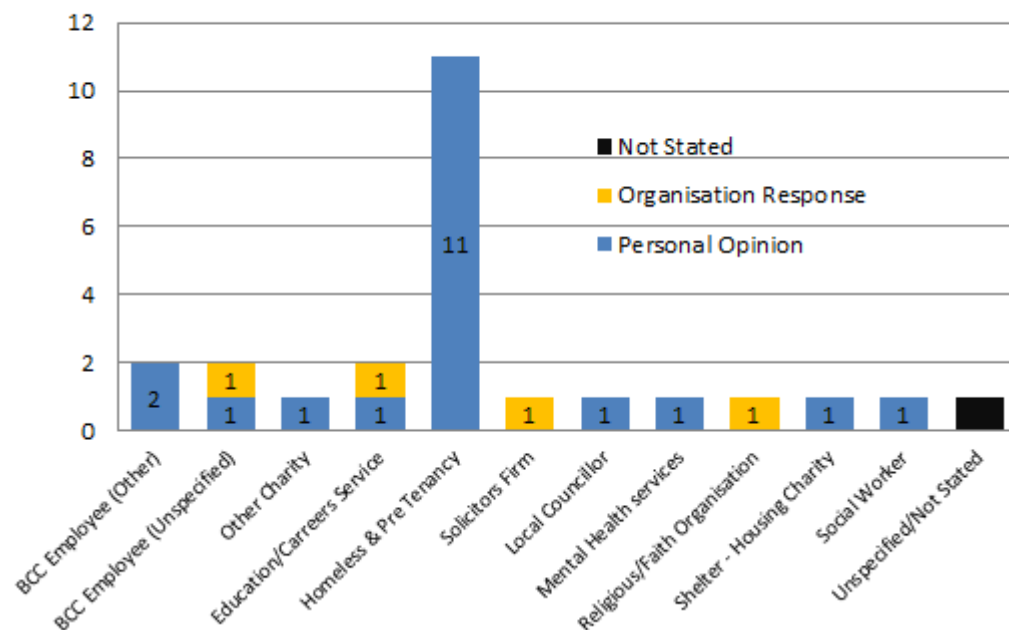
5.2.53. All of these save for one expressed personal opinion however the one response on behalf of an organisation (within BCC) did not state the area of BCC for which the response was provided.

5.2.54. Details of the organisations responding and the type of response (personal or organisational) can be found below in chart 29.

Chart 29

[Data Index](#)

Respondent organisation and views provided



5.2.55. Organisations and professionals responding were given the opportunity to provide contact details in the event of any further feedback being provided. 18 responses were providing giving contact details (phone or email).

5.2.56. As in [Chart 11](#) and [Chart 23](#)), professionals were posed the same question and invited to provide details of any concerns they had regarding the proposal to move to a single HAC based in Newtown. This was an open (free text) question and 27 responses were provided.

5.2.57. Analysis of the responses allowed for these responses to be categorised into 8 broad categories. Responses, dependent on content may fall into more than one of these categories.

5.2.58. Opposition to the proposed centre in Newtown was strong with 16 responses falling into this category to some degree. A large number (13) stated preference for the former 2 centre option.

5.2.59. 4 respondents favoured a city centre location with one suggesting that desk space could be freed at Lancaster Circus or Woodcock Street to provide this if other teams gave up un-needed or un-used desk space. However this option was explored previously and both Woodcock Street and Lancaster Circus currently lack the capacity to deal with the large number of public visitors that a single HAC at these locations would require. As such both would require significant work to develop a customer facing service.

5.2.60. 10 responses indicated concerns that a single centre would be too busy, 8 expressed concerns about the distance to travel & transport arrangements and 5 expressed specific concerns about vulnerable people accessing the service in its proposed form.

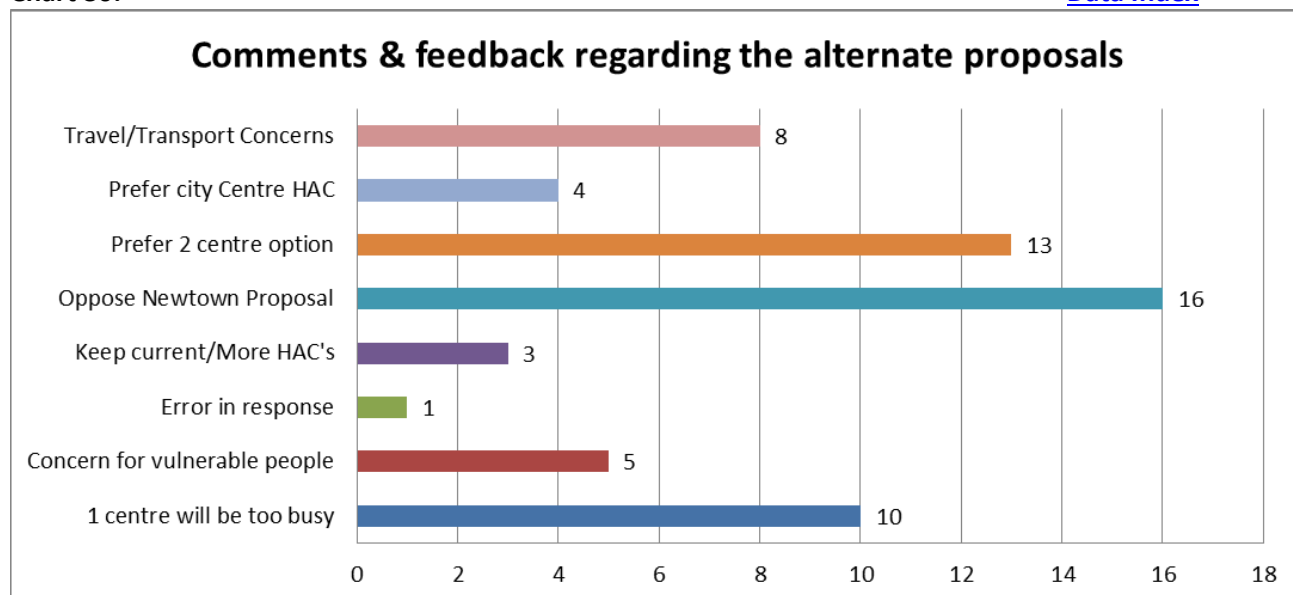
5.2.61. It is worthy of note that 7 of the free text responses are identical in wording and content. Further analysis of these responses show that these 7 respondents show that the respondents work within the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy Service within a Housing Advice Centre and all work at the same location.

5.2.62. These 7 identical responses, while still remaining valid, account for 44% of those responses classified as objecting to the Newtown proposal, 54% of those preferring the 2 HAC option and of 70% responses classified as raising concerns about 1 centre being too busy. These responses should be considered as with all others. However consideration and weighting should be given to the fact that these responses reflect 7 individual members of staff within the same organisation and location.

5.2.63. The categorised responses to this question can be viewed graphically in Chart 30 (below).





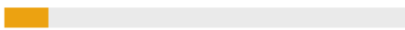
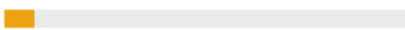
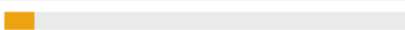
Chart 30:

[Data Index](#)



5.2.64. A Wordcloud analysis of the free text responses was also undertaken identifying frequently used words in responses. This can be found overleaf, with data identifying the frequency of word use (top 7).

Option West of the City Access Appropriate Quality Decisions Staff Housing Central Point

Quality Decisions Staff		33.33%	9
Access		18.52%	5
Housing		18.52%	5
Option		14.81%	4
Appropriate		11.11%	3
West of the City		7.41%	2
Central Point		7.41%	2

5.2.65. Professionals were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the proposals to centralise the Housing Advice Service at Newtown. 27 responses were received to this question, all of whom disagreed with the proposal.

5.2.66. As with Charts 11 & 23, professionals were invited to express any concerns they had in relation to the proposed single HAC option, these were free text responses. 27 responses were received.

5.2.67. These 27 responses were categorised into 11 categories broadly encompassing the details within. From these responses 17 expressed concern regarding the distance that clients will have to travel, 16 expressed specific concerns for vulnerable clients attempting to access the service (predominantly due to distance), 12 were concerned that the centre would be too busy and 12 thought that the cost of travel would reduce accessibility.

5.2.68. Notable was a concern expressed by 11 respondents that Domestic Abuse victims would be unable to access the centre as, with a single location, the perpetrator of the abuse would be able to locate them more easily. The same 11 respondents also identified that clients may be unable to enter Newtown due to gang affiliations or threats.

5.2.69. As in 6.2.61, It is again worthy of note that 7 of the free text responses are identical in wording and content. Analysis shows that these 7 respondents are the same 7 previously identified working within the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy Service at a specific Housing Advice Centre.

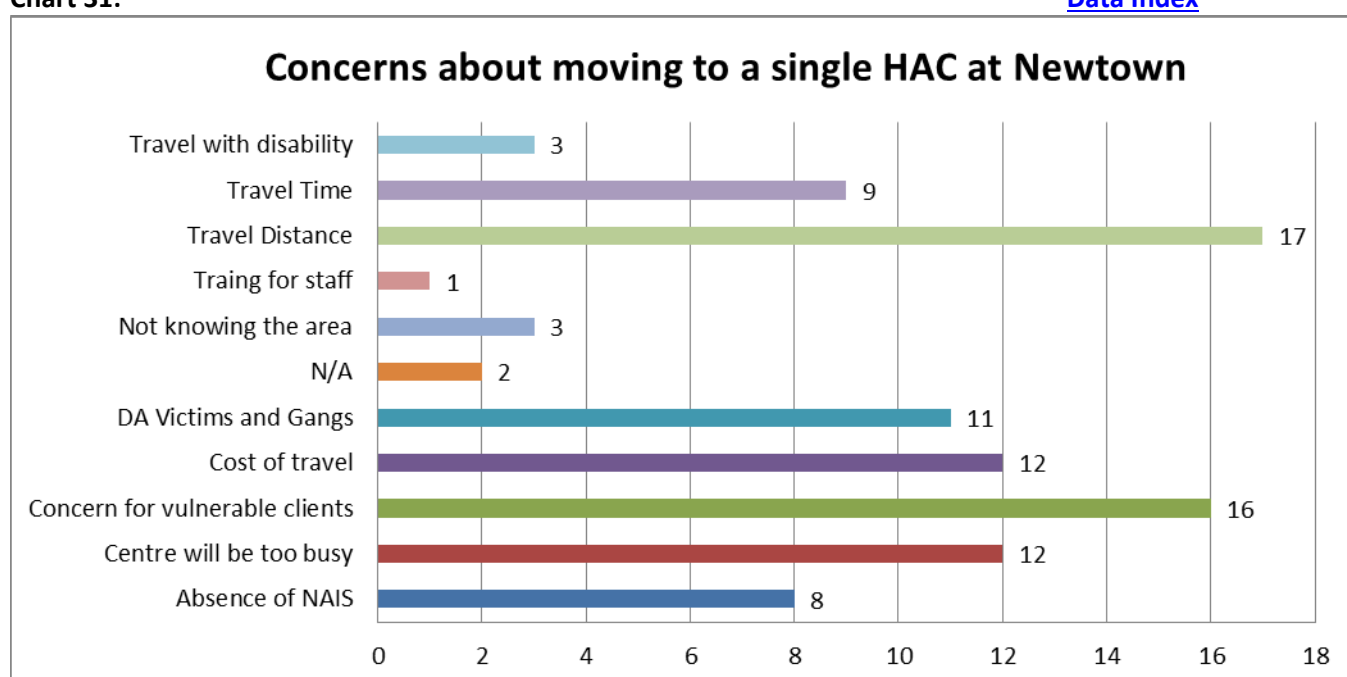
5.2.70. These 7 responses account for 41% of those identifying Travel Distance as an issue, 44% of those identifying concerns for vulnerable clients, 58% of concerns regarding the cost of travel, of concerns regarding Gangs and Domestic Abuse victims and of concerns regarding travel times.

5.2.71. Again the validity of these responses is not questioned. However weighting and consideration should be given by the reader that these 7 responses represent a single HAC location which is the subject of closure within the proposed model.

5.2.72. The concerns identified by respondents can be found graphically detailed in Chart 31 (below).

Chart 31:

[Data Index](#)



5.2.73. Respondents were asked to provide commentary on how the proposed changes could impact upon the clients they work with. 28 responses were received to this question; these were grouped into 14 categories.

5.2.74. Travel distance was again the largest concern for professionals (16 responses), stating that many clients that they deal with may be unable to travel across the city to Newtown.

5.2.75. A large number (11) stated that the proposed centre would be inaccessible to disadvantaged groups.

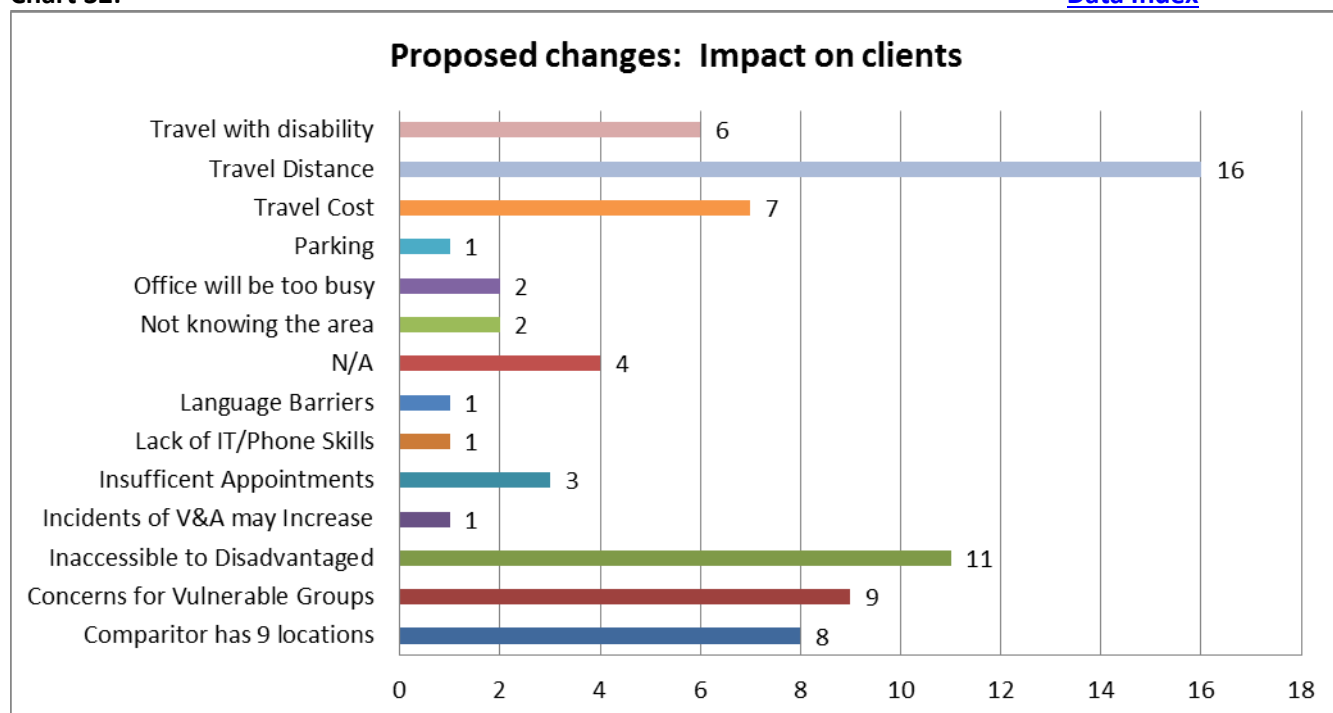
5.2.76. 8 responses detailed a comparator city, this being Liverpool, having 9 locations where clients could present as homeless despite being half the size of Birmingham.

This point is worthy of note as benchmarking already undertaken included examination of other cities accessibility to Homelessness (including Liverpool).

- 5.2.77. It is correct that Liverpool offers numerous locations despite being around half the size of Birmingham and also suffering from considerable disadvantage, poverty and social exclusion. However it was also noted during benchmarking that, in 2014/2015, Liverpool took significantly fewer Homeless Applications (297) when compared with Birmingham (in excess of 5,200)⁷. Inference can be drawn from this that there is no clear link between the number of sites available and the accessibility of the service.
- 5.2.78. This inference is strengthened when considering Sheffield & Leeds, cities geographically larger than Birmingham and also suffering social exclusion, disadvantage and poverty. These cities offer only a single location and took significantly more Homeless Applications than Liverpool.
- 5.2.79. It is also worthy of note that existing research in relation to this issue raised indicates that all other core cities, excepting Liverpool, offer a Single Point of Access for Homelessness Services.
- 5.2.80. Responses to this question also again identified potential issues of travel cost and travel for those with a disability (7 & 6 responses respectively).
- 5.2.81. Again it was noted that responses were received with identical wording, This time 8 responses were noted to use the exact same wording and analysis again showed a group within the Homeless & Pre Tenancy Service operating from a HAC proposed for closure under the new proposals.
- 5.2.82. It is reiterated that this does not invalidate the responses in any way however it is once again noteworthy that 100% of responses referring to the Liverpool model of Homelessness are attributed to this group of staff.
- 5.2.83. 73% of all responses raising concerns about accessibility for vulnerable persons are attributable to this group, as are 50% of responses raising concerns about the distance people will have to travel.
- 5.2.84. Responses to this question are categorised in full in Chart 32.

⁷ Homeless Statistics (2014/15), DCLG

Chart 32:

[Data Index](#)

5.2.85. As with customers and concerned citizens ([Chart 27](#)), professional respondents were asked what benefits they could see within the new proposed model. 27 free text responses were received to this question. These were categorised into 11 broad categories and again responses could identify with more than one category.

5.2.86. The majority of respondents (16) could see no benefits in the proposals.

5.2.87. 8 specifically stated that the proposed increase in consistency would not arise specifically from moving to a one centre model but could be achieved while retaining the current 4 HAC model.

5.2.88. 5 believed cost savings would arise from a move to the proposed single centre model however 2 of those stated that financial impacts (such as a perceived increase in TA costs) would exceed the cost savings from the proposal.

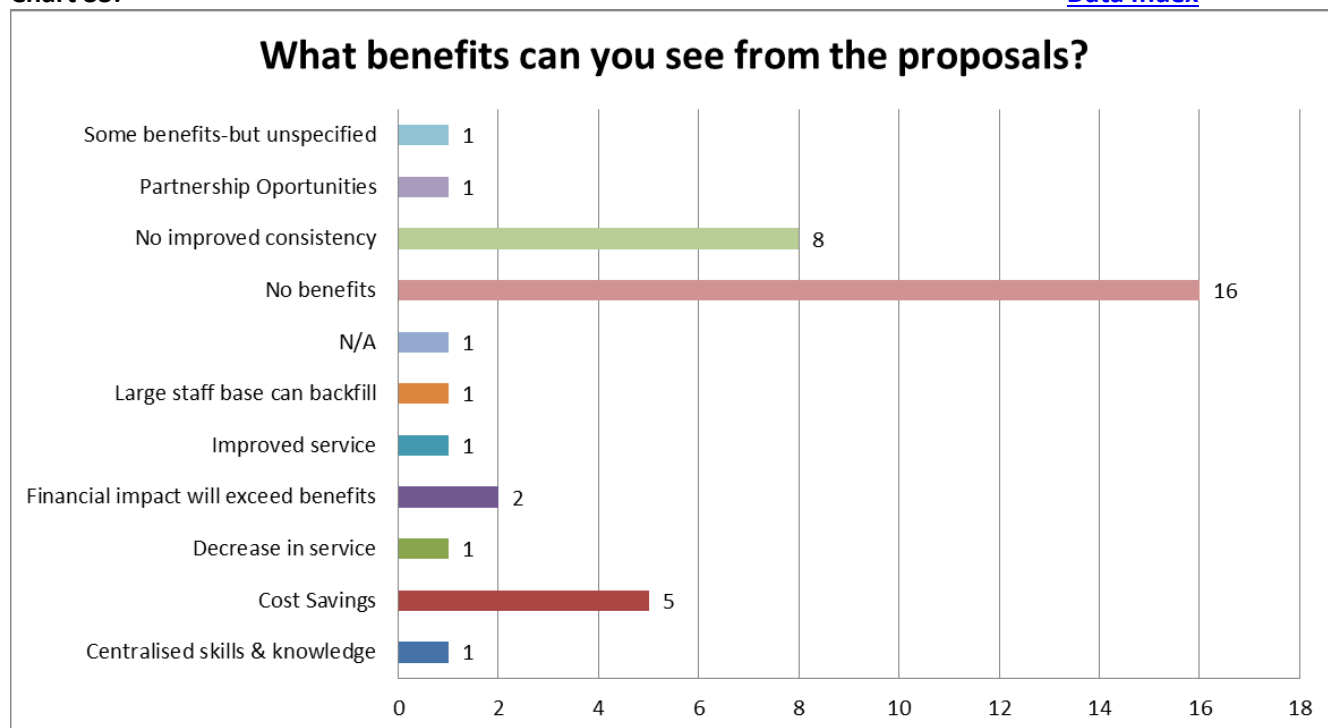
5.2.89. 1 cited that centralising staff would produce a centralised skills and knowledge base that could assist them when signposting clients and discussing cases. Another stated that the service would improve overall and 1 more respondent stated that the move would increase opportunities for partnership working with other agencies that also provide advice.

5.2.90. Again it is noted that 8 identical responses were provided by the group previously identified. These account for 50% of all respondents who see no benefits and 100% of respondents who state that the service will be no more consistent as a result.

5.2.91. These categorised benefits can be found below in Chart 33.

Chart 33:

[Data Index](#)



5.2.92. The final question asked of professionals was, 'Given the current resource restrictions, do you have any further comments which could improve the service?' 25 responses were received to this question. These responses were grouped into 15 categories (responses may fit more than one category).

5.2.93. 4 categories identified significant number of responses; these being suggestions to (1) open more HAC's or (2) provide 2 HAC's (with Erdington being one of these), (3) Keeping Erdington open and (4) a point that there has been no evidence provided to show that more HAC's cost more than the single HAC option. These 4 categories attracted 7 responses each.

5.2.94. It is noted that the categories above were again identical responses identified as being from the group based within an affected HAC.

5.2.95. An additional 2 respondents identified that a 2 HAC option would be preferable however did not expressly specify Erdington as a desired option.

5.2.96. 3 Respondents identified a joined up partnership approach as an improvement. Suggestions in this area included working closer with Benefit Services, Landlord Services, Social Services, Registered Providers and third sector partners to deliver joined up Housing Advice and Homelessness Prevention.

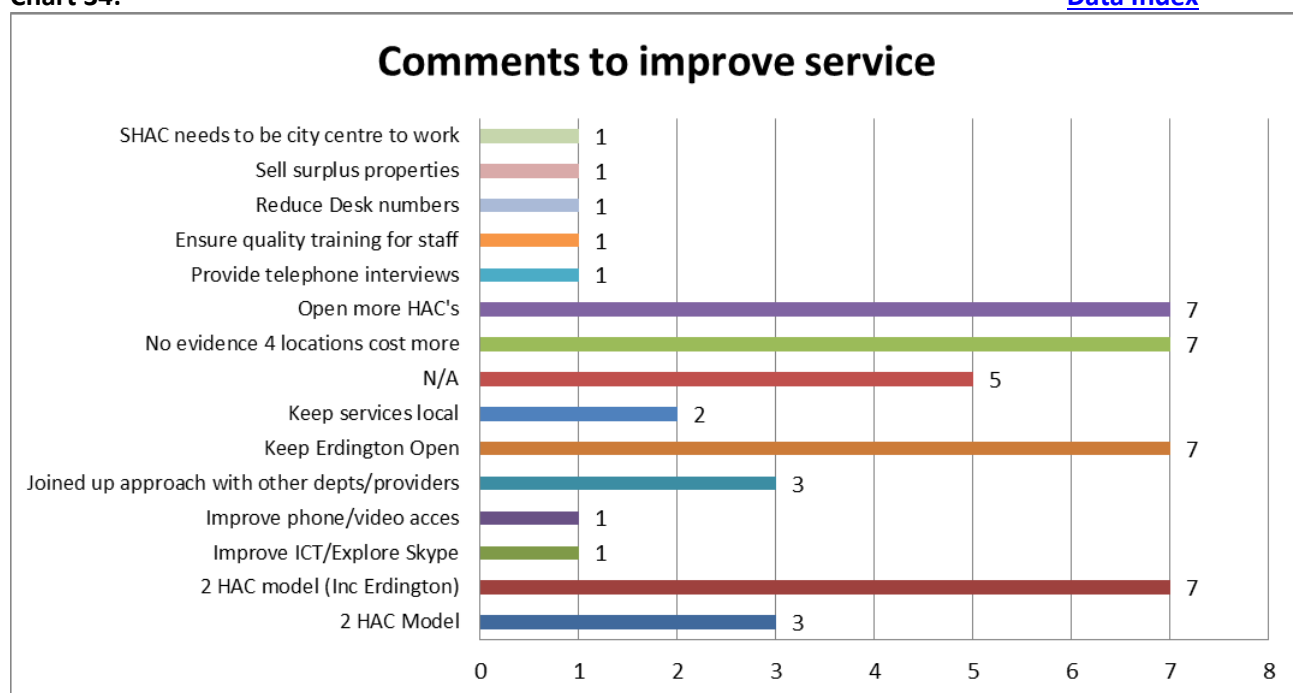
5.2.97. 1 respondent identified potential to sell surplus buildings to generate income. Louisa Ryland House was cited as an example however at the time of preparation of this report it is confirmed that this particular building has recently been sold.

5.2.98. A further respondent identified with the single centre approach however stated that it would only work with a location provide in the city centre.

5.2.99. The condensed (categorised) results of this question are shown below in Chart 34.

Chart 34:

[Data Index](#)



5.3. Consultation C

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- 5.3.1. Consultation C was undertaken via face to face events at 4 locations across the city. To ensure fairness and transparency an impartial party was commissioned and instructed to facilitate these sessions and to provide reports back in relation to the findings.
- 5.3.2. The reports were prepared impartially for the purposes of review and as such further analysis has not taken place here. All 4 public events have an associated report and also contained is a final summary report which also details FAQ's that were identified as a result of these events and the responses that were provided. These reports can be found at Appendix 1E to this report.

5.4. Written Representations

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- 5.4.1. Although there was no specific call for written representations, Members, M.P's and partners were written to regarding the consultation thus tacitly inviting written responses. As such various concerned parties have chosen to provide their views this way. Therefore these representations have been included to ensure fairness and transparency.
- 5.4.2. In total 8 written representations were received. These were from a variety of parties. This group of respondents consisted of 3 councillors, 2 M.P's, a Trade Union representative, a local community group and a solicitors firm. These representations are here and can be found at Appendix 1F to this report.
- 5.4.3. One written representation does contain an alternate service proposal with a view to retaining a Homelessness Service within the Northfield district.
- 5.4.4. The response from the Community Law Partnership opposes proposals to centralise Homelessness at Newtown & makes 6 recommendations.
- 5.4.5. A local councillor response broadly opposes the proposal to centralise Homelessness Services at Newtown and requests that the service remains at the four present locations.
- 5.4.6. A second local councillor recognises that benefit in delivery from multiple locations but agrees with the proposal as "the best use of the available resources that we have".
- 5.4.7. A third local councillor notes that they do not see a single centre approach as being appropriate however, should it proceed recommends a city centre location. The use of Midlands Heart facilities is suggested in alternative to the Newtown Location⁸.
- 5.4.8. The trade union contribution disputes the fact that a preferred option is being consulted on without offering a choice of the alternate options and opposes the progression of Consultation A.
- 5.4.9. An MP response broadly opposes the proposal to centralise Homelessness Services at Newtown and cites difficulties in travelling by vulnerable persons, cost of travel and distance of travel for constituents in South Birmingham as the primary reasons for opposition.

⁸ The use of Midlands Heart accommodation at three sites including The Foyer was explored and all were deemed non-viable. A response to this member detailing reasons was provided and is included at Appendix 1F.

5.4.10. An MP response broadly opposes the proposal to centralise Homelessness Services at Newtown cities agreement with concerns raised by his fellow MP (difficulties in travelling by vulnerable persons, cost of travel and distance of travel for constituents in South Birmingham) as well as a need to make decisions regarding provision of local services in partnership with other local providers rather than following consultation with them.

5.5. NAIS Consultation

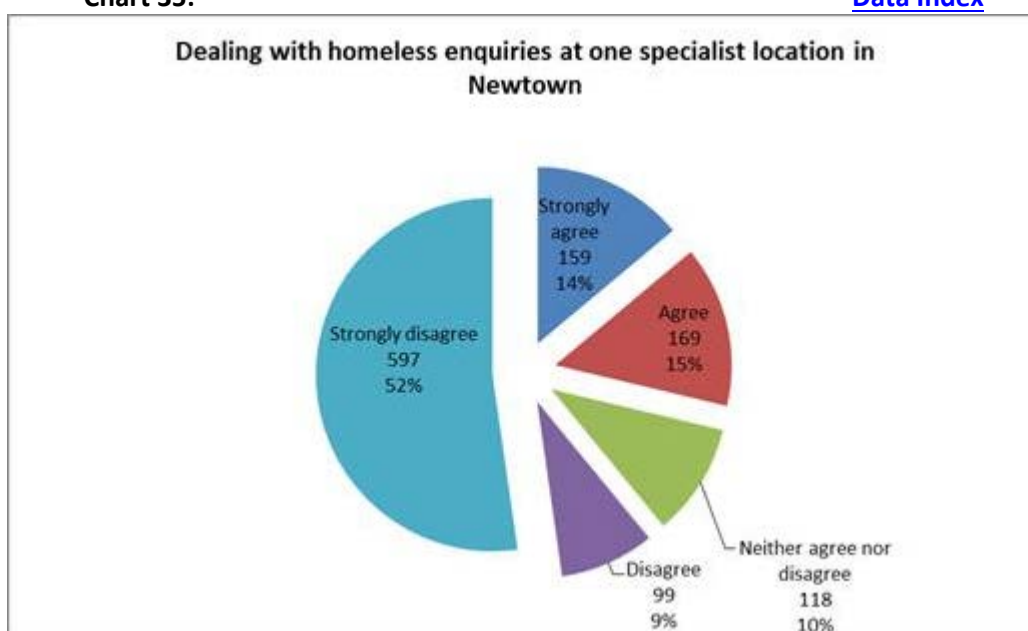
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5.5.1. Ongoing at the same time as the consultation on a revised Housing Advice Service, was a linked consultation on proposals to redesign the Neighbourhood Advice & Information Service (who operate the first point of contact for Neighbourhood Offices where HAC's are based). It was, in part, proposals to redesign NAIS that precipitated the proposal to redesign Housing Advice.

5.5.2. NAIS undertook a similar paper based survey to their customers as that undertaken in Consultation A. As part of this NAIS customers were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with proposals to deal with Homeless Enquiries at one specialist location in Newtown. 1141 responses were received to this question with the large majority (597 – 55%) strongly disagreeing. Only 29% (328) agreed (to any extent) with this proposal.

Chart 35:

[Data Index](#)



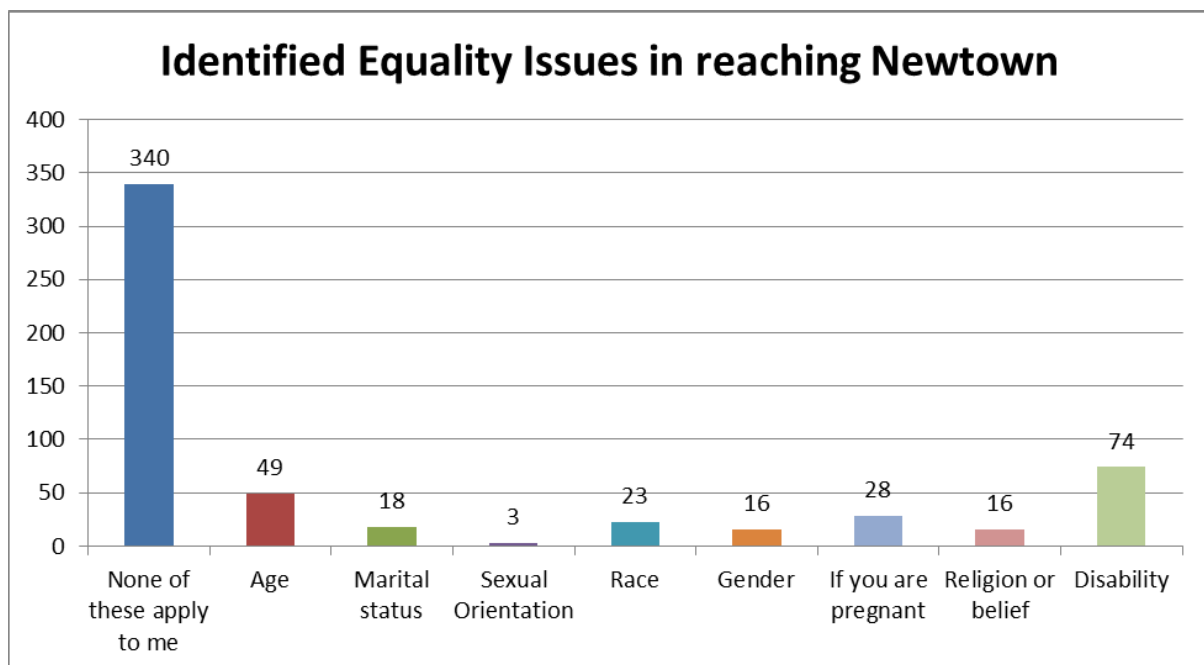
6. Demographic Information & Equality Issues

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6.1. Consultation A

6.2. In consultation A detailed Demographic information was not requested for reasons already detailed (3.4-3.5). However respondents were asked to detail any protected⁹ characteristic which they felt might impact upon their ability to travel to Newtown.

6.3. The top 4 responses mirror the 4 potentially disadvantaged groups identified in the Equality Analysis previously prepared and submitted to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Management & Homes in 2015 (when seeking permission to consult on the preferred Newtown option¹⁰). These being Age, Disability, Pregnancy/Maternity and Race. This data can be found demonstrated graphically below.



6.4. The data above should be considered carefully in view of the fact that respondents were allowed to select multiple issues (save for those where no issue applies) and therefore the numbers of identified equality issues above will significantly exceed the number of individual respondents who have identified such an issue. 156 respondents identified an issue with a protected characteristic, however 49 respondents identified 'Multiple Issues' resulting in a total 227 equality issues from 156 respondents.

⁹ [Protected Characteristics](#) identified in the [Equality Act 2010](#) which Local authorities must consider with regard to impact when fulfilling the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#).

¹⁰ [Consulting on a Way Forward for Homelessness Services \(Ref 001113/2015\), Birmingham City Council](#)

6.5. Analysis of those identifying with 'Multiple' protected characteristics shows some patterns and trends.

- Nearly half of those identifying pregnancy as an equality issue also identify with 'Disability' as an equality issue with accessing Newtown (12 of 26).
- Nearly half of those identifying Gender as an equality issue also identify with 'Pregnancy' as an equality issue with accessing Newtown (7 out of 14).
- Nearly half of those identifying Race as an equality issue also identify with 'Disability' as an equality issue with accessing Newtown (10 out of 23).
- Over half of those identifying Marital Status as an equality issue identify this as one of 'multiple' issues. Of this group 7 out of 18 also identify with 3 or more protected characteristics in total.
- Over half of those with 'Multiple issues' who identify 'Age' as an equality issue also identify with 'Disability' as an equality issue with accessing Newtown (9 out of 16). A quarter of these 16 respondents also identify with Pregnancy and a third of these respondents identify with 3 or more protected characteristics as an equality issue.

6.6. Results from equality questions show that, overall, 32% of respondents identify with a protected characteristic that may impact upon their ability to travel to Newtown. However it should be noted that this identified impact does not necessarily mean that they will automatically require or be eligible for support in reaching the centre.

6.7. Furthermore, protected characteristics such as gender, religious belief, sexual orientation and marital status are ambiguous as to how they would affect an individual's ability to travel to the centre. Analysis (7.4) has identified that 78% of individuals identifying with one or more of these characteristics identify with 3 or more protected characteristics in total.

6.8. Given the contentious nature of the proposed reorganisation and the absence of supporting data from respondents to show how these characteristics would be impacted, care should be taken when considering the responses and heed should be paid to the possibility that some responses may be exaggerated or misinterpreted, a position evidenced by one respondent identified as being impacted by every single protected characteristic.

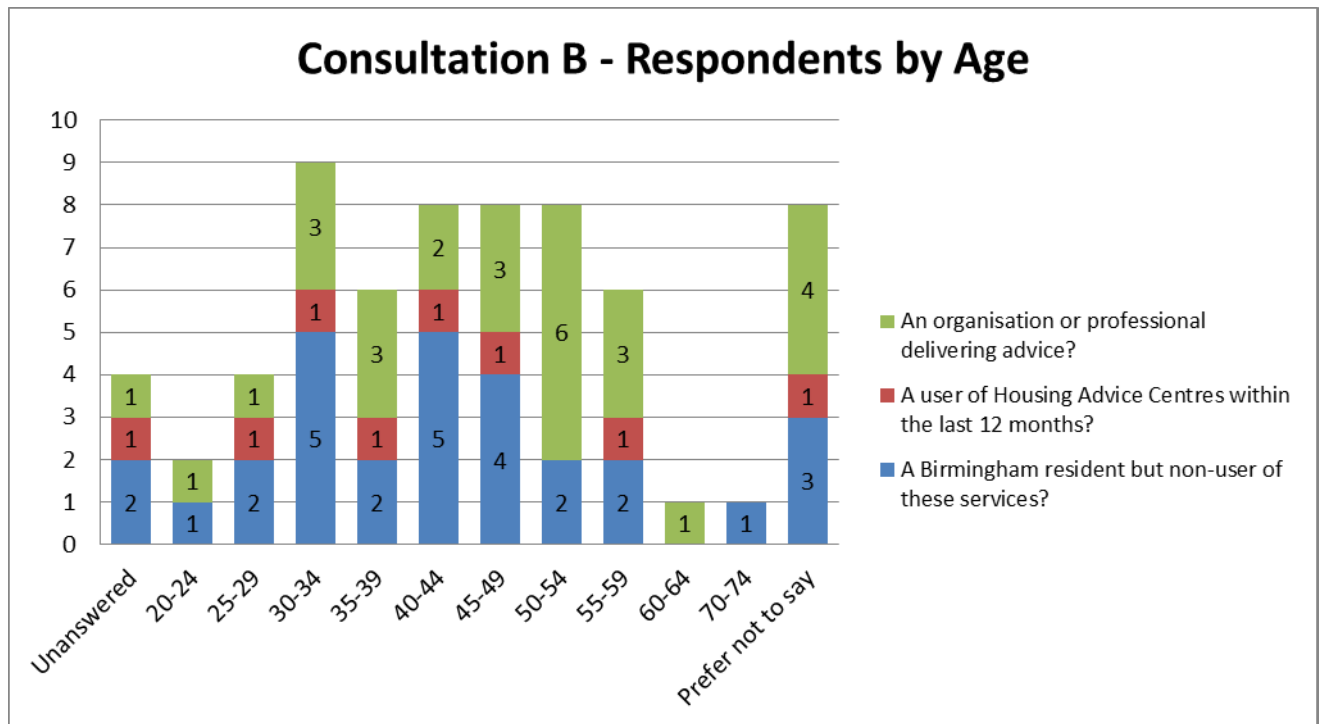
6.9. Consultation B

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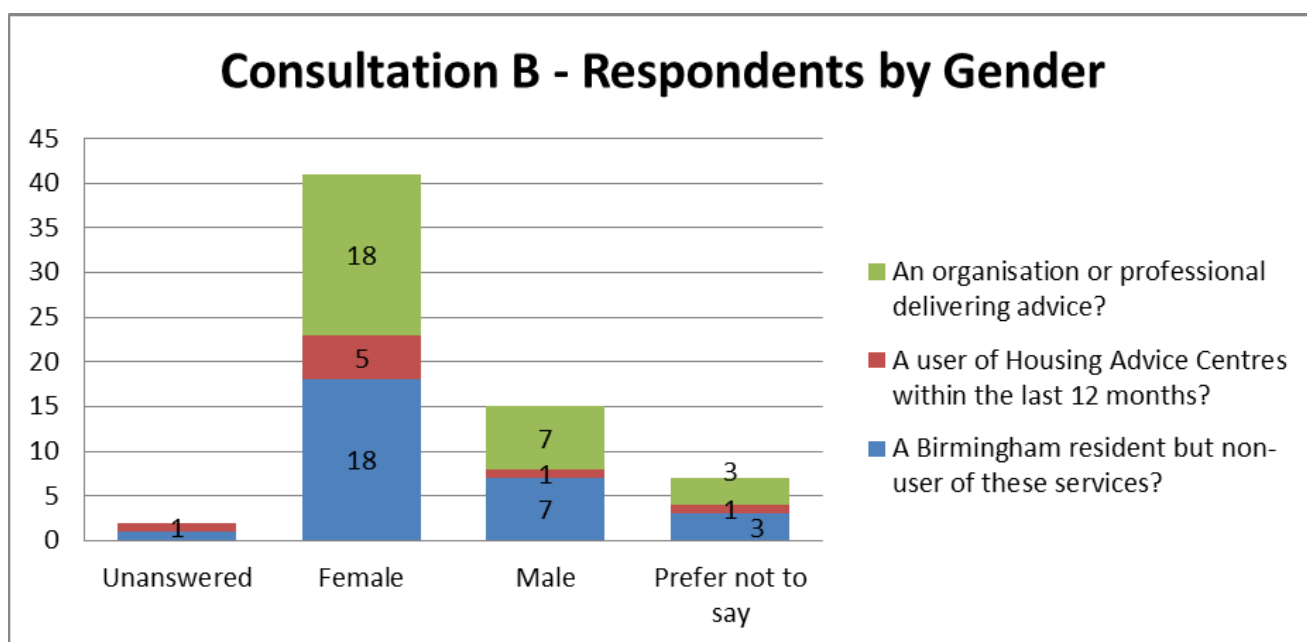
6.10. In consultation B respondents were asked more detailed questions regarding their demographic and protected characteristic data. Although the sample is relatively low in view of the small number of respondents in Consultation B, this data is presented below for consideration.

6.11. In view of the small sample detailed analysis and comparison to the Birmingham City population demographic has not taken place. It is considered that the small number of respondents (combined with numerous respondents being potentially out of area professionals), would likely produce unreliable comparison data when measured against such a demographic.

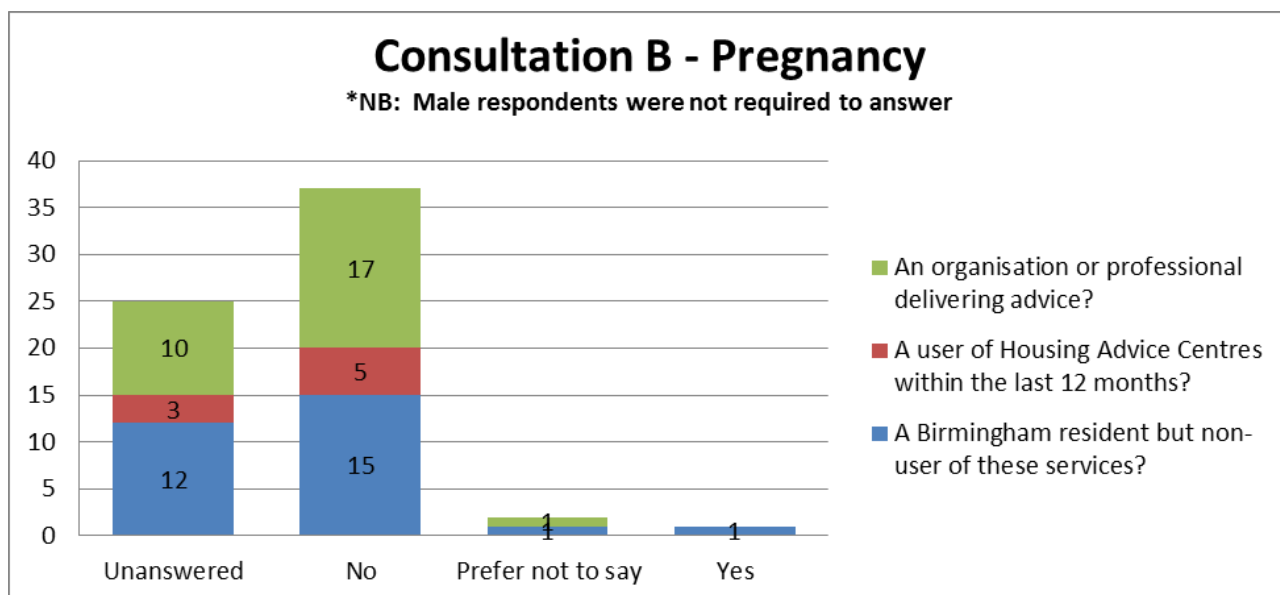
6.11.1. Consultation B: Age



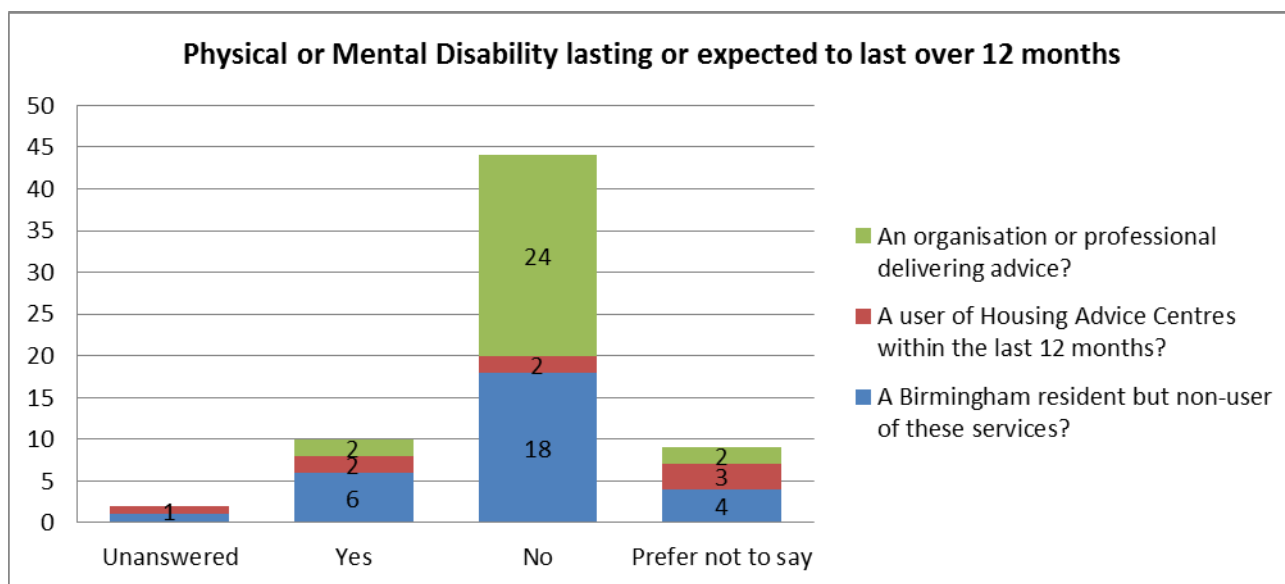
6.11.2. Consultation B: Gender



6.11.3. Consultation B: Pregnancy

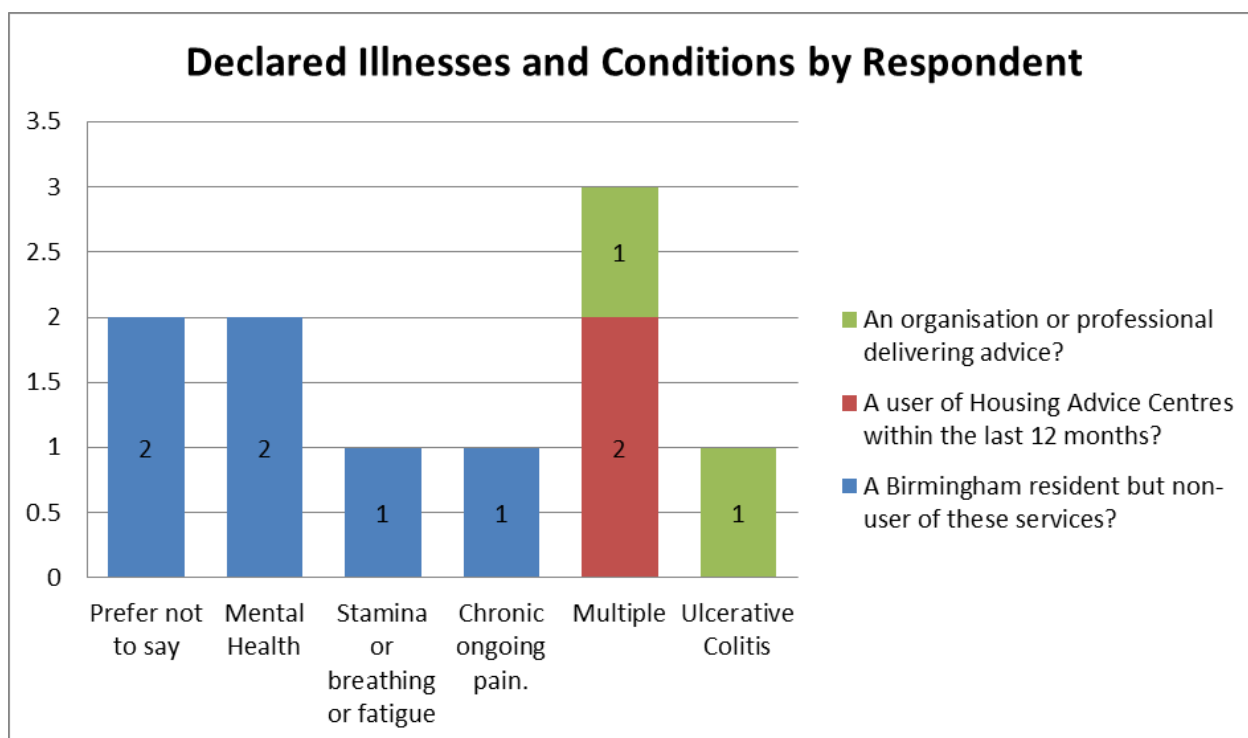


6.11.4. Consultation B: Respondents with a physical or mental condition or disability lasting or expected to last over 12 months.

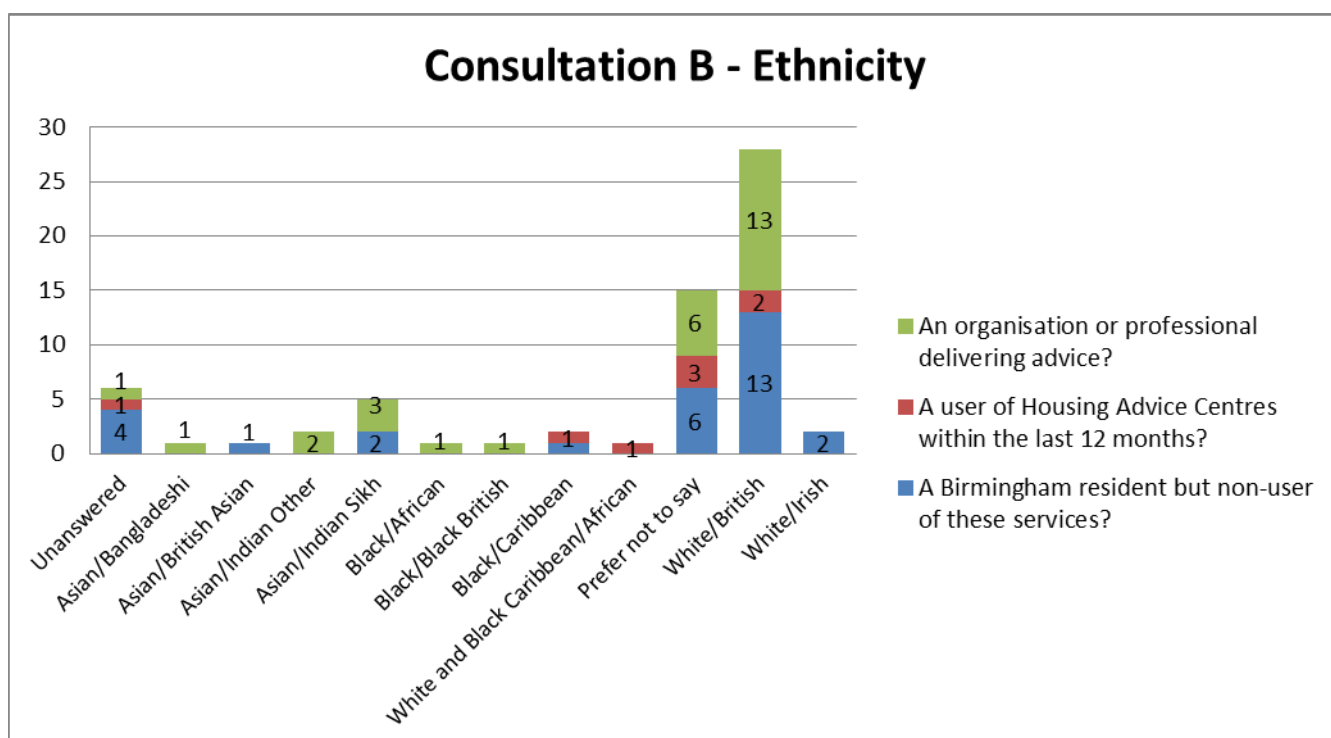


6.11.5. Conditions and illnesses declared by respondents (from 7.9.4).

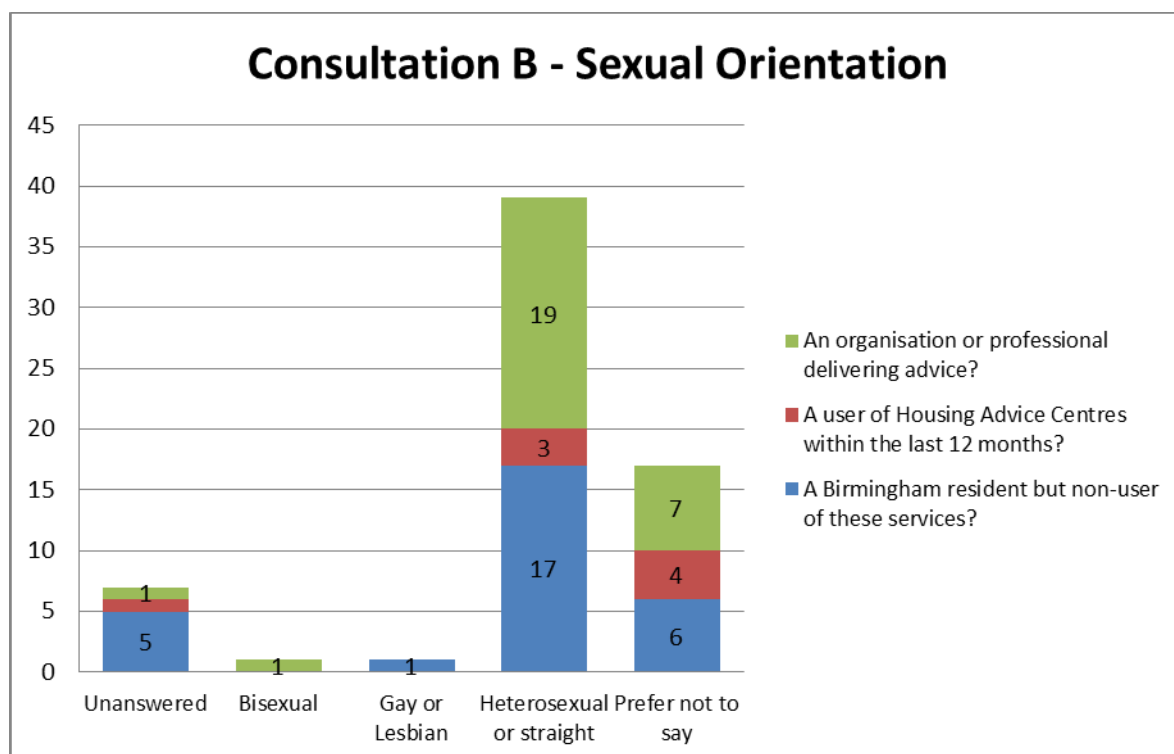
*NB: Persons answering 'no' or 'Prefer not to say' in 7.9.4 were not asked this question.



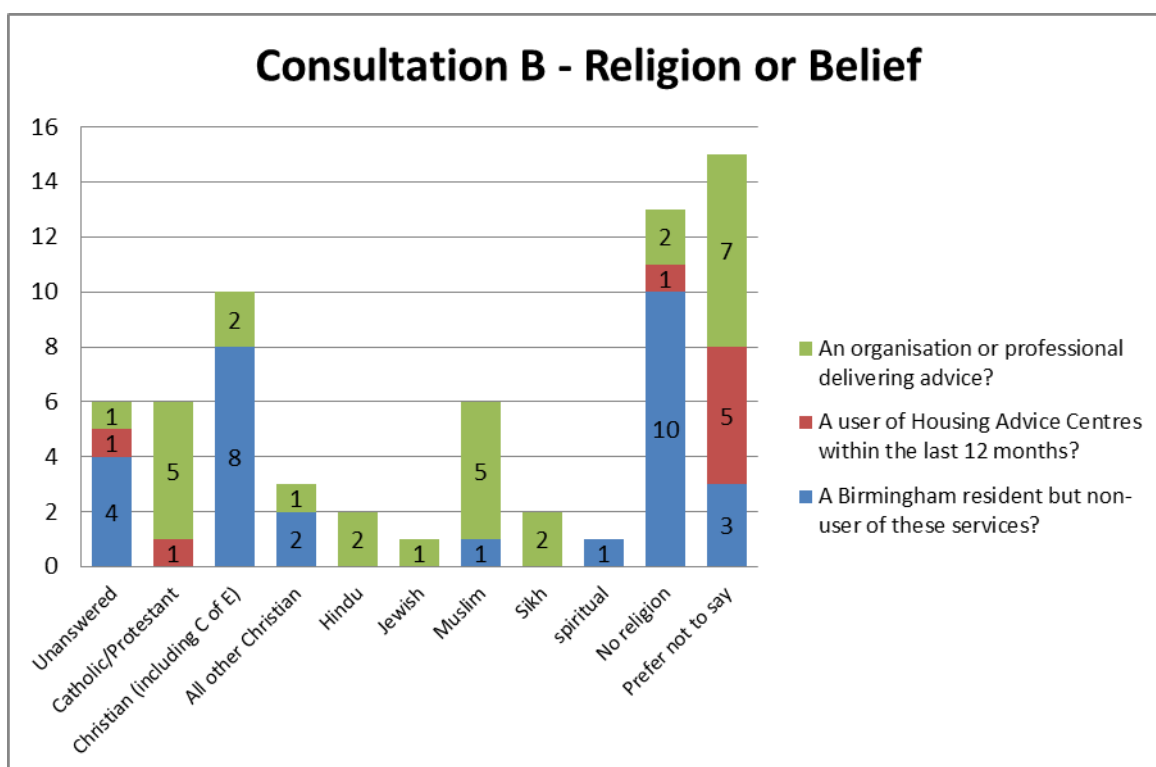
6.11.6. Consultation B: Ethnicity



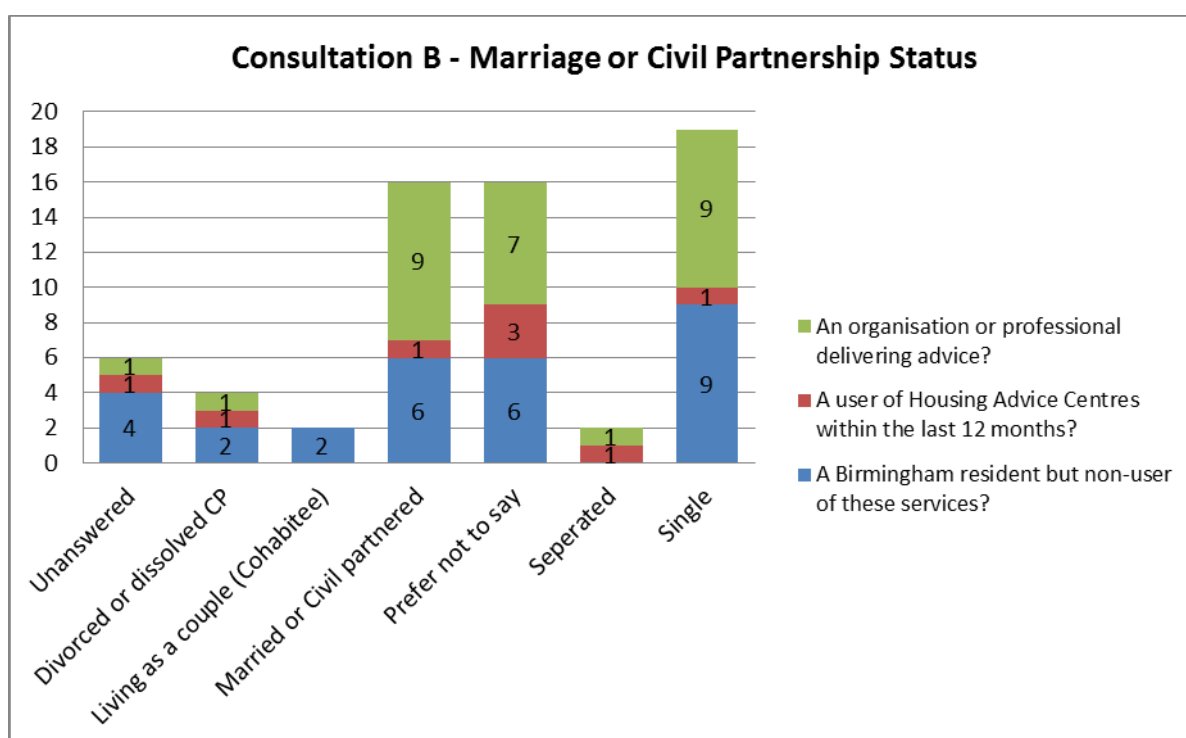
6.11.7. Consultation B: Sexual orientation



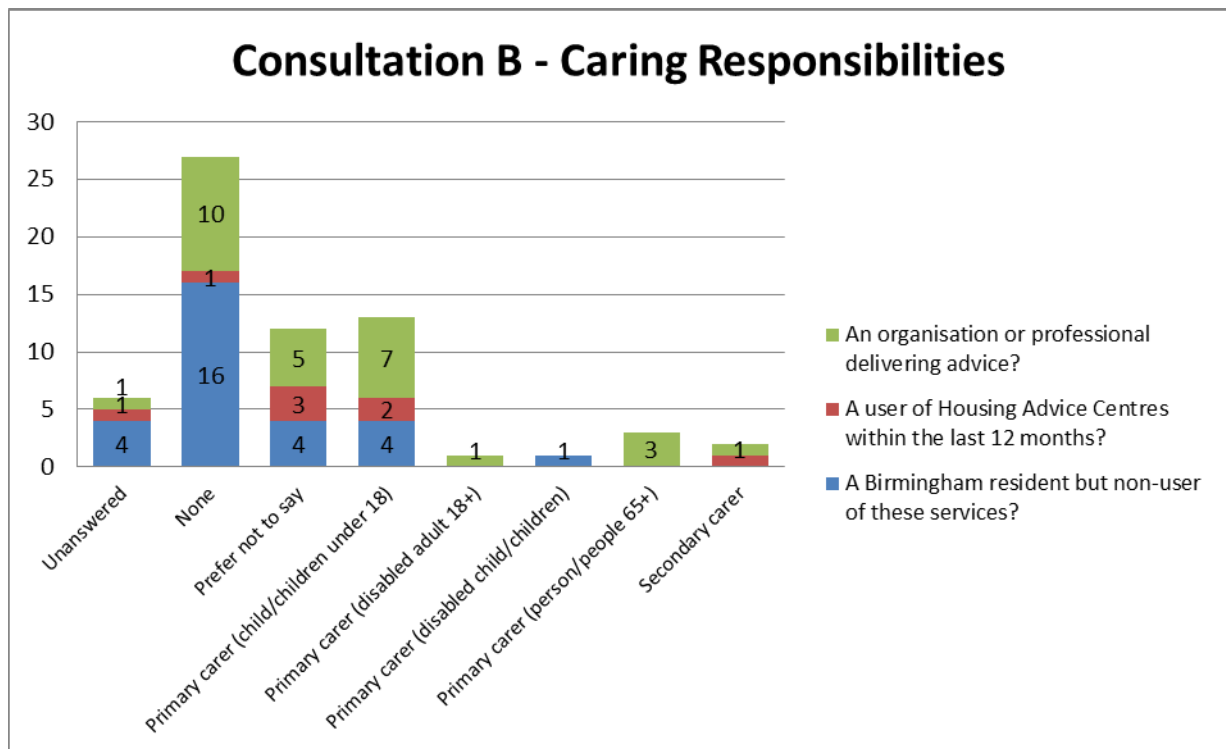
6.11.8. Consultation B: Religion



6.11.9. Consultation B: Marriage or Civil Partnership Status



6.11.10. Consultation B: Carers Responsibilities



7. Travel Analysis

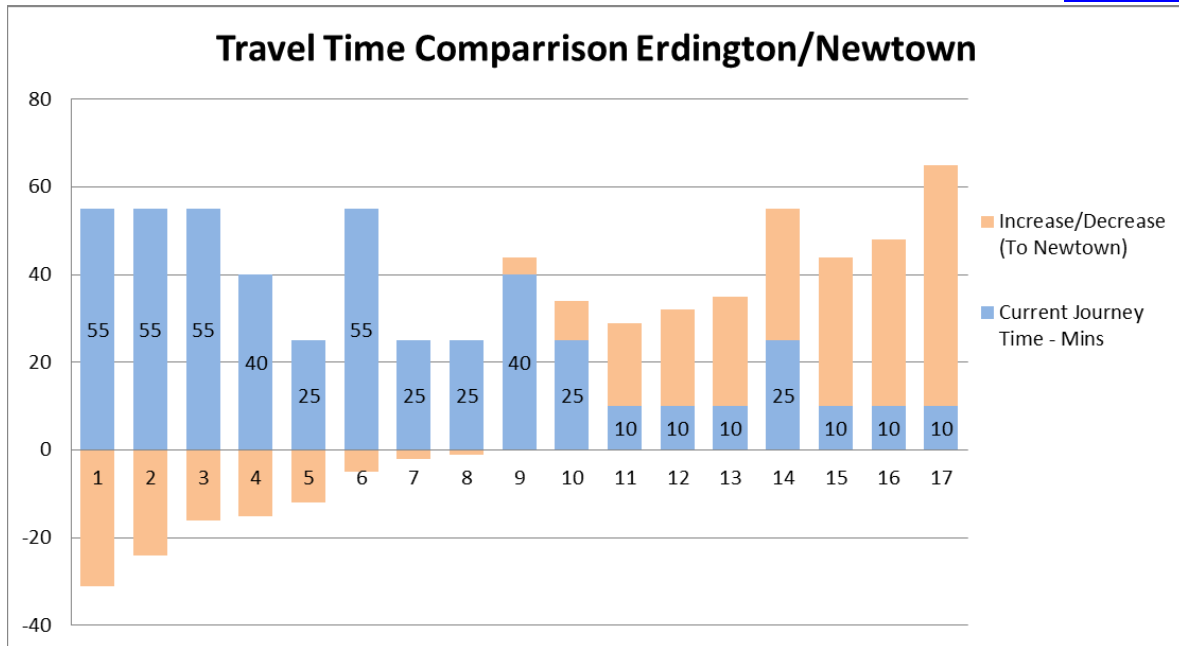
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- 7.1. In view of the large number of respondents asserting that they would be unable to reach the proposed centre in Newtown (6.1.30), particularly the large number citing distance as the reason (6.1.27), analysis was undertaken to determine the potential accessibility of the site for respondents who felt it was inaccessible.
- 7.2. This analysis was undertaken against respondents meeting the following criteria:
 - a) Respondents from Consultation A who either 'disagreed' or 'strongly' disagreed that they would be able to reach the proposed centre in Newtown, detailed in (Chart 12) who also...
 - a. Completed their questionnaire at either Northfield, Erdington or Sparkbrook (centres proposed for closure).
 - b. Provided details of their means of transport on the day of completing the original questionnaire, as well as...
 - c. Providing details of their journey time to the HAC on the day of completing the original questionnaire. And...
 - d. Provided a full and valid Birmingham Postcode (Invalid postcodes and those from out of the city were not included).
- 7.3. A total of 98 responses met these criteria for further study. These 98 responses were separated by Centre attended and their means of travel on the date of completing the original questionnaire was recorded. Their travel time was logged*¹¹ and their postcode was also recorded.
- 7.4. A corresponding trip to Newtown Customer Service Centre was then logged, using the same means of transport the respondent utilised when completing the initial questionnaire. For car users Travel time was calculated Postcode to Postcode by car using Google Maps.
- 7.5. For Foot, Bus, Bike or Train respondents a Public Transport route was planned using Network West Midlands Journey Planner and the 'best' route was selected balancing bus changes, walking distance and travel time.
- 7.6. The two journeys were then compared to determine increase or decrease in travel time. These results were broken down by HAC and are displayed below per respondent (Charts [TA1](#), [TA2](#) & [TA3](#)).

¹¹ Travel Time in consultation A was recorded in 'Approximate' blocks. In order to produce a comparable figure for analysis the 'mid-point' of each block was taken and rounded up to the nearest 5 mins. I.e 15-30mins becomes 25mins.

Chart: TA1

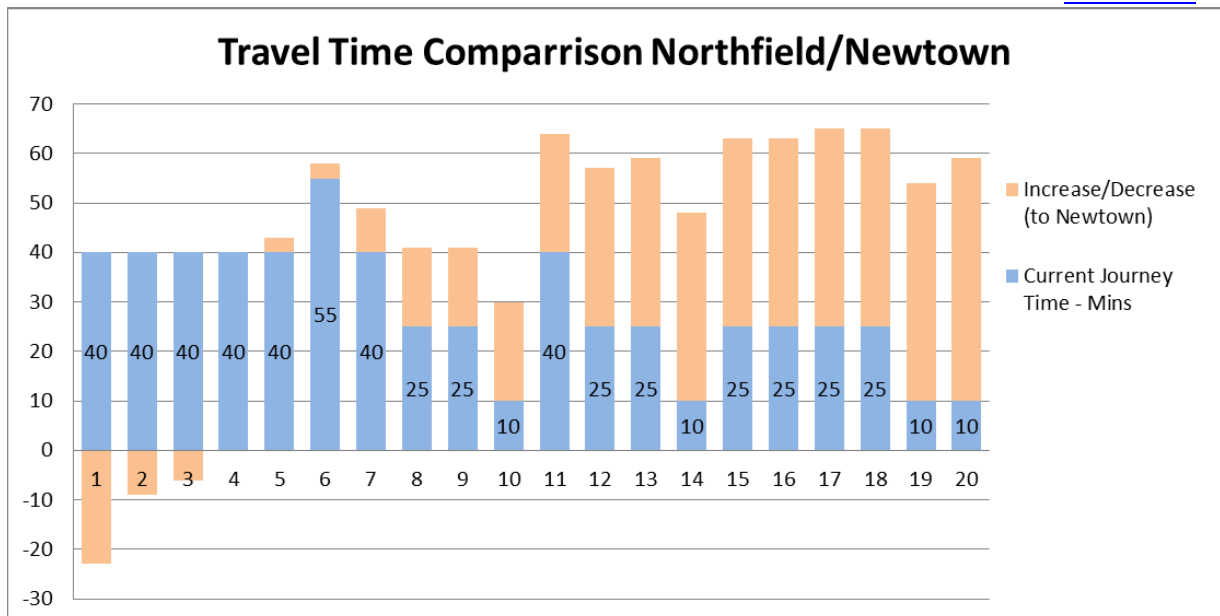
[Data Index](#)



- 7.7. From this data, nearly 50% of Erdington Customers (8 of 17) will experience a reduction in travel time when accessing Newtown. However due to larger increases for some the (mean) average travel time will increase by 8 mins from 28 to 36 minutes.

Chart TA2:

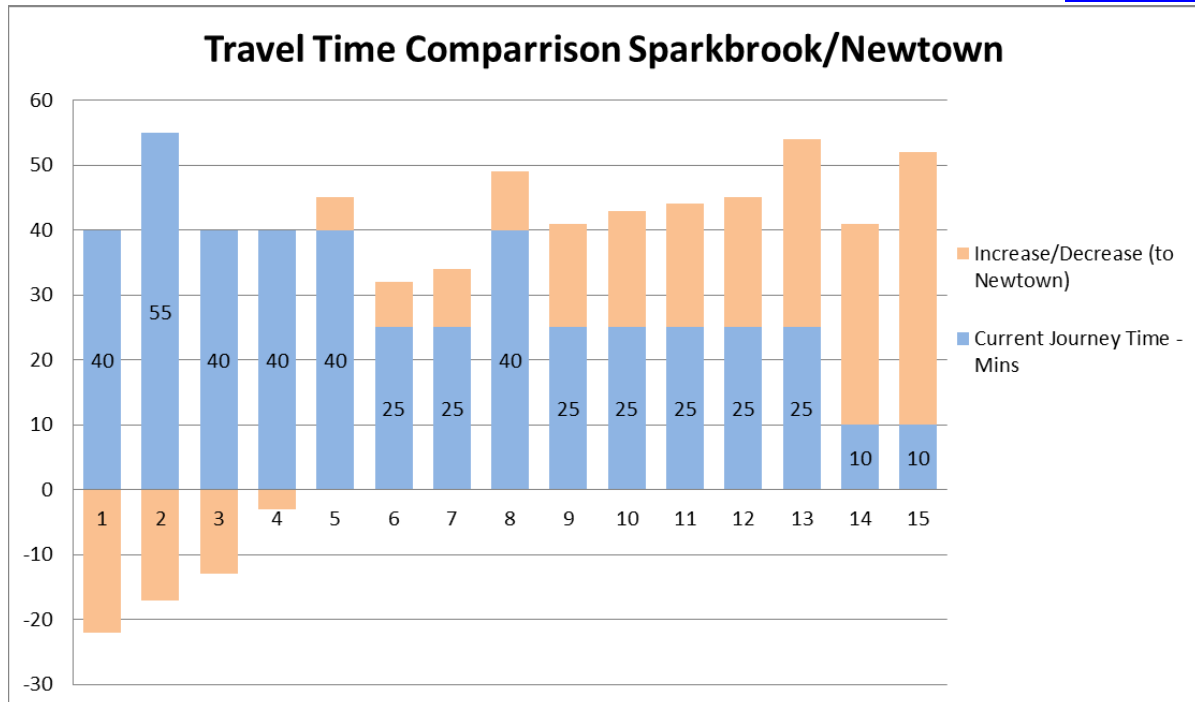
[Data Index](#)



- 7.8. Analysis of results from Northfield show a significant increase in journey time for the majority of respondents. Only 3 respondents will reduce their journey time as a result of travelling to Newtown and (mean) average journey time will increase by 20 minutes from 29 minutes to 49 minutes in the new model.

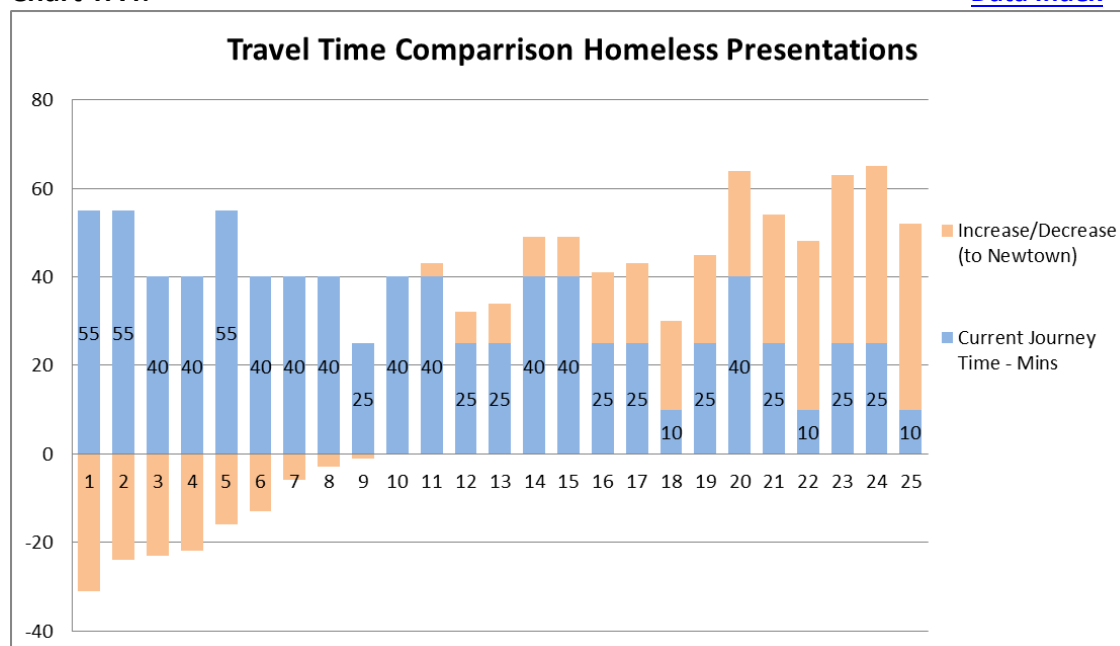
Chart TA3:

[Data Index](#)



- 7.9. Analysis of results from Sparkbrook show that a small number of respondents will experience reduced journey times if travelling to Newtown however the majority will experience a moderate or significant increase (of between 5 and 42 minutes with around 15 minutes being the average increase). The average journey time will increase by 10 minutes from 30 to 40 minutes.
- 7.10. As before, the data from this work has been limited to Homeless Applicants and analysed separately in view of their particular vulnerability. This information is shown overleaf.

Chart TA4:

[Data Index](#)

- 7.11. Over one third of homeless applicants in this study would experience a reduction in journey time from home when traveling to Newtown in substitution to the centre where they completed the questionnaire. Around another third would experience broadly similar journey times with small to moderate increases of between 2 and 15 minutes. The final third would experience significantly increased travel times of between 20 and 40 minutes. It is notable that these larger increases are noted in households with the shortest travel times in the first instance.
- 7.12. In view of the above information, as the majority of homeless households originally presented having travelled 40+ minutes, as a result the overall (mean) average travel time increases only slightly by 7 minutes from 33 to 40 minutes.
- 7.13. In reviewing feedback from respondents during consultation it was noted that numerous respondents noted the potential increase in cost for clients attempting to reach a single HAC in Newtown. Therefore an analysis of Public Transport costs was undertaken as part of the travel analysis.
- 7.14. For the purposes of this only National Express buses were studied (as these are the only buses covered by the current arrangements where bus tickets can be issued) however fares across providers are comparable with little difference between carriers.
- 7.15. Both Off Peak and On Peak fares were examined however it should be noted that the 'Off Peak' applies to those travelling after 0930hrs daily.

- 7.16. National Express West Midlands currently operates a fee structure as shown below:

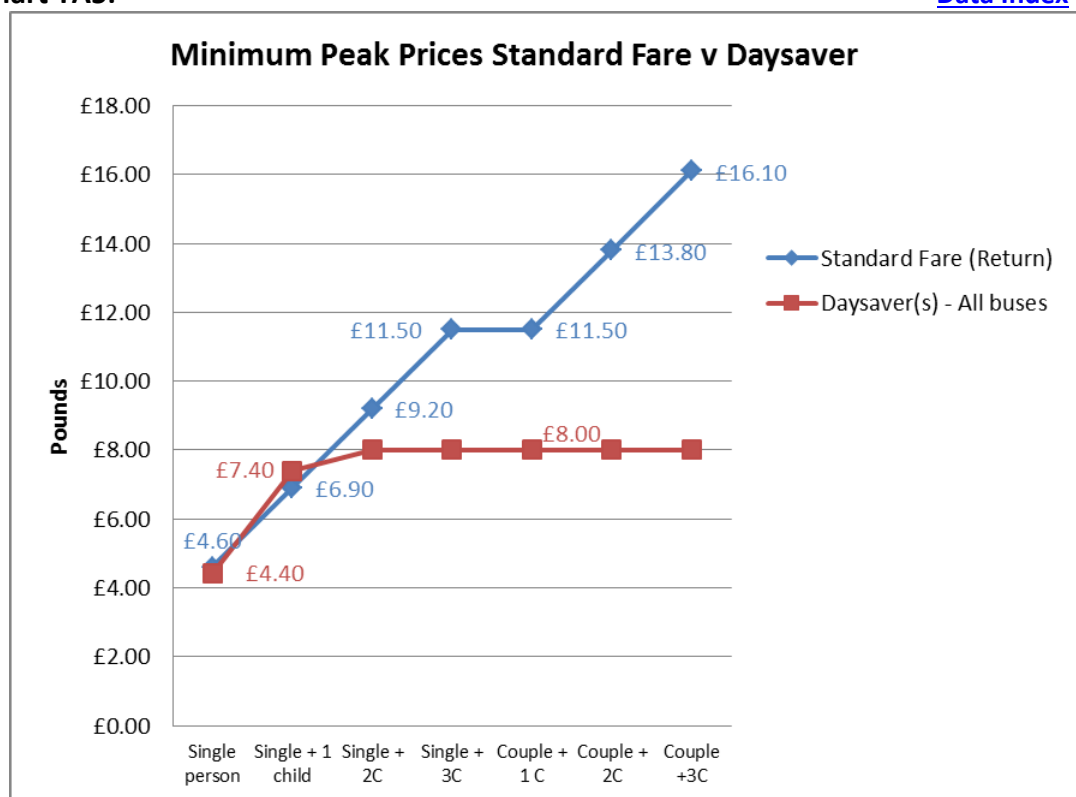
	Journey Type	Adults	Children
Option 1	Single 'Short Hop' (within B'Ham city centre only)	£0.90p	N/A
Option 2	Off-peak 'short hop' (about a mile)	£1.90p	£1.15p
Option 3	Maximum single fare (Any journey over 1 mile)	£2.30p	£1.15p
Option 4	Daysaver (all NX buses, all day)	£4.40p	£3.00p
Option 5	Off-peak Daysaver (All NX buses after 9.30 am)	£4.00p	£1 per child* *Purchased with adult Daysaver
Option 6	Family Daysaver (1 or 2 adults + up to 4 kids)	£8.00p	N/A

- 7.17. An assumption must be drawn that those accessing a HAC by Public Transport, save for those entering TA subsequently, will also utilise public transport to return home.
- 7.18. Any customer accessing a HAC by Public Transport travelling over 1 (by road mileage and not line of sight) mile will be required to pay the Option 3 fare of £2.30p (on or off peak) per journey (minimally £4.60p for a return trip).
- 7.19. A daysaver covering all NX Buses for the entire day can be purchased for £4.40p On Peak and £4.00p off peak. As this is cheaper than option1 for a single person travelling over 1 mile; the cost differential in terms of fare is nil, regardless of how many buses the customer is required to take. In rare cases of respondents living on a route not covered by NX Buses and requiring an alternate provider, an NBus One Day Daysaver can be purchased for £4.60 (adult) and £3.10 (child) which covers 28 alternate providers (including NX buses) for the same cost as an Option 3 return trip. In these cases the cost differential remains Nil.
- 7.20. Any customer accessing a HAC with a child from over 1 mile away will be required to pay £2.30p + £1.15p per child (Children aged 5-15). This can total minimally £6.90 for a return trip (Single person with 1 child) up to £18.40 for a couple with 4 children.
- 7.21. A single person with one child travelling from over 1 mile away who is required to travel before 0930hrs can purchase a Daysaver for £4.40 and a child Daysaver for £3.00 resulting in a cost differential of +£0.50p to access as many buses as required all day. This cost differential will only apply to single persons travelling with 1 child before 0930hrs.

- 7.22. If the same household makes the same journey after 0930hrs an Off Peak Daysaver can be purchased for £3.80p with a Child add on for £1.00p (total cost £4.80p) resulting in a total cost differential of -£2.10 for access to all buses on the NX Network all day.
- 7.23. For single persons with more than 1 child or a couple with 1 child or more (travelling more than 1 mile) the minimal cost of standard fares will always exceed £8 for a return journey and thus the purchase of an £8.00p family Daysaver will be a cheaper option. Therefore the cost differential will always be negative for access to all NX buses all day regardless of peak or off peak fare structures.

Chart TA5:

[Data Index](#)

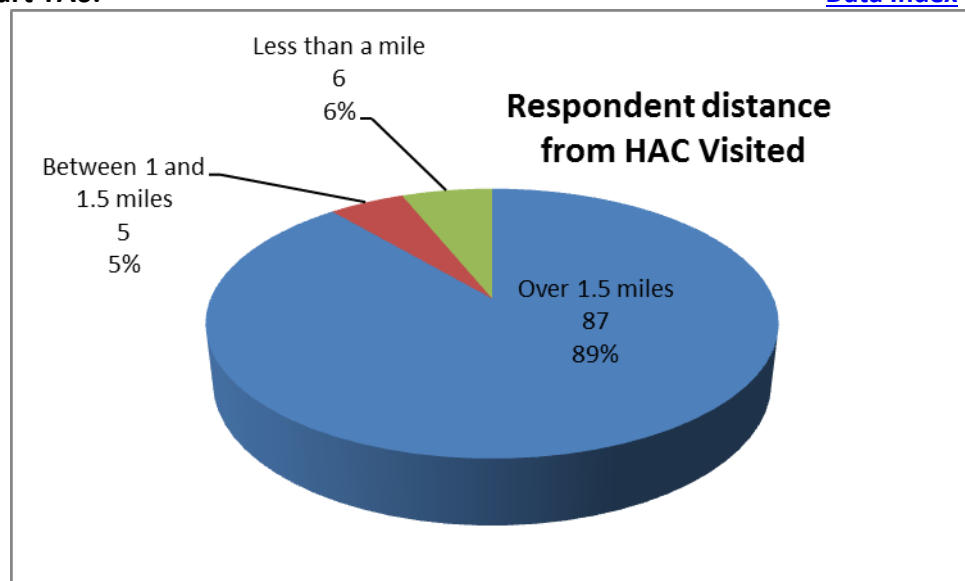


- 7.24. The 'Short Hop' Fare within Birmingham City Centre (Option 1 in the fares and pricing table at 8.16) is not considered here as there is No HAC within the 1 mile zone designated by Option 1. However it is noted that the closest HAC to this 1 mile zone is Newtown HAC. It therefore follows that any person utilising this option would already be travelling to the site of the proposed Single HAC site and would thus be unaffected by the proposals.
- 7.25. In considering (Option 1 in the fares and pricing table at 8.16) it is recognised that there may be customers utilising this option to reach an existing HAC that may be required to travel further in future to reach a HAC outside of this mile radius.

- 7.26. In considering this the data/criteria outlined at 8.2 was utilised to review the distance from clients home postcodes to the HAC's they visited when providing responses. Only 6 respondents lived within 1 mile of the HAC they visited. When reviewed further only 5 lived within 1.5 miles of the HAC they visited on the day of responding
- 7.27. It should be noted that this data is not limited to respondents who already use public transport but also includes those who walked on the day of their visit when a response was completed.

Chart TA6:

[Data Index](#)

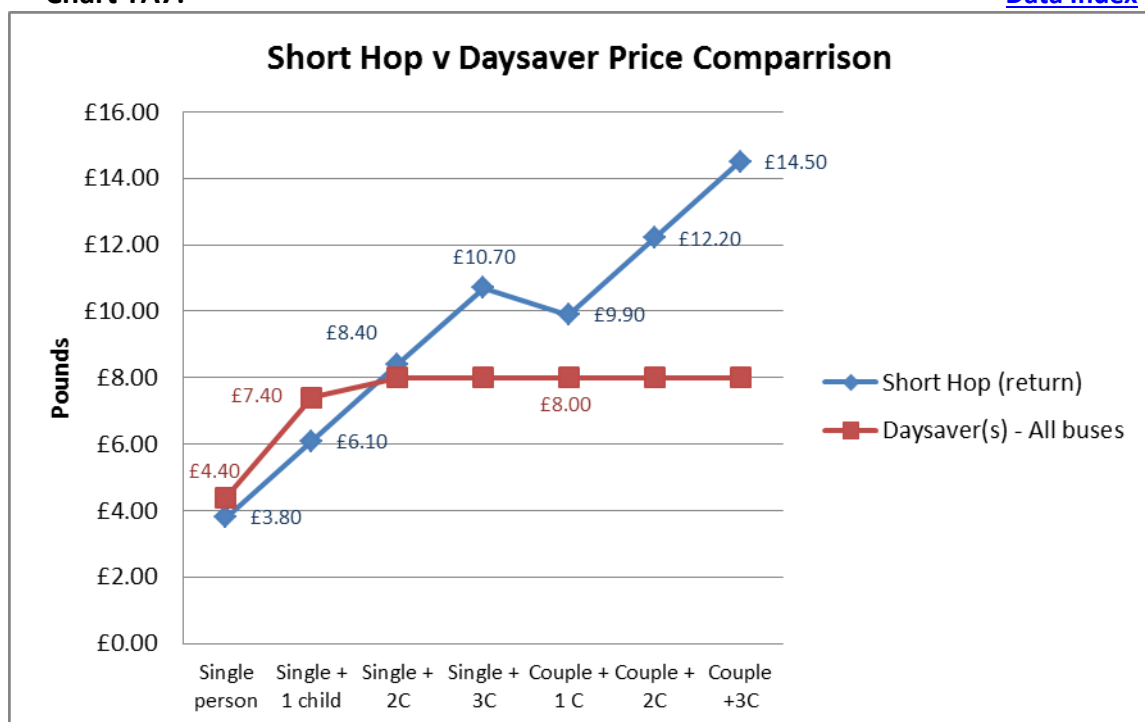


- 7.28. Additional analysis has been undertaken regarding bus journeys in order to establish a reliable view as to how many customers utilising public transport could access a HAC via a 'Short Hop'.
- 7.29. A 'Short Hop' is defined as 'About a Mile' within National Express pricing structures. To determine how long a mile journey takes 10 bus routes were studied. These included 6 key routes from the 3 existing HAC's to the Newtown site as well as 4 others (chosen from a bus route map). Care was taken to ensure that trips through the city centre were included in these routes as well as '9' prefix 'Limited Stop' routes. This was to ensure that city traffic as well as time saver routes were factored into the calculation.
- 7.30. The routes examined totalled 36.5 miles of travel with an estimated travel time of 168 minutes. From this the average speed of a bus is calculated at 14.7mph (0.245 miles per minute).
- 7.31. From this it can be concluded that any passenger travelling for 4 minutes or more on a bus is likely to exceed the 1 mile radius for a 'short hop' journey.

- 7.32. From [Chart 7](#), 91% of all respondents utilising public transport travelled in excess of 15 minutes to reach their local HAC. It is reasonable to conclude that the vast majority of these would have likely exceeded the 1 mile radius for a 'Short Hop', a conclusion given additional weight by the data detailed at 8.26.
- 7.33. The additional travel distance does provide an additional cost implication for some who may otherwise live within the distance of a 'short hop'. This cost implication varies from £0.60p for a single person to £1.30 for a single person with one child; all other household types remain cheaper with a daysaver.
- 7.34. The potential additional cost implications are outlined below in chart TA7:

Chart TA7:

[Data Index](#)



- 7.35. When considering this potential additional cost implication, the following points should be noted:
- The data already reviewed indicates that the number of people attending a HAC from within the radius of a 'Short Hop' is very small, reducing the number impacted.
 - This additional cost implication will only apply to that small group when travelling after 0930hrs daily, further reducing the number that may be impacted.
 - This additional cost only applies to two specific household types (Single Persons and Single Persons with 1 child), reducing the number even further.

- d) Of the small group identified within (a-c), it is also noted that it should not be assumed that persons in this group are automatically unable to meet the small additional cost. Many within this group may well be able to meet the additional cost of between £0.60p and £1.30 for occasional infrequent trips, they may be able to access advice via the internet, phone or another agency. They can also travel at off peak times where this cost is removed. Those that are unable to exercise this any of these options are likely to be a smaller subsection of the group outlined in a-c.
- e) When considering that (a-d) are conditions which must all be met simultaneously, is concluded that the group potentially adversely affected by this particular additional travel cost is likely to be very small and consideration should be given as to if current planned mitigation (such as the issue of bus tickets) can manage this effectively.

Report Ends

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Andrew Clarke
Business Analyst – Business Change
Directorate for People

Tel: 07730282801
Email: Andrew.j.clarke@birmingham.gov.uk

Housing Advice: Consultation on future proposals



Overview:

The City Council is continuing to strive to improve its services for homeless households in Birmingham.

Housing Advice Centres are presently co-located in four Customer Service Centres and we are therefore consulting on changes to this service. The service provided by the Youth Hub (provision for single young people aged 16-25 is not affected by this proposal.)

The Housing Advice Service provides assistance with joining the Council Housing list, discussing housing options, seeking temporary accommodation and assistance with Homelessness or Homelessness Prevention.

Why We Are Consulting:

In the current climate the Council is reviewing all services to ensure they best meet the needs of the citizens of Birmingham. Historically, Housing Advice and Homelessness has been delivered alongside the Council's Neighbourhood Advice Service. We recognise that the current approach has not always led to a consistent service for customers and a small number have experienced delays and frustrations with the service they receive.

In seeking to develop an improved service, consideration has also been given to the significant savings required within the Neighbourhood Advice Service for 2015-16.

We are confident that the proposed changes to the service will bring about improvements such as allowing the service to increase the availability of appointments as well as improving the level of service for Households threatened with homelessness.

However, we also acknowledge that such changes can bring with them concerns from citizens and we may not have identified all of the potential impacts upon our customers. We also recognise that customers are well placed to suggest other improvements that we may not have thought of.

Therefore we are undertaking public consultation to get as much feedback on our proposals as we can to inform our decision making as we move forward.

The proposals on which we are seeking your views:

The Housing Advice Service

The Housing Advice service is presently based in 4 Customer Service Centres at Sparkbrook, Newtown, and Erdington & Northfield. It is proposed to reorganise the service to be delivered, from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham. This new single Housing Advice Centre will have more advisors on duty and additional available interviews. There is no planned reduction in accessibility to specialist Housing & Homelessness advisors via the telephone and long term we anticipate improved access to housing advice available via phone and web.

This proposal is not based on the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy Service saving money and we are not looking to reduce resources available to the service at this present moment. We believe that one centre will be able to deliver a more consistent service through centralising our staff and expertise. This will take place alongside improvements to our phone service and further enhancement of online services. This approach is in line with that being taken by other similar authorities.

The Newtown location is proposed for its central location and because it sits in an area of the highest demand for Housing Advice Services. It is the most evenly accessible of the four present locations for people across the city to get to and meets the space requirements to accommodate the service. This proposal follows exploration of alternate options; these have been considered however none have been found to be viable. Alternate options which we considered included:

1) *Do nothing and stay as we are:*

After consideration, it was concluded that if the Neighbourhood Advice staff are to be reduced, it would be necessary to balance this with an enhanced ability on the part of the Housing Advice Service to offer more appointments, ensure that the most consistent service is available and secure the high quality decisions which are needed, particularly in the area of homelessness, all of which objectives are in any event desirable in their own right. This option was therefore not found to be viable.

2) *Move Housing Advice Delivery to a two centre model:*

Upon further exploration it was concluded that this option would still require more Neighbourhood Advice Service staff in support than those actually available or would require additional resources for the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy service. It wouldn't create sufficient increased capacity and would not fully resolve issues around consistency or flexibility of staff cover. This option was not considered viable in view of this.

3) *Relocate the Housing Advice Service to a single site in Birmingham City Centre:*

This was explored however the Council has no suitable building currently available to use and an evaluation of renting a private building recognised that we would incur significant yearly costs as well as one off set up costs which are unlikely to be sustainable and thus this option was not considered viable.

As part of these proposals we are consulting with and seeking the views of citizens of Birmingham and users of our services along with professionals delivering advice in these areas of work. If you would like to provide more detailed feedback, or see more information please visit our consultation webpage at:

www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/housingadvice-service

Birmingham Housing Advice - Future proposals consultation



The Council are currently consulting on the Housing Advice service delivered from Customer Service Centres. This questionnaire will enable us to better understand the views of those using the centres. If you have any questions regarding this consultation please email AdviceServiceConsultation@birmingham.gov.uk

1. Which centre have you visited today?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Erdington Customer Service Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Northfield Customer Service Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newtown Customer Service Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Sparkbrook Customer Service Centre |

2. What service did you come in for today?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Join Housing Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in paperwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Advice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use phone or Computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Present as Homeless | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

3. How did you get here today?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On foot | <input type="checkbox"/> By Car | <input type="checkbox"/> By Bus/Train | <input type="checkbox"/> By bike |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|

4. How long was your journey?

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> less than 15 mins | <input type="checkbox"/> 15-30mins | <input type="checkbox"/> 30-45mins | <input type="checkbox"/> over 45mins |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|

5. Before you came here today did you try to find information...

- ☐ By calling our customer service line (0121 303 7410)
- ☐ By looking at our Birmingham City Council or Birmingham Housing Options website (www.birminghamhousingoptions.org.uk)

6. Thinking about what you came in for today could we have dealt with this in any other way listed below?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> By an improved website with clearer on line help and advice | <input type="checkbox"/> By allowing documents to be emailed in to us |
| <input type="checkbox"/> By an arranged call back or interview by phone | <input type="checkbox"/> By allowing documents to be posted in to us |

7. Including today how many times have you been into the centre in the past year?

- | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10+ |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|

8. To help us understand the areas using our service please can we have the post code of your current/most recent address (Optional)

Proposed changes to the service

It is being proposed that Housing and Homelessness Advice moves to being delivered from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham with more advisors on duty and additional available interviews. There would also be improved advice available via phone and web.

9. If we went to a single Housing Advice Centre what if any concerns would you have about this?

10. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about how you might access housing and homelessness advice in the future?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure/Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I would still be able to get to the centre in Newtown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would use the web or phone to get the service I need instead.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would be able to get help from another advice service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a support worker or other professional who could help me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would need additional support to enable me to get to Newtown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. How do you think we could make it easier for you to get the housing and homelessness support you might need? Any other comments on our proposals?

12. The characteristics below are protected. This means that there is protection for people who identify with them against discrimination based on that characteristic. Please tick appropriate boxes (if any apply) which you believe might impact upon your ability to travel to Newtown?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your age | <input type="checkbox"/> Your disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Your race |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your marital status | <input type="checkbox"/> If you are pregnant | <input type="checkbox"/> Your Sexual Orientation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your religion or belief | <input type="checkbox"/> Your gender | <input type="checkbox"/> None of these apply to me |

Thank you. This information will be used to help us review our plans for our service development. Please hand your completed survey back to a member of staff.



<<https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/>>

Birmingham Housing Advice Service consultation

Overview

The City Council is continuing to strive to improve its services for homeless households in Birmingham.

Housing Advice Centres are presently co-located in four Customer Service Centres and we are therefore consulting on changes to this service. The service provided by the Youth Hub (provision for single young people aged 16-25 is not affected by this proposal.)

The Housing Advice Service provides assistance with joining the Council Housing list, discussing housing options, seeking temporary accommodation and assistance with Homelessness or Homelessness Prevention.

Why We Are Consulting

In the current climate the Council is reviewing all services to ensure they best meet the needs of the citizens of Birmingham. Historically, Housing Advice and Homelessness has been delivered alongside the Council's Neighbourhood Advice Service. We recognise that the current approach has not always led to a consistent service for customers and a small number have experienced delays and frustrations with the service they receive.

In seeking to develop an improved service, consideration has also been given to the significant savings required within the Neighbourhood Advice Service for 2015-16.

We are confident that the proposed changes to the service will bring about improvements such as allowing the service to increase the availability of appointments as well as improving the level of service for Households threatened with homelessness.

However, we also acknowledge that such changes can bring with them concerns from citizens and we may not have identified all of the potential impacts upon our customers. We also recognise that customers are well placed to suggest other improvements that we may not have thought of.

Therefore we are undertaking public consultation to get as much feedback on our proposals as we can to inform our decision making as we move forward.

The proposals on which we are seeking your views:

The Housing Advice Service

The Housing Advice service is presently based in 4 Customer Service Centres at Sparkbrook, Newtown, and Erdington & Northfield. It is proposed to reorganise the service to be delivered, from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham. This new single Housing Advice Centre will have more advisors on duty and additional available interviews. There is no planned reduction in accessibility to specialist Housing & Homelessness advisors via the telephone and long term we anticipate improved access to housing advice available via phone and web.

This proposal is not based on the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy Service saving money and we are not looking to reduce resources available to the service at this present moment. We believe that one centre will be able to deliver a more consistent service through centralising our staff and expertise. This will take place alongside improvements to our phone service and further enhancement of online services. This approach is inline with that being taken by other similar authorities.

The Newtown location is proposed for its central location and because it sits in an area of the highest demand for Housing Advice Services. It is the most evenly accessible of the four present locations for people across the city to get to and meets the space requirements to accommodate the service. This proposal follows exploration of alternate options; these have been considered however none have been found to be viable. Alternate options which we considered included:

1. Do nothing and stay as we are:

After consideration, it was concluded that if the Neighbourhood Advice staff are to be reduced, it would be necessary to balance this with an enhanced ability on the part of the Housing Advice Service to offer more appointments, ensure that the most consistent service is available and secure the high quality decisions which are needed, particularly in the area of homelessness, all of which objectives are in any event desirable in their own right. This option was therefore not found to be viable.

2. *Move Housing Advice Delivery to a two centre model:*

Upon further exploration it was concluded that this option would still require more Neighbourhood Advice Service staff in support than those actually available or would require additional resources for the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy service. It wouldn't create sufficient increased capacity and would not fully resolve issues around consistency or flexibility of staff cover. This option was not considered viable in view of this.

3. *Relocate the Housing Advice Service to a single site in Birmingham City Centre:*

This was explored however the Council has no suitable building currently available to use and an evaluation of renting a private building recognised that we would incur significant yearly costs as well as one off set up costs which are unlikely to be sustainable and thus this option was not considered viable.

As part of these proposals we are consulting with and seeking the views of citizens of Birmingham and users of our services along with professionals delivering advice in these areas of work.

Give Us Your Views - Take our survey

Housing Advice Consultation <<https://www.research.net/r/beheardhousingadvice>>

Related Documents

- **2013 - 2014 Homeless Applicants by Geography.pdf** <https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/housingadvice/service/++preview++open/supporting_documents/2013%20%202014%20Homeless%20Applicants%20by%20Geography.pdf> , 1.0 MB (PDF document)

Contact

AdviceServiceConsultation@birmingham.gov.uk

Key Dates

Status: Open

Runs from 30 Nov 2015 to 18 Jan 2016

Other Information

Areas:

All Areas

Audience:

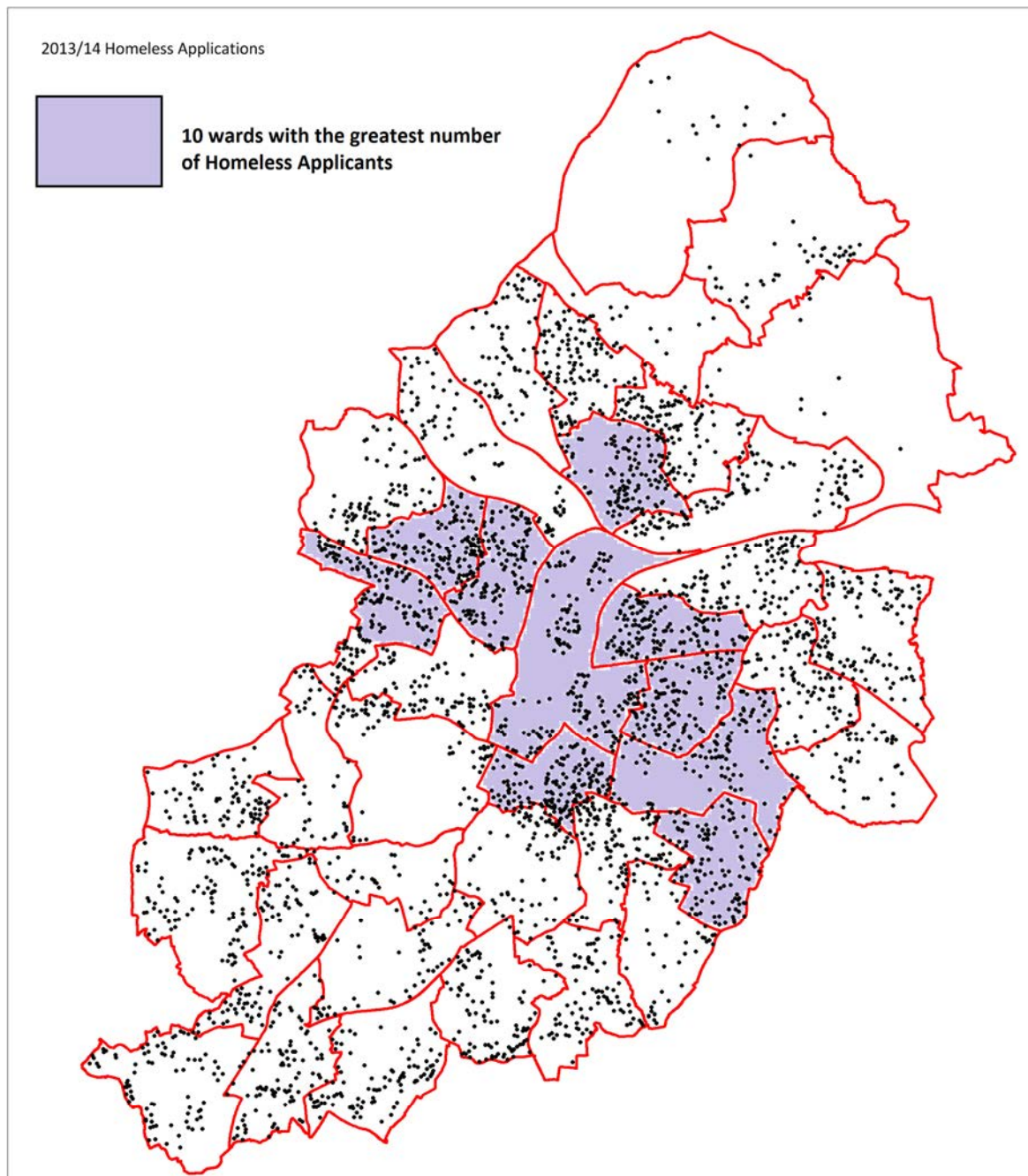
- All residents,
- Asylum Seekers and Refugees,
- Minority Ethnic people,
- Young people,
- Older people,
- Disabled people,
- Council tenants,
- Women,
- Councillors/MPs/MEPs,
- Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender people,
- Older people,
- People with Disabilities,
- People with Learning Disabilities,
- Men,
- Homeless,
- Offenders,
- Local Residents,
- Public Sector Bodies,
- Faith groups,
- Community groups,

- Voluntary Organisations,
- Staff,
- Service user groups,
- Newly arrived groups

Interests:

- Citizens Satisfaction,
- Health & Wellbeing,
- Equality & Human rights,
- Housing,
- Homelessness

2013/2014 Homeless Applicants by ward

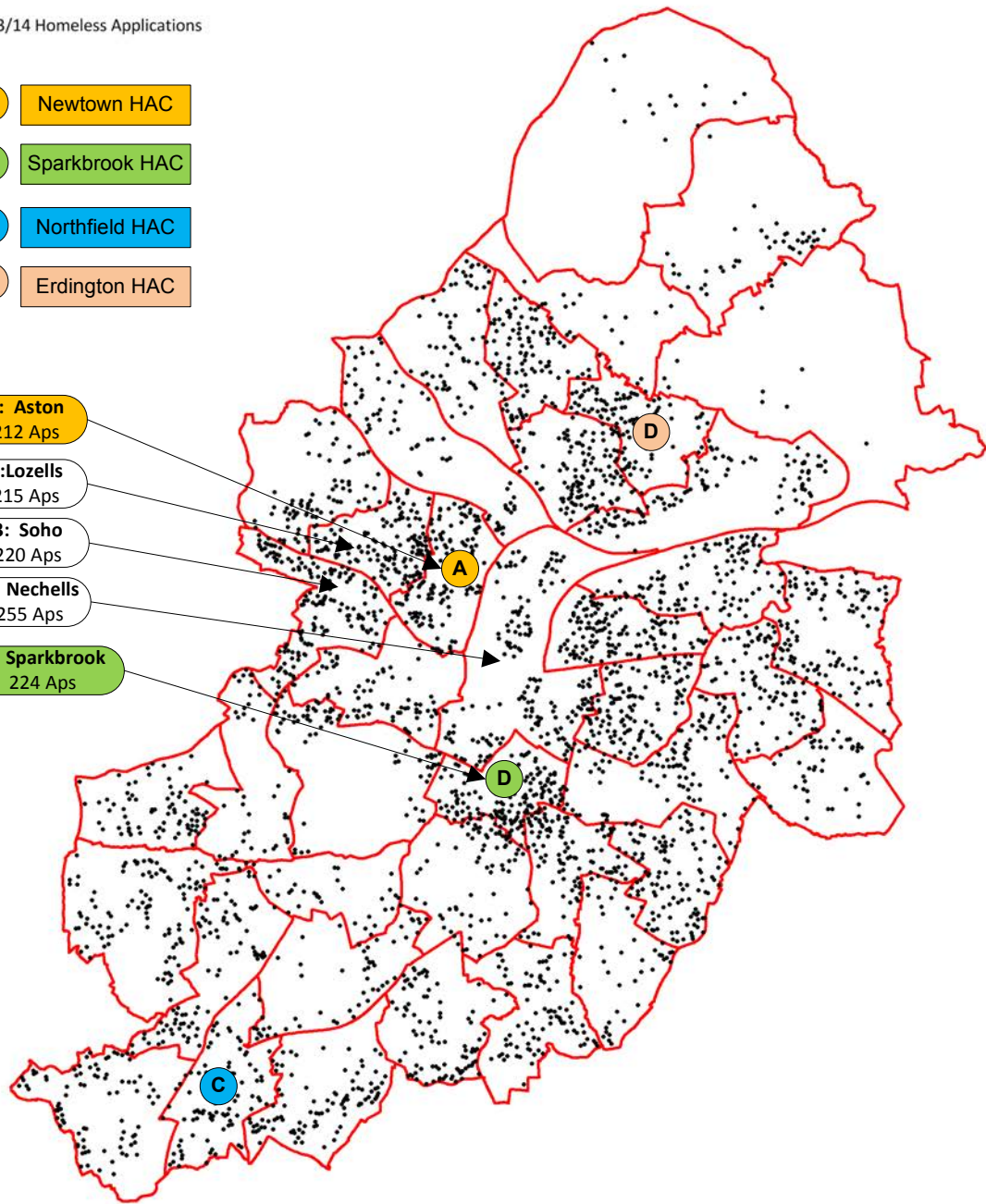


Ward Name	Homeless Applications
NECHELLS	255
SPARKBROOK	224
SOHO	220
LOZELLS AND EAST HANDS	215
ASTON	212
WASHWOOD HEATH	183
STOCKLAND GREEN	182
BORDESLEY GREEN	161
ACOCKS GREEN	158
SOUTH YARDLEY	148

2013/14 Homeless Applications

- A** Newtown HAC
- B** Sparkbrook HAC
- C** Northfield HAC
- D** Erdington HAC

- 5: Aston**
212 Aps
- 4: Lozells**
215 Aps
- 3: Soho**
220 Aps
- 1: Nechells**
255 Aps
- 2: Sparkbrook**
224 Aps



Ward Name	Homeless Applications
NECHELLS	255
SPARKBROOK	224
SOHO	220
LOZELLS AND EAST HANDSWORTH	215
ASTON	212
WASHWOOD HEATH	183
STOCKLAND GREEN	182
BORDESLEY GREEN	161
ACOCKS GREEN	158
SOUTH YARDLEY	148
BARTLEY GREEN	146
SPRINGFIELD	144
HODGE HILL	142
TYBURN	142
SHARD END	138
KINGSTANDING	137
NORTHFIELD	131
KINGS NORTON	130
BILLESLEY	126
BRANDWOOD	126
ERDINGTON	126
STECHFORD AND YARDLEY NORTH	114
WEOLEY	113
HANDSWORTH WOOD	109
MOSELEY AND KINGS HEATH	109
EDGBASTON	104
LADYWOOD	103
LONGBRIDGE	103
PERRY BARR	103
QUINTON	93
OSCOTT	83
BOURNVILLE	75
SHELDON	55
HALL GREEN	53
HARBORNE	53
SELY OAK	45
SUTTON TRINITY	43
SUTTON VESEY	22
SUTTON FOUR OAKS	15
SUTTON NEW HALL	15

Data Protection & Privacy

Birmingham City Council has a privacy statement. We will process any personal data given in relation to this consultation for the purposes of:

- Evaluating the answers to the questionnaire
- Reviewing responses to the proposals contained within

In addition, we will hold and process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and our full privacy notice which is available from www.birmingham.gov.uk/privacy

This questionnaire is anonymous and does not ask for your name, full address or any contact details. Your postcode (and contact details in the case of professionals delivering advice) is the only personal data requested throughout the completion of this questionnaire (although the provision of this is not compulsory).

This data is requested only to analyse geographical spread of our customer base and respondents (and for any identified follow up work for professionals delivering advice).

Responses to these questions will not be included in public feedback on this consultation.

However, as part of other public consultation and the feedback we provide on this matter, responses you provide to other questions may be made public. Therefore please take care not to enter any personal details, information or opinions that you are not happy to be made available in the public domain. We would ask that you take particular care when entering free text in your responses as, depending on the complexity and number of respondents, we are unlikely to be able to remove any personal data contained in these responses, prior to providing public feedback.

If you have any questions, please contact the nominated email address contained within the Be Heard consultation page at www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/housingadvice-service

Response type

*1. Are you responding as:

- ☐ A user of Housing Advice Centres within the last 12 months?
- ☐ An organisation or professional delivering advice?
- ☐ A Birmingham resident but non-user of these services?

Users of Housing Advice Services (Within the last 12 months)

2. What services have you visited our Housing Advice Centres for in the last 12 months (please select all that apply)?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use phone or Computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Join the Housing Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Present as Homeless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in paperwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Advice | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

3. How did you normally get there?

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> On foot | <input type="radio"/> By bike |
| <input type="radio"/> By Car/Motorcycle | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| <input type="radio"/> By Bus/Train | |

4. On your last visit to a Housing Advice Centre, how long was your journey?

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> less than 15 mins | <input type="radio"/> 31-45mins |
| <input type="radio"/> 15-30mins | <input type="radio"/> Over 45 Mins |

5. Before you visited in person, did you try to find information by any of the following means...(please select all that apply)

- ☐ By calling the Birmingham City Council or Housing contact centre?
- ☐ By looking at the Birmingham City Council or Birmingham Housing Options website?
- ☐ By contacting another agency first i.e. advice agency or charity

6. Thinking about the last time you visited our service, could we have dealt with this in any other way listed below? (please select all that apply)

- ☐ By an improved website with clearer on line help and advice
- ☐ By an arranged call back or interview by phone
- ☐ By allowing documents to be emailed in to us
- ☐ By allowing documents to be posted in to us

7. Approximately how many times have you been into a Housing Advice Centre in the past year?

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 6-10 |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 10+ |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 | |

8. What is your postcode so we can learn how far you travelled (Optional):

Housing Advice Service - Feedback

It is being proposed that Housing and Homelessness Advice moves to being delivered from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham with more advisors on duty and additional available interviews. There would also be improved advice available via phone and web.

This proposal follows exploration of alternate options; these have been considered however none have been found to be viable. Alternate options which we considered included:

1. Do nothing and stay as we are:

After consideration, it was concluded that if the Neighbourhood Advice staff are to be reduced, it would be necessary to balance this with an enhanced ability on the part of the Housing Advice Service to offer more appointments, ensure that the most consistent service is available and secure the high quality decisions which are needed, particularly in the area of homelessness, all of which objectives are in any event desirable in their own right. This option was therefore not found to be viable.

2. Move Housing Advice Delivery to a two centre model:

Upon further exploration it was concluded that this option would still require more Neighbourhood Advice Service staff in support than those actually available or would require additional resources for the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy service. It wouldn't create sufficient increased capacity and would not fully resolve issues around consistency or flexibility of staff cover. This option was not considered viable in view of this.

3. Relocate the Housing Advice Service to a single site in Birmingham City Centre:

This was explored however the Council has no suitable building currently available to use and an evaluation of renting a private building recognised that we would incur significant yearly costs as well as one off set up costs which are unlikely to be sustainable and thus this option was not considered viable.

9. Do you have any comments or feedback regarding the alternate proposals that were considered?

10. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the proposal to centralise Homelessness Advice at one central location at Newtown Customer Service Centre



Agree



Not sure



No opinion



Disagree

11. If we went to a single Housing Advice Centre what if any concerns would you have about this?

12. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about how you might access housing and homelessness advice in the future, in light of the proposals?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
I would still be able to get to the centre in Newtown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would use the web or phone to get the service I need instead.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would be able to get help from another advice service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a support worker or other professional who could help me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would need support with transport to enable me to get to Newtown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. How do you think we could make it easier for you to get the housing and homelessness support you might need?

14. Do you have any other comments on our proposals or benefits you see from them?

Organisations and Professionals delivering advice

The Housing Advice service is proposing that Housing and Homelessness Advice moves from the four present sites (Sparkbrook, Northfield, Newtown and Erdington) to being delivered from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham with more advisors on duty and additional available interviews. There would also be improved advice available via phone and web.

15. Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or are these your individual views

☐ I am responding on behalf of my organisation

☐ These are my individual views

16. Please provide some details about your organisation including the type of service it provides?

17. If you are happy for us to contact you regarding any feedback you wish to provide, please provide a means of contact (telephone or email with a contact name) below:

It is being proposed that Housing and Homelessness Advice moves from its four present centres (Newtown, Sparkbrook, Erdington & Northfield) to being delivered from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham with more advisors and available interviews. There would also be improved advice available via phone and web.

The proposal in relation to Homelessness & Housing Advice follows exploration of alternate options, these have been considered however none have been found to be viable. Alternate options which we considered included:

1. Do nothing and stay as we are:

After consideration, it was concluded that if the Neighbourhood Advice staff are to be reduced, it would be necessary to balance this with an enhanced ability on the part of the Housing Advice Service to offer more appointments, ensure that the most consistent service is available and secure the high quality decisions which are needed, particularly in the area of homelessness, all of which objectives are in any event desirable in their own right. This option was therefore not found to be viable.

2. Move Housing Advice Delivery to a two centre model:

Upon further exploration it was concluded that this option would still require more Neighbourhood Advice Service staff in support than those actually available or would require additional resources for the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy service. It wouldn't create sufficient increased capacity and would not fully resolve issues around consistency or flexibility of staff cover. This option was not considered viable in view of this.

3. Relocate the Housing Advice Service to a single site in Birmingham City Centre:

This was explored however the Council has no suitable building currently available to use and an evaluation of renting a private building recognised that we would incur significant yearly costs as well as one off set up costs which are unlikely to be sustainable and thus this option was not considered viable.

18. Do you have any comments or feedback regarding the alternate proposals that were considered?

19. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the proposal to centralise Homelessness Advice at one central location at Newtown Customer Service Centre

☐ Agree

☐ Not sure

☐ No opinion

☐ Disagree

20. If we went to a single Housing Advice Centre what if any concerns would you have about this?

21. Please provide any comments on how these changes could impact upon the clients you work with?

22. What benefits can you see from the model?

23. Given the current resource restrictions, do you have any further comments which could improve the service?

Equalities Data

Birmingham City Council has responsibilities under the Equalities Act (2010) to work to prevent against people based on protected characteristics. To assist in this we like to gather data regarding the demographics of people providing us with feedback and responding to consultations.

This information is not mandatory and if you do not wish to provide such information a 'Prefer not to say' option is available on each question.

24. Which age group applies to you?

***25. What is your sex?**

Equalities Data

26. As a woman, are you pregnant, on maternity leave or returning from maternity leave?

*** 27. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to say

Equalities Data

28. If yes, do any of these conditions or illnesses affect you in any of the following areas? (More than one answer is acceptable)

- ☐ 1. Vision (e.g. blindness or partial sight)
- ☐ 2. Hearing (e.g. deafness or partial hearing)
- ☐ 3. Mobility (e.g. walking short distances or climbing stairs)
- ☐ 4. Dexterity (e.g. lifting and carrying and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
- ☐ 5. Learning or understanding or concentrating
- ☐ 6. Memory
- ☐ 7. Mental Health
- ☐ 8. Stamina or breathing or fatigue
- ☐ 9. Socially or behaviourally (e.g. associated with autism, attention deficit disorder or Asperger's syndrome)
- ☐ 10. Prefer not to say

Other (please specify)

29. Ethnicity: What is your ethnic group?

30. Sexual Orientation: What is your sexual orientation?

31. Religion What is your religion or belief?

32. What is your marital or same sex civil partnership status?

33. Do you have caring responsibilities?

Finish

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your responses will be reviewed and considered as we develop our proposals and make decisions as to what will happen next.

Consultation A (Concerns regarding moving to a single HAC at Newtown):



Centre will be too busy Yes - Office will not be big enough to be a single advice centre
1/20/2016 5:38 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (disabled) One centre will not be good due to travelling from, where I live, it is difficult and my wife is disabled
1/20/2016 5:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Safety Safety Aspect
1/20/2016 5:35 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Safety Yes - safety of customers
1/20/2016 5:34 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Safety Yes - Need more officer due to health & safety of everyone
1/20/2016 5:33 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Access to NAIS Rubbish, what about benefits
1/20/2016 5:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Yes - office would no be suitable for one centre. Health & Safety for customer is not big enough
1/20/2016 5:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Access to NAIS Where will I go for benefit advice, if this becomes a homeless centre?
1/20/2016 5:27 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General Not going to work for everyone
1/20/2016 5:26 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Access to NAIS Yes - where would I go for general help with other queries. Do not want one office, need more
1/20/2016 5:23 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Access to NAIS Centre will be too busy Do not want one office - need to have access to other enquiries rather than just homeless - office would not be big enough for everyone.
1/20/2016 5:21 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Access to NAIS Centre will be too busy Yes - Because not big enough for everyone. cannot get a good service. Need to be more offices for all enquires not just housing
1/20/2016 5:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Keep Local/Open more HACs Yes - Need more offices for more access as one will not be enough for all in b'ham. need 4 offices for homeless
1/20/2016 5:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Access to NAIS Centre will be too busy Yes Health & Safety due to size of building will not accommodate al. Need other services they nee help with
1/20/2016 5:09 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour It's time (as long as everybody got the help they need!
1/20/2016 5:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns None
1/20/2016 4:56 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy I doubt you would cope with the numbers under one roof, longer queue's etc. Where would it be, you couldn't have everyone from B'ham etc go to one office - BIG MISTAKE
1/20/2016 4:45 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour That would be a lot easier everything would be in one place so people know where to go and get advice and support without all the different numbers for different areas and departments.
1/19/2016 10:11 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General My concerns are that to many housing office, have closed down which means fewer appointment
1/19/2016 9:59 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) What if I do not have money to travel
1/19/2016 9:57 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour No I would travel see housing officer
1/19/2016 9:47 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy I think it will be very busy with a single location
1/19/2016 9:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns None
1/19/2016 9:41 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Distance to travel
1/19/2016 9:40 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) If a personal visit is required Newtown is at least 2 bus rides away. Please remember Birmingham is a big City
1/19/2016 9:39 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General **Centre will be too busy** There would be far more issues forced by one central on rendering the idea counter productive. At present the work is equally shared by four different centres making it easier for customers to attend the
1/19/2016 9:16 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns None
1/19/2016 9:04 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns None
1/19/2016 9:03 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area **Too far (general)** Distance Misinformation over the name
1/19/2016 8:59 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General That would not be to everyone confients their are not much neighbour hood offices as there is

1/19/2016 8:54 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Wouldn't of been able to get there

1/19/2016 8:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) It will be more time spent on travel

1/19/2016 8:48 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs Stay in local area

1/14/2016 5:25 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns Dest ao n Dee

1/14/2016 5:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Too far (general)** The waiting times to be seen, the location of the centre

1/14/2016 9:31 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns Nothing

1/14/2016 9:29 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Too fart to travel Sparkbrook ideal for me

1/14/2016 9:26 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Travelling issue will be a problem this branch is suitable for me

1/14/2016 9:25 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Too far (general)** Will be busy long wait - too far to travel

1/14/2016 9:23 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Too Far Can't Travel

1/14/2016 9:22 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too Far (Financial) Point 6: No valuable documents which I wanted to hide in person It is vital that people in Housing Needs have access to services that can be reached on foot within a reasonable distance from their home. I would not be able to access on foot - not would many people living too far away. Being on a low incloe, I can not easily afford bus fare, and DONOT HAVE ACCESS TO INTERNET AT HOME.

1/13/2016 2:32 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Would not make it due to distance to travel

1/13/2016 2:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too Far (Financial) This would be very awkward having different options makes it much easier to get to. I walked here today as I have no money. I could not have walked all the way to Newtown.

1/13/2016 2:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy None - would be busy so the waiting time would be very long

1/13/2016 2:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy It would be impossible to be seen by any housing officer. This will also cause delay. there is already a shortage of staff. We already have to queue in long lines just to be seen.

1/13/2016 1:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs People would have to travel from all corners of Birmingham so its best to keep 4 centres

1/13/2016 1:05 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) That their local office will no longer be local & will be to far to travel to

1/13/2016 1:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Too Far

1/13/2016 1:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Not enough centre around

1/13/2016 12:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs **Too far (general)** That their local office will no longer be local & will be too far to travel to.

1/13/2016 11:58 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) this would be to far for me to travel

1/13/2016 11:52 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs Should have homeless opts in every housing office

1/13/2016 11:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area **Safety** **Too far (general)** Difficult to get to. Don't like the thought of being in the area by myself

1/13/2016 11:49 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Dont know the area** **Too Far (Financial)** Getting seen, getting there, travel expenses, busy

1/13/2016 11:46 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Too far to travel

1/13/2016 8:49 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area **Too far (general)** Too far away and cannot get there as do not know the area

1/13/2016 8:48 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Long queues, waiting times would be too long

1/13/2016 8:47 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns None

1/13/2016 8:45 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) too far to travel

1/13/2016 8:43 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Have to wait longer

1/13/2016 8:39 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns No

1/13/2016 8:38 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns No

1/13/2016 8:37 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns None

1/13/2016 8:36 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns No

1/13/2016 8:35 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area Too far (general) Do not know area and too far to travel

1/13/2016 8:33 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns N/A

1/13/2016 8:33 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area do not know other areas

1/13/2016 8:31 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns No

1/13/2016 8:29 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns No

1/13/2016 8:28 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns No

1/13/2016 8:27 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs I would like it to be local

1/12/2016 2:26 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Safety the location, the perpetrator lives in that area and would not be helpful to me. If it was Newtown I would not attend

1/12/2016 2:25 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted Married with a child

1/12/2016 2:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Keep Local/Open more HACs That it would be overwhelmed with people because its only in one location and could hinder the efficiency end time it takes to be seen. I think this a poor idea and needs different centres dotted around

1/12/2016 2:19 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Travel

1/12/2016 2:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) too far to travel when you have other committments

1/12/2016 2:12 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) It wold be very inconvenient for people without transport and with young children to travel.

1/12/2016 2:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) It would be a long journey to Newtown
1/12/2016 2:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns NONE
1/12/2016 2:04 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted I've been on the housing list for nearly a year now and have been taken off for no reason. I'm also homeless ??? from property Is not covering for people who born here and housing us
1/12/2016 2:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns NONE
1/12/2016 1:59 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Travelling
1/12/2016 1:52 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) would be to far to travel
1/12/2016 1:42 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too Far (Financial) Too far to travel. Also it will cost more money when I want to see someone and my funds are limited
1/12/2016 1:41 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Long waiting time
1/12/2016 1:39 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs I would want the office open it's very helpful
1/12/2016 1:19 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs I would prefer to have the neighbour office open because if easy to come and hand the paperwork less hassle
1/12/2016 1:17 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General Disagree
1/12/2016 1:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) I would like the office to remain as it is and NOT turned into a homeless office. People in the community are not all able to travel further for services,
1/12/2016 12:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General I don't want a homeless centre
1/12/2016 11:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General DO NOT AGREE
1/12/2016 11:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General No Homeless
1/12/2016 11:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs Keep housing Office leave it alone

1/12/2016 11:40 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General would not be convenient

1/12/2016 11:39 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General I do not want the Office to close

1/12/2016 11:30 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs Don't close the office

1/12/2016 11:29 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs I would like to come to the centre local to me - Keep it open

1/12/2016 11:28 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General No homeless Centre here

1/12/2016 11:26 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (disabled) There would be no where else to go as I am a nearly 80 year old disabled lady

1/12/2016 11:24 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General Not happy that there would be nothing local to go to discuss my issues/concerns I do not want it to turn into a homeless centre

1/12/2016 11:20 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Keep Local/Open more HACs** Over Crowding, longer waiting queues, not overly efficient. Better to keep centres open to local communities rather than people having to travel.

1/12/2016 11:18 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs I am not happy with a single housing centre I prefer it as it is for generic purpose

1/12/2016 11:13 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) We would have nowhere to go and harder to get to

1/12/2016 11:11 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs It's good to see who you are speaking with as advisers are impatient on the phone and email take too long for a respond

1/12/2016 10:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted By helping to get a house

1/12/2016 10:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted I still want

1/12/2016 10:47 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Not suitable for all people to come to one office. Demand will be too high

1/12/2016 9:31 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Access to NAIS Its close for Benefit advice

1/12/2016 9:24 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) That the local office will no longer be local will be too far to travel to.

1/12/2016 9:22 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs Not enough centres around
1/12/2016 9:20 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Too Far
1/12/2016 9:18 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs Rather my local office
1/10/2016 8:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Being able to book a specific time so you don't have to wait. Like the GPs are doing it.
1/10/2016 8:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Distance travelling, what place feel comfortable attending
1/10/2016 7:57 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy The waiting time would be too long and staff will be over worked
1/10/2016 7:55 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns N/A
1/10/2016 7:48 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy May be very busy
1/10/2016 7:47 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area Safety **Too far (general)** i think the distance is to far to travel and Newtown is not a nice area to travel on your own.
1/10/2016 7:45 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Concerns Travel
1/10/2016 7:42 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted you need to help to ??? people to do something about housing Thank you
1/10/2016 7:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Not to be seen on time, already had problems with that before
1/10/2016 7:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted My Children
1/10/2016 7:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns N/A
1/10/2016 7:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour **Too far (general)** i think its a good idea apart from the distance
1/10/2016 7:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns None
1/10/2016 7:18 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns No

1/10/2016 7:12 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour Accept it and get on with it

1/10/2016 7:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Too far

1/10/2016 7:07 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (disabled) I am disabled with mobility issue

1/10/2016 7:05 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Newtown impossible to get to.

1/10/2016 6:53 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General Like old times. Not a good idea

1/10/2016 6:51 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General Came in to discuss Housing app over phone. Neary impossible to get through

1/10/2016 6:49 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns No concerns

1/10/2016 6:45 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Not accessible to people, people's needs not catered for.

1/10/2016 6:43 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) To far to travel

1/10/2016 6:41 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Travel - getting to Newtown Impossible!!!!

1/10/2016 6:39 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns None

1/10/2016 6:37 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) the distance is to far to travel

1/8/2016 1:57 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too Far (Financial) **Too far (general)** Travel Distance, cost of travelling

1/8/2016 1:56 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General Strongly Disagree

1/8/2016 1:53 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted We have been waiting for our homeless appointment today for over 2hrs and in between the appointment the housing officer called away leaving us sitting down. I am not very well at this time and don't think this the way to treat people. I think it very degrading. The way we are treated. So it doesn't matter where you moved to these issues have to be improved.

1/8/2016 1:49 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Time waiting to be seen. Big queues in front

1/8/2016 1:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Travelling
1/8/2016 1:18 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General I think this a bad idea
1/8/2016 1:17 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) I don't think it would be easy for all to get to
1/8/2016 12:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns None
1/8/2016 12:04 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) How busy it would be, it would be harder to travel to from certain areas
1/8/2016 12:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs Not good idea 1 office should be each area North South East West
1/8/2016 12:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted I don't like Newtown office Erdington staff extremely friendly better than Newtown and handsworth office
1/8/2016 11:47 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted We have been to other places and couldn't get help as a couple We need to stay together because care for my wife arthritis
1/8/2016 11:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General Transport Waiting time More comfy chairs, water machine / coffee
1/8/2016 11:41 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Travelling with a baby & buggy bus Service not always reliable
1/8/2016 11:39 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) Would not be able to get to Newtown
1/8/2016 11:36 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs I WOULD PREFER TO COME TO SPARKBROOK OFFICE
1/5/2016 4:39 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns NONE
1/5/2016 4:37 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too Far (Financial) **Too far (general)** VERY DISTANT, TRAVEL & COSTS WOULD INCUR PARKING PROBLEMS, SPACE ETC
1/5/2016 4:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy I WOULDN'T GET THE HELP I NEED AND I MIGHT NOT BEEN SEEN TOO.
1/5/2016 4:27 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Too far (general)** TIME YOU WAIT. TIME IT TAKES TO GET THERE, ACCESSABILITY, PARKING. TOO DISTRESSING ENVIRONMENT.
1/5/2016 4:23 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Safety** TOO MANY PEOPLE, MORE ARGUEMENTS, NOT ANY TIME TO BE SEEN AND MORE STRESS FOR STAFF & CUSTOMERS.

1/5/2016 4:18 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns N/A

1/5/2016 4:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs I THINK IT WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT DUE TO VOLUME OF HOMELESS THAT WILL FLOW TO THIS. I SUGGEST TO LEAVE THE SYSTEM LIKE IT IS BEFORE.

1/5/2016 4:12 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) GETTING TO THE OFFICE

1/5/2016 4:07 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) TRAVELLING

1/5/2016 4:05 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area HOW WOULD I GET TO NEWTOWN

1/5/2016 4:04 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) GETTING THERE WOULD REQUIRE MORE TIME.

1/5/2016 3:59 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Too far (general)** LOCATION BEING FURTHER OUT, LONGER QUEUES AND TIMES WAITING TO BE SEEN.

1/5/2016 3:57 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy TOO BUSY

1/5/2016 3:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs **Too far (general)** VERY DIFFICULT IN CLOSING SPARKBROOK - WE DON'T ALWAYS HAVE CAR SO WILL CAUSE PROBLEM TRAVELLING FOR.

1/5/2016 3:51 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Too far (general)** TRAVELLING DISTANCE, WAITING TIMES

1/5/2016 3:49 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy IS GOING TO BE VERY HARD FOR EVERYONE OR MAYBE APPOINTMENT IS GOING TO TAKE 3 MONTHS.

1/5/2016 3:46 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) I LIVE IN B31, I HAVE 3 YOUNG CHILDREN. I DO NOT THINK IT'S FAIR FOR PEOPLE LIKE ME TO HAVE TO GO SO FAR.

1/5/2016 3:39 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) TRAVEL TOO FAR

1/5/2016 3:32 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) TRAVELLING TO IT

1/5/2016 3:31 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area NOT KNOWING WHERE IT IS
1/5/2016 3:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs TRAVELLING, SHOULD HAVE MORE THAN ONE AS PEOPLE WILL BE WAITING FOREVER.
1/5/2016 3:27 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General THINK IT IS ABSOLUTELY DIABOLICAL
1/5/2016 3:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy THE AMOUNT OF TIME IT WOULD TAKE TO SEE EACH PERSON, THE AMOUNT OF CHILDREN BEING IN THIS PLACE CAN BE DANEROUS AND I TRULY BELIEVE NEEDS WILL NOT BE MET FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL.
1/5/2016 3:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy TOO FAR TO TRAVEL, OVERCROWDING & LONGER WAITING TIMES, DELAYS ETC IN SINGLE HOUSING CENTRE.
1/5/2016 3:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted UNCLEAR
1/5/2016 3:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area HOW TO GET THERE
1/5/2016 3:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour WILL SAVE PEOPLE IN HAVING TO TRAVEL TO DIFFERENT OFFICES, ONE CENTRE WOULD BE BETTER.
1/5/2016 3:09 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns N/A
1/5/2016 3:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Safety NEWTOWN IS AT TIMES A KNOWN VOLATILE AREA AS GANGS CAN HAVE ISSUES AND THIS CAN MAKE IT UNCOMFORTABLE FOR SOME OF MY CLIENTS TO WANT TO GO INTO THE AREA.
1/5/2016 3:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns N/A
1/5/2016 2:59 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted CONTACT CUSTOMER ASAP FOR ANY BENEFITS CHANGES AFFECTING HIS HOUSING ALLOWANCES
1/5/2016 2:57 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted NOT TOO SURE
1/5/2016 2:51 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy LONG QUEUES NOT BEING ABLE TO BE SEEN IN THE SAME DAY.
1/5/2016 2:46 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy IT WON'T BE VISIBLE FOR PEOPLE WHO LIVE FAR AND THE WAITING WOULD INCREASE.

1/5/2016 2:44 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy I CAN EXPECT THAT BECAUSE TODAY I SPEND MORE THAN 4 HOURS TILL NOW AND I CLOSE MY SHOP AND THE WEATHER IS TOO BAD WITH CHILDREN.

1/5/2016 2:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour IT WOULD SAVE IN WAITING AROUND FOR AN ADVISOR TO SEE AN ADVISOR.

1/5/2016 1:41 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy THIS WOULD DEFINATELY SLOW THINGS DOWN

1/5/2016 1:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) TRANSPORT AS I DON'T DRIVE & HAVE TWO YOUNG CHILDREN

1/5/2016 1:38 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour ERDINGTON STAFF ARE MORE FRIENDLY NEWTOWN NEEDS MORE OF THIS.

1/5/2016 1:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs YOU SHOULD PROVIDE HELP AND ADVICE THROUGH THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE ASWELL SO PEOPLE IN ERDINGTON SHOULD ACCESS THE HELP FROM THEIR LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE.

1/5/2016 1:26 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns NO

1/5/2016 1:21 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Safety **Too far (general)** TRAVEL, THE AREA NOT KNOWN. SINGLE WOMAN NOT CONFIDENT ONGOING TO UNKNOWN AREA AND SAFETY ASPECT

1/5/2016 1:17 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy IT WILL BE CROWDED, LONG APPOINTMENT. ERDINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE IS NEAR THE JOB CENTRE, EASY ACCESS.

1/5/2016 12:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy CAUSE INCONVENIENCE LIKE A CATTLE OF HERD

1/5/2016 12:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Too far (general)** THEN THAT WILL NOT BE CONVENIENT FOR EVERYONE TO GET ONE SINGLE PLACE AND IT WILL TAKE MORE TIME TO RESOLVE THE THINGS

1/5/2016 12:12 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) I WON'T GO TO NEWTOWN, DON'T LIVE IN THE AREA

1/5/2016 12:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General IT WILL BE VERY HARD & DIFFICULT FOR US

1/5/2016 12:04 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) A LOT, WOULD HAVE TO TRAVEL LONGER AND WAIT LONGER

1/5/2016 12:01 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Too far (general)** TOO FAR TO TRAVEL, WAITING TIMES AND NOT HAVING A DECENT SERVICE

1/5/2016 11:57 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (disabled) | SUFFER WITH PANIC ATTACK, DIFFICULT FOR ME TO GET INTO A CENTRE
1/5/2016 11:47 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs **Safety** | I'D WANT TO GO TO ERDINGTON HOUSING ADVICE CENTRE
AS I LIVE ROUND HERE AND FEEL SAFE
1/5/2016 11:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General | IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
1/5/2016 11:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) | TRAVEL TOO FAR
1/5/2016 11:35 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) | TRAVELLING TO IT
1/5/2016 11:33 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area | NOT KNOWING WHERE IT IS
1/5/2016 11:31 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted | Response to question 6:- No I believe meeting in person avoids confusion and waiting times. Response to question to question 9:- I think it is very unfair because this end of B'ham needs a centre. It's unfair for people who don't have access to the internet and even a telephone.
12/21/2015 11:54 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General | It would be impossible to do anything
12/21/2015 11:49 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted | Response to question 6:- No prefer face to face comment to question12: Your age 26 Your marital status - separated Your religion or belief - Muslim Your gender - Female
12/21/2015 11:47 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour | don't have no concerns for that straight I went to Disk and I get help in 5 minut waiting :-)
12/21/2015 11:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy | Long waiting hours and delays
12/21/2015 11:39 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (disabled) | DISTANCE WOULD BE AN ISSUE DUE TO MOBILITY.
12/17/2015 3:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) | IT WOULD BE HARD TO TRAVEL THERE AS IT IS TOO FAR.
12/17/2015 3:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (disabled) | DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO TRANSPORT TO TRAVEL. NEED TO GET TAXI, I AM DISABLED & NEED TO GET BUS.
12/17/2015 3:07 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General | BELIEVE THIS WOULD NOT WORK. I HAVE BEEN THERE 3 TIMES IN THE LAST WEEK. TODAY I HAVE BEEN DEALT WITH IN A VERY PROFESSIONAL BY LINDA

WHO TOOK THE TIME TO HELP US AS WE ARE DYSLEXIC. WOULD A SINGLE CENTRE COPE AS WELL AS HAVING MORE THAN ONE CENTRE.

12/17/2015 2:47 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) TRANSPORT LINKS AND ACCESSIBILITY DUE TO DISTANCE

12/17/2015 2:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) IT WOULD BE TOO COMPLEX IN JUST ONE PLACE AND NOT ALWAYS EASY TO TRAVEL TO IF NEEDED.

12/17/2015 2:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too Far (Financial) **Too far (general)** TRAVELLING, COSTS, TIMES, HEALTH IMPACT

12/17/2015 2:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont know the area **Safety** MAJOR CONCERNS. I WOULD NOT KNOW HOW TO GET THERE. I WOULD NOT BE CONFIDENT TO TRAVEL ALONE. I DO NOT KNOW THE AREA AND WOULD NOT FEEL SAFE.

12/17/2015 12:33 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) TRAVEL

12/17/2015 12:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs I THINK WE NEED MORE LOCATION

12/17/2015 10:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs **Too far (general)** I WILL NOT AGREE AS THIS OFFICE IS CLOSER TO ME & WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO TRAVEL - PLEASE DO NOT CLOSE THIS OFFICE.

12/14/2015 2:46 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Too Far (Financial)** NOT BEING ABLE TO GET THERE IN TIME. HAVING TO WAIT A LONG TIME TO BE SEEN COSTLY DUE TO ILLNESS & USE TAXI'S TO GET TO PLACES.

12/14/2015 2:44 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) - TRAVEL - EASY LOCAL ACCESS

12/14/2015 2:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy LONG WAITING TIME

12/14/2015 2:38 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy I WOULD BE WAITING FOREVER AND IT WON'T BE OK TO PEOPLE.

12/14/2015 2:37 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns NO

12/14/2015 2:35 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) DISTANCE

12/14/2015 1:33 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Safety** PEOPLE BEING ABUSIVE AND THREATENING, SWEARING AROUND CHILDREN.

12/14/2015 1:32 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General ACCESS TO PARKING

12/14/2015 1:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) NEED TO SEE SOMEONE IN PERSON. I WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO GET THERE AND IT MAY BE TOO FAR TO GET TO.

12/14/2015 1:26 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy WAITING TO BE SERVED

12/14/2015 1:23 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted BETTER COMMUNICATION FACE TO FACE , NO BREAK DOWN IN COMMUNICATION.

12/14/2015 1:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy FACT THAT WE WOULDN'T GET AN APPOINTMENT.

12/14/2015 1:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) MAYBE TOO FAR TO GET TO.

12/14/2015 1:12 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy OVERCROWDING MIGHT BE A CONCERN.

12/14/2015 1:04 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy THE WAITING TIME DUE TO THE NUMBER OF CLIENTS.

12/14/2015 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)




Against - General **Centre will be too busy** **No Concerns** NONE

12/14/2015 12:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General **Centre will be too busy** **Keep Local/Open more HACs** MY MAIN CONCERNS THAT WITH IT BEING THE ONLY PLACE TO GO, IT'LL BE VERY BUSY, YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GURANTEE THE INFORMATION GIVEN OVER THE PHONE IS ACCURATE AND THOSE WHO DON'T SPEAK ENGLISH AS A FIRST LANGUAGE MAY FIND IT DIFFICULT. ALSO,ANY TEHCNICAL ISSUES COULD HAVE MASSIVE IMPACT ON EVERYTHING /EVERYONE. I PERSONALLY FEEL THAT IT IS RIDICULOUS. AS I AM CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING THE POSSIBILITY OF BECOMING HOMELESS, I HAVE USED THE HOUSING TODAY TO HAVE A HOMELESS INTERVIEW. OVER THE LAST MONTH I'VE BEEN EXTREMELY STRESSED AND ANXIOUS WITH REGARD TO THIS. I HAVE SPOKEN TO VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS (OVER THE PHONE) AND BEEN GIVEN TOO MUCH CONTRADICTING INFORMATION FROM VARIOUS PEOPLE. IT WASN'T UNTIL TODAY I HAVE BEEN RE-ASSURED OF ALL POSSIBLE OUTCOMES AND NOW FULLY AWARE OF WHERE I STAND AND WHAT TO EXPECT. IF IT WASN'T FOR ME BEING ABLE TO COME AND SIT DOWN TO HAVE FACE TO FACE CONTACT, WITH SOMEONE FULLY INFORMED AND EXPERIENCED IN WHAT THEY DO, I WOULD HAVE BEEN LEFT ON THE STREETS WITH MY CHILDREN. I SERIOUSLY FEEL THAT MOVING ALL HOUSING / HOMELESSNESS TO A CALL CENTRE WILL NOT BE BENEFICIAL FOR THOSE WHO NEED TO ACCESS IT; PEOPLE WITH LANGUAGE BARRIERS / SPEECH IMPEDEMENTS / THOSE WHO SUFFER MENTAL ILLNESS, CHANGE CAN MAKE IT WORSE FOR THEM / WAT HAPPENS IF TEHCNICAL ISSUES ARISE? THAT MEANS THE WHOLE OF BIRMINGHAM (THAT DEPARTMENT) WILL BE AFFECTED / MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT HAPPENS IF A MEMBER OF STAFF DOESN'T DO THEIR JOB ACCURATELY OR MISS VITAL INFORMATION THEY HAVEN';T UPDATED? WHICH IS WHAT I HAVE PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED. THIS HAS LED ME TO NOT ACCESSING THE RIGHT PEOPLE AS WELL AS MAJOR DELAYS IN PROCESSING RELEVANT INFORMATION WHICH HAS LED ME TOI MISSING OUT ON MUCH NEEDED SERVICES. I HAVE LEFT MY APPOINTMENT TODAY KNOWING WHAT'S BEEN PROCESSED, WHAT I NOW NEED TO


DO, KNOWING ALL DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN COPIED, WATCH THAT THE SYSTEM HAS BEEN UPDATED, AS WELL AS SAW MY PERSONAL STATEMENT HAD BEEN NOTED ACCURATELY. THE LADY WHO SAW ME WAS VERY PROFESSIONAL, HELPFUL AND COMPASSIONATE WITH MY SITUATION. ALL OF THIS HAS MADE ME A LOT CALMER AND THOROUGHLY INFORMED OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN AS WELL AS ADVISED ON ALL CORRECT INFORMATION. I PERSONALLY STRONGLY ADVISE AGAINST THE MOVE. I SUFFER WITH ANXIETY AND TODAY'S APPOINTMENT HAS HELPED ME SO MUCH AND I KNOW THIS IS DOWN TO HAVING FACE TO FACE CONTACT WITH THE RIGHT PERSON, IT HAS BEEN AN EASY EXPERIENCE TO ACCESS. IF IT GOES TO CALL CENTRE THERE ARE GOING TO BE VAST AMOUNTS OF DELAY GETTING THROUGH, NOT TO MENTION HAVING THE TELEPHONE ACCESS. NOT EVERYONE HAS TELEPHONE / INTERNET ACCESS, THIS CAN ALSO HAVE A MASSIVE EFFECT ON INDIVIDUALS BEING ABLE TO ACCESS THIS SERVICE. IT'S STRSSING ENOUGH KNOWING YOU COULD BE HOMELESS THE ONLY RE-ASSURANCE I'VE HAD HAS BEEN THROUGH ME ATTENDING MY HOMELESS INTERVIEW, AS EVERY OTHER DEPARTMENT I'VE CALLED HAS GIVEN CONTRADICTING INFORMATION / ADVICE WHICH IS ADDED STRESS.

12/14/2015 12:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 

Centre will be too busy LOT OF CONFUSION, MORE TRAINING FOR STAFF.

12/14/2015 11:36 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 

Keep Local/Open more HACs NO - DO NOT AGREE - NEED MORE OFFICES

12/14/2015 11:34 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 

Centre will be too busy **Keep Local/Open more HACs** TOO OVERCROWDED, PEOPLE WILL NOT GET THEY SERVICE THEY DESERVE, WILL GET PUSHED AWAY. NEED MORE OFFICES TO ACCESS SERVICES.

12/14/2015 11:32 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 

Keep Local/Open more HACs NEED MORE OFFICES OPEN SO THAT IT IS EASY ACCESS TO GET TO.

12/14/2015 11:30 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 

Centre will be too busy TOO OVERCROWDED AND WOULD NOT GET THE BEST SERVICE.

12/14/2015 11:28 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 


Against - General NOT GOOD

12/14/2015 11:17 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 

Centre will be too busy **Too Far (Financial)** OVERCROWDED, LONGER WAITING TIMES. CAN'T ACCESS ON FOOT & MAY NOT BE ABLE TO AFFORD BUS FARE.

12/14/2015 11:11 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 

N/A or Misinterpreted UNABLE TO RESERVE ANY MATTER OVER THE PHONE & I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO DEAL WITH MATTER USING THE INTERNET.

12/14/2015 11:08 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 

N/A or Misinterpreted TOO LONG WAIT IN PHONE CUE & NO CREDIT ON PHONE TO CALL. ALSO PROBLEM WITH MY SIGHT. NOT MANY OF THESE SERVICE USERS HAVE ACCESS TO PERSONAL MOBILE OR LANDLINE AT THIS PRESENT TIME OF FINANCIAL SITUATION AND EVEN IF THE CALLS ARE FREE NUMBERS, MOBILE DOES NOT ALLOW FREE NUMBERS. THIS WILL NOT WORK.

12/14/2015 10:56 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 

Against - General WOULDN'T IT CONCENTRATE ALL THE HOMELESS TO ONE AREA? WOULDN'T THAT INCREASE THE WAITING TIME FOR OTHER PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT ENQUIRIES?

12/14/2015 10:51 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Safety SAFETY ASPECT

12/14/2015 10:48 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy DON'T THINK WE SHOULD DO THAT AS THERE WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH TIME TO GET ADVISE ON SITUATION DEALT WITH AND A LOT OF PEOPLE WOULD GET ANGRY AND UPSET.

12/8/2015 1:05 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy **Keep Local/Open more HACs** MY CONCERN IS THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO ARE IN NEED FOR HELP AND IF IT IS ONLY ONE I THINK THERE WILL BE TOO MUCH CROWD, SO I HOPE ALL 4 WILL BE OPEN.

12/8/2015 1:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted THE CONCERNS THAT I HAVE IS THAT YOU WOULD JUST PASSED ON TO AND TRANSFERRED TO DIFFICULT DEPARTMENTS WHICH COST A LOT OF MONEY. ALSO, IT'S BETTER TO HAVE A FACE TO FACE INTERACTION.

12/8/2015 12:56 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) TRAVEL QUALITY OF SERVICE

12/8/2015 12:52 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Access to NAIS HOW WOULD I GET USAGE OF THE PHONES, HANDING DOCUMENTS TO THE HOUSING AND HELP WITH MY BENEFIT ISSUE.

12/8/2015 12:50 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Against - General LOADS, MEAN TOO MANY THINGS

12/8/2015 12:34 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep Local/Open more HACs PLEASE KEEP THE OFFICE.

12/8/2015 12:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO REACH THERE. THIS AREA IS GOOD FOR EVERYONE.

12/8/2015 12:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Safety SECURITY

12/8/2015 12:25 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A or Misinterpreted I WANT T O MOVE ON.

12/8/2015 12:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy NO TOO BUSY, TOO MANY PEOPLE, VERY OVERCROWDED, NEEDS WILL NOT BE MET.

12/8/2015 12:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Too far (general) MAY BE TOO FAR FOR PEOPLE THAT LIVE FOR FROM THE AREA.

12/8/2015 12:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



In Favour DISTANCE, TIME WOULD BE AFFECTED. MY HEALTH & MONEY IF I DIDN'T HAVE THE NEWTOWN CUSTOMER SERVICE TO WALK TO.
12/8/2015 12:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)

Consultation A (Making it easier for you to get housing and homelessness support):



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep more offices in order for people to travel to a local office rather than one
1/20/2016 5:38 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Having more offices in more locations to provide appointments
1/20/2016 5:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs have more open offices to go to
1/20/2016 5:34 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep more office open in order to have more access
1/20/2016 5:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal I do not require homeless support. I need access for benefit enquires.
1/20/2016 5:27 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep more offices open
1/20/2016 5:23 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Need more offices to access for all services
1/20/2016 5:21 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Need more office for all enquiries
1/20/2016 5:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change I Agree live this centre here help here
1/20/2016 5:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change Live this here Please
1/20/2016 5:12 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Have more open offices for access. Need help other than with homeless only what will happen to other services to access.
1/20/2016 5:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Have more than one open office need. Need other offices for other services to access
1/20/2016 5:09 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info By giving more information
1/20/2016 5:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment No comment
1/20/2016 4:56 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal **Keep local/Open more HACs** This way is best, if its not broke don't fix it Phone calls to the offices are a big no as we're on the phone ages. Haven't got internet system in my house and with closure / short hours at library that also a no
1/20/2016 4:45 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Website/Online Forms To have a website which is easier to understand and everything housing needs wise in one place

1/19/2016 10:11 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info Keeping in contact as arranged and not just brushing me off.

1/19/2016 9:47 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments Appointment

1/19/2016 9:43 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment None

1/19/2016 9:41 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs DO NOT MOVE!

1/19/2016 9:40 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info **Improved Housing Advice** For all staff to understand the importance of each policy as I have been pushed from pillow to post just to try and get the correct advice on how it should proceed with a housing application

1/19/2016 9:16 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment None

1/19/2016 9:07 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Increased Opening Hours Due to work it is very difficult for me to visit neighbourhood offices as they're only open between 9-4.15 therefore it would be very helpful for another arrangement to be made

1/19/2016 9:03 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Increased Opening Hours Take into Account individuals who work in unsocial hours - difficulty getting time off work Stress involved trying to keep your job and look accommodation - joined of service.

1/19/2016 8:59 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments more officers on duty

1/19/2016 8:54 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep Sparkbrook open

1/14/2016 9:26 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info to get back to me ASAP contact me

1/14/2016 9:25 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep Sparkbrook office open for public line

1/14/2016 9:23 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Sparkbrook Office Ideal

1/14/2016 9:22 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Point 10: Would need you to pay for my bus fare Keep Sparkbrook centre open - and other services in their local areas eg communities, people on low incomes may not be able to afford internet at home, and could not afford to travel on the bus
1/13/2016 2:32 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Leave Sparkbrook Housing open
1/13/2016 2:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable The people in the housing office were very helpful especially Sonia + Philomina
1/13/2016 2:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change More appointments Have one location, with less waiting time
1/13/2016 2:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs By keeping this centre open it would be easier to get help we need
1/13/2016 1:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Upset, Angry because Newtown is too far
1/13/2016 1:09 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep the Sparkbrook office open
1/13/2016 1:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keeping local Sparkbrook Centre open
1/13/2016 12:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep the Sparkbrook office open Point 12: & money & finding it
1/13/2016 11:58 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs open more housing offices and cut back on the less important things
1/13/2016 11:52 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments More appointments
1/13/2016 11:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Don't implement proposal Not moving the office to Newtown. Keeping the area safe
1/13/2016 11:49 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs By leaving Northfield open!!!
1/13/2016 11:46 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice Just to help me as much as you can
1/13/2016 8:45 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice Very clear and helpful
1/13/2016 8:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep Local Office open
1/13/2016 8:43 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments Not have to wait long when homeless with child
1/13/2016 8:39 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal If you note one der will be hard for as single mum to gat there as I suffer with a lot of helth issues

1/13/2016 8:26 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable If you have support worker

1/12/2016 2:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice Be more helpful

1/12/2016 2:27 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Email/Scan Documents **Telephone Appointments** **Website/Online Forms** By making it possible to complete the application online or by tway of telephone interview and enabling documents to be emailed or posted.

1/12/2016 2:25 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs By having a few more centres located in the East access area ie town or in smaller location to allow efficiency

1/12/2016 2:19 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments booked appointments Point 12 Carers commitments

1/12/2016 2:12 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment No comments

1/12/2016 2:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Open more offices

1/12/2016 2:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice By supporting us how they show

1/12/2016 2:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep the office open

1/12/2016 1:19 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs keep the office open it helps us a lot

1/12/2016 1:17 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal Disagree

1/12/2016 1:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change To keep the present office open for housing support

1/12/2016 12:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Website/Online Forms Some applications would be better to be completed on line rather than coming to the office to complete

1/12/2016 11:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change Need open office to deal with problems not on phone

1/12/2016 11:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Need to have more office available

1/12/2016 11:39 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change Keep my office local for housing needs

1/12/2016 11:26 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable Stop knocking down the flats , put the homeless in them at least that way you can keep this branch open

1/12/2016 11:24 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change I would still prefer if I could get advice in an office where you can approach for generic issues that just reason

1/12/2016 11:20 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Home Visits Home Visit Service The newton Centre is already slow with a ticket and wait system You need separate specific teams with separate urgency traffic light system of priority.

1/12/2016 11:18 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change From the current office

1/12/2016 11:13 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal To keep this office how it without change

1/12/2016 11:11 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment Not sure

1/12/2016 10:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice To give me the appropriate help

1/12/2016 10:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal Keep the office open as it is

1/12/2016 10:47 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep as many officer open as possible to help vulnerable people

1/12/2016 9:31 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep the Sparkbrook Office open

1/12/2016 9:22 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keeping local Sparkbrook Centre Open

1/12/2016 9:20 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs I would prefere to stay at the local office, I am diabled and would find it difficult

1/10/2016 8:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Website/Online Forms After first visit to be able to dealwith the paperwork online

1/10/2016 8:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment N/A

1/10/2016 7:48 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Telephone Appointments By phone call

1/10/2016 7:47 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep the local (Erdington) housing open
1/10/2016 7:45 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Telephone Appointments Website/Online Forms Website, telephone advice
1/10/2016 7:42 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change Yes ??? ??? to do this because people suffering thank you
1/10/2016 7:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice Telephone Appointments better help on phon at the moment you call JX and get 5 different answers
1/10/2016 7:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keepthe services at Erdington
1/10/2016 7:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment N/A
1/10/2016 7:18 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment None
1/10/2016 7:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable on the bus
1/10/2016 7:12 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable You cannot really
1/10/2016 7:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Keep my local Northfield open
1/10/2016 7:07 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments More options of appointments
1/8/2016 1:56 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs by Staying in Sparkbrook and not moving
1/8/2016 1:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs don't close sparkbrook
1/8/2016 1:53 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change I have been waiting for approximately 2 years for support from the council for housing support and until now we have not gotten any. Therefore it doesn't matter where you move to it doesn't seem like you are going to help us!!!
1/8/2016 1:49 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Having an office local to the are like there is already
1/8/2016 1:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable I think the service is not resourced properly
1/8/2016 1:17 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info **Improved Housing Advice** Good clear concise advise tat is easy to understand Point 10: - I an deaf

1/8/2016 12:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable Don't know

1/8/2016 12:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



tel access/freephone To have a free telephone service for emergency homelessness for after hours Service and for people unable to afford travel

1/8/2016 11:52 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info **Keep local/Open more HACs** More friendly supporting staff non judgemental, more offices

1/8/2016 11:47 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice we homeless and would like your support and help

1/8/2016 11:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments Website/Online Forms Speedier Response On line access

1/8/2016 11:41 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



tel access/freephone **Website/Online Forms** Updating the website and useful contact number

1/8/2016 11:39 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs Don't change the service

1/8/2016 11:36 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs PREFER TO KEEP SPRAKBROOK OFFICE OPEN.

1/5/2016 4:39 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment NO

1/5/2016 4:37 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP CENTRES OPEN WHERE PEOPLE NEED THEM. THEY ALREADY WORK WELL, SO WHY CHANGE IT?

1/5/2016 4:23 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info **Improved Housing Advice** I APPRECIATE ANY HELP GIVEN AS I HAVE NOWHERE TO STAY AT ALL AND I AM NOT AWARE OF THE SUPPORT IN THIS SITUATION BUT HAVE BEEN TOLD NEIGHBOURHOOD HELP IN BEST WAY AND I REALLY NEED SUPPORT IN THIS MATTER.

1/5/2016 4:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs DE-CENTRALISE THE SYSTEM

1/5/2016 4:12 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Assistance PAY TRAVEL

1/5/2016 4:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal STILL HAVE SOME FACILITIES TO DO THE HOMELESS APP AT LOCAL OFFICES.

1/5/2016 3:57 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP SPARKBROOK
1/5/2016 3:51 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info MAKE IT CLEAR THE PROCESS OF WHAT HAPPENS TO ALL EMPLOYERS
1/5/2016 3:49 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change | THINK IT'S OK
1/5/2016 3:39 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal KEEPING MORE THAN 1 OFFICE OPEN
1/5/2016 3:32 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP LOCAL OFFICES OPEN
1/5/2016 3:31 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP ALL HOUSING OFFICES OPEN, EASIER FOR EVERYONE.
1/5/2016 3:27 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP THE SERVICE IN ERDINGTON, WE NEED IT.
1/5/2016 3:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP IT AS IT IS PEOPLE NEEDS ARE BEING MET 100%.
1/5/2016 3:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment DON'T KNOW
1/5/2016 3:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info **Improved Housing Advice** BY UNDERSTANDING THE EXPLANATIONS
1/5/2016 3:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs OFFER APPOINTMENTS AT ALTERNATIVE LOCATION THAT SOME CUSTOMERS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO GET TO NEWTOWN DUE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.
1/5/2016 3:09 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment NO
1/5/2016 3:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info **Improved Housing Advice** TO HELP HOMELESS PEOPLE BEFORE THEIR DAY OF LOSING THEIR ACCOMODATION MORE, WITH PREVENTION OF SOME BEING MADE HOMELESS THROUGH NO FAULT OIF THEIR OWN.
1/5/2016 3:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable TURN THE HEATING OFF
1/5/2016 2:59 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Increased Opening Hours ALLOW LONG HOURS AND OPENING OF OFFICES
1/5/2016 2:57 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable MY PARTNER IS PREGNANT AND ISN'T FEELING VERY WELL . IF WE REALLY HAD TO RELOCATE WE WILL BUT I WOULD PREFER IF WE DIDN'T.
1/5/2016 2:51 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment N/A

1/5/2016 1:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info Improved Housing Advice KEEP PEOPLE UPDATED.

1/5/2016 1:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs THE SERVICE SHOULD CARRY ON AT ERDINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE.

1/5/2016 1:26 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Website/Online Forms MORE INFO ONLINE

1/5/2016 1:21 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE IN ERDINGTON HAVE BEEN MOST HELPFUL IN SUPPORT AND HOW I HAVE TO ARRANGE TO GET ON HOUSING LIST.

1/5/2016 1:17 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs INSTEAD OF REMOVING ERDINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE, IT WILL BE GOOD IF YOU OPEN A FEW OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE AS WE GET THE CHANCE TO TALK TO THEM & UNDERSTAND.

1/5/2016 12:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments EMPLOY MORE STAFF ACROSS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE CHAIN

1/5/2016 12:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info Improved Housing Advice More appointments LESS QUEING TIME, MORE ADVICE TO BE GIVEN

1/5/2016 12:07 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable ITS VERY GOOD

1/5/2016 12:04 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEPING ERDINGTON AVAILABLE

1/5/2016 11:57 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs ITS EASY FOR ME TO GO TO ERDINGTON, I SPEAK LITTLE ENGLISH

1/5/2016 11:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Assistance WITH A BUS PASS AND DIRECTIONS

1/5/2016 11:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info Improved Housing Advice FOR ME TO EASILY ACCESS THE CENTRES AND TO BE ABLE TO SEE SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP WITH THE WHOLE PROCESS

1/5/2016 11:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal KEEPING MORE THAN 1 OFFICE OPEN

1/5/2016 11:35 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP LOCAL OFFICES OPEN

1/5/2016 11:33 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment No

12/21/2015 12:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal By not closing the centre. Or to open another in this side of Birmingham.

12/21/2015 11:54 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep this office open

12/21/2015 11:49 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Email/Scan Documents **tel access/freephone** **Telephone Appointments** BY CALLING AND POSTING

12/17/2015 3:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP THE OFFICE WHERE IT IS.

12/17/2015 3:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs NEED TO KEEP SPRAKBROOK OPEN & NEED MORE STAFF.

12/17/2015 3:07 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Assistance AS I AM DYSLEXIC AND MY SON IS, I HAVE TO COME TO THIS OFFICE WITH HIM, I WOULD HAVE TO COME OVER TO HELP HIM AND I LIVE IN B14 AREA.

12/17/2015 2:47 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info **Improved Housing Advice** BY WORKING HARD

12/17/2015 2:39 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Email/Scan Documents **Improved Housing Advice** **Telephone Appointments** DO A CALLING INTERVIEW / ASSESSMENT FIRST, SO THAT ALL DOCUMENTS NEEDED COULD HAVE BEEN FACILITATED PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW WHICH WOULD MINIMISE THE TRIPS RATHER THAN DOING IT IN ONE GO.

12/17/2015 2:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs TO KEEP LOCAL HOUSING IN LOCAL AREAS.

12/17/2015 2:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs LEAVE OFFICES OPEN, IN DIFFERENT AREAS

12/17/2015 2:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs CONTINUE TO COME TO NORTHFIELD OFFICE AS WOULD NOT BE HAPPY OR CONFIDENT TO ATTEND ANYWHERE ELSE. STAFF THERE VERY EFFICIENT AND WELL INFORMED.

12/17/2015 12:33 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment TO STRONGLY CONSIDER THE EXTREME OVERCROWDING IN MY PROPERTY WHERE 3 OF MY CHILDREN OF OPPOSITE SEX SLEEPING IN THE SAME BEDROOM.

12/17/2015 12:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments HAD INTERVIEW

12/17/2015 12:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs NEED MORE OFFICES TO HELP US

12/17/2015 12:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs WE LIKE TO OPEN MORE LOCATIONS FOR SERVICE

12/17/2015 10:42 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs LEAVE SPARKBROOK OFFICE OPEN FOR US PUBLIC.

12/14/2015 2:46 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs ABLE TO TRAVEL FROM ALUM ROCK TO SPARKBROOK EASILY ESPECIALLY IF I HAVE TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

12/14/2015 2:44 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Website/Online Forms MORE INFO ON WEBSITE

12/14/2015 2:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal EXTRA TRAVEL, WORSE COMMUNICATION

12/14/2015 2:37 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice TO BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH ONE HOUSING OFFICER FOR EACH CASE. SEEING SEVERAL DIFFERENT PEOPLE IS EMBARRASSING AND TRAUMATISING HAVING TO AIR MY PROBLEMS IN PUBLIC.

12/14/2015 1:32 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



More appointments MORE APPOINTMENTS IN A SHORTER TIME.

12/14/2015 1:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs IT WOULD HELP IF I COULD GET TO A CSC WHICH IS EASY ACCESS I.E. ON FOOT.

12/14/2015 1:26 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice NOTHING WAS DONE AT NEWTOWN AND PAPERWORK WAS SCREWED UP BY WORKERS THERE.

12/14/2015 1:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice HAVE INDIVIDUAL / INDEPENDANT INVESTIGATION WITH SUPPORT FOR TENANTS IN PRIORITY NEEDS.

12/14/2015 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Not Applicable I AM UNDER WOMENS AID

12/14/2015 12:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Dont implement proposal KEEP IT AS IT IS, IT'S MORE INTIMATE AS IT IS, WITH HOMELESSNESS BEING AS UPSETTING AS IT IS, FACE TO FACE APPOINTMENTS ARE DETRIMENTAL, REASSURING AND MORE ACCOMODATING IN HELPING TO RE-ASSURE YOU. ESPECIALLY WITH ME SUFFERING FROM ANXIETY, HAVING OVER THE PHONE HELP IS VERY STRESSING AT TIMES.

12/14/2015 12:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice CASE WORKERS FOR VULNERABLE RESIDENTS OVER 55 YEARS OLD.

12/14/2015 11:36 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP MORE OFFICES OPEN.

12/14/2015 11:34 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP OFFICE OPEN AS IT IS. NEED MORE CHOICES TO GO TO DIFFERENT OFFICES.

12/14/2015 11:32 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP MORE OFFICES OPEN AS THEY ARE.

12/14/2015 11:30 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP OFFICES OPEN AS THEY ARE IN ORDER FOR PEOPLE TO ACCESS THEM. NEED MORE THAN ONE OFFICE.

12/14/2015 11:28 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs HAVING AS MANY OFFICE KEPT OPEN RATHER THAN ONE OFFICE ONLY. A LOT OF ABUSE TODAY AT NEWTOWN, WILL GET WORSE AS THE OFFICE WILL NOT BE ABL TO COPE WITH DEMAND. SERVICE WILL GO DOWN.

12/14/2015 11:26 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs KEEP CENTRES OPEN AS THEY ARE NEEDED.

12/14/2015 11:11 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change IT WOULD CAUSE MAJOR PROBLEMS IF NEWTOWN HOUSING CLOSED DOWN, I PREFER TO SEE SOMEONE IN PERSON.

12/14/2015 11:08 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change I WOULD NEED TO STAY NEWTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE.

12/14/2015 10:58 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



tel access/freephone Website/Online Forms EASIER ACCESS USING THE IN-HOUSE COMPUTERS & PHONES

12/14/2015 10:51 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs LEAVE IT AS IT IS

12/14/2015 10:48 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improved Housing Advice More appointments BY KEEPING STAFF ON AND ADDING MORE, SO THAT THINGS CAN GET DONE WITH OUT RUSH AND MORE TIME TO EXPRESS YOUR SITUATION.

12/8/2015 1:05 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs JUST TO CONTINUE THE WAY IT IS NOW.

12/8/2015 1:00 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change KEEP THE NEWTOWN OFFICE OPEN.

12/8/2015 12:56 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs WELL HAVING THE COUNCIL OFFICE BY IT IS, IS WELL ENOUGH YOU CAN DEAL WITH MORE THAN MULTIPLE ISSUES.

12/8/2015 12:50 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Implement Proposed Change BY KEEPING THE CENTRE OPEN.

12/8/2015 12:39 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Better Quality/More Info Improved Housing Advice LOADS OF HELP AND ADVICE

12/8/2015 12:34 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Comment STRONG VIEW

12/8/2015 12:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs HAVE MORE OFFICES SO THAT YOU HAVE A CHOICE WHERE TO GO, RATHER THAN ONE OFFICE ONLY. DISAGREE WITH ONE OFFICE ONLY. PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN.

12/8/2015 12:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs IF I MOVE OUT OF THE AREA IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO GO TO NEWTOWN AND I PREFER HERE SHOULD BE MORE SMALLER OFFICES.

12/8/2015 12:19 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep local/Open more HACs TO LEAVE THINGS AS THEY ARE AND HAVE BEEN WITH THE NEWTOWN HOUSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES - THEY SERVICE THE COMMUNITY.

12/8/2015 12:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)

Consultation B (Comments on Alternate Proposals that were considered)



Prefer 2 HAC Model Equality Impact assessment needs to be undertaken. I think the 2 centre model might be useful to consider - this isn't the

1/20/2016 2:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer 2 HAC Model All proposals have been considered non viable. The question is always going to be what is viable - and what do you need Moving the present system to 1 neighborhood office will leave less option for single homeless people and the walk in homeless that would be considered priority would be seen first. A first come first service is difficult to sustain and also travelling from Rubery would be difficult to 1 place. I can understand 2 hubs: North and south rather than only 1 hub.

1/20/2016 1:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Insufficient info Not enough consultation on them

1/18/2016 3:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Be consistent Support Proposal Consistency in delivery has to be a priority. customers must all be treated fairly by well trained and professional staff.

1/15/2016 11:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Oppose proposed option Access to the service will be a key issue. There will be challenge of proximity and cost for individuals to get to the single point.

1/11/2016 10:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer City Centre HAC One central single site- would be better- ensuring hopefully a consistent an non bias service to residents of birmingham- services & policies need to be more transparent & fair

1/11/2016 4:53 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer 2 HAC Model moving the advice delivery to a two centre model makes sense as the city is so vast. Splitting the city and giving homeless people easy access would be recommended.

1/11/2016 11:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Oppose proposed option People with little income and great difficulties will not be able to travel to the new centre in Newtown. The centre near where I work is always busy.

1/11/2016 11:01 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer 4 or more HAC's We need more local hubs where housing advice can be provided. Many residents have problems with homelessness, under-housing and maintenance. The answer is not to cut front line service so that you can save money. Perhaps the options should contain employing less senior managers, directors and chief execs and streamlining your services by empowering your employees.

1/11/2016 10:33 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



City Centre - Council Hse There is currently space within the Council House to use for desks, and the Council House already has a 'front door' for the public. Could a service based out of the Council House and/or Margaret Street be considered? Perhaps with drop-in services/advice clinics located elsewhere if there are no appropriate rooms? Could an agreement be made with another Government body (e.g. DCLG) to utilise space? BIS are located close to the Council House. Have libraries been considered?

1/8/2016 9:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer 2 HAC Model **Prefer City Centre HAC** It is impossible for many families on low income to travel to Newtown and most of these cannot afford to be on the internet or pay for phone calls. Therefore alternative options 2 or 3 are preferable

1/7/2016 2:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Insufficient info It is very difficult to comment on the alternative proposals when there is absolutely no real information behind the sentences above. You appear to have already made up your mind.

1/7/2016 1:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Concern but not objection Concern would be for one hub in Newtown is how accessible is the site and the impact on customers. I understand the need to have teams together to provide consistent advice and offer flexible cover more appointments

1/7/2016 12:41 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer 4 or more HAC's it is better to have several centres around different areas , os local people can access them easier and quicker.

1/7/2016 12:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Support Proposal None

1/7/2016 11:55 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer City Centre HAC BCC has many occupied and vacant buildings in the City Centre which I don't see why they could not have been used despite any initial cost outlay. Newtown is not a nice area and if coming from the South of the City is a significant and costly journey to have to undertake.

1/7/2016 11:30 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Support Proposal go with the newtown site

1/7/2016 9:12 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Support Proposal The move to a single centre in New Town is a good one but there needs to be guarantees that the centre will be fully staffed and hours extended. There also needs to be strong digital and phone capacity and capability to provide additional an out of hours support.

1/7/2016 6:27 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer City Centre HAC Relocating the service to a single site in Birmingham would be the more suitable option to ensure that the service is still accessible to all citizens of Birmingham.

1/4/2016 2:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Use RP Buildings Additional travel costs (especially if on low/no income) Perhaps Housing Associations could use there office base and have dual links if Neighbourhood Offices are reduced, this would reduce/spread costs. Most vulnerable/elderly know their own neighbourhood and could not cope travelling outside of it to an 'unknown area'

12/23/2015 3:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer 2 HAC Model Number 2

12/17/2015 4:42 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Oppose proposed option Residents who become homeless would have to travel far and wide to access the only point of contact in emergency and could have to catch several buses which would make it hard to help vulnerable people fleeing DV with no money.

12/17/2015 1:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer 2 HAC Model Two centres in Birmingham would be better. Co-location should help to reduce costs. There would be a better spread. Often people seeking the services have not got the funds to make bus/car journeys.

12/17/2015 1:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Support Proposal All homeless/housing applicants should have to travel to one specified location. This will allow continuity and consistency of service. This also proves that people are able to travel if need be, so this can be used as evidence later on in their assessment/application when they say they are not able to travel for whatever reason.

12/16/2015 2:43 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Oppose proposed option My principal concern about the proposed reduction of the numbers of housing advice centres (being aware of the numbers of people who need to access housing advice, their relative mental and/or physical frailty), is that many of those who need to access the services may be unable, or unwilling to travel the increased distances, in many cases significantly increased distances across the city. Accessibility is key to ensuring that people who need advice can get it. Making this more difficult will result in greater problems for both clients and the organisation/s servicing their needs, and a commensurate increase in costs.

12/11/2015 8:07 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)

Consultation B (Concerns regarding moving to a single HAC at Newtown):



Centre will be too busy **Cost of Travel** **Removal of NAIS Staff or Professional Vulnerable Groups (le DA)**

I totally appreciate the fact the council as a whole has a very difficult issue around its budgets and prioritising this will be very challenging. My concerns around going to a single housing advice centre for a city the size of Birmingham is realised in the map provided as part of the consultation detailing the sheer number of applications you receive [I have assumed over a year]. In terms of homeless households these can be the most vulnerable members of the various wards suffering mental health, domestic abuse, various forms and levels of physical disability - the expectation that they can all get across Birmingham from wards such

as Wash wood Heath, Sparkbrook, Moseley - it may be an assumption that the SHAC is easy to access but this may not be easy in terms of buses [costs of buses have increased to £2.30 for a single journey - let alone if they have children in tow]. I live in Kingstanding and would if I were a single mum with children in or too small for school find it very difficult to get to the proposed centre. Also if people are suffering Domestic abuse, travelling to this centre may not be appropriate both in terms of location but also in terms of the facility itself. It feels like we could be returning to public buildings of the past like social security where there were huge numbers of people queuing for services - so if an appointment system is set up it would need to take into account the length of time each case might take so that customer frustrations don't boil over. As a multicultural city will the staff have access to sufficient language support as the city has a variety of languages to cater to. As a council, in view of previous comments will an equality impact assessment be carried out Also in the text it mentioned the neighbourhood advice and the homelessness element will be separated and that they didn't particularly work well - I wondered under the new proposals will customers have to go to 2 buildings if they have different queries which aren't being met by each service as this would be very annoying? To be brutally honest whilst I understand why you are proposing this I am not entirely convinced that it will improve services for Birmingham's citizens who find themselves at risk of homelessness - with the proposed welfare reform changes coming into effect the council need to look at doing more to prevent homelessness as the number of applies you receive is high and only likely to increase!!!

1/20/2016 2:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Cost of Travel Staff or Professional I would have concerns about clients being able to access 1 centre would bus travel be provided? if the centre is based at Newtown I would have concerns as this isn't the most central building for all residents of Birmingham

1/20/2016 2:09 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Cost of Travel Removal of NAIS Staff or Professional 1: Access from all places of Birmingham 2: Waiting periods of people for homeless interview particularly walk in homeless 3: If homeless on the day how will they be prioritized and if homeless in the next 28 days how will they be prioritized? 4: What about other services that should also be at the neighbourhood office at Newtown, and will they move elsewhere

1/20/2016 1:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel with Disability New town is too far to travel as I am registered disabled. Cost of taxi would triple.

1/18/2016 3:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy I would be concerned about the numbers of people attending -

1/15/2016 11:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Accessibility, Are there service improvements in relation to performance?

1/11/2016 10:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Consider Existing Tenants No consideration to residents of Birmingham wanting to exchange or move, taxpayers. All priority is given to newly arrived who have contributed nothing to the country/

1/11/2016 4:53 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy It would be a way of reducing staff (in the long term) and saving money. This would impact on the delivery of service

1/11/2016 1:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy location - pressure will build on one office to deal with issues - staffing issues

1/11/2016 11:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 




Centre will be too busy **Cost of Travel** **Removal of NAIS** **Travel with Disability** 1.

cost and time to travel to the centre 2. what hours would it be open 3. people who have no confidence or/and mental health problems may not be able to undertake the journey 4. Delay in getting appointments - call centre staff have let people down re booking appointments 5. sometimes something only takes a couple of minutes to sort out and has huge benefits to that person - will they travel for something like that and if they have travelled for some hours for a few minutes will they take out their frustration on the NAIS staff

1/11/2016 11:01 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Cost of Travel **Travel with Disability** **Vulnerable Groups (le DA)** Less support for vulnerable people More homeless residents not getting the service they require Many homeless service users are not IT literate and will loose access People living in the East and South of the city will completely loose out Disabled, Senior citizens and people with learning difficulties will loose out as they might not be able to navigate your website or travel to Newtown.

1/11/2016 10:33 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Travel Distance Location would be my main concern. I don't know Newtown as an area, but my first question would be whether a large number of people requiring homelessness services are based in or around Newtown. I know that homeless people tend to congregate in the city centre, or in hubs around the city, and that people requiring homelessness services due to housing issues are spread across the city. A service needs to be somewhere easily accessible to all those people.

1/8/2016 9:50 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Centre will be too busy **Travel Distance** Longer waiting times as well as travel issues

1/7/2016 11:45 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Travel Distance **Travel with Disability** **Vulnerable Groups (le DA)** People living on the outskirts in South areas would find it impossible to travel into Newtown with young children etc. Many people are not able to find buildings in strange areas or have skills to understand directions

1/7/2016 2:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Crime in Newtown **Travel Distance** I am not at all happy about having to travel to Newtown to meet with any Housing Advice staff. I would need to travel into the city centre to get connecting bus services. I do not believe there is a train station in the vicinity of the office. If I had mobility issues this would be a great disadvantage. Also, if I had to bring a pushchair. I do not think this is acceptable. I would like to know the crime statistics for this area.

1/7/2016 1:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Travel Distance People getting to one location from various parts of the city

1/7/2016 1:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Cost of Travel **Travel Distance** Too far away for some people? Travel costs/time etc.

1/7/2016 12:57 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Centre will be too busy **Staff or Professional** **Travel Distance** Concern would be for one hub in Newtown is how accessible is the site and the impact on customers. I understand the

need to have teams together to provide consistent advice and offer flexible cover more appointments - how do people get to appointments.

1/7/2016 12:41 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Distance That people would struggle to reach it and be put off seeking advice and support

1/7/2016 12:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Parking at Newtown Travel Distance Vulnerable Groups (le DA) I am unclear whether the single Housing Advice Centre will be a drop in centre, or a call centre. If a drop in centre, my only concern to a centralised location is for safeguarding of vulnerable adults, who may not have the financial means to travel far and for those presenting as homeless upon fleeing domestic violence - a central location could make it far easier for a perpetrator of violence to track down the victim/make presentation more difficult as they could risk being seen by an associate/friend/family member of the perpetrator. Also re Newtown - this is a difficult area to both walk around and park, although has good bus links, would be difficult for those coming by bus from the south of the city with limited time (eg they may need to travel back to pick up children).

1/7/2016 11:55 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Crime in Newtown Safety on site Staff or Professional Travel Distance The location is not accessible to all city wide. The safety of staff and customers - dealing with negative housing/homeless decisions having many frustrated, angry people in one place is a recipe for disaster. Lack of parking and only way to get to the centre using public transport is via bus. I personally would not be happy waiting for a bus around that area particularly when it is the time of year that it gets dark early. GOOD staff retention - many knowledgeable, experienced staff may leave causing the organisation/service and customer to suffer.

1/7/2016 11:30 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Cost of Travel Travel Distance some people in other areas of Birmingham may not be able to travel or have funds to attend appointments

1/7/2016 9:12 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Staff or Professional Travel Distance The ability or lack thereof of homeless people and families to be able to travel to this location without support. There needs to be full by in from statutory and third sector health, work and skills, libraries, housing and homeless providers. Creative and sustainable ways need to be found to ensure transport is available and the site is easily accessible from all points of the city and that it is satisfactorily subsidised for those in need. Additional services will have to be provided for those with disabilities and long term health conditions.

1/7/2016 6:27 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy Vulnerable Groups (le DA) You don't answer your phones which is evidenced by your own telephone handling reports obtained through the FOI. There would be transportation concerns for some residents. Particularly those having to flee their home in a hurry. One single centre would be the first port of call for abusive partners or other vulnerable groups seeking to flee a bad situation. You already have to sit around in a neighbourhood office all day whilst someone deals with you, how will this be improved?

1/5/2016 5:17 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy I would be concerned about the waiting times for clients. Particularly those who are in desperate need. There would need to be a considerable amount of competent staff in order for this to work efficiently and effectively.

1/4/2016 2:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centre will be too busy The huge amount of tenants/homeless congregating into one building

12/23/2015 3:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Distance Difficult for people to travel

12/19/2015 9:58 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Unsure Not sure

12/17/2015 4:42 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Crime in Newtown Travel Distance Residents having to travel from all over Birmingham to one central point. Newtown is a high crime area.

12/17/2015 1:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Distance Someone living say in Northfield would have to travel some distance

12/17/2015 1:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No Concerns Zero.

12/16/2015 2:43 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Distance Please see previous comments. Reduced accessibility for client group; increased travel time; client dissatisfaction & lack of confidence in the service etc.

12/11/2015 8:07 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Distance Increased inequality due to reduced access to service.

12/4/2015 11:39 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)

Consultation B (Other comments on proposals or benefits):

Showing 17 responses



Monitor Performance Going forward if the SHAC goes ahead that the Council regularly monitors the performance of the SHAC and also the quality of the advice provided.

1/20/2016 2:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Reconsider Proposals I think that you need to reconsider 1 place only.

1/20/2016 1:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Do not see any benefit No benefits to client

1/18/2016 3:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Good transport network Support Proposal Accepting that some people will have further to travel in order to receive the service - Birmingham is not a large City- and I think it has a good transport system-

1/15/2016 11:40 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Do not see any benefit No benefits in regards to housing in Birmingham for people who work & don't claim benefits -FACT

1/11/2016 4:53 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Do not see any benefit I don't see a benefit from having this service in one office - especially as the city is wide and travelling will be involved. on line would be effective if you know in advance and have actually done something about it but not for someone who is on the street last minute. You need a person to talk to and help

1/11/2016 11:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Concern for vulnerable Oppose Proposals Yes - huge concerns and if you succeed in cutting on homeless people, the consequences will be: A more deprived Birmingham Un-equal society Rising youth crime, ASB, Teen age pregnancy, NEETS, CSE The people who need the service not having access to the service I will give you two example: A young teenage girl who is homeless with a history of abuse and can not manage the bureaucratic process you are putting in place - Will be housed by the local drug dealer who will become her pimp- The child will be sexually exploited for at least few years depending on her mental capacity. A homeless pensioner from (Say Doddington in Northfield) will most certainly end up on the road before he finds his way to Newtown CSC or going online. He will be abused by other homeless people and will die and be buried without anyone's knowledge or concern.

1/11/2016 10:33 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Ability to Travel Finances to Travel I deal daily with people who have housing enquiries and who do not have the necessary funds to contact the support team either with money for bus fares or money for phone calls. These are people who call in off the street looking for help

1/7/2016 2:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Do not see any benefit Oppose Proposals The only benefit I can see is in staff reduction, but this will be at the withdraw of a valuable service, which affects the most vulnerable. I thought these services were being maintained. I think you have made up your mind and are now looking for justification by claiming you have consulted. You are not asking the public to come up with suggestions, just to rubber stamp what you want to happen.

1/7/2016 1:11 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No comments None.

1/7/2016 11:55 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Do not see any benefit None. Remove acting up roles and reduce the amount of GR5 and aboves to save money. Far too many chiefs & not enough Indians in this organisation

1/7/2016 11:30 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Support Proposal In short, I feel that by pooling services into one and having full partner support, Birmingham City Council should be able to provide a vastly improved service. Any effort to bring the numbers of homeless across Birmingham and beyond down can only be welcomed. But I emphasise there needs to be a step change approach to engaging and partnering with other organisations that already do an excellent job of tackling the blight of homelessness in the city.

1/7/2016 6:27 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Easier process/fewer form Cut down on contradicting paperwork (especially if needing housing benefit as several are sent out with slight changes causing confusion and sometimes arrears.

12/23/2015 3:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Easier process/fewer form Helping people who have difficulty paying rent on BCC housing and also able to see council tax statements what pay in ect on one account if there are a council tenant.

12/17/2015 4:42 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Ability to Travel Would disadvantage people with travel distance and location.

12/17/2015 1:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Support Proposal All good.

12/16/2015 2:43 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Do not see any benefit The only short-term benefit that I believe will accrue from either of the proposals for change will be a cash saving. In the longer

Consultation B (comments & feedback regarding the alternate proposals):

Showing 27 responses



Keep current/More HAC's It is being proposed that Housing and Homelessness Advice moves from its four present centres (Newtown, Sparkbrook, Erdington & Northfield) to being delivered from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre - this will not appropriate for the needs Birmingham citizens just having one location due to the large population and housing and homeless issues offices should be increased

1/21/2016 10:49 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Concern for vulnerable pe Oppose Newtown Proposal I feel that the option that has been selected is the one that will prejudice the most vulnerable in the society and therefore the least favourable.


1/20/2016 10:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



1 centre will be too busy Oppose Newtown Proposal Prefer 2 centre option

I cannot see how moving to one location at Newtown will "ensure there are more advisors on Duty and additional available interviews". The amount of staff offering the service will be reduced as we will no longer be able to utilize Neighbourhood Office Staff. We will effectively be expected to take on the advisors role and carry out our excising duties as well. We will be taking on 2 roles and we can't see how this will be possible. We will only retain 6 Advisors under the present proposal and no explanation has been offered as to how we will cope with this additional work load Our staffing levels could also reduce as a result of the current budget cuts so the situation could be unmanageable. No understandable explanation has been offered to justify the view that more advisors will be on Duty simply because we are all in one location? We have also been informed that not all staff will fit into Newtown with the overflow being based at Lancaster and some will work from home. The Team will effectively be split up into more than 3 locations. Currently at each Neighbourhood Office staff who are not on Duty are available to support the Duty team during busy periods. This model will expect staff to arrive at one location in the morning and then potentially travel to Newtown if the influx of clients is not manageable towards the end of the day. This causes stress for staff and extra expense in travelling costs and parking fees. This requires an unacceptable level of flexibility Two Centre Model: If we move to two locations we still have the same amount of staff so why hasn't this proposal been given more consideration. e.g. 6 Advisors3 at each location Half of the team could be based at each

location... half the amount of staff would be on reception as they would be dealing with half of the foot fall across the city. All staff would also possibly fit in two locations rather than being located at Lancaster away from the service that they provide. The suggestion is that pre-booked homeless appointments will be double booked hence leading to extra available interviews. Whether we are based at one location or more this idea can be adopted. It is also stated that 1 location will lead to a more consistent service leading to high quality decisions. We don't need one location in order to achieve this. This can be achieved through good communication and training. Consistency can be achieved if effective processes are put in place. We have faced problems with levels of training etc. because currently 2 organisations have historically offered 1 service. In the future practically all staff under the new proposal will be made up of the existing Homeless Team and issues of poor communication between 2 divisions will no longer exist. The suggestion that being based at one location will lead to better quality decisions is also curious. Again this is about training and ensuring that quality decision time is available to staff. My concern would be that the quality of decisions will be effected as we won't have time to make them as we will have to take on the advisors role as well as our own and we will spend most of our time on the front line trying to clear the back log of clients who are queuing up to get into one Neighbourhood Office. Single site in Birmingham City Centre: I feel Newtown fulfils this brief but it is not a good operational decision.

1/20/2016 2:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



1 centre will be too busy **Oppose Newtown Proposal** **Prefer 2 centre option** |

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1 centre will be too busy **Oppose Newtown Proposal** **Prefer 2 centre option**

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the end of the day. This causes stress for staff and extra expense in travelling costs and parking fees. This requires an unacceptable level of flexibility Two Centre Model If we move to two locations we still have the same amount of staff so why hasn't this proposal been given more consideration. e.g. 6 Advisors3 at each location Half of the team could be based at each location... half the amount of staff would be on reception as they would be dealing with half of the foot fall across the city. All staff would also possibly fit in two locations rather than being located at Lancaster away from the service that they provide. The suggestion is that pre-booked homeless appointments will be double booked hence leading to extra available interviews. Whether we are based at one location or more this idea can be adopted. It is also stated that 1 location will lead to a more consistent service leading to high quality decisions We don't need one location in order to achieve this. This can be achieved through good communication and training. Consistency can be achieved if effective processes are put in place. We have faced problems with levels of training etc. because currently 2 organisations have historically offered 1 service. In the future practically all staff under the new proposal will be made up of the existing Homeless Team and issues of poor communication between 2 divisions will no longer exist. The suggestion that being based at one location will lead to better quality decisions is also curious. Again this is about training and ensuring that quality decision time is available to staff. My concern would be that the quality of decisions will be effected as we won't have time to make them as we will have to take on the advisors role as well as our own and we will spend most of our time on the front line trying to clear the back log of clients who are queuing up to get into one Neighbourhood Office. Single site in Birmingham City Centre I feel Newtown fulfils this brief but it is not a good operational decision. I will cover this in more detail in the next que

1/20/2016 2:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



1 centre will be too busy Oppose Newtown Proposal Prefer 2 centre option

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1/20/2016 11:46 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



1 centre will be too busy **Oppose Newtown Proposal** **Prefer 2 centre option**

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1/20/2016 10:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Concern for vulnerable pe **Keep current/More HAC's** **Oppose Newtown Proposal** **Travel/Transport Concerns**

It will be difficult for geographical access for the 'hard to reach' and those who do not have access to telephones and the internet. The City has not yet overcome 'digital poverty' and wants to introduce telephone and web based services to a city with citizens who have a low level literacy and IT. Why fix it when it isn't broken. The people of Birmingham need face to face services in geographical areas of reach where they can go and speak to a person face to face and build a relationship of trust and share their concerns often relating to hardship and crisis. The cumulative impact of welfare reform requires the need to build trusting and understanding relationships with a real person and not a voice or the web.

1/18/2016 5:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



1 centre will be too busy **Oppose Newtown Proposal** **Prefer 2 centre option**

cannot see how moving to one location at Newtown will “ensure there are more advisors on Duty and additional available interviews” The amount of staff offering the service will be reduced as we will no longer be able to utilize Neighbourhood Office Staff. We will effectively be expected to take on the advisors role and carry out our excising duties as well. We will be taking on 2 roles and we can’t see how this will be possible. We will only retain 6 Advisors under the present proposal and no explanation has been offered as to how we will cope with this additional work load Our staffing levels could also reduce as a result of the current budget cuts so the situation could be unmanageable. No understandable explanation has been offered to justify the view that more advisors will be on Duty simply because we are all in one location? We have also been informed that not all staff will fit into Newtown with the overflow being based at Lancaster and some will work from home. The Team will effectively be split up into more than 3 locations. Currently at each Neighbourhood Office staff who are not on Duty are available to support the Duty team during busy periods. This model will expect staff to arrive at one location in the morning and then potentially travel to Newtown if the influx of clients is not manageable towards the end of the day. This causes stress for staff and extra expense in travelling costs and parking fees. This requires an unacceptable level of flexibility Two Centre Model If we move to two locations we still have the same amount of staff so why hasn't this proposal been given more consideration. e.g. 6 Advisors3 at each location Half of the team could be based at each location... half the amount of staff would be on reception as they would be dealing with half of the foot fall across the city. All staff would also possibly fit in two locations rather than being located at Lancaster away from the service that they provide. The suggestion is that pre-booked homeless appointments will be double booked hence leading to extra available interviews. Whether we are based at one location or more this idea can be adopted. It is also stated that 1 location will lead to a more consistent service leading to high quality decisions We don't need one location in order to achieve this. This can be achieved through good communication and training. Consistency can be achieved if effective processes are put in place. We have faced problems with levels of training etc. because currently 2 organisations have historically offered 1 service. In the future practically all staff under the new proposal will be made up of the existing Homeless Team and issues of poor communication between 2 divisions will no longer exist. The suggestion that being based at one location will lead to better quality decisions is also curious. Again this is about training and ensuring that quality decision time is available to staff. My concern would be that the quality of decisions will be effected as we won't have time to make them as we will have to take on the advisors role as well as our own and we will spend most of our time on the front line trying to clear the back log of clients who are queuing up to get into one Neighbourhood Office.

1/18/2016 11:18 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#)



Error in response **cc**

1/15/2016 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#)



Prefer 2 centre option I believe that two Housing Advice centres would be more appropriate in that it would provide customers with the choice of travelling to a centre within reach reducing the prospects of additional costs.

1/14/2016 11:06 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#)



Concern for vulnerable pe **Oppose Newtown Proposal** **Prefer 2 centre option** **Prefer city Centre HAC** **Travel/Transport Concerns**

I feel the information provided on options to be inaccurate and misleading. There is no increase in staff resources (in fact the budget proposes a small reduction) and the Homeless service will be taking on functions previously undertaken by the neighbourhood Office Service (Reception/Triage). Any increase in staff on duty or appointments offered is just reconfiguring how the existing staff are used so curtailing time available for other duties such as investigation or decision making. Option 1 If as I understand the proposals correctly there is going to be a complete separation between the

Homeless Service and the Neighbourhood Advice Service so there is no implication for the latter whether the Homeless Team is based at 1, 2, 3 or 4 locations as present. A small number (6) of Neighbourhood advisers are going to be based at the Newtown Office supporting by providing welfare rights and money advice. If the service was provided at 4 offices you would not need more staff but just to allocate 1.5 at each office. Option 2 as explained above this option incorrectly states more Neighbourhood staff would be required to support. There is also no real explanation as to why this model would require additional resources from the Homeless and Pre Tenancy Service. 3. If you are going to adopt a one centre model it should be in the City Centre. Concern is raised about the cost to the organisation but this has to be balanced against the additional travel costs for often vulnerable homeless people who often have no or limited financial resources.

1/13/2016 3:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Oppose Newtown Proposal **Prefer 2 centre option** Option 2 why would it need more staffing if the NAIS consultation has 2 offices anyway

1/13/2016 9:29 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Oppose Newtown Proposal A single site would not be appropriate

1/13/2016 8:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer city Centre HAC Having only one delivery point ideal. However there would be logic to having a central point

1/12/2016 10:32 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Oppose Newtown Proposal It appears as though the decision has already been made! Locating the only centre for face to face contact so far away from the south west of the city makes it unusable for clients and for professional who try to support them through the process.

1/11/2016 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel/Transport Concerns No account seems to have been taken of the not inconsiderable transport requirements and costs upon individuals from across the city to be able to access the Newtown base. On the basis of distance from residence to all of the current 4 bases for all presenting customers over the past 12 months how far does this indicate that "need" from across the city can be met at Newtown with corresponding transport access.

1/8/2016 5:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Oppose Newtown Proposal **Prefer 2 centre option** **Travel/Transport Concerns**

Yes - I support teenage parents and young mums (age 16-20) to be in the south and west of the city. This area runs from Frankley/Rubery across the city up to Handsworth. There is a huge need for housing/homeless applications within my client group as often there is either overcrowding as a result of the new baby, or my clients are asked to leave the family home as a result of becoming homeless. This is a vulnerable client group, often lacking in confidence, and as a result of the teen parent housing support from Bromford Housing having been cessated by BCC, supporting into housing has become a large part of my role. I am currently able to take young people over the age of 18 with children to their local housing CSC (the most common one being Northfield, as the majority of the housing need I come across is in the south of the city). I would not have the time to take clients across the city to Newtown, and it is a long way away for any clients not living in the west to get to, especially if they have young babies. if at all possible, it would be fairer to have 2 locations, with one in the south.

1/8/2016 10:57 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



1 centre will be too busy **Concern for vulnerable pe** **Prefer 2 centre option**

Travel/Transport Concerns I feel at least two locations are needed in a city the size of Birmingham. There are issues such as disability, domestic violence and gang related issued that

may prevent people attending just one office in the city. There are also cost implication to customers who may struggle to afford to get to one location. Consistency is a problems whether there is one or four locations and it is a training matter and nothing to do with location. Also homelessness is not a black and white area in legislation which is why there is a review process available. One office with many families with young children screaming and running around along with large amounts of luggage is also not a viable option no matter what the size of the office. There is a great deal of prevention work done by Neighbourhood Advisers that stops homeless reports being completed in the first place - the added workload but Homeless Officers if Neighbourhood Advisers do not see homeless customers first, will put additional pressure on them at a time when there already struggle to get decisions done within the 33 day time limit.

1/8/2016 8:37 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel/Transport Concerns that this will make it even more difficult for residents to get face to face advice on housing issues

1/7/2016 5:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer city Centre HAC 3. There would be plenty of opportunity to use Woodcock St or Lancaster Circus if the present staff filling those buildings were to work more flexibly by embracing the City Council's call for "working outside of standard office set-up" or working from home. Huge numbers of staff in the buildings occupy desk space that they do not need to have and further cost savings can be made.

1/7/2016 4:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



1 centre will be too busy Concern for vulnerable pe yes. we need to consider the health and saefty, safeguarding issues with the proposals for one HAC. domestic Violence victims, Gang members would easily have access to their victims, and victims have a high posibility of bumping into the perpetrators. This will be a very daunting situation for BCC. their are so many issues regarding Safeguarding that we need to establish. also one HAC may not be accessible for all residents of Birmingham City. the elderly, the disabled, the blind, the poor. we would be discriminating these categories of the public, as they most likely would not be able to have access, and the tresultus of this could be sleeping rough, children being taken off parents, and even worse, death.

1/7/2016 12:21 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Oppose Newtown Proposal Prefer 2 centre option I would favour a two centre model, one North and one South. I have serious concerns that homeless families living on the outskirts of the south of the City, i.e. Woodgate Valley, Quinton, etc., would be denied REASONABLE access to the service if they had to travel to Newtown. Say, for example, they have to drop a child/children at school for 9am, travel over to Newtown, (a journey which for me going to work at that time in the morning is an hour), and return to collect said child/children for 3pm? In my view this is totally unreasonable.

1/7/2016 11:56 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Prefer city Centre HAC I feel that Birmingham city centre would be much easier for people to travel to.

1/5/2016 10:16 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



1 centre will be too busy Travel/Transport Concerns you have to bear in mind groups of people who are unable to get anywhere without the support of others. people with mental health challenge are usually alienated from family and friends and rely largely on professionals to help them. As a frontline social worker I find myself doing more and more housing related support due to cuts on Tenacy support officers as well as community support officers that supported the social work teams. The existing appointment system is already failing residents as you cannot book in advance but have to choose from that day's appointments.

1/4/2016 5:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Keep current/More HAC's Oppose Newtown Proposal Travel/Transport Concerns

In relation to the alternate approach number 1, this is the best approach to take, because as the situation already stands, even 4 access points are still not proving to be enough for people to access and fully utilise the homeless service, therefore causing access problems. People are demanding more access points as opposed to less, or as being proposed, just one central access point. Travel can be quite expensive and some individuals would prefer to be at walking distance from their closest neighbourhood office.

12/29/2015 11:59 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#)

Consultation B (How the proposed changes could impact upon the clients you work with)

Showing 28 responses



Insufficient Appointments Office will be too busy Travel Cost Travel Distance

This will impact on travel costs for them and the waiting time to be seen once at the one access point. At the moment our service users have an option of 4 offices so if they are local to them they can walk which does not eat into their low income. Also will having one access point will take longer for customers to have homeless interviews, also there is no mention of how much more advisors there will be also there is no real information regarding increasing available interviews - how much will this be increased by. Also will the office be expanded as there will be a lot more customers going there

1/21/2016 10:49 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#)



Inaccessible to Disadvantaged I believe that it will mean some will fail to access the services that they need and will be more distressed/desperate. it will reduce their quality of life. (see above) I believe it will discriminate against those who are the least stable and least advantaged in society.

1/20/2016 10:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#)



Comparator has 9 location Inaccessible to Disadvantaged Travel Distance I have touched on this in my comments above The service will be less accessible. Liverpool is a City less than half the size of Birmingham and has 9 locations where you can make a homeless application.

1/20/2016 2:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#)



Comparator has 9 location Inaccessible to Disadvantaged Travel Distance I have touched on this in my comments above The service will be less accessible. Liverpool is a City less than half the size of Birmingham and has 9 locations where you can make a homeless application. We will put some example cases here

1/20/2016 2:27 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#)




Comparator has 9 location Inaccessible to Disadvantaged Travel Distance I have touched on this in my comments above The service will be less accessible. Liverpool is a City less than half the size of Birmingham and has 9 locations where you can make a homeless application. We will put some example cases here

1/20/2016 2:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#)




Comparator has 9 location Inaccessible to Disadvant Travel Distance Please provide comments on how these changes could impact upon the clients that you work with. I have touched on this in my comments above The service will be less accessible. Liverpool is a City less than half the size of Birmingham and has 9 locations where you can make a homeless application. We will put some example cases here

1/20/2016 2:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Comparator has 9 location Concerns for Vulnerable G Inaccessible to Disadvant Incidents of V&A Increase Travel Distance Travel with disability I

have touched on this in my comments above The service will be less accessible. Liverpool is a City less than half the size of Birmingham and has 9 locations where you can make a homeless application. We will put some example cases here 1) Victims of domestic violence quite often access services available to them in time when they can for instance lunch breaks, after school, before or after work. The implication of having only one office dealing with these applications is that it does not take into account the length of time a person would take travelling across the city, quite often the applicant has to travel back to collect children from school therefore this could be near impossible, Also having one office dealing with these cases would mean the perpetrator would know what office the victim was travelling too and from therefore this would create further risk. 2) Elderly people accessing the service. I have dealt with a number of elderly people who have required assistance. Quite often with severe health issues including poor mobility. The customers I have seen have lived near to the area of the office I work in therefore even though their journey was difficult the service was available to them. If the elderly customer who for instance walked with an aid was told they would have to travel further would this be possible? It would mean bus journeys or taxis which they may not be able to fund. My concern in this case is that we would not be providing a service to the vulnerable customers which we need to do. 3) Having worked in Neighbourhood offices prior to working within the Homeless service within the same environment I have had first hand experience of aggression and challenging situations. We have these incidents now within our working day however this situation would be aggravated should we move to one office. The impact the volume of people would have and the possibility that we do not have space to accommodate them within our waiting area would create higher aggression levels which we manage at the moment.

1/20/2016 11:46 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Comparator has 9 location Inaccessible to Disadvant Travel Distance Travel with disability I have touched on this in my comments above The service will be less

accessible. Liverpool is a City less than half the size of Birmingham and has 9 locations where you can make a homeless application. We have recently dealt with 2 elderly gentlemen who were Homeless and they both had with quite serious health issues. They could not travel to Newtown as their mental and physical health would make this too difficult for them. The fear is that they would simply give up trying to access a Homeless Service that is too remote for them to physically get to

1/20/2016 10:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Concerns for Vulnerable G Inaccessible to Disadvant Insufficient Appointments Travel Cost Travel Distance Travel with disability - Mental impact - increased stresses

- Increased financial stresses - travel costs - They could not access emergency support immediately - they would be required to travel and then wait in an even longer queue - Lack of confidence would result in feeling inadequate in not being able to support their families at a time of crisis and hardship because they cannot use phone or web service due to language barriers or lack of IT skills

1/18/2016 5:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Comparator has 9 location I have touched on this in my comments above The service will be less accessible. Liverpool is a City less than half the size of Birmingham and has 9 locations where you can make a homeless application.

1/18/2016 11:18 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



N/A 

1/15/2016 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Concerns for Vulnerable G Parking Travel Distance clients would have further to travel. Waiting time at the centre could increase because of the influx of customers at one centre. Clients fleeing domestic violence will be easily located from one centre. Also issues with parking space.

1/14/2016 11:06 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Comparator has 9 location Inaccessible to Disadvantaged It will make the service less accessible. Liverpool a city less than half the size of Birmingham has 9 locations where you can make homeless applications.

1/13/2016 3:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Concerns for Vulnerable G Travel with disability those with disabilities unable to access or travel especially from the South DV would be at greater risk

1/13/2016 9:29 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



N/A As above

1/13/2016 8:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Concerns for Vulnerable G Insufficient Appointments Travel Cost Travel

Distance Increased levels of homelessness if not getting appts/quality of advice increased levels of deteriorating mental health increased travel costs/barriers to services form people with disabilities etc to get to one centre on the opposite side of the city Barriers to services for people with no money who may not be able to afford credit to book appts if this is a requirement. Increased stress for staff/long queues What access will there be to independent welfare rights advice for example?

1/12/2016 10:32 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Concerns for Vulnerable G Travel Distance Many of our clients come to us following emergency situations - access to Erdington from the Northfield area is costly and time consuming especially when clients have children in school.

1/11/2016 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Lack of IT/Phone Skills Language Barriers Not knowing the area The majority of the clients I work with have never been to the city centre and have no idea where Newtown is. - I myself would be unable to advise how anyone from anywhere in the city would be able to get there by bus. The majority of my clients are unable to use web-based or telephone services because so very many of them do not have English or IT skills and are illiterate and present with issues which can often require explanation that is beyond just straightforward housing advice and information. - Not dealing with these exceptionally vulnerable clients who are often elderly, parents of small children, victims of abuse with loss of confidence and significantly financially and information challenged will inevitably lead to a higher than normal level of demand on the emergency social care services as a result - when effective "locally" and "humanly-faced" provision of service could safeguard against this arising.

1/8/2016 5:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



N/A see above

1/8/2016 10:57 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Concerns for Vulnerable G Office will be too busy Travel Cost Travel with disability

We get many vulnerable customers here, some do not have money to travel, are bus tickets going to be provided to customers to get to one location, what provisions are going to be made for those that have a disability, Newtown is a large office however when you have families in with screaming children it is very stressful. The service would benefit from having at least two offices. Erdington csc does a lot of preventive work regarding homelessness.

1/8/2016 8:43 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Cost Financial difficulties getting to a location further from where they live. Reasons as listed above.

1/8/2016 8:37 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A that they have been affected enough by the closure of the Quinton Centre(which now only has a two morning a week scanning service - no face to face advice)

1/7/2016 5:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Distance People of South West Birmingham will have considerable difficulty in travelling to and from the proposed centre

1/7/2016 4:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Concerns for Vulnerable G Inaccessible to Disadvant Not knowing the area Travel Cost Travel Distance

clients would feel scared coming to access the service, always looking over their shoulder. as explained earlier some would not even be able to access the service especially if they live on one side of Birmingham i.e Northfield, and the HAC is in Newtown. how can someone who has no money, access the service. will we pay for their taxi, bus fare (this is costing incurring for the BCC).

1/7/2016 12:21 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Distance My clients will be unaffected by the current proposal, they will continue to be processed at the Youth Hub. However, having worked nearly all of my housing career on the South, my concerns are for those customers.

1/7/2016 11:56 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Travel Distance Travel with disability I work with people who have learning disabilities and mental health issues. They often find it very difficult and stressful to travel to their nearest advice centre never mind travelling to a place that they do not know and have never been.

1/5/2016 10:16 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Concerns for Vulnerable G Currently we are coming across a lot of neglect of the finances relating to housing in mental health due to lack of access of support at neighbourhood offices. Kingstanding opens one day a week.

1/4/2016 5:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Inaccessible to Disadvant Travel Cost Travel Distance From the personal experiences of our law firm, and in dealing with homeless clients, it can be said that on the previous occasion when Neighbourhood Offices were reduced from 30 to 4, it caused a considerable amount of disruption for clients and became a difficult process for clients in terms of access. Some clients live too far from even one of the current 4 HAC's and travelling to these takes a considerable amount of time, and can be quite costly to some individuals who are not financially capable of making the journey to the HAC. Reducing the current 4 HAC's to 1 central HAC would mean that clients or individuals would need to travel to Newtown. it is stated in your consultation document that Newtown is an office which is central and the travel distance would remain the same for a number of neighbourhoods. However if an individual is living in Acocks

Green and wishes to make a Homeless Application it would mean having to catch 2 or 3 buses to the destination or paying around £20 for a taxi, and in some cases clients would need to take their children and family with them as they are homeless on the day, which would mean more expenditure. Furthermore, clients and individuals would prefer to be able to access a HAC which is close enough for them to make a short journey to, and as the situation currently stands, even having 4 HAC's is proving to be a struggle and strain for our clients, therefore it would not make the matter any better or easier for our clients if access points were limited from 4 to 1. It would be the suggestion from our organisation and from clients that have already dealt with, that more HAC's are introduced as well as an improved system for contact via telephone and online services. More help and support should be offered by CSA's and information should be readily available and easily accessible, as our experiences till date have proved that the system to obtain information is easily accessible nor is it readily available.

12/29/2015 11:59 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [⌵](#)

Consultation B (What benefits can you see from the proposals?)

Showing 27 responses



Decrease in service No benefits At the moment none as services will be decreased by moving Housing and Homelessness Advice to move from Sparkbrook, Erdington & Northfield to just Newtown

1/21/2016 10:49 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [⌵](#)



Cost Savings Financial impact will exc There may be cost savings of having people all working from one site but these are people who are more able to interact effectively across the city than the clients are to travel. I believe that the costs savings will be out weighed by the costs of increased emergency housing needs and increased medical costs. if you map purely the service providers I am sure it will be more efficient however if you map both service providers and service users then it will be much less efficient.

1/20/2016 10:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [⌵](#)




No improved consistency The claim that it will lead to consistency of advice and decision making and a claimed increase in the availability of Duty and appointments. One location will not achieve this any more than 2-3-or 4 This is achieved through clear management advice and training. Effective procedures are "Effective" whether or not we are based at 1 or 4 locations. The extra duty and appointments can only be made available by altering the balance of duties currently performed. It has been suggested that extra appointments will be created by overbooking the number of appointments available and then relying on no shows. This problem is already being addressed by contacting clients and asking if they still require the appointment and then using the free time to do other work i.e. investigations and decisions. We don't need to be in one location to achieve this.

1/20/2016 2:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [⌵](#)




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1/20/2016 2:27 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/20/2016 2:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/20/2016 2:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/20/2016 11:46 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/20/2016 10:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Cost Savings None other than cutting costs for the city.

1/18/2016 5:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



No benefits **No improved consistency** The claim that it will lead to consistency of advice and decision making and a claimed increase in the availability of Duty and appointments One location will not achieve this any more than 2-3-or 4 This is achieved through clear management advice and training. Effective procedures are "Effective" whether or not we are based at 1 or 4 locations. The extra duty and appointments can only be made available by altering the balance of duties currently performed. It has been suggested that extra appointments will be created by overbooking the number of appointments available and then relying on no shows. This problem is already being addressed by contacting clients and asking if they still require the appointment and then using the free time to do other work i.e. investigations and decisions. We don't need to be in one location to achieve this.

1/18/2016 11:18 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



N/A 

1/15/2016 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



No benefits None

1/14/2016 11:06 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



No benefits **No improved consistency** The only claimed benefits I have seen are about the consistency of advice and decision making and claimed increase in availability of duty and appointments. The first point is not guaranteed even if all staff are based at one location. This is more a function of good staff training, regular updating and clear management advice. There is no reason why this can't be done at 1, 2, 4 or 4 location. Without any increase in staff extra duty and appointments can only be made available by altering the balance of duties currently performed. It has been put forward that extra appointments will created by overbooking the number of appointments on the assumption that there there is a significant degree of no shows. The no show issue can be addressed in other ways (pre-calls or text messages) and that time is not lost to the service as staff continue to do other work eg investigations/decisions.

1/13/2016 3:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



No benefits None

1/13/2016 9:29 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



No benefits None

1/13/2016 8:44 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Cost Savings **Financial impact will exc** It will save funds for the City Council, however I can foresee that costs will be incurred in supporting families who do not get the right support at the right time especially when Children Centre support is also being cut.

1/11/2016 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Improved service **Partnership Opportunities** Closure of 3 centres and associated building overheads with consequential financial savings in line with budget requirements. Potential for an improved service as "best practice" amongst advisors has a better chance of being spread If, other local services such as libraries and job centre plus was to join up as providing a one stop shop for signposting, reception of documents / general enquiries and information provision then there is an opportunity for the service to provide the advice and response that it needs to, to the standard that is needed, much more efficiently.

1/8/2016 5:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Cost Savings financial.

1/8/2016 10:57 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Some benefits-but unspeci Not many
1/8/2016 8:43 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No benefits None.
1/8/2016 8:37 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No benefits None
1/7/2016 5:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Cost Savings Cost savings
1/7/2016 4:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No benefits none. more tension, more violence. This has not been thought through properly.
1/7/2016 12:21 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Loaded staff can backfill I cannot see any benefit to the one office model, apart from having all staff in one office for support and to backfill any staff shortages as the need arises.
1/7/2016 11:56 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Centralised skills & know That there will be more knowldege in a central place so as a professional it might be easier for me to actually get the correct information.
1/5/2016 10:16 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No benefits At the moment none.
1/4/2016 5:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



No benefits None
12/29/2015 11:59 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)

Consultation B (further comments which could improve the service?)

Showing 25 responses



SHAC needs to be city cen the only one centre solution that I can see working is if the service is based in the city centre. I realise that you have been unable to find a venue but are there not other council employees who could move out to NewTown? Have you assessed every council department that is based there and evaluated the cost of moving them to New Town?
1/20/2016 10:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



2 HACs inc Erdington Keep Erdington Open No evidence 4 locations c Open more HAC's No evidence has been provided that there is a cost implication for more than one location. BCC presumably own many buildings from which the service could be run. Sutton New Road will possibly be a location for an advice service using Neighbourhood Staff and the Homeless Service should continue to run from here. We are already dealing with clients from Newtown and Sparkbrook and joining these resources together makes better sense for the customer and staff. Two locations would at least allow the Service to be more accessible to our customers many of whom are amongst the most vulnerable in the city. Each significant geographical area should have Housing and Homeless Advice Service running from offices that have already proven it is possible to provide an effective service in easily accessible buildings.

There is no evidence that any real research has been done into the alternatives to one homeless centre in Newtown

1/20/2016 2:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/20/2016 2:27 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/20/2016 2:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/20/2016 2:10 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/20/2016 11:46 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/20/2016 10:53 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Keep services local Keep face to face services in key hubs - service users who cannot use the phones and web still need to access services by conventional means.

1/18/2016 5:06 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



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1/18/2016 11:18 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



N/A 

1/15/2016 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Quality training for staf Ensure that staff are given adequate training to undertake their role effectively.

1/14/2016 11:06 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



Joined up approach I think closer working between the Homeless Service, Council Benefit Service and the Housing Landlord functions could reduce the number of homeless application. I see people in my day to day job who not be homeless if a more proactive approach was taken to Benefit issues and the services had not become more remote and dependent on phone and online.

1/13/2016 3:16 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) 



2 HAC Model Have two centres

1/13/2016 9:29 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Joined up approach Investing more funds in the independent advice sector. Having Shelter workers co located for independent advice if clients need support to appeal decisions

1/12/2016 10:32 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



2 HAC Model In the long term a two centre approach would deliver better outcomes yet still make savings.

1/11/2016 1:02 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Joined up approach Keep services local Potential for a rolling service which is delivered in locality Real need for every partner organisation to know telephone numbers, opening hours, access arrangements for any of their clients to be able to access this new centre and for this information to be seamlessly delivered. - Absolutley no indication that this will be the case as no partner organization seems to have any of the current service information

1/8/2016 5:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A How many staff do we have in total to run the service, having taken into account annual leave, training etc.

1/8/2016 8:43 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



2 HAC Model Homeless Service run from a minimum of two location in the city.

1/8/2016 8:37 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Improve ICT/Explore Skype Improve phone/video acces possible research of any solutions using ICT/Skype/conferencing etc.

1/7/2016 5:08 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Reduce Desk numbers Every member of staff should be asked the question do you need a desk?

1/7/2016 4:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Sell surplus properties for council to sell the buildings that are not in use i.e have been advertised as TO LET. i.e Louisa Ryland House, Tamebridge House.this will help recuperate some cash back into BCC

1/7/2016 12:21 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A I appreciate it is very difficult but I do not have sufficient knowledge of the current problems, facts, figures, so do not feel qualified to comment.

1/7/2016 11:56 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



Provide telephone intervi That maybe the service could be provided over the phone for those people who find it too difficult to attend the centre. I have eperience of a person with high anxieties being told that they had to attend the centre and this ended up in a lot of difficulties for everyone when it could have more easily been done my a represenative or over the phone.

1/5/2016 10:16 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A Find ways of making the system more efficient without taking away the service

1/4/2016 5:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)



N/A Please see document 'Recommendations for improvement to Homeless Service'

12/29/2015 11:59 AM [View respondent's answers](#) [Categorize as...](#) [α](#)

Birmingham City Council

Consultation on Birmingham Housing Advice Service

Report on East Birmingham Consultation Meeting

Introduction

Birmingham City Council has been consulting upon the proposal to move the delivery of Housing and Homelessness Advice to a single location at the Newtown Customer Service Centre in Aston, Birmingham. A component of this consultation process involves four public meetings called to provide an opportunity for residents and organisations to have a face-to-face dialogue with relevant Council staff about their concerns on the impact of the proposal and any ideas for improving the service including the potential for collaborative action.¹ A meeting has been scheduled for each quadrant of Birmingham.

The meetings had been advertised via the Be Heard consultation portal, accessed directly or through the Council's website and through emails and telephone calls to agencies and voluntary and community groups in Birmingham that worked with people who had become homeless or were at greatest risk of becoming homeless, and all of the cities registered social landlords/housing associations.

These sessions were advertised and promoted as widely as practicable with a view to maximising public and partnership attendance. A variety of promotional methods were engaged. These are listed below:

1. A press release was issued by the Birmingham City Council Press Office detailing the times, dates and locations of the proposed events.
2. Emails were sent to MP's, Local Councillors and Partner Agencies detailing times and dates of the events and encouraging attendance.
3. Posters for all four events were displayed prominently in Housing Advice Centres (and events were timed so many customers may have knowledge of the proposals as the paper based survey in HAC's had been taking place for some weeks).
4. Flyers were handed out at Housing Advice Centres
5. Posters were displayed by partner agencies including displays at Citizen's Advice Bureau's and Police Stations (including Steelhouse Lane as the only remaining 24hr station).
6. Details of the events were loaded onto the Housing Advice Service's 'Be Heard' online consultation page.
7. Posters were displayed In BCC Temporary 'Accommodation Centres' for Homeless Persons.
8. Details of the events were 'Tweeted' by Birmingham Newsroom and Cllr Stacey.

¹ Other components of the consultation involve an online questionnaire hosted on the Be Heard website (which can be accessed via the Council's website) and a face-to-face survey of users of the Advice Service.

9. Details of the events were included in internal publications 'Weekly Staff News' and the fortnightly 'Leadership Bulletin'.
10. Emails and telephone calls to agencies and voluntary and community groups in Birmingham that worked with people who had become homeless or were at greatest risk of becoming homeless.
11. Emails to all of the cities registered social landlords/housing associations

The first meeting was scheduled to take place at Sparkbrook Community Centre (in the East Quadrant of Birmingham) on Monday, 11th January 2016 between 10am and 12 noon. Unfortunately, there were no attendees and was closed at 10:30am.

Birmingham City Council

Consultation on Birmingham Housing Advice Service

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Birmingham City Council

Consultation on Birmingham Housing Advice Service

Report on South Birmingham Consultation Meeting

Introduction

Birmingham City Council has been consulting upon the proposal to move the delivery of Housing and Homelessness Advice to a single location at the Newtown Customer Service Centre in Aston, Birmingham. A component of this consultation process involves four public meetings called to provide an opportunity for residents and organisations to have a face-to-face dialogue with relevant Council staff about their concerns on the impact of the proposal and any ideas for improving the service including the potential for collaborative action.¹ A meeting has been scheduled for each quadrant of Birmingham.

These sessions were advertised and promoted as widely as practicable with a view to maximising public and partnership attendance. A variety of promotional methods were engaged. These are listed below:

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¹ Other components of the consultation involve an online questionnaire hosted on the Be Heard website (which can be accessed via the Council's website) and a face-to-face survey of users of the Advice Service.

10. Emails and telephone calls to agencies and voluntary and community groups in Birmingham that worked with people who had become homeless or were at greatest risk of becoming homeless.
11. Emails to all of the cities registered social landlords/housing associations

This is a report on the second of these public meetings held in the south quadrant at Northfield Baptist Church on Monday, 11th January 2016 between 2pm to 4pm. The report has been written by the independent chair of the meeting based upon detailed notes taken by him and Council staff who were present.

It was attended by 7 people, as well as Council staff, including staff or volunteers from the Northfield Community Partnership, Northfield Baptist Church, a local Methodist Church, the Northfield Town Centre Manager, Freshwinds, the Northfield Constituency's MP's office, and a local City Council Councillor.

The purposes of the meeting were:

1. To inform Birmingham citizens and organisations about the proposal to move the delivery of Housing and Homelessness Advice to a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham and alternatives that have been considered. The proposal involves more advisors on duty, additional interview appointments and improved advice available via phone and the web.
2. To obtain greater insights into the likely impact of this proposal.
3. To explore ways that any potential negative impacts could be avoided or mitigated and new ways of working that could improve the service to people seeking housing and homelessness advice.

Following a presentation by the Council's Integrated Service Head of Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Services, the meeting opened out for questions of clarification and then discussions about likely impacts and what could be done to either mitigate any negative impacts or improve the service including ideas for collaborative working. Key points made at the meeting are summarised next, followed by an outline of the presentation. The bulk of the report provides a more detailed account of questions (heading in red), responses by Council staff (heading in blue) and the discussion on collaborative action and how such action could be made to happen.

Summary

The key concerns, responses and ideas for improving the Service were:

- The possibility that many people from Northfield and the rest of the south of the city would **not have the confidence or ability to travel the distance required** to attend appointments in Newtown, Aston. This did not apply just to the most vulnerable but also too many residents who were not used to travelling across Birmingham or were worried about child care responsibilities. To mitigate this concern, the Service would: provide an enhanced phone service to avoid unnecessary face-to-face appointments; clear advice and information on how to get to the consolidated office; free bus tickets if there was an affordability issue; appointments at times which fitted in with child care responsibilities; and, when there was a real need, a free taxi service or an appointment with a visiting officer in the applicant's locality. The Service would also look at ways of extending the follow-up calls and texts system currently operated by the Youth Hub to adults with appointments at the Aston office.

- Another concern was that people in need would **not be able to afford phone calls**. While there would be free phones available in neighbourhood Offices, the Service committed to exploring the introduction of a free phone service and extending the availability of free phones through a wider network of local organisations. There would also be more people available to answer phones in the Aston office, allocated officers for homelessness applications (as was the case currently) and an IT system that allowed all frontline staff to answer questions on specific cases.
- A further concern was the **ability of the consolidated office to deal with emergency cases and to provide referrals to other local support needed** such as food banks. The Service would continue to have an out-of-hours service to deal with emergencies across the city and would keep extensive, updated information and connections with local services that provide additional support.
- There was a real appetite in the area for **greater collaborative action with local third sector organisations** on preventative work and on supporting the Council's statutory homelessness duty. The Service was keen to do this, as was the Cabinet Member responsible for the Service, and was committed to develop collaborative working further.
- Meeting participants were keen to see that **the consolidated service was monitored and reviewed**, with action taken if things weren't right. The Service explained that, if the proposal was approved, it would monitor and review the new service model from day one of its implementation in June 2016.

Presentation

First, the proposal was explained, involving the consolidation of all front-facing staff from the current four Advice Centres at Erdington, Northfield, Sparkbrook and Newtown into the Newtown location which would therefore be the venue for all face-to-face interviews. There would be increased phone access to ensure that travel is only undertaken when necessary. The Youth Hub would not be affected and would continue to operate from and in partnership with St. Basil's.

The proposal would deliver:

- greater consistency in advice and decision making across the service;
- a centre of excellence with all staff trained to the same standards, better able to share expertise and owning the whole 'customer journey';
- the ability to have some dedicated specialist staff in areas often associated with homelessness such as benefits advice and debt;
- increased numbers of appointments and shorter waiting times;
- greater flexibility to cover for staff absences; and
- a greater focus in the future on early intervention and prevention.

Homelessness services often attract legal challenges because providing these services is a statutory duty of local authorities. BCC therefore took legal advice on whether the proposal would conflict with this statutory duty and was informed by a barrister that it would not and was legally more robust than the other options considered.

Currently there are around 1,000 enquiries per month and 100 face-to-face appointments. The waiting time for an appointment can be up to 6 weeks (emergencies are handled on the same day) and about one third do not turn up. The target for the new model will be a waiting time of one week as all staff being at one venue will allow greater flexibility and the ability to overbook so that non-attendees don't lead to unnecessary staff 'down time'. There will be 15 to 20 interviewing officers at Newtown on a normal day.

The proposal is not driven directly by the need to make financial savings as the cost of the service would remain the same. However, significant cuts proposed in neighbourhood advice staff and neighbourhood offices (down to two, one in Erdington and the other in Northfield) which have been supporting the Housing Advice Service, would have an effect on the Service. That is why the 'do nothing, leave things as they are' alternative option was rejected.

Two other alternatives of a two centre model and of one base in the city centre were also rejected on grounds of cost, the risk of lowering the consistency and quality of the service and inadequacy of the size and/or shape of the alternative premises researched. The Citizens Advice Bureau had also contacted the Council offering assistance and suggesting sharing office space. However, the space it has available is not large enough for the number of Advice Service staff and people attending the centre.

In drawing up this proposal, the Service had conducted a detailed Equality Impact Assessment, considering possible impacts and what could be done to lessen or avoid negative impacts. These included:

- for people not able to travel or able to afford the cost of travelling:
 - Bus tickets could be provided following appropriate checks on need, and taxis in certain very difficult situations;
 - an enhanced phone service which would identify whether those seeking advice needed to travel for a face-to-face interview; and
 - an officer to visit where someone was definitely unable to travel. (There are three visiting officers in the team.)
- for the few who might have genuine fears of travelling to Newtown for reasons such as the perpetrator of domestic violence living in that area or gang rivalries:
 - taxis or visiting officers would be deployed in these circumstances. (The bill last year for taxis was over £5,000.)
- for people becoming homeless late in the day without the time to travel before the office closed:
 - in these circumstances the out of hours service would find accommodation for the night and then they would be able to visit the Newtown centre the next day.

We have also benchmarked our service against other large cities in England, the so called Core Cities such as Manchester, Bristol, Nottingham, Liverpool, Newcastle, Sheffield and Leeds. Only one core city (Liverpool) provides homelessness advice from more than one site; Liverpool have five offices but last year had just under 300 homeless applications compared with BCC's over 5,000. We do have a larger population than any of the other Core Cities but Sheffield and Leeds cover a larger geographical area.

The 7 week consultation process would close on 21st January after which responses would be analysed and a publically-available report produced. The proposal would be put before the Council's Cabinet in March 2016 with any amendments arising from the consultation. If approved, there would be a transition period with the new model being in place by June 2016.

Questions and Discussion

Q1: What will happen to the staff at the other three centres?

Response: They will all move to Aston or, if they are back-office staff, to Lancaster Circus. This is not about staff reductions. As a service, we will have to make savings but this proposal is not part of these.

Q2: Customers have complained in the past about not having an allocated worker and not being able to contact the Housing Advice Centre and access the information they require. This is also important for Councillors and MPs who may be contacted by constituents and often ring the Integrated Service Head rather than an allocated officer.

Response: We will have an enhanced phone service with all staff being able to answer the phone and provide advice, thereby reducing the number of trips to the Advice Centre. Homelessness applicants will have an allocated officer who will also call the applicant back if their phone credit is running out. If they are not in when the applicant phones, other staff will be able to look at the case on the IT systems and answer most queries.

Q3: Who pays for the first phone call? Some people in need will also have no phone or no credit on their phone. Will there be a free phone call service available?

Response: We will look into the possibility of having a free phone call service. Would need to make sure that this applies to mobile phone calls too as some services are only free from landlines.

Q4: Could some community facilities act as contact points, creating a network with free phone access to the Housing Advice Centre?

Response: Current plans are that the Northfield and Erdington Neighbourhood Offices will remain and there will be free phones to use there. Customers tend to gravitate towards Neighbourhood Offices first where they will be put in touch with the Housing Advice Service. However, we can look into providing free phone access at other venues.

Q5: How will referrals to community services such as food banks and extra support needs be managed?

Response: Referrals will continue as officers in Newtown will have a comprehensive, updated knowledge of facilities local to where the person seeking advice and support is from. Currently 60% of enquirers tend to go home after advice rather than into temporary accommodation. We do ask enquirers about their money situation and organise food parcels for those who need to go into temporary accommodation. We are establishing additional emergency accommodation of our own and therefore further reduce our emergency use of Bed and Breakfasts. We currently place on average two people per night into emergency accommodation through our out of hours service.

Q6: How long until the Northfield Centre is closed? How will the closure be advertised?

Response: If the proposal is approved, the Northfield Housing Advice Service will close in June. Closure will be advertised as early and as widely as possible. However, we realise that some people will still turn up at the Northfield Office after closure and we will ensure that the neighbourhood Office is able to advise these people what to do. Experience from when we reduced from 32 centres to four is that the numbers turning up at a closed centre will decrease over time.

Q7: Are there financial reasons for this proposal?

Response: The reductions in the budget for Neighbourhood Advice Centres will have an impact on the Housing Advice Service but the proposal is not about staff savings for the Service itself and is centred on improvements to the current service.

Q8: Thirty voluntary and community groups in Northfield work together. There is a lot of experience there and they want to work with the Council but they have not really been given the opportunity to do so. Is there a plan to utilise third sector expertise? We need to

encourage the Council to find out what services are out there to support it and the Council needs to be pro-active in finding things out and seeking support. You may need to organise meetings with local organisations to discuss through the details of how we could work together. Also, don't forget to link in with the growing networks of local Councillors and MPs.

Response: We are keen to work with agencies to support prevention while meeting our statutory duties on homelessness, but I do not think that we have any new money to support this. We are also happy to develop this joint working to avoid customers having to make unnecessary trips to Aston. We would rather that a person received good advice locally and did not have to travel to us in Aston. Councillor Cotton, the Cabinet Member responsible for this Service, is very keen that we work collaboratively and there appears to be a real appetite for this in Northfield. We need to think about how we do this better and how we do it in other parts of the city as well, particularly where Neighbourhood Offices are closing down.

Q9: The most vulnerable people will not be able to make the trip to Aston. In addition, Northfield residents in general do not travel into Birmingham City Centre, never mind further to Aston. Asking residents in shock, not just the most vulnerable, to travel that far is concerning as they won't know how to get there and fear of the journey may prevent them from getting to their interviews. This is also linked to mental health issues.

Response: Detailed travel advice will be provided including which bus to get, where the stop is, where to get off and where any connecting bus stop is. In extreme circumstances, those unable to travel will be catered for via taxi provision and visiting staff. We will investigate addressing vulnerability by adopting the Youth Hub's model of phoning up or texting applicants who have missed an appointment to check whether they need further support.

Q10: Parents dropping off their children at school may be unable to attend as they will worry about getting back to pick them up. Or they will take their children out of school to attend an interview. Will the proposal discriminate against families?

Response: We will ensure that appointments for families fit in with school times, allowing plenty of time to travel between dropping off and picking up children. We will also advise them that they will have time to return for their children before pick-up time.

Q11: Do visiting officers currently have a backlog and are there any plans to increase their numbers? What are the criteria for a visit from a visiting officer?

Response: There is no backlog at present. However, we have not discounted increasing the number of visiting officers if we need to which is possible to do relatively quickly as all front-facing officers have generic job descriptions. Visits are related to vulnerability and ability to travel and visiting officers will negotiate this. They use their own vehicles and travel anywhere in Birmingham and to surrounding areas as some applicants are from outside Birmingham.

Q12: You said that you looked at other Core Cities and all but one had a single Housing Advice Centre. However, Birmingham is a bigger city than these others and also has the largest number of homelessness applicants, so is it fair to make this comparison?

Response: Birmingham also has far more staff than these other Core Cities. Many authorities with large rural areas also expect their residents to travel further, Solihull for example.

Q13: Have you looked at how far people have to travel to get to Newtown?

Response: Yes, we did an analysis of how many buses and how much time it would take from the centre of each of the city's 40 Wards to reach the Newtown office. All but two required 2 buses and 45 minutes or less. The other two required just over an hour. (It was clarified that this applied to normal traffic conditions.) All this information will be in the published Equality Impact Assessment. In addition, we were surprised to find from a customer survey that about 50% of applicants arrive in a car.

Q14: Is there sufficient parking provision at the Newtown, Aston office?

Response: Yes, there is a car park which allows 2 hours parking and there is also plenty of street parking available in the vicinity.

Q15: Is there scope for increasing the size of the Newtown office?

Response: We will be the only service in there. It has space for all our current front-facing staff, sufficient numbers of interview rooms and space for people to wait. Newtown is used to dealing with large volumes of people. It is a fairly newly renovated building which has a natural flow for customers and has been well kitted out for the provision of advice services.

Q16: People whose benefits have been sanctioned may not have enough money to ring. We need a free phone system or phones in third sector organisations. At the moment there is a free phone for repairs so perhaps you could tag onto that. We also need more information on bus tickets.

Response: Phones for contacting us will continue to be available in Neighbourhood Offices but we will seek to develop their availability. We need to avoid frustrations of people queuing to use the free phone in an office. The free phone also needs to be available out of hours. We do not promote the availability of bus tickets but we do ask applicants if they need them and do not refuse to hand out bus tickets unnecessarily. However, we do need to ask some questions to confirm that the applicant really needs them and to prevent abuse of the system. The Council House also has bus tickets to hand out in appropriate cases.

Q17: How many of the homeless applicants are repeat applicants? They will know where to go.

Response: We only keep records of those representing within two years and they are about 5% of applicants. We also have a website that provides information, has the phone number to ring for further advice and a link to the very helpful Shelter website. We are finding that nowadays most people, including the vulnerable, do have internet access or a smartphone.

Q18: Can a customer request a call back through the website?

Response: Not at present but it is a consideration for the future. We are looking to improve the website and look at the possibility of other IT tools such as Skype for interviews. We will also explore ways of developing third sector organisations and our collaborative working with them to assist in delivering our statutory duty and to reduce demand on the Housing Advice Centre.

Q19: Why will people have to go to Newtown for an interview?

Response: It's mainly because we need to see their documentation. It is easier to assess vulnerability face-to-face. In addition, we have to check for fraud and we have a passport/identity documentation checker in that office. However, we are doing more and more on line so there is increasing scope for local organisations to work with and support the Service.

Q20: If all goes wrong after implementation of this proposal, what is the timescale for review?

Response: If the proposal is agreed, we will be monitoring and reviewing from day one including the numbers who don't turn up for interview and reasons for this. Developing the proposal has been an ongoing process over the past 12 months Councillor Cotton, the responsible Cabinet Member, has been very challenging to make sure we get it right. Ultimately, as we are a statutory service, we will end up in court if we don't get it right. But we will get it right!

Birmingham City Council

Consultation on Birmingham Housing Advice Service

Report: West & Central Birmingham Consultation Meeting

Introduction

Birmingham City Council has been consulting upon the proposal to move the delivery of Housing and Homelessness Advice to a single location at the Newtown Customer Service Centre in Aston, Birmingham. A component of this consultation process involves four public meetings called to provide an opportunity for residents and organisations to have a face-to-face dialogue with relevant Council staff about their concerns on the impact of the proposal and any ideas for improving the service including the potential for collaborative action.¹ A meeting has been scheduled for each quadrant of Birmingham.

These sessions were advertised and promoted as widely as practicable with a view to maximising public and partnership attendance. A variety of promotional methods were engaged. These are listed below:

1. A press release was issued by the Birmingham City Council Press Office detailing the times, dates and locations of the proposed events.
2. Emails were sent to MP's, Local Councillors and Partner Agencies detailing times and dates of the events and encouraging attendance.
3. Posters for all four events were displayed prominently in Housing Advice Centres (and events were timed so many customers may have knowledge of the proposals as the paper based survey in HAC's had been taking place for some weeks).
4. Flyers were handed out at Housing Advice Centres
5. Posters were displayed by partner agencies including displays at Citizen's Advice Bureau's and Police Stations (including Steelhouse Lane as the only remaining 24hr station).
6. Details of the events were loaded onto the Housing Advice Service's 'Be Heard' online consultation page.
7. Posters were displayed In BCC Temporary 'Accommodation Centres' for Homeless Persons.
8. Details of the events were 'Tweeted' by Birmingham Newsroom and Cllr Stacey.
9. Details of the events were included in internal publications 'Weekly Staff News' and the fortnightly 'Leadership Bulletin'.

¹ Other components of the consultation involve an online questionnaire hosted on the Be Heard website (which can be accessed via the Council's website) and a face-to-face survey of users of the Advice Service.

10. Emails and telephone calls to agencies and voluntary and community groups in Birmingham that worked with people who had become homeless or were at greatest risk of becoming homeless.
11. Emails to all of the cities registered social landlords/housing associations

This is a report on the fourth of these public meetings held in the West and Central Quadrant at St. Luke's Church Centre in Lee Bank on Monday, 18th January 2016 between 2pm and 4pm. The report has been written by the independent chair of the meeting based upon detailed notes taken by him and Council staff who were present.

It was attended by 11 people, as well as Council staff, including staff and volunteers from Shelter, the Longhurst Group, Midland Heart, the police, Catalysts Mutual CIC, Ashram Moseley and the Northfield Baptist Church.

The purposes of the meeting were:

1. To inform Birmingham citizens and organisations about the proposal to move the delivery of Housing and Homelessness Advice to a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham and alternatives that have been considered. The proposal involves more advisors on duty, additional interview appointments and improved advice available via phone and the web.
2. To obtain greater insights into the likely impact of this proposal.
3. To explore ways that any potential negative impacts could be avoided or mitigated and new ways of working that could improve the service to people seeking housing and homelessness advice.

Following a presentation by the Council's Integrated Service Head of Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Services, the meeting opened out for questions of clarification and then discussions about likely impacts and what could be done to either mitigate any negative impacts or improve the service including ideas for collaborative working. Key points made at the meeting are summarised next, followed by an outline of the presentation. The bulk of the report provides a more detailed account of questions (heading in red), responses by Council staff (heading in blue) and the discussion on collaborative action and how such action could be made to happen.

Summary

The key issues raised about the proposal to consolidate the Housing and Homelessness service at one centre in Newtown, Aston were:

- Would the centre be the **first point of contact** wherever you were in the city? It was explained that it would be but that the expectation would be that contact could be made via telephone from a Neighbourhood Office, partner agency or directly by the individual.
- Some time was spent discussing: **how the centre at Newtown would operate**; the number of staff, footfall and the flexibility and capacity to reduce waiting time for appointments; the co-location of advice workers on benefits and money management/debt but that staff would have the knowledge to refer clients on to specialist services on mental health, drug, alcohol and other issues often connected with homelessness.
- Questions were asked about **the point at which evidence of homelessness and identity would need to be presented**. It was explained that while as much as possible would be dealt with over the phone, homeless applicants would need to present original identity documents early on and that original identity and other

needed documents would need to be presented at the lettings point or else the lettings couldn't go ahead.

- The **potential for undertaking telephone applications for homelessness** was supported as a way of reducing the need to travel and as a way of speeding up application procedures although face-to-face interviews were seen as being better for eliciting the right information from vulnerable people. It was agreed that telephone applications should be tested out and that training staff and providing a good script would be important for the quality of the procedure. **Skype and similar video-telephony** should be investigated as well. Support workers would be encouraged for telephone interviews.
- The impact of the **Universal Credit** roll out and the increase in **rough sleeping** were also topics discussed.
- There was a real appetite for **greater collaborative action with third sector and other organisations** on preventative work, on providing advice in general and on supporting the Council's statutory homelessness duty. The Service was keen to do this and the National Homeless Advice Service, run by Shelter, could provide training for third sector organisations as well.

Presentation

First², the proposal was explained, involving the consolidation of all front-facing staff from the current four Advice Centres at Erdington, Northfield, Sparkbrook and Newtown into the Newtown location which would therefore be the venue for all face-to-face interviews. There would be increased phone access to ensure that travel is only undertaken when necessary. The Youth Hub would not be affected and would continue to operate from and in partnership with St. Basil's.

The proposal would deliver:

- greater consistency in advice and decision making across the service;
- a centre of excellence with all staff trained to the same standards, better able to share expertise and owning the whole 'customer journey';
- the ability to have some dedicated specialist staff in areas often associated with homelessness such as benefits advice and debt;
- increased numbers of appointments and shorter waiting times;
- greater flexibility to cover for staff absences; and
- a greater focus in the future on early intervention and prevention.

Homelessness services often attract legal challenges because providing these services is a statutory duty of local authorities. BCC therefore took legal advice on whether the proposal would conflict with this statutory duty and was informed by a barrister that it would not and was legally more robust than the other options considered.

Currently there are around 1,000 enquiries per month and 100 face-to-face appointments. The waiting time for an appointment can be up to 6 weeks (emergencies are handled on the same day) and about one third do not turn up. The target for the new model will be a waiting time of one week as all staff being at one venue will allow greater flexibility and the ability to overbook so that non-attendees don't lead to unnecessary staff 'down time'. There will be 15 to 20 interviewing officers at Newtown on a normal day.

² While attendees asked questions during the presentation, this meeting report places the questions and responses in the next section for ease of reading. For the same reason, some questions and some responses have been merged.

The proposal is not driven directly by the need to make financial savings as the cost of the service would remain the same. However, significant cuts proposed in neighbourhood advice staff and neighbourhood offices (down to two, one in Erdington and the other in Northfield) which have been supporting the Housing Advice Service, would have an effect on the Service. That is why the 'do nothing, leave things as they are' alternative option was rejected.

Two other alternatives of a two centre model and of one base in the city centre were also rejected on grounds of cost, the risk of lowering the consistency and quality of the service and inadequacy of the size and/or shape of the alternative premises researched. The Citizens Advice Bureau had also contacted the Council offering assistance and suggesting sharing office space. However, the space it has available is not large enough for the number of Advice Service staff and people attending the centre.

In drawing up this proposal, the Service had conducted a detailed Equality Impact Assessment, considering possible impacts and what could be done to lessen or avoid negative impacts. These included:

- for people not able to travel or able to afford the cost of travelling:
 - Bus tickets could be provided following appropriate checks on need, and taxis in certain very difficult situations;
 - an enhanced phone service which would identify whether those seeking advice needed to travel for a face-to-face interview; and
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- for people becoming homeless late in the day without the time to travel before the office closed:
 - in these circumstances the out of hours service would find accommodation for the night and then they would be able to visit the Newtown centre the next day.

We have also benchmarked our service against other large cities in England, the so called Core Cities such as Manchester, Bristol, Nottingham, Liverpool, Newcastle, Sheffield and Leeds. Only one core city (Liverpool) provides homelessness advice from more than one site; Liverpool have five offices but last year had just under 300 homeless applications compared with BCC's over 5,000. We do have a larger population than any of the other Core Cities but Sheffield and Leeds cover a larger geographical area.

The 7 week consultation process would close on 21st January after which responses would be analysed and a publically-available report produced. The proposal would be put before the Council's Cabinet in March 2016 with any amendments arising from the consultation. If approved, there would be a transition period with the new model being in place by June 2016.

Questions and Discussion

Q1: Does the consultation include Housing Advice and the Homelessness Service or just Homelessness?

Response: The consultation relates to both services. If the proposed model goes through both of these functions will be delivered through the Newtown centre.

Q2: First point of contact – will this be Newtown regardless of where they are? For example, if I met someone at Bournville College who wants to be housed, where do I take them?

Response: They could either travel to Newtown direct or phone the Newtown office to secure advice on the phone. You may take them to the Northfield Neighbourhood Office or to a partner agency who would help them contact Newtown. However, there will be increased provision of phone and web access to Newtown so we could assist many people who are not under immediate threat of homelessness avoid the need to travel.

Q3: What kind of numbers do you expect to be coming through the service?

Response: We take about 5,000 homeless applications per year and expect that to continue. There are also about 10,000 preventions and we expect this to go up. However we hope to decrease the footfall due to better phone and web access.

Q4: Do you think you can handle that level of footfall?

Response: We think so. Newtown currently sees over 200 people per day and the centre can handle this. With more people on reception or ready to conduct interviews (around 25) in a one-centre model, we believe we can handle it. However, regardless of numbers of staff there will be people waiting to be seen. There is space for 25 people with their children in a reasonably comfortable waiting area. We will use floor walkers to reduce queues by dealing with issues quickly while people wait.

Q5: How many staff will there be at Newtown? How many will be front-line and how many back office?

Response: There are about 60 staff who will provide a service at Newtown but not on each and every day as there would be a rota. There will be around 20 to 25 on front-line duty at Newtown on any given day with 10 more in the back office working on investigations and documenting decisions who can be called on to interview if the overbooking system means that more people turn up than the front-facing staff can deal with. The rest of the staff will be at Lancaster Circus or, in some instances, may be working from home.

Q6: Is there a case for surgeries at Erdington as Welfare advice will continue to be provided from there? Or will there be other advice provided at Newtown?

Response: Six Neighbourhood Advice and Information Service staff will be based at Newtown to continue to provide welfare/benefit advice related to housing need as part of the new Housing Advice and Homelessness Service

Q7: Homelessness is often linked with other issues such as mental health, drugs and alcohol. Will you have specialist advisers on these issues in the Service?

Response: Staff will have the knowledge to refer clients onto specialist support and advice in these areas. We won't have the specialist provision ourselves.

Q8: How will people provide their evidence of homelessness in the new model if they're speaking over the phone?

Response: We're currently considering taking homeless applications over the phone. This will still involve people making a trip to Newtown to provide original identification documents and sign forms at some point. However there is nothing preventing us from doing the assessments via telephone. Visiting officers are being provided with mobile scanners to assist in their role where verification is required. We are looking at ways to do these checks as conveniently as possible.

Discussion 1: the facilitator asked how attendees felt about taking homeless applications over the phone. Homeless applications via web will not be offered yet as this is felt to be a step too far and prevents effective investigation. It was agreed that you obtained more information face-to-face as you see how they respond and this can prompt your next question. However it can be useful if a telephone interview is scripted well and in emergency situations where time constraints prevent a face-to-face interview. It needs to be planned and extensively tested to ensure it is working.

Discussion 2: One participant said that he had previously done interviews with camcorders at other local authorities with limited success. Are there any similar plans for Homelessness?

Response: We are looking at this as part of the future fully-developed service. The Council is corporately looking at Skype as are we in our specific Service. However we are not in a position to offer this at the moment. The purpose of face-to-face interviews is not to catch people out but to ensure that vulnerable people are able to answer properly.

Q9: Have you tested out the phone application process yet? And at what point in a telephone conversation would you decide to move into a full-blown homeless application?

Response: Not tested yet but perhaps we should. We seem to have all agreed that it would be worth testing out a telephone application system out. Face-to-face is best but Skype etc. will be worth testing out as well. It will limit wasting people's time with unneeded trips to Newtown. Ensuring the quality of our staff and developing scripted interview models will be important in making it work. We can also record calls as a form of quality control.

Q10: Will the new one-centre system reduce Bed and Breakfast usage?

Response: Possibly but this isn't the aim of the proposal.

Q11: You mentioned safety issues around gangs. Could you elaborate? It's not threatening gangs hanging around corners, is it?

Response: No. Some individuals may be unable to go to Newtown because of previous gang activity/affiliations which are rivals to gangs active in Aston, and we will ensure that they are able to access the Advice Service.

Q12: Will this include partner organisations directing people to where they can be assisted by support workers with telephone Interviews.

Response: Yes. It does make sense to involve support workers. We already do now and this will extend into any provision of telephone interviews.

Q13: Where information is not provided correctly during a telephone interview, will they be asked to come in for a face to face interview?

Response: Yes, in most cases (save for cases where refusal to provide information is intentional and will not change through face to face), customers will be invited in for an interview and facilitated to attend where necessary.

Q14: Will Universal Credit make temporary accommodation more unaffordable

Response: Yes, it is a big risk for temporary accommodation. . However in cases where it is unaffordable due to specific circumstances we can write off some costs. This does happen already however we do expect Universal Credit to negatively impact our rental income.

Universal Credit is already with us for single people aged over 21. It will eventually be rolled out to people with families.

Q15: Will the Newtown office need refurbishing?

Response: No except for upgrading the CCTV. Everything else is in there. The neighbourhood staff move out and we move in.

Q16: Has there been an increase in rough sleepers?

Response: (Partly from Midlands Heart rough sleepers team.) The Rough Sleepers Team does see a number of people sleeping rough but also people involved with them drinking, begging etc. who do not sleep rough. The numbers do fluctuate over the year but the official figure has gone up from 20 to 36 although Birmingham has been proud of its record of reducing the numbers in earlier years. It is an issue which has risen up the political agenda and a priority for the new Council Leader.

Q17: Birmingham Social Housing Partnership (BSHP) would like to enter into conversation with BCC to see what further assistance it can provide to contribute to stabilising homelessness and assisting BCC in tackling it. Issues of debt and growing difficulties for young people necessitate closer working. Birmingham CAB also confirmed that they were beginning to see more cases of rent arrears coming to County Court and coming earlier than usual, perhaps because we're beginning to see the impact of the bedroom tax.

Response: Yes. We will need to, and want to collaborate closely with partners to tackle these issues.

Q18: What is the relationship like with Let to Birmingham?

Response: It's a partnership with BCC and Omega Lettings. We no longer fund them as funding was for 18 months; however we still work with them. We hope to have them providing a front line presence in the new one-centre Housing Advice Centre. This does not happen at the moment.

Q19: What happened to the Customer Service Centres?

Response: It is still there. The Centre was run by Capita but was brought back in house. Calls to the main council number regarding Homelessness will be referred to us and not dealt with there.

Q20: Is there any provision for training for volunteers and charities who want to assist customers and provide advice.

Response: BCC hopes to provide this training to upskill other groups to see customers and provide quality advice to reduce the strain on our own services. A representative from the National Homeless Advice Service, run by Shelter, who was a meeting participant, said that they could offer free training as well. The need for energy saving advice was also raised.

Birmingham City Council

Consultation on Birmingham Housing Advice Service

Summary Report on Consultation Meetings

Introduction

Birmingham City Council has been consulting upon the proposal to move the delivery of Housing and Homelessness Advice to a single location at the Newtown Customer Service Centre in Aston, Birmingham. A component of this consultation process involved four public meetings called to provide an opportunity for residents and organisations to have a face-to-face dialogue with relevant Council staff about their concerns on the impact of the proposal and any ideas for improving the service including the potential for collaborative action.¹ A meeting was been scheduled for each quadrant of Birmingham and an individual report has been completed for each meeting.

These sessions were advertised and promoted as widely as practicable with a view to maximising public and partnership attendance. A variety of promotional methods were engaged. These are listed below:

1. A press release was issued by the Birmingham City Council Press Office detailing the times, dates and locations of the proposed events.
2. Emails were sent to MP's, Local Councillors and Partner Agencies detailing times and dates of the events and encouraging attendance.
3. Posters for all four events were displayed prominently in Housing Advice Centres (and events were timed so many customers may have knowledge of the proposals as the paper based survey in HAC's had been taking place for some weeks).
4. Flyers were handed out at Housing Advice Centres
5. Posters were displayed by partner agencies including displays at Citizen's Advice Bureau's and Police Stations (including Steelhouse Lane as the only remaining 24hr station).
6. Details of the events were loaded onto the Housing Advice Service's 'Be Heard' online consultation page.
7. Posters were displayed In BCC Temporary 'Accommodation Centres' for Homeless Persons.
8. Details of the events were 'Tweeted' by Birmingham Newsroom and Cllr Stacey.
9. Details of the events were included in internal publications 'Weekly Staff News' and the fortnightly 'Leadership Bulletin'.

¹ Other components of the consultation involve an online questionnaire hosted on the Be Heard website (which can be accessed via the Council's website) and a face-to-face survey of users of the Advice Service.

10. Emails and telephone calls to agencies and voluntary and community groups in Birmingham that worked with people who had become homeless or were at greatest risk of becoming homeless.

11. Emails to all of the cities registered social landlords/housing associations

This is a summary report of all the meetings in the form of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and areas that the Housing and Homelessness Advice Service committed to exploring to improve the proposed service. While many concerns were expressed and ideas put forward on how negative impacts could be mitigated or the service could be improved, no meeting participant suggested an alternative to the consolidation into a one-centre model.

The meetings were attended by 21 people in total, as well as Council staff, although there were no attendees for one meeting.

The purposes of the meeting were:

1. To inform Birmingham citizens and organisations about the proposal to move the delivery of Housing and Homelessness Advice to a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham and alternatives that have been considered. The proposal involves more advisors on duty, additional interview appointments and improved advice available via phone and the web.
2. To obtain greater insights into the likely impact of this proposal.
3. To explore ways that any potential negative impacts could be avoided or mitigated and new ways of working that could improve the service to people seeking housing and homelessness advice.

Frequently asked Questions

Q1: Who pays for the first phone call? Some people in need will also have no phone or no credit on their phone. Will there be a free phone call service available?

Response: We will look into the possibility of having a free phone call service. We would need to make sure that this applies to mobile phone calls too as some services are only free from landlines.

Q2: First point of contact – will this be Newtown regardless of where they are? For example, if I met someone at Bournville College who wants to be housed, where do I take them?

Response: They could either travel to Newtown direct or phone the Newtown office to secure advice on the phone. You may take them to the Northfield Neighbourhood Office or to a partner agency who would help them contact Newtown. However, there will be increased provision of phone and web access to Newtown so we could assist many people who are not under immediate threat of homelessness avoid the need to travel.

Q3: Could some community facilities act as contact points, creating a network with free phone access to the Housing Advice Centre?

Response: Current plans are that the Northfield and Erdington Neighbourhood Offices will remain and there will be free phones to use there. Customers tend to gravitate towards Neighbourhood Offices first where they will be put in touch with the Housing Advice Service. However, we can look into providing free phone access at other venues.

Q4: How will referrals to community services such as food banks and extra support needs be managed?

Response: Referrals will continue as officers in Newtown will have a comprehensive, updated knowledge of facilities local to where the person seeking advice and support is from. Currently 60% of enquirers tend to go home after advice rather than into temporary accommodation. We do ask enquirers about their money situation and organise food parcels for those who need to go into temporary accommodation. We are establishing additional emergency accommodation of our own and therefore further reduce our emergency use of Bed and Breakfasts. We currently place on average two people per night into emergency accommodation through our out of hours service.

Q5: Are there financial reasons for this proposal?

Response: The reductions in the budget for Neighbourhood Advice Centres will have an impact on the Housing Advice Service but the proposal is not about staff savings for the Service itself and is centred on improvements to the current service.

Q6: Is there a plan to utilise third sector expertise? We need to encourage the Council to find out what services are out there to support it and the Council needs to be pro-active in finding things out and seeking support. You may need to organise meetings with local organisations to discuss through the details of how we could work together. Also, don't forget to link in with the growing networks of local Councillors and MPs.

Response: We are keen to work with agencies to support prevention while meeting our statutory duties on homelessness, but we do not have any new money to support this. We are also happy to develop this joint working to avoid customers having to make unnecessary trips to Aston. We would rather that a person received good advice locally and did not have to travel to us in Aston. Councillor Cotton, the Cabinet Member responsible for this Service, is very keen that we work collaboratively and there appears to be a real appetite for this across the city. We need to think about how we do this better and how we do it across the city, particularly where Neighbourhood Offices are closing down.

Q7: The most vulnerable people will not be able to make the trip to Aston. Asking residents in shock, not just the most vulnerable, to travel is concerning as they won't know how to get there and fear of the journey may prevent them from getting to their interviews. This is also linked to mental health issues.

Response: Detailed travel advice will be provided including which bus to get, where the bus stop is, where to get off and where any connecting bus stop is. In extreme circumstances, those unable to travel will be catered for via taxi provision and visiting staff. We will investigate addressing vulnerability by adopting the Youth Hub's model of phoning up or texting applicants who have missed an appointment to check whether they need further support.

Q8: Parents dropping off their children at school may be unable to attend as they will worry about getting back to pick them up. Or they will take their children out of school to attend an interview. Will the proposal discriminate against families?

Response: We will ensure that appointments for families fit in with school times, allowing plenty of time to travel between dropping off and picking up children. We will also advise them that they will have time to return for their children before pick-up time.

Q9: Do visiting officers currently have a backlog and are there any plans to increase their numbers? What are the criteria for a visit from a visiting officer?

Response: There is no backlog at present. However, we have not discounted increasing the number of visiting officers if we need to which is possible to do relatively quickly as all front-facing officers have generic job descriptions. Visits are related to vulnerability and ability to travel and visiting officers will negotiate this. They use their own vehicles and travel

anywhere in Birmingham and to surrounding areas as some applicants are from outside Birmingham.

Q10: You said that you looked at other Core Cities and all but one had a single Housing Advice Centre. However, Birmingham is a bigger city than these others and also has the largest number of homelessness applicants, so is it fair to make this comparison?

Response: We have benchmarked our service against other large cities in England, the so called Core Cities such as Manchester, Bristol, Nottingham, Liverpool, Newcastle, Sheffield and Leeds. Only one core city (Liverpool) provides homelessness advice from more than one site; Liverpool have five offices but last year had just under 300 homeless applications compared with BCC's over 5,000. We do have a larger population than any of the other Core Cities but Sheffield and Leeds cover a larger geographical area.

Q11: Have you looked at how far people have to travel to get to Newtown?

Response: Yes, we did an analysis of how many buses and how much time it would take from the centre of each of the city's 40 Wards to reach the Newtown office. All but two in normal traffic conditions required 2 buses and 45 minutes or less. The other two required just over an hour.

Q12: Is there sufficient parking provision at the Newtown, Aston office?

Response: Yes, there is a car park which allows 2 hours parking and there is also plenty of street parking available in the vicinity.

Q13: Can a customer request a call back through the website?

Response: Not at present but it is a consideration for the future. We are looking to improve the website and look at the possibility of other IT tools such as Skype for interviews. We will also explore ways of developing third sector organisations and our collaborative working with them to assist in delivering our statutory duty and to reduce demand on the Housing Advice Centre.

Q14: Why will people have to go to Newtown for an interview? Can't a homeless application be done by phone?

Response: Mainly because we need to see their documentation. It is also easier to assess vulnerability face-to-face. In addition, we have to check for fraud and we have a passport/identity documentation checker in that office.

We're currently considering taking applications over the phone. This will still involve people making a trip to Newtown to provide original identification documents and sign forms at some point. It can be useful if a telephone interview is scripted well and in emergency situations where time constraints prevent a face-to-face interview. It needs to be planned and extensively tested to ensure it is working.

Visiting officers are being provided with mobile scanners to assist in their role where verification is required. We are looking at ways to do these checks as conveniently as possible. You obtain more information face-to-face as you see how they respond and this can prompt your next question. The purpose of face-to-face interviews is not to catch people out but to ensure that vulnerable people are able to answer properly.

The Council is also corporately looking at Skype, as are we in our specific Housing Advice Service. However we are not in a position to offer this at the moment.

Q15: If all goes wrong after implementation of this proposal, what is the timescale for review?

Response: If the proposal is agreed, we will be monitoring and reviewing from day one including the numbers who don't turn up for interview and reasons for this. Developing the proposal has been an ongoing process over the past 12 months. Councillor Cotton, the responsible Cabinet Member, has been very challenging to make sure we get it right. Ultimately, as we are a statutory service, we will end up in court if we don't get it right. But we will get it right!

Q16: What kind of numbers do you expect to be coming through the service?

Response: We take about 5,000 homeless applications per year and expect that to continue. There are also about 10,000 preventions and we expect this to go up. However we hope to decrease the footfall due to better phone and web access.

Q17: Do you think you can handle that level of footfall?

Response: We think so. Newtown currently sees over 200 people per day and the centre can handle this. With more people on reception or ready to conduct interviews (around 25) in a one-centre model, we believe we can handle it. However, regardless of numbers of staff there will be people waiting to be seen. There is space for 25 people with their children in a reasonably comfortable waiting area. We will use floor walkers to reduce queues by dealing with issues quickly while people wait.

Q18: How many staff will there be at Newtown? How many will be front-line and how many back office?

Response: There are about 60 staff who will provide a service at Newtown but not on each and every day as there would be a rota. There will be around 20 to 25 on front-line duty at Newtown on any given day with 10 more in the back office working on investigations and documenting decisions who can be called on to interview if the overbooking system means that more people turn up than the front-facing staff can deal with. The rest of the staff will be at Lancaster Circus or, in some instances, may be working from home.

Q19: Homelessness is often linked with other issues such as mental health, drugs and alcohol. Will you have specialist advisers on these issues in the Service?

Response: Staff will have the knowledge to refer clients onto specialist support and advice in these areas. We won't have the specialist provision ourselves.

Q20: Has there been an increase in rough sleepers?

Response: The Rough Sleepers Team does see a number of people sleeping rough but also people involved with them drinking, begging etc. who do not sleep rough. The numbers do fluctuate over the year but the official figure has gone up from 20 to 36 although Birmingham has been proud of its record of reducing the numbers in earlier years. It is an issue which has risen up the political agenda and a priority for the new Council Leader.

Improvements to be explored

- Providing a free number to call which is also free for mobiles.
- Developing a stronger collaborative network with third sector organisations and other agencies involving training, direct phone systems, two-way communication and updating, referrals, provision of information on support others can offer, and continual development of the overall system of advice and support on homelessness and housing issues including through local meetings of partners.

- Developing and testing homeless applications by telephone and, eventually, Skype and other video-conferencing technologies.
- Developing web-based resources including the possibility of asking for a call back through the website.
- Extending the number of visiting officers if demand is there.
- Adapting the call or text back service used for non-attendees at the Youth Hub for non-attendees at the Newtown office.
- Committed to monitoring performance and impact from day one.

Tuesday 19th January, 2016

Dear Jim Crawshaw,

ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL IN NORTHFIELD FOR HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE CONSULTATION

This letter is a follow-up from the initial correspondence sent on Monday 11th January, and follows localised discussions within Northfield in respect of the proposed Housing Advice Service consultation which closes on Thursday 21st January.

In my initial letter, I outlined concerns we hold within Northfield for the protection of vulnerable adults through the proposed re-allocation of all Homeless Advice Centres (HACs) to one location, in Newtown. We recognise that BCC's desire is to increase the availability of appointments as well as improving the level of service for those threatened with homelessness. We recognise that the financial backdrop limits options open to Birmingham City Council (BCC). In my letter, I outlined serious reservations about whether individuals in South Birmingham will actually be able to travel to an alien part of Birmingham, such as Newtown, in order to receive advice. These concerns had been raised with me by over twenty organisations represented within Northfield Stakeholders' Group (all of whom support the vulnerable and mentally ill in the Northfield District). I sought to offer important considerations for you to ensure that appropriate, easy-to-access support was available with any changes as well as ensuring that localised communication and support was available all around the city.

This subsequent letter and proposal follows localised discussions within the Northfield District to offer some level of support within South Birmingham to ensure those who may need to cross the city would have some support in South Birmingham. It recognises that training would need to be completed by the appropriate staff and that they would need to work alongside the statutory responsibilities that BCC holds with regards to homelessness. Furthermore, it is consistent with BCC's desire to work alongside local communities which it highlights in its 2016+ budget.

Alternative proposal

In light of the above context and concerns and following consultation with a number of organisations who seek to work alongside homeless, imminently homeless or similarly vulnerable individuals, **we propose a paid worker to support or advise those facing imminent homelessness who would cover South Birmingham and who could be deployed in the vicinity of the existing Northfield HAC.** They would be the local, first port-of-call to anyone in the area who was either immediately or imminently homeless and would help signpost them appropriately. The worker would be able to evaluate the immediate need, identify local provision and offer housing guidance with experienced, local expertise. This could be to any of the local, experienced, support agencies (such as South Birmingham Young Homeless Project or Northfield Community Partnership, who have both expressed keen support of this proposal). Should it be that there was no alternative other than to send them to Newtown, procedures could then be put in place to ensure that this occurred swiftly and safely.

Chair:

Rev. D. Tubby, Northfield Baptist Church, 789 Bristol Road South, Northfield B31 2NQ

Tel: 0121 4766678

Vice-chair:

R. Debenham, Northfield Community Partnership, 693 Bristol Road South, Northfield B31 2JT

Tel: 0121 4112157

This adviser would also be able to work alongside other appropriate, existing expert advice in the community where benefits advice, financial planning, housing and work applications, Foodbank support and Local Welfare Provision support already exist. They would bring with them a wealth of local experience and an ability to work alongside the many third sector organisations which provide support and guidance in this area.

Location-wise, we would anticipate this individual to be based in the community and co-located around South Birmingham in the most appropriate public locations. Over the last week, four potential locations have already been identified with unconfirmed further interest. Should our separate proposal for the Community Asset Transfer of premises in central Northfield also be successful, this location would be perfect for such a service.

We are not clear as to whether BCC funding may be available for such a post. However, regardless of this situation, we would like to meet with you to explore this further and to ensure that some level of service (whether funded by BCC, external opportunities or a combination) can exist and offer the best support to the consultation outcomes.

We believe that this proposal complements the planned centre of excellence in Newtown without compromising the safety of those in South Birmingham who would be unable to make this trip. It would safeguard and protect the most vulnerable in the south of the city and enhance the homelessness service in a cost-effective way.

We await your response and look forward to hearing from you.

With best regards,



Rev. D. Tubby
Chair, Northfield Stakeholders' Group
Minister, Northfield Baptist Church

cc: Richard Burden MP
Cllr. Brett O'Reilly (Northfield Ward)
Helen Sephton (South Birmingham Young Homeless Project)
Rebecca Debenham (Northfield Community Partnership)

Chair:

Rev. D. Tubby, Northfield Baptist Church, 789 Bristol Road South, Northfield B31 2NQ

Tel: 0121 4766678

Vice-chair:

R. Debenham, Northfield Community Partnership, 693 Bristol Road South, Northfield B31 2JT

Tel: 0121 4112157

Andrew J Clarke

From: Jim Crawshaw
Sent: 15 February 2016 09:22
To: Simon J Field; Maura Mulligan; Andrew J Clarke
Subject: FW: Consultation on the /future of Homeless Services and Neighbourhood Advice Service

Jim Crawshaw
Integrated Service Head Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Services
0121 675 2154
07887851985

From: Jim Crawshaw
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 9:00 AM
To: Councillor Lisa Trickett; Councillor John Cotton
Subject: RE: Consultation on the /future of Homeless Services and Neighbourhood Advice Service

Dear Cllr Trickett

Firstly apologies for the delay in responding

Following your e-mail below I have had discussions with Midland Heart regarding any possible buildings they have that would be appropriate for use as a HAC that are more central to the city centre than the Newtown Neighbourhood office. I can advise

- I contacted them initially regarding the Foyer and received the following response from Chris Ellison - *In terms of the Foyer which was also suggested, in consideration we felt it would not be suitable both in terms of the nature of the space required and capacity of the building along with presenting a challenge regarding the nature of the vulnerability of the existing client group and some other client groups in the same space.* As you are aware the statutory service deals with a range of customers from families to single people, some of whom have the most complex issues and therefore it wasn't deemed appropriate to mix these with the current young people in the foyer.
- I visited the Bradford Street office of Midland Heart which I'm sure you are aware is situated very close to the outdoor markets. Unfortunately this office isn't large enough for our requirements. At Newtown we will have a large reception area, 25 -28 front facing desks, 2 private interview rooms predominantly for victims of DV and back office space for up to 12 officers to be located. Bradford Street is not large enough to provide a similar set up. Additionally there would be some building work required and although it has IT access the number of officers we would seek to place there would mean we would have to upgrade this at an additional cost.
- Midland Heart are currently looking at plans for the Bismillah building (which I'm sure you will recall is next to the Snowhill Centre). However this would require significant structural intervention that would be a significant cost as well as the setting up of a new office, IT etc. etc.

I hope this reassures you that we have been pro-active in seeking an alternative central location to the Newtown Office, however we have not been successful in finding something large enough to meet our needs that doesn't require significant investment, which in the current climate is highly unlikely.

Happy to discuss this further if you would like to.

Regards

Jim

Jim Crawshaw
Integrated Service Head Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Services
0121 675 2154
07887851985

From: Councillor Lisa Trickett
Sent: Saturday, January 02, 2016 12:41 PM
To: Councillor John Cotton; Jim Crawshaw
Subject: Re: Consultation on the /future of Homeless Services and Neighbourhood Advice Service

Hi John

As discussed previously at pre-Cabinet I fail to see the appropriateness let alone merit of the Newtown location. If we are to have a single hub it should be city centre located for accessibility and combine a wider housing options shop so as to evidence a wider housing offer. This would suggest a shopfront location or as I have previously suggested we could explore with MH the use of the ground floor Foyer?

KR

Lisa

Sent from my iPad

On 4 Dec 2015, at 10:38, Councillor John Cotton <John.Cotton@birmingham.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Colleague

CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF HOMELESS SERVICES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD ADVICE SERVICE

We are writing to advise you of consultations which commence today regarding the two services above.

Homeless Service

The Homeless and Pre Tenancy Service (H&PTS) is currently based in 4 Housing Advice Centres across the city – Erdington, Newtown, Northfield and Sparkbrook as well as at the Youth Hub in Digbeth. The proposed changes to service delivery do not impact on the Youth Hub. As with all services within the Council the H&PTS is continually seeking to improve the service it provides to homeless households in the city. The proposal, for a number of reasons, is to move all the staff into one Housing Advice Service based at Newtown to enable the creation of a centre of excellence for homelessness and housing advice for the city.

Neighbourhood Advice Service

As you will be aware the Neighbourhood Advice and Information Service (NAIS) has been subject to significant change over a number of years. During 2014/15 municipal year, extensive consultation took place through Executive Members for Local Services on a four-hub future operating model for NAIS, with proposed hubs in Northfield, Newtown, Erdington and Sparkbrook. Following the requirement to secure additional financial savings during 2015/16 the service has developed a proposed new model.

Your comments would be welcomed on these two proposals in order for us to take this into account in the decision making process. Please submit these direct to

Jim.crawshaw@birmingham.gov.uk for Homeless Services

Chris.jordan@birmingham.gov.uk for Neighbourhood Advice Service

If you would like to discuss the proposals further please contact either Jim or Chris respectively.

The formal consultation commences today, Friday, 4th December and will run for a 7 week period, ending on the 21st January 2016.

The consultation questionnaire will be available from Friday and can be accessed via Be Heard on: www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/housingadvice/service and www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/neighbourhoodadvice

Yours sincerely

Councillor John Cotton
Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Management & Homes

Councillor Shafique Shah
Cabinet Member for Inclusion & Community Safety

Proposal to retain Homelessness Advice in Northfield District

Background

This proposal is written in response to the recent budget cuts announced within the Northfield district. It is written with particular reference to the Homelessness Advice Centre (HAC), Birmingham & Solihull Womens' Aid (BSWAID) & Midland Heart (MH) being relocated to Newtown or an alternative central Birmingham location. I write this on behalf of a number of community groups who have grave concerns about these important services being moved out of an area which desperately needs them. It follows on from a discussion meeting held on 14th March, 2014 at Allen's Cross Community Centre.

Homelessness in Northfield

We know that homelessness in Birmingham is high in comparison to the rest of the country. The rate of homelessness application acceptances in Birmingham is five times the national average, and four times that of the other core cities.¹ Acceptances within Northfield for the last two years have also been high (361 from 740 applications in 2011/12; 318 from 555 in 2012/13²) and initial attendance figures from the HAC in Birmingham indicate this is likely to be consistent from 2013/14.

Most recent figures from the HAC in Northfield show that 1,515 individuals have been seen there between November 2013 and January 2014. Of these, over two-thirds (1,029) either had a Homeless Prevention Interview or presented themselves as homeless on the day.

This is borne out from recent South Birmingham Young Homeless Project last Annual Report³, which shows that in 2012/13 they saw 314 adults (primarily under 24), who between them had 181 children (111 under 4). This is in addition to those referred to Youth Hub from the HAC.

These figures alone demonstrate the enormous negative impact that losing the HAC will have on Northfield. Whilst it is sensible to re-direct these individuals to the new central HAC in Birmingham, the reality is that many are unlikely to make this journey because of financial or mental health reasons (both of which are recognised as key priorities within Northfield's most recent District profile). I shall shortly outline a proposal to retain these services in a streamlined, alternative method. However, before doing so, I want to consider the principal reasons within Northfield, too. This will help us analyse what factors need to be considered in any future homelessness support within the area, in order to enable prevention as well as cure.

¹ Northfield District Profile, Birmingham City Council, 2014, p19

² Northfield District Profile, Birmingham City Council, 2014, p19

³ South Birmingham Young Homeless Project Annual Report, 2012/13

Principal reasons for homelessness

According to the District Profile, the principal reasons for homelessness within Northfield are domestic violence or family breakdown.⁴ Clearly, there is a need for advice in both of these areas to remain available for both of these. If any service is to remain in Northfield, these must therefore both be considered. Indeed, losing both MH and BSWAID will certainly also have a detrimental effect on the area, for this reason.

I have already mentioned briefly that poor mental health is a concern within the Northfield District Health Profile. Offering support for both of these must, therefore, remain a significant consideration in any revised service.

Poverty within Northfield remains high, too. Many people are presenting themselves as homeless (or potentially so) because of financial pressures. Increasing sanctions within the Jobcentre has seen a rise in the use of Foodbank referrals in the area.

To my knowledge, there are now at least two Foodbanks serving the Northfield area (Lifeline Foodbank, based at Hollymoor Community Church), Cotteridge Foodbank (Trussell Trust), based at The Cotteridge Churches. A number of locations around Northfield (including Northfield Town Centre Partnership, South Birmingham Young Homeless Project) act as distribution centres or referral units for both of these, and demand is consistently increasing for these, not out of choice but out of necessity.

If any homelessness advice service is to be offered within Northfield, it must also be able to offer advice in these critical areas, too. This will help to tackle many of the root causes of homelessness.

The knock-on effects of losing the HAC services

Losing the HAC, BSWAID and MH would have an enormous detrimental effect on Northfield. I regularly see people coming in to Northfield Baptist Church seeking support or advice on homelessness. I know that many other community groups in Northfield have the same issues to deal with on a daily basis, too. With such a drastic cut in services, this will only increase, regardless of the effectiveness of signposting to other locations. Every single person I see is vulnerable to some degree, largely because of (though not limited to) finances, poor mental health or confidence. For these reasons, if the alternative option is to get in to Birmingham City Centre, I have serious reservations about how many of them would even attempt this.

⁴ Northfield District Profile, Birmingham City Council, 2014, p19

An alternative homelessness advice solution: a community-led proposal

My understanding is that there is a small sum of money (potentially £30,000) which could be utilised in a flexible way to commission services needed by the District. I understand this spend would be directed by District members.

Taking into account the concerns I outline above, I would like to propose that a revised homelessness service be retained in Northfield, but which appears in a different form.

Format of revised service

The service would cover the following areas of support, and would run from a number of locations:-

Support service	Run by	Tackling
<i>Homelessness advice & signposting</i>	Floating HAC adviser	Homelessness
<i>BSWAID</i>	BSWAID	Domestic violence
<i>MH</i>	MH	Homelessness for young people
<i>Budgeting & debt advice</i>	CAP/ alternative provider	Financial budgeting
Signposting to other sources of support	Freephone location (see below)	Lack of awareness of services
Bus pass provision (to get to HAC)	Freephone location	Lack of ability to travel to Central Birmingham HAC
Foodbank referral	Freephone location	Food poverty

This support service would be made up of two strands:-

1. Immediate freephone advice

The Northfield area would house a number of 'Freephone locations' whereby an individual could present themselves and immediately contact the support service they require (highlighted in italics in the above list). This would be available to anyone who has immediate homeless (or potentially so) concerns, or who has domestic violence issues and would give immediate support without the need to travel in to Birmingham necessarily. The locations would also stock a small supply of bus passes/means to travel which could be distributed at the discretion of the freephone location, and have facilities to signpost individuals to the help they need if it covers other aspects of life. They would also act as referrers to the local foodbanks (this is already in place). The *Visit Northfield* shop, Northfield Baptist Church and Northfield Ecocentre have all expressed interest in offering this, along with various other locations.

2. An appointment-based advice session

Appointments would then be available to be booked, whereby an adviser would be able to see any of the italicised names above. They would be retained at a central location, with the additional benefit of being contactable on the phone outside of appointments.

Costs for revised service

Initial costs would include installation and use of freephones for connecting to the HAC, and advertising the service. Ongoing costs would include the HAC adviser salary, any costs associated with BSWAID and MH contracts, and bus passes/Foodbank referrals as required.

Funding required for revised service

This would require some level of funding from the District (I understand some money is potentially available which is allocated to homelessness services in Northfield). This funding would be combined with funding sourced from alternative locations (grant or lottery funding, for example).

Summary

I recognise that the issues are far broader than this document does justice. However, this document intends to offer an alternative solution retaining significant services within Northfield to help tackle issues of homelessness, domestic violence and poverty, all of which are recognised as significant within the area. I would value an opportunity to discuss this proposal further with you.

Rev. Dave Tubby

Northfield Baptist Church

On behalf of the Northfield Community Stakeholders group

24th March, 2014

4TH FLOOR, RUSKIN CHAMBERS, 191 CORPORATION STREET, BIRMINGHAM, B4 6RP | DX 23525 Birmingham 3
T: 0121 685 8595 | F: 0121 236 5121 | Email: office@communitylawpartnership.co.uk
Visit our Website: www.communitylawpartnership.co.uk

Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Services

23/12/2015

Dear Sirs,

We are currently engaged in judicial review proceedings against Birmingham City Council in respect of what we assert is unlawful homeless gatekeeping and systematic failures in homeless procedures. The title of the case is *The Queen on the application of (1) Rachel Edwards, (2) Vernica Cole, (3) Yasmin Saeed, (4) Marian Noworol* – Claim Numbers CO/1518/2015, CO/1520/2015, CO/2045/2015 & CO/2177/2015 respectively.

The matter was heard in the High Court, Birmingham, over 5 days from 7 – 11 December 2015. A final day is scheduled for hearing on 26 January 2016.

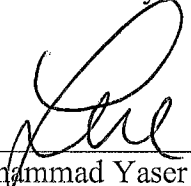
Further details can be obtained from the Integrated Service Head of the Homeless & Pre Tenancy Services Team being your Mr Jim Crawshaw.

In these circumstances, we would suggest that you delay in submitting any consultation report to the Cabinet for a final decision on the matter until the above proceedings have concluded. Clearly, the outcome of the case could have a significant impact upon your proposals. We propose that a further period of 7 weeks after 26th January 2016 is provided in order for us to consider our position and to consider further matters in relation to the new 'one location' system.

Please find attached a completed consultation form in which we have detailed our views.

We hope to hear from you soon.

Yours Sincerely,


Mohammad Yaser

Birmingham Housing Advice Service consultation

Overview

The City Council is continuing to strive to improve its services for homeless households in Birmingham.

Housing Advice Centres are presently co-located in four Customer Service Centres and we are therefore consulting on changes to this service. The service provided by the Youth Hub (provision for single young people aged 16-25 is not affected by this proposal.)

The Housing Advice Service provides assistance with joining the Council Housing list, discussing housing options, seeking temporary accommodation and assistance with Homelessness or Homelessness Prevention.

Why We Are Consulting

In the current climate the Council is reviewing all services to ensure they best meet the needs of the citizens of Birmingham. Historically, Housing Advice and Homelessness has been delivered alongside the Council's Neighbourhood Advice Service. We recognise that the current approach has not always led to a consistent service for customers and a small number have experienced delays and frustrations with the service they receive.

In seeking to develop an improved service, consideration has also been given to the significant savings required within the Neighbourhood Advice Service for 2015-16.

We are confident that the proposed changes to the service will bring about improvements such as allowing the service to increase the availability of appointments as well as improving the level of service for Households threatened with homelessness.

However, we also acknowledge that such changes can bring with them concerns from citizens and we may not have identified all of the potential impacts upon our customers. We also recognise that customers are well placed to suggest other improvements that we may not have thought of.

Therefore we are undertaking public consultation to get as much feedback on our proposals as we can to inform our decision making as we move forward.

The proposals on which we are seeking your views:

The Housing Advice Service

The Housing Advice service is presently based in 4 Customer Service Centres at Sparkbrook, Newtown, and Erdington & Northfield. It is proposed to reorganise the service to be delivered, from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham. This new single Housing Advice Centre will have more advisors on duty and additional available interviews. There is no planned reduction in accessibility to specialist Housing & Homelessness advisors via the telephone and long term we anticipate improved access to housing advice available via phone and web.

This proposal is not based on the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy Service saving money and we are not looking to reduce resources available to the service at this present moment. We believe that one centre will be able to deliver a more consistent service through centralising

our staff and expertise. This will take place alongside improvements to our phone service and further enhancement of online services. This approach is inline with that being taken by other similar authorities.

The Newtown location is proposed for its central location and because it sits in an area of the highest demand for Housing Advice Services. It is the most evenly accessible of the four present locations for people across the city to get to and meets the space requirements to accommodate the service. This proposal follows exploration of alternate options; these have been considered however none have been found to be viable. Alternate options which we considered included:

1. *Do nothing and stay as we are:*

After consideration, it was concluded that if the Neighbourhood Advice staff are to be reduced, it would be necessary to balance this with an enhanced ability on the part of the Housing Advice Service to offer more appointments, ensure that the most consistent service is available and secure the high quality decisions which are needed, particularly in the area of homelessness, all of which objectives are in any event desirable in their own right. This option was therefore not found to be viable.

2. *Move Housing Advice Delivery to a two centre model:*

Upon further exploration it was concluded that this option would still require more Neighbourhood Advice Service staff in support than those actually available or would require additional resources for the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy service. It wouldn't create sufficient increased capacity and would not fully resolve issues around consistency or flexibility of staff cover. This option was not considered viable in view of this.

3. *Relocate the Housing Advice Service to a single site in Birmingham City Centre:*

This was explored however the Council has no suitable building currently available to use and an evaluation of renting a private building recognised that we would incur significant yearly costs as well as one off set up costs which are unlikely to be sustainable and thus this option was not considered viable.

As part of these proposals we are consulting with and seeking the views of citizens of Birmingham and users of our services along with professionals delivering advice in these areas of work.

Birmingham Housing Advice - Future proposals consultation



The Council are currently consulting on the Housing Advice service delivered from Customer Service Centres. This questionnaire will enable us to better understand the views of those using the centres. If you have any questions regarding this consultation please email AdviceServiceConsultation@birmingham.gov.uk

1. Which centre have you visited today?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Erdington Customer Service Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Northfield Customer Service Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newtown Customer Service Centre | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sparkbrook Customer Service Centre |

2. What service did you come in for today?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Join Housing Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in paperwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Advice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use phone or Computer | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present as Homeless | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

3. How did you get here today?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On foot | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By Car | <input type="checkbox"/> By Bus/Train | <input type="checkbox"/> By bike |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|

4. How long was your journey?

- | | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> less than 15 mins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15-30mins | <input type="checkbox"/> 30-45mins | <input type="checkbox"/> over 45mins |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|

5. Before you came here today did you try to find information...

- ☒ By calling our customer service line (0121 303 7410)
- ☒ By looking at our Birmingham City Council or Birmingham Housing Options website (www.birminghamhousingoptions.org.uk)

6. Thinking about what you came in for today could we have dealt with this in any other way listed below?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By an improved website with clearer on line help and advice | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By allowing documents to be emailed in to us |
| <input type="checkbox"/> By an arranged call back or interview by phone | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By allowing documents to be posted in to us |

7. Including today how many times have you been into the centre in the past year?

- | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10+ |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|

8. To help us understand the areas using our service please can we have the post code of your current/most recent address (Optional)

B4 6RP

Proposed changes to the service

It is being proposed that Housing and Homelessness Advice moves to being delivered from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham with more advisors on duty and additional available interviews. There would also be improved advice available via phone and web.

9. If we went to a single Housing Advice Centre what if any concerns would you have about this?

10. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about how you might access housing and homelessness advice in the future?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure/Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I would still be able to get to the centre in Newtown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would use the web or phone to get the service I need instead.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would be able to get help from another advice service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a support worker or other professional who could help me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would need additional support to enable me to get to Newtown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. How do you think we could make it easier for you to get the housing and homelessness support you might need? Any other comments on our proposals?

12. The characteristics below are protected. This means that there is protection for people who identify with them against discrimination based on that characteristic. Please tick appropriate boxes (if any apply) which you believe might impact upon your ability to travel to Newtown?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your age | <input type="checkbox"/> Your disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Your race |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your marital status | <input type="checkbox"/> If you are pregnant | <input type="checkbox"/> Your Sexual Orientation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your religion or belief | <input type="checkbox"/> Your gender | <input type="checkbox"/> None of these apply to me |

Data Protection & Privacy

Birmingham City Council has a privacy statement. We will process any personal data given in relation to this consultation for the purposes of:

- Evaluating the answers to the survey
- Reviewing responses to the proposals contained within

In addition, we will hold and process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and our full privacy notice which is available from www.birmingham.gov.uk/privacy

This survey is anonymous and does not ask for your name, full address or any contact details. Your postcode (and contact details in the case of professionals delivering advice) is the only personal data requested throughout the completion of this survey (although the provision of this is not compulsory).

This data is requested only to analyse geographical spread of our customer base and respondents (and for any identified follow up work for professionals delivering advice).

Responses to these questions will not be included in public feedback on this consultation.

However, as part of other public consultation and the feedback we provide on this matter, responses you provide to other questions may be made public. Therefore please take care not to enter any personal details, information or opinions that you are not happy to be made available in the public domain. We would ask that you take particular care when entering free text in your responses as, depending on the complexity and number of respondents, we are unlikely to be able to remove any personal data contained in these responses, prior to providing public feedback.

If you have any questions, please contact the nominated email address contained within the Be Heard consultation page at www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/housingadvice-service

Response type

*1. Are you responding as:

- ☐ A user of Housing Advice Centres within the last 12 months?
- ☒ An organisation or professional delivering advice?
- ☐ A Birmingham resident but non-user of these services?

Users of Housing Advice Services (Within the last 12 months)

2. What services have you visited our Housing Advice Centres for in the last 12 months (please select all that apply)?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use phone or Computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Join the Housing Register | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present as Homeless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in paperwork | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing Advice | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

3. How did you normally get there?

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> On foot | <input type="radio"/> By bike |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> By Car/Motorcycle | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| <input type="radio"/> By Bus/Train | |

4. On your last visit to a Housing Advice Centre, how long was your journey?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> less than 15 mins | <input type="radio"/> 31-45mins |
| <input type="radio"/> 15-30mins | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Over 45 Mins |

5. Before you visited in person, did you try to find information by any of the following means...(please select all that apply)

- ☒ By calling the Birmingham City Council or Housing contact centre?
- ☒ By looking at the Birmingham City Council or Birmingham Housing Options website?
- ☒ By contacting another agency first i.e. advice agency or charity

6. Thinking about the last time you visited our service, could we have dealt with this in any other way listed below? (please select all that apply)

- ☒ By an improved website with clearer on line help and advice
- ☒ By an arranged call back or interview by phone
- ☒ By allowing documents to be emailed in to us
- ☒ By allowing documents to be posted in to us

7. Approximately how many times have you been into a Housing Advice Centre in the past year?

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 6-10 |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 10+ |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 | |

8. What is your postcode so we can learn how far you travelled (Optional):

B4 6RP

Housing Advice Service - Feedback

It is being proposed that Housing and Homelessness Advice moves to being delivered from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham with more advisors on duty and additional available interviews. There would also be improved advice available via phone and web.

This proposal follows exploration of alternate options; these have been considered however none have been found to be viable. Alternate options which we considered included:

1. Do nothing and stay as we are:

After consideration, it was concluded that if the Neighbourhood Advice staff are to be reduced, it would be necessary to balance this with an enhanced ability on the part of the Housing Advice Service to offer more appointments, ensure that the most consistent service is available and secure the high quality decisions which are needed, particularly in the area of homelessness, all of which objectives are in any event desirable in their own right. This option was therefore not found to be viable.

2. Move Housing Advice Delivery to a two centre model:

Upon further exploration it was concluded that this option would still require more Neighbourhood Advice Service staff in support than those actually available or would require additional resources for the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy service. It wouldn't create sufficient increased capacity and would not fully resolve issues around consistency or flexibility of staff cover. This option was not considered viable in view of this.

3. Relocate the Housing Advice Service to a single site in Birmingham City Centre:

This was explored however the Council has no suitable building currently available to use and an evaluation of renting a private building recognised that we would incur significant yearly costs as well as one off set up costs which are unlikely to be sustainable and thus this option was not considered viable.

9. Do you have any comments or feedback regarding the alternate proposals that were considered?

In relation to alternate approach number 1, this is the best approach to take as the situation currently stands, even 4 access points are still not proving to be enough for people to access, therefore causing access problems. People are demanding more access points as opposed to less, or as being proposed, just one central access point. Travel can be quite expensive and some individuals would prefer to be at walking distance from their closest neighbourhood office.

10. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the proposal to centralise Homelessness Advice at one central location at Newtown Customer Service Centre

☐ Agree

☐ Not sure

☐ No opinion

☒ Disagree

11. If we went to a single Housing Advice Centre what if any concerns would you have about this?

See Question 20

12. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about how you might access housing and homelessness advice in the future, in light of the proposals?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
I would still be able to get to the centre in Newtown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would use the web or phone to get the service I need instead.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would be able to get help from another advice service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a support worker or other professional who could help me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. How do you think we could make it easier for you to get the housing and homelessness support you might need?

Please see attached 'Question 13'

14. Do you have any other comments on our proposals or benefits you see from them?

CSA's and Homeless officer's should carry out home visits in certain situation, or where individuals are vulnerable, such as where a property is deemed unfit to occupy or where an individual is unable to visit the local HAC or neighbourhood office because of an illness or vulnerability. This would provide the CSA/Homeless officer with a better view on how the individuals case should be assessed, as they would be viewing the physical state of the property themselves and can discuss any issues which may need addressing.

Question 13

The introduction of more HAC's, so individuals can gain easier access to help and support. There needs to be more CSA's trained so the system can move faster. Provide a better and more user friendly online and telephone service, as the current service is not very helpful nor does it provide individuals who need help with any proper help, advice or support. As well as online services, communication should be made better, for example, when individuals visit a HAC, rather than the individual having to make numerous calls and visits after an initial visit, or waiting for a letter in the post, CSA's or Homeless Officer's should endeavour to call the individual back and update them on the progress of their claim or query. E-mail is widely used today and in this day and age it is the most commonly used form of instant communication. It would be very beneficial to individuals to receive e-mail updates as to the progress of their claims or applications, and a responding to e-mail service would also be beneficial.

Organisations and Professionals delivering advice

The Housing Advice service is proposing that Housing and Homelessness Advice moves from the four present sites (Sparkbrook, Northfield, Newtown and Erdington) to being delivered from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham with more advisors on duty and additional available interviews. There would also be improved advice available via phone and web.

15. Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or are these your individual views

☒ I am responding on behalf of my organisation

☐ These are my individual views

16. Please provide some details about your organisation including the type of service it provides?

The Community Law Partnership
Law Firm - Providing Legal Housing Advice

17. If you are happy for us to contact you regarding any feedback you wish to provide, please provide a means of contact (telephone or email with a contact name) below:

The Community Law Partnership
4th Floor
Ruskin Chambers
191 Corporation Street

It is being proposed that Housing and Homelessness Advice moves from its four present centres (Newtown, Sparkbrook, Erdington & Northfield) to being delivered from a single location at Newtown Customer Service Centre, Birmingham with more advisors and available interviews. There would also be improved advice available via phone and web.

The proposal in relation to Homelessness & Housing Advice follows exploration of alternate options, these have been considered however none have been found to be viable. Alternate options which we considered included:

1. Do nothing and stay as we are:

After consideration, it was concluded that if the Neighbourhood Advice staff are to be reduced, it would be necessary to balance this with an enhanced ability on the part of the Housing Advice Service to offer more appointments, ensure that the most consistent service is available and secure the high quality decisions which are needed, particularly in the area of homelessness, all of which objectives are in any event desirable in their own right. This option was therefore not found to be viable.

2. Move Housing Advice Delivery to a two centre model:

Upon further exploration it was concluded that this option would still require more Neighbourhood Advice Service staff in support than those actually available or would require additional resources for the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy service. It wouldn't create sufficient increased capacity and would not fully resolve issues around consistency or flexibility of staff cover. This option was not considered viable in view of this.

3. Relocate the Housing Advice Service to a single site in Birmingham City Centre:

This was explored however the Council has no suitable building currently available to use and an evaluation of renting a private building recognised that we would incur significant yearly costs as well as one off set up costs which are unlikely to be sustainable and thus this option was not considered viable.

18. Do you have any comments or feedback regarding the alternate proposals that were considered?

In relation to alternate approach number 1, this is the best approach to take, because as the situation currently stands, even 4 access points are still not proving to be enough for people to access and fully utilise the Homelessness Service, therefore causing access problems. People are demanding more access points as opposed to less, or as being proposed, just one central access point. Travel can be quite expensive and some individuals would prefer to be at walking distance from their closest neighbourhood office.

19. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the proposal to centralise Homelessness Advice at one central location at Newtown Customer Service Centre

☐ Agree

☐ Not sure

☐ No opinion

☒ Disagree

20. If we went to a single Housing Advice Centre what if any concerns would you have about this?

Please see attached 'Question 20'

21. Please provide any comments on how these changes could impact upon the clients you work with?

Please see attached 'Question 21'

22. What benefits can you see from the model?

None

23. Given the current resource restrictions, do you have any further comments which could improve the service?

Please see attached 'Recommendations for Improvement to Homeless Service'

Question 20

When our practice was first set-up in Birmingham, homeless applications were accepted at any of the council's numerous "neighbourhood offices" based throughout the city and in most if not all areas. There were approximately 30 offices. Decisions on homeless applications were made within individual offices. There followed a period when the power to decide homeless applications was removed from local offices and placed in the hands of officers based centrally within a "homeless service". Applications were completed at local offices but then channelled to a central team for a decision to be made. This structure was then dismantled and replaced with the current structure which I will now describe.

No longer are applications taken at local offices. The Council will now only agree to investigate an application if it is made to one of four 'customer service centres' one of which does not accept 'on the day' applications and all of which operate appointment systems.

There has therefore been a narrowing of the opportunity for a person to seek assistance (the number of offices has fallen from approximately 30 to 4 already). A person who might at one time be able to walk to the end of their road to make an application may now have to travel many miles across the city.

Corresponding with this narrowing opportunity is the fact that there is less access to obtaining assistance at the customer service centres.

Question 21

From the personal experiences of our law firm, and in dealing with homeless clients, it can be said that on the previous occasion when neighbourhood offices were reduced from 30 to 4, it caused a considerable amount of disruption for clients and became a difficult process for clients in terms of access. Some clients live too far from even one of the 4 current HAC's, and travelling to these takes a considerable amount of time, and can be quite costly to some individuals who are not financially capable of making the journey to the HAC.

Reducing the current 4 HAC's to 1 Central HAC would mean that clients or individuals would then need to travel to Newtown. It is stated in your consultation document that Newtown is an office which is central and the travel distance would remain the same from a number of neighbourhoods. However, if an individual is living in Acocks Green and wishes to make a homeless application, this would mean having to catch two or three buses to the destination, or paying around £20 for a taxi, and in some cases, clients would need to take their children and family with them as they are homeless on the day, which would mean more expenditure.

Furthermore, clients and individuals would prefer to be able to access a HAC which is close enough for them to make a short journey to, and as the situation currently stands, even having 4 HAC's is proving to be a struggle and strain for our clients, therefore it would not make the matter any better or easier for our clients if access points were limited from 4 to 1. It would be the suggestion from our organisation and from clients have already dealt with, that more HAC's are introduced as well as an improved system for contact via telephone and online services. More help and support should be offered by CSA's and information should be readily available and easily accessible, as our experiences till date have proved that the system to obtain information is not easily accessible nor is it readily available.

Recommendations for Improvement to Homeless Service

The following are suggested steps for improving Birmingham City Council's Homeless Service having regard to failings in the four areas identified by the Local Government Ombudsman in its report: *Homelessness: How Councils can ensure Justice for Homeless People – Focus Report: Learning the Lessons from Complaints*.

1. Homeless Prevention (Where no concurrent action taken under Part 7)

1.1 Take homeless prevention measures in conjunction with and not instead of the steps required to be taken under Part 7 Housing Act 1996.

1.2. Make organisational changes/system changes to enable this to happen.

1.3. Provide improved training.

2. Failure to Enquire

2.1. Make organisational/system changes to enable officers to identify actual or potential homelessness when new applicants join the housing register.

2.2 Register all applications at point of first contact.

2.3. Put in place a system for registering all applications for assistance (registration not simply to run from the date an application form is completed/date of an appointment).

2.4. To ensure that timescales for notification of decisions run from date of first registration and to ensure that such timescales are in line with the guidance provided to Local Authorities in the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

2.5. To provide training in relation to the homeless duties and the low threshold for

investigating homelessness and providing accommodation.

3. Difficulty in Making Homeless Applications

3.1. Overcome difficulties by making organisational/system changes as necessary.

3.2. Provide a single coherent leaflet explaining the rights of homeless applicants and explaining clearly how an individual can engage with those rights providing relevant contact and access details.

3.3 To produce a dedicated website page dealing with rights and duties under Housing Act 1996.

3.4. To provide direct telephone access to applicants/their advisers to register a homeless application.

3.5. Otherwise to effectively publicise homeless services in the city.

3.6. Provide better access for making homeless applications. An applicant should be able to register an application for homeless assistance at any of the Council's numerous housing offices instead of at any four service centres – make structural changes as necessary.

4. Non Provision of Interim Accommodation

4.1. In all cases to consider interim accommodation provision on the same day as initial application.

4.2. Not to confine the provision of interim accommodation to 'roofless' cases only. Make system/structural changes as necessary.

4.3. System for monitoring the need to provide interim accommodation throughout the decision making process.

Training/Homeless Procedures Manual

Individual Housing Officers would be assisted if there was a comprehensive homeless procedures manual or similar document. The Council has never had a procedures manual (or at least has never disclosed one). The manual could include key information about rights and duties and about the systems and procedures in place to ensure that rights are upheld and duties are lawfully discharged. On a practical level the manual could include details of relevant homeless officers, contact and access details etc. This would lead to greater conformity in decision making and improved transparency.

Equalities Data

Birmingham City Council has responsibilities under the Equalities Act (2010) to work to prevent against people based on protected characteristics. To assist in this we like to gather data regarding the demographics of people providing us with feedback and responding to consultations.

This information is not mandatory and if you do not wish to provide such information a 'Prefer not to say' option is available on each question.

24. Which age group applies to you?

21-24

***25. What is your sex?**

Male

Equalities Data

26. As a woman, are you pregnant, on maternity leave or returning from maternity leave?

N/A

* 27. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Equalities Data

28. If yes, do any of these conditions or illnesses affect you in any of the following areas? (More than one answer is acceptable)

- ☐ 1. Vision (e.g. blindness or partial sight)
- ☐ 2. Hearing (e.g. deafness or partial hearing)
- ☐ 3. Mobility (e.g. walking short distances or climbing stairs)
- ☐ 4. Dexterity (e.g. lifting and carrying and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
- ☐ 5. Learning or understanding or concentrating
- ☐ 6. Memory
- ☐ 7. Mental Health
- ☐ 8. Stamina or breathing or fatigue
- ☐ 9. Socially or behaviourally (e.g. associated with autism, attention deficit disorder or Asperger's syndrome)
- ☐ 10. Prefer not to say

Other (please specify)

29. Ethnicity: What is your ethnic group?

30. Sexual Orientation: What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual

31. Religion What is your religion or belief?

Muslim- Islam

32. What is your marital or same sex civil partnership status?

Single

33. Do you have caring responsibilities?

Yes

Finish

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses will be reviewed and considered as we develop our proposals and make decisions as to what will happen next.

From: Councillor Brett O'Reilly

Sent: Friday, December 04, 2015 11:36 PM

To: Councillor John Cotton; Jim Crawshaw; Chris Jordan; richard.burden.mp@parliament.uk; burdenr@parliament.uk

Subject: RE: Consultation on the /future of Homeless Services and Neighbourhood Advice Service

Hi John / All,

Thank you for the email.

Whilst I appreciate entirely the current financial situation, I would be deeply concerned at the prospect of the homeless service being relocated to one centre. A centre of excellence is all well and good, but I struggle to imagine how difficult it would be for me to get to Newtown, particularly if I had no funds or transport.

Newtown, for many in the far reaches of Birmingham, might as well be in another region for the access that citizens trying to use the service will have. This is not just from a Northfield perspective, but from many other wards, I suspect including Shard End.

I recall raising similar concerns at EMLS when I was at the helm for Northfield, and I would like to think that the concerns that I raised then were duly considered.

It would seem to make sense to me to have staff working at the four main hubs that will be in operation anyway, even if this means working peripatetically moving forward.

I have copied in Richard Burden MP as I think it likely that he will wish to contribute.

I can see the logic in four main hubs for NAIS and I know that much work has gone into this. I would urge reconsideration on the Homeless service, as I believe that with an equally innovative solution, we can maintain a diminished, yet comprehensive homelessness offer.

Kind Regards

Brett

Councillor Brett O'Reilly

Labour Councillor for Northfield

0121 303 2039

Tweet: [@bret4northfield](https://twitter.com/bret4northfield)

Facebook: [Bret4northfield](https://www.facebook.com/Bret4northfield)

The Council House
Victoria Square
B1 1BB

From: Councillor Josh Jones
Sent: Friday, December 04, 2015 11:32 AM
To: Jim Crawshaw; Chris Jordan
Subject: Homelessness and NAIS consultation

Hi Both,

As I said at exec members last week, it is extremely unfortunate that we are where we are, but I think that what you have put together is the best use of the available resources that we have.

I would prefer it if we had more staff, offices and more points of access to the homelessness service, but I think having specific hubs with the homelessness team centralised in one building is the best bet with the lack of staff we have.

Kind Regards

Josh

Sent from my iPad

From: David Hughes

Sent: Friday, December 04, 2015 3:36 PM

To: Jim Crawshaw

Cc: Chris Jordan; Doreen Brown; Lynda Lea; Gillian Mcpherson; Hamood Saleh; Kathryn Rider (Kathryn.Rider@birminghamunison.co.uk); Lisa Taylor; Mohammed Zubair; Taheir Mahmood

Subject: Housing Advice Consultation

I have for the first time seen the consultation Questionnaire and accompany Information sheet. There is no question on the Questionnaire about whether the public would prefer to keep the existing 4 site model or move to 3, 2 or 1 so in that sense it is loaded to produce the response required.

The accompanying information is much worse because it makes assertions that are unfounded and even untrue, to support moving to one office in Newtown. For this reason I think I would urge UNISON members not to issue the information sheet in its current format.

I am very disappointed that these documents have been finalised without any trade union involvement, regards David Hughes UNISON



Monday 11th January, 2016

Dear Jim Crawshaw,

RE: PROPOSED CHANGES TO BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE

I'm writing to you in response to the consultation you are undertaking regarding Birmingham City Council (BCC)'s Housing Advice Service. I'm writing to share concerns from the Stakeholders' Group and to help you as you consider the most effective and sensible long-term solution to this important service.

We understand the sense that it makes to streamline a service which needs to remain consistent, effective, legally compliant and serve all of Birmingham. We understand, too, that this is against a backdrop of unprecedented financial pressure for all of BCC. Taking all this into consideration, I wish to share three points which I hope you will find helpful and constructive.

1. The most vulnerable need to be protected as the priority

This is perhaps our greatest concern and has been raised by every single service provider and supporter across Northfield that has been in touch with us. When someone presents themselves as homeless, this is for a whole variety of reasons. However, for a significant proportion that we come into contact with, the mental health of the individual is poor. To expect an individual in such a vulnerable situation to travel to an unknown location the other side of the city is very unlikely to result in them doing so successfully. Logistically, they may be offered a free bus-pass but that is not the hurdle that prevents them making the journey; it is their poor mental health.

Whatever the service looks like, it is essential that the most vulnerable are protected and are able to receive the appropriate support and advice as soon as is practically possible with as little disruption as is possible. Clearly, homeless applications will need to be processed in person, so there appears to be little way to avoid that physical journey. However, local community can play its part in sign-posting, advising, supporting and guiding to ensure the vulnerable individual is helped quickly.

2. Access to the service is essential

In order to make this revised service effective, the critical aspect is that it must be readily accessible for everyone.

Reducing the number of HACs from four to one will increase the pressure and reliance on access to services through other means. Your website will need to be able to effectively and quickly direct people to the appropriate support. The reliance on telephone support will increase substantially, too. This will require a strong, experienced team to be available and for phones to also be readily available. Northfield's HAC already has an in-demand set of freephone telephones for advice. If the number of Neighbourhood Offices is also due to decrease (which the separate consultation is proposing), then the demand for advice on the telephone (regardless of the topic) is only going to increase.

Chair:

Rev. D. Tubby, Northfield Baptist Church, 789 Bristol Road South, Northfield B31 2NQ

Tel: 0121 4766678

Vice-chair:

R. Debenham, Northfield Community Partnership, 693 Bristol Road South, Northfield B31 2JT

Tel: 0121 4112157

We would also encourage you to increase the number of telephone points in the Neighbourhood Offices around the city, and also consider placing additional telephone points in third-sector organisations (such as churches or community buildings) around the city, too. Whilst it could be problematic inputting a phone-line, logistically it will relieve a lot of pressure on existing BCC staff and enable residents to access services from a much broader range of locations. I could give you at least six locations in Northfield which would take one such phone if you would find that helpful.

It is also imperative that such a telephone advice service is free-phone. The one consistent problem for those facing homelessness is a lack of funds. To offer this readily-available service on a free basis will ensure that this advice is accessible to all and not just those who could afford the initial call.

3. It is essential to partner with existing, experienced local organisations

In the Northfield district there is a breadth of experience and expertise around homelessness. Organisations such as South Birmingham Young Homeless Project already work closely with statutory services around Birmingham and in order to continue protecting the most vulnerable this needs to continue.


We can help sign-post or act as a support post and we would value a dialogue with you in this regard. Clearly, this would need to be tailored to the Northfield district, but I would urge you to actively seek out organisations across the city (particularly those close to existing Homeless Advice Centres (HACs)) where you could use this expertise to support any transition you are seeking to make. In order for any proposed changes to the homelessness service to be implemented effectively, it is imperative to actively engage with these organisations. This will help your immediate costs and will also greatly improve the sharing of experience and expertise across Birmingham.

In March 2014, we submitted a proposal to BCC to help it reconsider how it used the third-sector in its offering of advice and support towards homelessness. I include it alongside this letter because, whilst some of the circumstances have changed, our proposal seems to still be consistent with ways that BCC is seeking to engage with local stakeholders. Perhaps it can be of use now.

Finally, let me reiterate how grateful I am to you for your offer to meet with relevant third-sector organisations to discuss the practical implications of any such transition and see how we can work with you in that regard. I will seek availability from relevant, interested parties and come back to you separately with potential dates.

In the meantime, please be assured of our support and desire to work with you to help ensure this vital service remains effective for the city of Birmingham.

With best regards,



Rev. D. Tubby
Chair, Northfield Stakeholders' Group
Minister, Northfield Baptist Church

cc: Richard Burden MP
Helen Sephton (South Birmingham Young Homeless Project)

Chair:

Rev. D. Tubby, Northfield Baptist Church, 789 Bristol Road South, Northfield B31 2NQ

Tel: 0121 4766678

Vice-chair:

R. Debenham, Northfield Community Partnership, 693 Bristol Road South, Northfield B31 2JT

Tel: 0121 4112157

Jim Crawshaw
Integrated Service Head Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Services
Birmingham City Council
Sent via Email

11 January 2016

Dear Mr Crawshaw

Re: Birmingham Housing Advice Service consultation

I am writing in response to the above consultation and specifically the proposals to relocate four customer service centres to one hub in Newtown, Birmingham.

Having looked at the proposals I have a number of concerns about the proposed housing advice changes. I'm very concerned about the proposals to deliver housing and pre-tenancy advice from one location which would effectively see the existing customer service centres in Sparkbrook, Newtown, Erdington and Northfield relocated to Newtown. Many of my constituents who need to access advice regarding how to get on the council housing list, housing options and temporary accommodation are vulnerable and I believe that by moving the services to one location, the Council will effectively be discriminating against those who don't live in Newtown.

As you will be aware, my constituency is located in South Birmingham and in order for my constituents travel to Newtown they would need to get two or three buses. Many of the people who need to access housing advice are often those most in need i.e. disabled people, domestic violence victims (who are often limited to which areas they can go to in the city), single parents with children, young people and homeless people. By relocating local customer service centres to Newtown, many of my constituents will find it very difficult to access the services they need as Newtown is not in close proximity and many are likely to struggle to afford transport to Newtown from South Birmingham. I believe that the current proposals discriminate against people in my constituency and favours those who live in the inner city such as Nechells, Aston, Handsworth and Perry Barr.

I note in the consultation document that there is no planned reductions to specialist housing and homelessness advisors via the telephone and there are plans to increase the number of advisors in the proposed Newtown centre. I can't see how there won't be a cut to resources and in particular, staff if you intend to move them all to one premises. I also note that a relocation to a single site in Birmingham City Centre was considered but no such building could be identified and the Council cannot afford to rent a building privately. I do not see how the housing advice service will be improved under the current proposals and I believe that if implemented, many of the most vulnerable in my constituency and across the city would struggle to access the service, both for financial and proximity reasons.

I would appreciate it if you could take the serious and practical concerns I have raised into consideration and provide an update on the outcome of the consultation once complete.

If you require any further information please contact my office on 0121 443 3911.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve M'Leary'.

Labour MP for Birmingham Selly Oak

On 8 Dec 2015, at 11:59, BURDEN, Richard <BURDENR@parliament.uk> wrote:

Dear John,

I think Brett has raised valid concerns here.

As well as echoing those, you will remember that this reorganisation was a key example of the kind of thing that then Northfield Stakeholders Group raised when you came to Northfield a while ago. Basically, if these initiatives are treated by the City Council as essentially internal reorganisations of its own departments, they cannot meet the challenges ahead, particularly in the current financial environment. How the City Council configures its own contribution to community advice services (on homelessness and more generally) should be related to what other partners are operating - or could operate- in different areas, to differing kinds of need and community resilience in different parts of the city, and to what local resources are available, including how capital assets such as office and other venues can be used and shared most effectively.

As far as I know, I have not had your e-mail directly and I have only seen it because Brett has copied his reply to me. Therefore, I do not know if there was any enclosure attached to what you sent out to Councillors. I may, therefore, be missing something. If that is not the case, however, on the basis of what was in the main body of your e-mail, I can't see grounds for optimism that the kinds of things we discussed when you visited Northfield being reflected in the way this reorganisation is proceeding. Developing local partnerships that work has to be about more than treating other stakeholders as consultees to an internal City Council reorganisation.

Sorry to be blunt about this but I hope you will see what I am getting at.

Best wishes,

Richard

Richard Burden MP

Birmingham Northfield

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

t: 020 7219 2318 (Commons) / 0121 459 7804 (Constituency)

e: richard.burden.mp@parliament.uk

w: www.richardburden.com | www.FB.com/richardburden4northfield

<image002.png> **Follow me on Twitter - www.twitter.com/RichardBurdenMP**

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APPENDIX 2

Housing Advice Service

- Staff Consultation Feedback Report

March 2016

Simon Field
Project Manager
Business Change Team
Birmingham City Council
Simon.Field@birmingham.gov.uk

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Document Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
0.1	24/2/16	Simon Field	1 st draft
0.2	1/3/16	Simon Field	2 nd draft
0.3	1/3/16	Simon Field	Circulated for comments
0.4	2/3/16	Jim Crawshaw	Comments
0.5	2/3/16	Simon Field	Further amendments
0.6	4/3/16	Simon Field	Further amendments, additional staff comments capture and re-formatted
1.0			Baselined version

1. Summary:

- 1.1. The Homeless and Pre-Tenancy Service have developed a proposal to move to a Single Housing Advice Centre at Newtown.
- 1.2. This would involve relocation of staff from the current Housing Advice Centres in Northfield, Sparkbrook and Erdington and also ending having a back office presence at Lifford House and Civic House. (Arrangements for the Youth Hub will remain unchanged)
- 1.3. Staff will either be working in Newtown HAC or utilising the back office space provided at Lancaster Circus.
- 1.4. This document details the staff consultation process and provides some of the feedback given.

2. Staff affected

- 2.1. The following numbers and grades of staff work within the Housing Advice Service.

Grade	Number of individuals
2	10
3	29
4	28
5	4
6	1

- 2.2. Most of these staff will be required to work from both Newtown HAC where the service will be delivered from and Lancaster Circus. A few staff will move into a new Assessing Needs team which will be picking up the management of the Housing Register applications (Part 6) and will be based purely at Lancaster Circus.

3. Consultation overview

- 3.1. Formal consultation with Housing Advice Centre staff ran from 4 January 2016 through to 2nd March 2016.
- 3.2. In addition to this all of the Homeless and Pre-Tenancy Service staff are subject to a consultation on proposed budget savings which runs from 27 January to 13 March 2016.
- 3.3. The consultation process involved regular meetings with Unions, Staff briefings, individual 1:2:1s with Managers and feedback through a dedicated email account. Regular reminders were sent out to staff to allow them to feedback their views.

- 3.4. A staff working group was set up with meetings run by a Grade 5 Service Manager. This contains representatives from across the HACs coming together to discuss aspects of the proposed new service and to shape future delivery. See appendix 2A for terms of reference. This group will continue to meet as we move towards the implementation of the proposal (subject to Cabinet decision).
- 3.5. The following table provides an overview of the service discussions with staff and trade unions.

Dates	Details of event	Comments
07-10-15	Briefing with trade unions	Overview of plans and start of ongoing discussion with staff and trade unions about proposals
14-10-15 and 15-10-15	Initial staff briefing on plans	This provided an initial briefing to staff on plans and allowed for feedback to be started. A series of FAQs were circulated based upon this. (See appendix 2B). NB this included staff alongside Housing Advice who were subsequently taken out of the scope of the consultation as they would not be affected
4-1-16	Formal consultation begins	
4-1-16	Briefing with trade unions	Overview of the plans
7-1-16, 8-1-16 and 20-1-16	Formal Staff briefing	Full presentation of formal plans and staff feedback. Two alternative events with additional mop up session
20-1-16	Staff working group 1	First meeting of staff working group.
27-1-16	Review meeting with trade unions	Review and ongoing discussion
27-1-16 and 28-1-16	Staff briefing	Consultation Meeting for Housing and Pre-Tenancy – this focused on new budget proposals rather than just the HAC proposals and was targeted at the whole eservice. This included a mop up session for those who missed the first two
4-2-16	Staff working group 2	
10-2-16	Review meeting with trade unions	Review and ongoing discussion
15-2-16	Email: Final reminder	Request for staff to raise their final comments
18-2-16	Planned end of formal 45 day initial consultation period- further time given to supply information back to Trade Unions	
19-2-16	Staff working group 3	
02-03-16	Meeting with Trade Union colleagues	Discussion of consultation and sharing of proposals
4-3-16	Closure of formal consultation period and email to staff and unions	

4. Staff feedback

4.1. Individual feedback

- 4.1.1. Overall there have been few individual responses by staff through the dedicated email address and more often views have been expressed through wider union and team responses or captured in meetings.
- 4.1.2. Service Managers have reported that the proposals are not fully supported by staff; however this does differ across different offices.
- 4.1.3. The six received responses are summarised in appendix 2C. These are in addition to questions raised at events; the first set of these were summarised in the Questions and Answers shown in Appendix 2B.
- 4.1.4. There are concerns around the capacity of a single HAC to deal with volume and requests to re-consider this. Additionally there are safety concerns around the single HAC - (both through overcrowding and staff's own personal safety in the area).
- 4.1.5. Another response focused on a number of improvements to the service they felt could be made and these will be evaluated.
- 4.1.6. Concerns about increased travel time and lack of staff car parking were also raised. A further direct submission to the Head of Service raised concerns around Gang Activity (this is addressed via the Equality Assessment),
- 4.1.7. Several staff also responded through the Be Heard public consultation. Their views will be noted in that document rather than re-produced here (see Public Consultation report Appendix 1 section 5.2.52 and onwards.)
- 4.1.8. Individual meetings were offered to all staff affected between them and their manager. These picked up similar concerns around safety, parking and increased travelling time. Some concerns were also raised about how extra travelling time might make caring for children or others more difficult. A concern was raised about how the service will respond to those needing accommodation that day still in the centre after closing time and staff having to stay later to deal with this.
- 4.1.9. Collectively the Erdington HAC team also put in a response which was responded to by the Head of Service.

4.2. Union feedback

- 4.2.1. Three formal meetings have been held with Trade Unions during the consultation period. These have mainly focused upon providing unions with further information to enable them to inform their members.
- 4.2.2. In addition there have been formal email requests for information with regard to health and safety concerns. See appendix 2D
- 4.2.3. Trade Unions have raised concerns about the potential volume of citizens using the centre and whether there is sufficient capacity at Newtown. They dispute that a single HAC will deliver the drivers for change.
- 4.2.4. They have requested two HACs be considered to which would reduce footfall and also increase availability of parking.
- 4.2.5. One response was submitted on behalf of Erdington Staff by their union rep. They have also requested a second HAC venue be developed suggesting that this should be in Erdington or Sparkbrook. This would also allow for some co-location of staff from Temporary Accommodation in the HAC. Also they raise concerns about the ending of Neighbourhood Advice Staff support and that this will put on undue pressure on the service. There are wider concerns that the new focused on increasing the number of appointments offered may mean that staff have limited time for decision making

4.3. Staff Working Group

- 4.3.1. The working group was set up to provide the opportunity to discuss proposals around Housing Advice Centres and to also provide the views of those currently working in the service about the impact of changes. The terms of reference for the group are given in Appendix 2A
- 4.3.2. The group has been chaired by a Service Manager with support from Business Change. The group has ten frontline staff attending with representation from across the four current centres.
- 4.3.3. So far it has met three times and will continue to meet to drive improvement in the service.
- 4.3.4. A summary of the key points of each meeting is shown below opposite

Meeting	Date	Key discussions points
1	20-1-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking • CCTV/security • Plasma screens • Staffing resources • Customer Journey for using the centre
2	4-2-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment process • Volume using the centre • Parking around Newtown
3	18-2-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure • Volume using the centre • Co-ordination of daily service • Future staff training,

5. Response to points raised

5.1. Safety is a significant concern that has been raised and will continue to be reviewed. Increased security staffing has been agreed to ensure that there are two security staff between 9:00 and 19:00. The current CCTV is also under review to ensure it meets the service demands.

5.2. Capacity at Newtown has been assessed and considered to be sufficient to meet with current levels of demand. Increasingly we will be seeking to minimise the number of repeat visits and reasons why citizens will need to attend a HAC (with some services being available online and through phone interviews.) Although providing Housing Advice for the City there will also be the ending of other services previously provided by NAS which will ease pressure on the building.

5.3. The creation of the floorwalker roles along with a dedicated duty manager will put the onus on providing quicker responses to citizens and taking common sense measures to avoid longer waits occurring. More work will be done with staff to clarify and develop this role so there is a clear understanding of expectations and concerns.

5.4. There is some available parking for the building and the managers will look to allocate these based upon any reasonable adjustments identified for individual staff members and upon daily need (e.g. later working).

5.5. Staff will be involved in the development of staff rotas and given sufficient notice of their duties. Having more staff on site will provide some flexibility when there are delays in finding immediate accommodation. Further work is also to take place to review how this process works to see if it can be improved.

5.6. Concerns have been raised about staff availability for decision making if they are always doing interviewing. The proposed operational model for the centre will

continue to be reviewed with staff input to make sure that there is the correct balance between staff on interviews allowing citizens to be seen and staff having time to the make prompt decisions.

- 5.7. Legal advice has emphasised that moving to a single Housing Advice Centre will protect the service against further future Legal Challenge. We also believe that it will allow an improved quality of service and for greater consistency to be maintained.

Appendix 2A – Terms of Reference for Staff working group

Working Group

This is a Working Group to look at considerations for moving forward the development of the Housing Advice Service and its future delivery.

Representation on the Working Group is required from across the HACs & case management team, including Health and Housing, Pathways and BCC employees in Gate way.

The optimum number of staff is twelve members, and ideally all grades will be represented in the working group, but in the event of an oversubscription, then managers will work with teams to ensure fair selection and representation.

Requirements for attendees.

- Must demonstrate a commitment to contribute to the development of the service for the future with an unbiased, open minded approach.
- Must be available to attend all meetings arranged.
- Must be able to communicate effectively within the meetings, and at any follow up team meetings to ensure discussions /outcomes are shared.
- It is anticipated that meetings will take place on a fortnightly basis; it will be the individual's responsibility to ensure that their manager is aware of the schedule of meetings in order that duty rotas can be drawn up accordingly.

Terms of Reference for Working Group

- The discussions from the group will feed into the overall decision making progress within the service and provide guidance and recommendations for further consideration and implementation when practical.
- Whilst supporting the development of the service this is in addition to more formal consultation routes.
- It will be chaired by Collette Campbell (Service Manager)
- Agreed actions will be cascaded down to teams
- It will meet fortnightly for up to 90 minutes.
- Where someone repeatedly doesn't attend the chair will review whether to ask for another representative.
- This group will be set up for 6 months with a review at 3 months to decide if it is meeting its purpose.

Standard Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Review of actions
3. Chair – update on service developments
4. Review of HAC transition plan
5. Feedback from local teams
6. Risks, Issues, Dependencies
7. Future agenda items
8. Next meeting

Appendix 2B Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Staff Briefing Q&A 14/10/2015 & 15/10/2015

Questions asked and Initial Answers given (NB some answers have developed or altered since then)

	There are also briefings for all staff in NAIS today and tomorrow. Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Advice staff are to be based at New Aston House – 70 and we are looking at additional desks to be sourced. There will be a working group headed by Maura and Collette and will require volunteers.
Q	Will there be 2 HACs?
A	432 + 1 – no proper signage in New Aston House. Homeless & Pre-Tenancy could not deliver across 2 offices. Health & Safety, public expectation – statutory duty. Councillor desire to have 2 locations. We did say we would need 14 Neighbourhood Advisors if the service worked out of 2 locations but not possible. We have considered all options.
Q	NAIS staff – what grade will they be and what budget will they come under?
A	Further discussions are required around this.
Q	Assessing Needs team – Will there be the option to do Part 6 or Part 7 by way of Expressions of Interest, any details? Going backwards? Everything on line – workflow? Will there be a specialised team?
A	The intention is that everyone will be within the same office.
Q	How many people will be going into New Aston House?
A	60 People - Not just talking about ground floor facilities, discussions around first floor availability on-going.
Q	Is the intention to have people on the front line all the time?
A	No, there will be a separate team for Part 7, computers for customers, floor walkers who will help in assisting customers with appointments. There will be a registration team, short-term, staffed by floor walkers.
Q	How many computers will there be for customers?
A	
Q	Have Cabinet agreed the new plans and have dates been set?
A	Cabinet agreed as at 01/04/2015 – the new financial year. There will be a 45 day consultation period and we will give 3-months notice for the move.
Q	Will we still have our back office?
A	There will still be Homeless & Pre-Tenancy services people at Lancaster Circus. We did look to move everyone to New Aston House.
Q	Has Health & Safety and parking been considered?

A	There is an action plan to consider all of these factors currently in process.
Q	What will the office hours be?
A	We would not have a half day closure, we are reluctant to shorten days of availability and currently have no thought to shorten.
Q	Will there be a cut-off time? Or else there is likely to be busy queues outside the building.
A	It is planned to have 20 odd staff ready to see customers, pinch point – staffed up to deal, but need to talk through the detail. We will not turn people away if they have come across the city.
Q	With applications at the centre – who will access? Other?
A	Normal housing applications to be made on-line, for vulnerable people, there will be a facility at New Aston House to complete the Part 6 in office.
Q	Will there be a cut-off time?
A	TA will have a cut-off time, but we do not . . ??? . . cannot get TA to assist? JC to speak to L.C.
Q	What appointments will we offer? On the day or pre-booked?
A	Yes we will offer appointments to discuss housing options – booked appointments. We would rather have appointments to manage the flow. There may be an extension of appointment times, but this can be part of the working group discussion. The difference in appointment will be dependent on the circumstances.
Q	What will happen with DV cases? Has there been an Equality Assessment?
A	With regards to DV and gang related cases these can be progressed by the visiting officers, numbers have not yet been agreed. They will deal with rate circumstances, risks and planned appointments away from the office.
Q	Who will work where? Front reception GR4 or GR3s? Part 6 – GR3s?
A	Assessment will be carried out by GR3s and sign off point will be by the GR4s (on the top band).
	Prevention toolkit
Q	Will there be security?
A	We are looking at 1 or 2 security guards and holding posts for this. Need to look at this and consider CCTV / Police – local community officer.
Q	Are we making any savings?
A	This is not about saving anything. There are 200K savings to be made next year, this proposal is nothing to do with this.

Q	Was Sparkbrook not considered for the one HAC location?
A	All locations were discussed, including Sparkbrook but New Aston House was seen as more accessible than any of the other 3 offices. New Aston House has been set up to be cleared. Security at Sparkbrook is paid for by the NHS. The rent at Sparkbrook is also higher.
Q	Will there be a Review Officer on duty at the HAC, as staff forever calling if they get stuck?
A	There are issues regarding the role of the Review Officer as they are involved in the decision making. We will skill up staff to deliver the service requirement. This has thrown up the issue of who and what do we need to deliver as part of a legal service? We need the right people to deliver the service.
Q	Will there be a choice or expression of interest process for the posts?
A	If there is a high level of people wanting to work on the Part 6 process, yes there may be interviews, we will look at filling the posts in the fairest way.
Q	What if there are no desks available? Will you look at another location?
A	Children's Services are currently on the first floor at New Aston House and we are trying to secure desks in the building. We need to be clear at the 45-day timescale on what is available. It will all be clear before the formal consultation.
Q	Will there be time to breathe to make decisions, as there is now?
A	Yes, that's your job.
Q	Will there be job evaluations for the roles?
A	We have not thought about that, as there is no change in the job descriptions so it is not required. The generic job descriptions remain.
	15/10/2015
Q	How many staff will be in the Part 6 team?
A	Looking at 10 but this needs to be worked through. We will also have floor walkers and the team will consist of a mixture of GR3 and GR4 officers. The GR4 officers will sign-off for top banding awards.
Q	How will you decide who gets which positions? Will there be expressions of interest or an interview process?
A	Talk through process - homeless – reception – floor walkers – GR4 – initial options screening. Completion of form by GR3/GR4. Pre-booked appointments GR3.
Q	You will have a maximum 6 Advisors – 3 Senior Housing Needs Officers – 9 people x 4 = 40 across the city. Cannot see 40 at Newtown?
A	25 Per day across the city, AV 125 not on duty every day.

	<p>Do not know volume of people from NAIS see – prevention – officers greatly. Can have up to 26/28 – over 20 officers ready to interview. NAIS staff will be doing benefit work. Reception will assess issues and sign-post.</p> <p>It does take 6 Advisors – 24 officers to try to address. It is decision making time.</p>
Q	Concerns about unhappy people in one place?
A	Health and Safety are looking at the action plan, CCTV, security – what do we need, crowd control including risk assessments. Every other major city has one homeless centre and they are smaller. Want to avoid the need for travelling across the city where / when possible.
Q	What will the opening hours be?
A	Same as now, no half-day closing.
Q	It busy like never known it?
A	Idea – enough staff to manage, rota management.
Q	Concerns over the backlog
A	12 on duty today - taking applications, as well as prevention.
Q	Believe New Aston House is too small, there is not enough staff – think you are setting up to fail.
A	
Q	How many staff will be on reception?
A	250 Footfall . . .
Q	Car parking – how much is there and how will it be allocated?
A	
Q	Who will cover reception – GR3s or GR4s?
A	
Q	Will those on reception need to record every person?
A	
Q	What will happen with DV victims – has safety been considered? Do we need more Visiting Officers?
A	We have looked at how to mitigate all of these issues.
Q	What about BSWAID – will they be coming back to support?
A	BSWAID will not be coming back in to support. There will be liaison with west midlands

	police.
Q	TA Provision – What if the team are not available to provide accommodation?
A	Work at HAC – HB
Q	<p>Busy – maximum people at reception, what is this figure? Ensure we meet obligations. Need to check on regulation. Risk assessment and contingency plan required.</p> <p>Families / children Unhappy customers ‘Cleaning office from hell’ Levels of aggression Incidents happen – clientele - ensure staff are safe. Unpredictable job – too many people at same time – too much hassel. GR5 Duty manager Travel for customers – bus tickets (from Neighbourhood Offices) – May provide taxis</p> <p>Building capacity – Erdington is 30/40 and has upstairs reception Budget – HRA Case management team</p> <p>Under the new scheme - Cases need to be managed Will still sit in LC Assessing team – dealing with all applications No specific Health & Housing team – amalgamated MAPPA / Children in need Band 1 – 3 months</p> <p>Size not worked out</p> <p>Clear CM function – 2 separate teams?</p>
Q	Telephone team at Lancaster? They need more capacity on the phones – how will you address this?
A	There is capacity within New Aston House.

Appendix 2C– Individual Email Responses

Response S1 - staff member

Summary: Member of staff concerns about;

- The Consultation process
- There only being one HAC
- Capacity of single HAC and impact upon safety from overcrowding
- Their safety in working from Newtown.
- Concerns about increased personal travel (but noted this was an issue for others and accepted it)

Response S2 – staff member

Summary:

- Request Amendment to opening hours to 9:00-4:00pm to enable TA requests to be turned around and staff leave at reasonable time.
- Management bids and Discharge Decisions to be done centrally
- Better communication arrangements between HAC and Private Tenancy Unit and Social Care to join up support
- Dedicated phone number for Part 6 team to enable direct access from staff and public allowing HAC staff to focus on roofless cases
- Secure email addresses
- GR5 manager on duty at the HAC
- More printers/photocopiers and shredding machines as currently insufficient.

Response S3 - staff member

Summary:

- Concerns raised about Newtown being the only office in relation to gang related activities.

Response S4 – group response

Summary:

- Concerns around safety
- Details about the specifics of the roles in the new centre and what workers will be expected to do
- How staff will be recruited or allocated to the different teams
- Training to be provided
- Hours and how rotas will be sorted
- Parking and travel allowance
- How will work be managed, appointments booked
- Request to consider two HAC model instead
- How will information be communicated to the public?

Response S5 - staff member –

Request to know how to arrange a car park place at Lancaster Circus.

Response S6 – staff member

Summary:

- Concern that one HAC not sufficient for Birmingham and asking about other areas
- The proposed HAC isn't close to the city centre and involves too much travelling
- Differing practices should not be sufficient reason for moving to one centre
- Querying difficulties cited in securing officers in the south

Appendix 2D– Concerns raised by Trade Unions and Service Response

The following is from correspondence between Doreen Brown, Unison Branch Equalities Co-ordinator (paragraphs with bullet points) and Jim Crawshaw, Head of Service for Homelessness and Pre-Tenancy (paragraphs in boxes)

REVIEW OF HOUSING HAC'S

- Staff/members believe that having one HAC is likely to increase the footfall/demand and staff will have less time to carry out their homeless assessments, instead will be utilising most of their time on reception and interviewing homeless.

We currently take on average about 130 homeless applications a week and therefore are using the figure of up to a maximum of 140 homeless applications per week when preparing for the worst case scenario. We believe that this number will not increase through one HAC but if anything due to increased prevention work would decrease. There will only be the equivalent of one GR4 on reception at any one time. Additionally there will be in excess of 25 GR3s in the one HAC and therefore a number of homeless interviews will be conducted by them.

- Don't believe that the drivers for change within the Business Case can be achieved by introducing one HAC.

We disagree. Please set out which drivers for change you believe can't be achieved by having one HAC.

- Will present staff with more problems culminating from an increase in waiting time and customers becoming more agitated, putting staff at potential risk of violence. Also consistency of advice and assistance to customers is mainly achieved through proper training and effective management.

I disagree. Currently some customers can wait in the offices for a significant period before they are seen. In fact I received an e-mail from a member of staff at Sparkbrook this week that highlights that somebody waited over 2 hours to see a triage officer and as you know this is before we would see them. In regards to consistency it is more difficult, for whatever the reason, to have consistency for any service if staff are spread across more than one location. We know there are inconsistencies and staff have also raised this as an issue. Having one office will ensure consistency for staff and for customers and we will also provide a management presence within the Centre.

- Car parking is an issue at Newtown. Having to park on the main road can present potential safety risks. 72% of affected staff are female.

We will be ensuring that we secure as many parking spaces for our staff as possible if the proposal is accepted. We will work with staff to ensure this is distributed fairly and in particular for any staff who are working late but of course we will also need to consider disabilities and where people have a parking space as a reasonable adjustment. Although I accept this is a concern for staff and we will ensure safety wherever possible staff across locations park in the street and walk to their office location. Additionally there are direct bus routes that stop outside of the building. Currently the make-up of Homeless & Pre-Tenancy staff who work in the Newtown office is 77% female.

- Staff/members are requesting two HAC's in order to reduce the footfall, ensure safety and provide adequate parking space.

Having 2 HACs is, we believe, not possible with current staffing levels and would require more staff to ensure officers have time to make decisions etc. As you are aware the council is under no obligation to provide parking spaces for the majority of staff working for the organisation. In regards to the footfall the evidence we have provided regarding the building demonstrates its suitability.

- Why can't we have a slight increase in NAIS officers to cover over two HAC's.

The NAIS service is already reducing to an anticipated number of 38 advisors. This includes the 6 who will be working with us. In order to provide a welfare advice service across the city they require these staff to provide their service. There is no more capacity to give us any additional staff.

- 3 full time GR5 Officers will be sufficient to cover over 3 HAC's taking into account sickness absence. Currently GR5 Officers are barely visible at the HAC's.

There is no opportunity for us to have 3 HACs in the future model and all of the feedback from staff who are concerned about 1 HAC is that we should have 2 HACs. In the one HAC there will be a GR5 on duty every working day so obviously their visibility will increase significantly. If we had 2 HACs we would not be able to have 2 out of 3 GR5s on duty every day as between them they also have 28 GR4s to manage and attend other meetings etc. If we had more than one HAC we would need 4 X GR5 managers.

- Would like management to reconsider Sparkbrook HAC or adjoining building. We understand that BCC has 100 year lease on Sparkbrook building which has to be paid for regardless of whether it is occupied or not. As an alternative we already have existing Council buildings where there are no cost implications.

Sparkbrook is an expensive building and currently it is planned to be a lettings suite. The council is also considering the leasehold agreement. As it is not a CAB building the cost of the lease will fall on the service using the building and is a cost that we cannot meet. Additionally what is clear from the consultation is that the major concerns, apart from our own staff, is regarding customers living in the south of the city.

- No evidence to suggest that all options have been adequately explored.

Please be re-assured they have. We explored the option of 4 HACs, 2 HACs, a city centre HAC and then the proposal for one HAC in Newtown.

- Need to fully understand the rational of having floor walkers at Newtown.

In order to ensure that customers are only in the queue to see reception when they need to be. It is envisaged that they will be pulling people out of the queue if they have an appointment, taking housing application forms and give receipts and direct people who want other council services to these etc. They will ensure that people in the queue genuinely need to see someone on reception and therefore decreasing the times people need to wait to be seen.

- **Legal Services are there to provide advice and support over legal matters, however they have no experience over how we conduct our day to day business.**

I am unsure whether this question is in relation to the barrister opinion we received to move to one HAC or having legal advice in the One HAC, so I have answered both!

With regards to the legal advice regarding moving to one HAC this advice has come from a nationally renowned barrister, Andrew Arden QC, who has over 40 years' experience in the field of homelessness and represented us on the judicial review regarding gatekeeping. With respect his opinion is valued by us, including our own legal services and although he may never have worked on the front line his experience of defending and challenging Local Authorities is vast.

In regards to having a solicitor in the HAC this is specifically to provide legal advice and support to staff. As you know homelessness is a complex area of law and it is thought that this will support staff to undertake their roles. I am happy to reconsider this decision if Unison/your members don't believe it is appropriate.

- Require costing for Newtown HAC and inhouse Solicitor. Will this impact on saving targets for 2016/17/18.

Will not impact on savings. We already have a legal budget and rather than paying for a solicitor to be based in Woodcock Street the intention is to locate them with our team.

- Require footfall information to establish where the demand is.

Please refer to my e-mail on the 12th February that sets out the footfall information.

- Require staffing structure, outcome of customer questionnaire to be formatted into Equality Assessment Analysis.

The staffing structure was shared at the TU meeting regarding budget reductions. The Equality Analysis and the consultation documents will of course be shared once the analysis is completed of the consultation responses.

- **Ensure that we have a written response to UNISON's H&S request.**

Please refer to my e-mail on the 12th February that responds to the questions you submitted regarding H&S.

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Equality Analysis

Birmingham City Council Analysis Report

EA Name	Review Of Housing Advice Centres
Directorate	People
Service Area	Adults - Meeting Housing Needs
Type	Amended Function
EA Summary	This EA evaluates the proposed centralisation of Housing Advice Services from 4 sites at which services at which this service is delivered to a proposed 1 site 'Centre of Excellence' Model to be provided from Newtown Housing Advice Centre
Reference Number	EA000673
Task Group Manager	Andrew.J.Clarke@birmingham.gov.uk
Task Group Members	maura.mulligan@birmingham.gov.uk, Quarrie@birmingham.gov.uk, Anne-Marie.Powell@birmingham.gov.uk, michael.walsh@birmingham.gov.uk, Shona.Adams@birmingham.gov.uk, Tina.Day@birmingham.gov.uk, Marion.Neil@birmingham.gov.uk, andrew.perry@birmingham.gov.uk, Vicki.Pumphrey@birmingham.gov.uk
Senior Officer	Jim.crawshaw@birmingham.gov.uk
Quality Control Officer	Charles.Ashton-Gray@birmingham.gov.uk

Introduction

The report records the information that has been submitted for this equality analysis in the following format.

Overall Purpose

This section identifies the purpose of the Policy and which types of individual it affects. It also identifies which equality strands are affected by either a positive or negative differential impact.

Relevant Protected Characteristics

For each of the identified relevant protected characteristics there are three sections which will have been completed.

- Impact
- Consultation
- Additional Work

If the assessment has raised any issues to be addressed there will also be an action planning section.

The following pages record the answers to the assessment questions with optional comments included by the assessor to clarify or explain any of the answers given or relevant issues.

1. Activity Type

The activity has been identified as an Amended Function.

2. Overall Purpose

2.1. What the Activity is for

What is the purpose of this Function and expected outcomes?	<p>The Homeless & Pre Tenancy function (H&PTS) encompasses the management of the council's housing register (a statutory obligation under Housing Act 196 Part VI) and the provision of the statutory homeless function (under Housing Act 1996 Part VII) including the provision of temporary accommodation when required. The Homeless & Pre Tenancy service also encompasses the Prevention of Homelessness Function undertaken in line with government guidance (P1E Guidance: Homelessness Prevention and Relief, DCLG, 2008).</p> <p>The service also provides general guidance to citizens seeking to secure housing in the private rented sector or the RSL (Registered Social Landlord) sector as well as providing housing advice to ensure households, where practicable, can remain in their current accommodation. In the execution of this function Housing Advice also provides 'Housing Options' information.</p> <p>The Homeless & Pre Tenancy service is presently based within 4 'Customer Service Centres' which sit within the Place Directorates 'Neighbourhood Advice & Information Service' (NAIS). These centres are at Sparkbrook, Northfield, Newtown and Erdington. In addition to this the service works in partnership with St Basils and CYPF (Children, Young People & Families) to provide the Youth Hub. The Hub deals with all housing needs of single people and childless couples aged 16-25. The Youth Hub is not affected by this proposal however it should be noted that this group of customers are required to travel from anywhere in the city, or beyond, to one centralised office for housing advice. The Hub is recognised as a national centre of excellence by DCLG (Department for Communities & Local Government).</p> <p>The proposal resulting in this Equality Analysis (EA) is to decommission 3 of the existing Housing Advice Centres (HAC's) and transfer their functions to a new Housing Advice Centre of Excellence (HACOE) based within the existing Housing Advice Centre at Newtown. The expected outcome is to provide a single, consistent point for citizens to access Housing Advice and all its associated functions. It should be noted that currently the Newtown office does not provide an emergency service and only deals with pre-booked interviews. The reason for this reduction in service was due to the NAIS service reducing the number of advisors to 10 FTE and the fact that this was deemed an inadequate level of staffing to provide the front-end prevention services on behalf of the H&PTS.</p> <p>This proposal arises as a result of proposed further reductions in staffing levels within the Neighbourhood Advice Service (which co-habit the locations at which all 4 Housing Advice Centres are based).</p> <p>Presently all Front Office functions are undertaken by NAIS staff who also undertake '1st response' Housing Advice work and refer Housing Advice clients/appointments through to the service. If a customer approaches a HAC in housing need the original structure meant that they were initially seen by a NAIS member of staff and would be triaged in order to ascertain the presenting issue. Once this issue was identified the NAIS staff would offer to seek to prevent the homelessness, wherever possible, and to refer the case to a member of the H&PTS in order to complete a homeless application if the customer wished to do so.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Advice Service has undertaken a restructure of its resources and is unable to continue to undertake this function on behalf of our service. The restructure within NAIS has resulted in neighbourhood offices reducing from 32 to the current number of 11 with proposals to reduce further.</p> <p>The staffing levels at the NAIS Offices, which were historically in excess of 200, will reduce to approximately 50 staff</p>
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Comment

What is the purpose of this Function and expected outcomes? (Continued):

In order to maintain a welfare advice service for the citizens of Birmingham the NAIS service are no longer able to commit significant resources to assisting the homeless & pre-tenancy service. The H&PTS is not resourced adequately to deliver the work of the NAIS officers across all 4 locations and therefore the only viable long term model is to provide the service from one centre of excellence. This model does include the NAIS service providing 8 officers to be located in this office in order to provide specialist welfare advice to households in housing need in order to complement the housing advice function.

With the above in mind, the continued operation of 4 Housing Advice Centres in the present financial climate is unlikely to be sustainable and thus a necessity exists change the service to meet future needs.

Glossary of Terms

- BCC Birmingham City Council
- CCTV Closed Circuit Television
- CYPF Children, Young People & Families
- DCLG Department for Communities & Local Government
- EA Equality Analysis
- FTE Full Time Equivalent
- H&PTS Homeless & Pre-Tenancy Service
- HAC Housing Advice Centre
- HACOEE Housing Advice Centre of Excellence
- IMD Index of Multiple Deprivations
- KPI Key Performance Indicator
- NAIS Neighbourhood Advice & Information Service
- Part VI Housing Register/Application
- Part VII Homeless Application
- RSL Registered Social Landlord

For each strategy, please decide whether it is going to be significantly aided by the Function.

Public Service Excellence	Yes
Comment <p>The development of a 'Centre Of Excellence' for Housing Advice aims to build upon best practice from the 4 existing Housing Advice Centres to develop a fit for purpose model that can be delivered to citizens while meeting the financial obligation to make savings in the current financial climate.</p> <p>The amalgamation of staff from 4 existing sites to one will provide a larger staff base in one location and will allow this team to deliver some functions that were previously delivered by NAIS officers.</p> <p>This approach will remove inconsistencies and will ensure that the service to customers is streamlined</p>	
A Fair City	Yes
Comment <p>The new approach will ensure that a consistent service delivered by specialist housing advice staff rather than customers receiving a different service based on geographical location.</p> <p>The centre of excellence will be the key office to ensure that vulnerable customers are assisted to navigate the requirement to apply for council housing through an on-line form within the new allocations policy. The development of best practice and training requirements within the centre of excellence will ensure that those in need receive the appropriate level of support and thus fairly allocate Housing Resources.</p>	
A Prosperous City	No
A Democratic City	No

2.2. Individuals affected by the policy

Will the policy have an impact on service users/stakeholders?	Yes
<p>Comment</p> <p>Other stakeholders impacted upon include partner agencies such as West Midlands Police (who often come into contact with homeless and roofless households and families and will seek advice from HAC's as well as bringing clients to the centres).</p> <p>Neighbourhood Advice will be exiting the Newtown HAC and as such they are a stakeholder. Their exit from the HAC is part of a separate programme of work outside the scope of this project. However, there is a dependency on this exit occurring on time. Withdrawal of NAIS staff will not be complete as 8 NAIS advisors will remain specifically to work with the H&PT Service. These officers will continue to provide welfare/debt advice to applicants as part of the Housing Advice interviews that will take place.</p> <p>The group of service users and stakeholders likely to be affected by the proposed change is significant, with the largest group of these being Service Users accessing Housing Advice Services at any of the existing 4 Housing Advice Centres across the city. This includes users of the Newtown HAC (the proposed location of the COE) as Newtown HAC only presently offers appointment based interviews for persons accessing Homelessness Services. This results in users local to Newtown being referred to other HAC's across the city in cases of rooflessness where they require immediate assistance to secure temporary accommodation. The future model will see both appointments and provide a walk in service from Newtown HAC.</p> <p>Data from the 'Northgate' IT system which is presently used to manage Housing Applications and allocations gives a breakdown of persons accessing both Homelessness Services (Part VII) and visiting regarding Council Housing applications (Part VI) across the 4 HAC's. For the purposes of this EA a period of 1 year was used for comparison (01/01/2014 - 31/12/2014). During this time 4768 Homeless Applications were taken across the 4 HAC's. Sparkbrook took the largest share with 1371 (29%). Newtown took the second largest number of these with 1304 (27%). Erdington took 1080 of these homeless applications (23%), with Northfield taking 1013 (21%). It should be noted that a large number of Homeless Applicants were from outside of the city. It therefore follows that the impact on these persons is likely to be less significant.</p> <p>During the same period we received 13,805 Housing Application Forms were received from customers for the Council Housing Register (Part VI). It should be noted that this isn't the number of people who are accepted onto the councils housing register but the number of forms received from customers and therefore there will be an element of double counting. In respect of these assessments Sparkbrook took the largest number of applications with 4341 (31%), Northfield was statistically the second busiest HAC taking 3931 Housing Applications (28%). Newtown took 3031 (23%) and Erdington took 2502 Part VI applications (18%). These statistics do not include persons who visited HAC's with general Housing Enquiries or to place bids on the councils choice based lettings scheme. The Youth Hub facility is also excluded from these statistics as it is not within the scope of the proposed function change.</p> <p>The data available shows that a total of 18573 Applications (Part VI or VII) were taken across the 4 HAC's between 01/01/2014 and 31/12/2014. From conversations with HAC staff during a mapping exercise, an assumption may be made that many customers complete their part VI applications by utilising the 'Sit and Wait' service provided on an alternate date to their Homeless Interview. It is also noteworthy that most applications (save for single persons) refer to a household rather than an individual. Data provided by NAIS shows 8817 customers accessing Housing Advice in the 9 month period 04/13-12/13. During that time 4220 Homeless applicants were also taken. This indicates both validity of the data shown for 2014 and a consistent demand for the service.</p>	

Will the policy have an impact on Employees					Yes																																				
Comment																																									
<p>There are approximately 18 staff (Grades 2-5) at Newtown HAC, approximately 16 staff (grades 2-5) at Northfield HAC, 16 staff (grades 2-5) at Sparkbrook HAC and 16 staff (Grades 2-5) at Erdington HAC. This provides an approximate total of 66 staff who will be affected (approximations are due to staffing fluctuations and internal moves within the H&PT Service). It must be noted that a large percentage of these staff work across both a HAC office and a back office of either Lifford House or Sutton New Road depending on the location of their current HAC. In addition to this there are 8 members of staff from the Neighbourhood Advice Service who will be based in the new COE. A total of 74 staff will be affected directly. Staff already based at Newtown HAC (including Neighbourhood Advice staff) will not be affected in terms of travel time/distance however will be affected by the new ways of working within the COE. 48 remaining BCC staff within the HAC's will be affected by a geographic change of location. A breakdown of this staff group is shown below.</p> <table> <tr> <th></th><th>GR5</th><th>GR4</th><th>GR3</th><th>GR2</th><th>Total</th></tr> <tr> <td>Erdington</td><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>2</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr> <td>Newtown</td><td>1</td><td>7</td><td>7</td><td>3</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr> <td>Northfield</td><td>0*</td><td>6</td><td>8</td><td>2</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr> <td>Sparkbrook</td><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>2</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>3</td><td>27</td><td>30</td><td>10</td><td>70</td></tr> </table> <p>* Indicates a vacant post where a decision to advertise has not been made</p>							GR5	GR4	GR3	GR2	Total	Erdington	1	6	7	2	16	Newtown	1	7	7	3	18	Northfield	0*	6	8	2	16	Sparkbrook	1	6	7	2	16	Total	3	27	30	10	70
	GR5	GR4	GR3	GR2	Total																																				
Erdington	1	6	7	2	16																																				
Newtown	1	7	7	3	18																																				
Northfield	0*	6	8	2	16																																				
Sparkbrook	1	6	7	2	16																																				
Total	3	27	30	10	70																																				
Will the policy have an impact on the wider community					Yes																																				
Comment																																									
<p>Newtown is situated in the Aston Ward within the Ladywood district. The Early Help needs analysis (BCC, 2014, Pg. 50) Shows that overall, Aston is one of the worst performing areas of the city in terms of social deprivation. 83% of the area falls within the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010 KPI (areas in City within 10% most deprived areas of England). It is therefore safe to conclude that the Newtown site is situated in an area of particularly high deprivation. Newtown is also identified as a Priority Area for crime reduction.</p> <p>The April 2009 Strategic Assessment of the neighbourhood of Newtown, Hockley & St Georges identified the following key strategic issues:</p> <p>Worklessness was identified as the biggest challenge for this neighbourhood, as it had one of the highest levels of worklessness out of the priority neighbourhoods. Both the rate of serious violent crime and violence against a person were considerably higher than the overall citywide rates. Gun crime rate in the neighbourhood was double that of the city.</p> <p>Residents were less satisfied with their local area and public sector bodies than in other areas of the city. The neighbourhood performed poorly when compared to the rest of the city on Community Cohesion and Community Engagement indicators. Levels of trust with regards to people or institutions in the local area were considerably lower than the citywide totals and may indicate potential for intergenerational tensions contributed to by the neighbourhoods younger age profile than other areas may add to this (however it should be noted that this data relates to 2009 and more up to date information is not available).</p> <p>However, it is also recognised that financial restrictions preclude the development of a new site for the COE. Furthermore the Newtown site is one of the most modern of the four HAC's and by some margin the most central, being only a short distance from the city centre. It is therefore still considered that this site is the most logical choice for the development of the COE. This is further demonstrated by Aston being one of the 5 areas of highest demand in terms of the geographical location of homeless applicants during 2013/14.</p> <p>Mitigation such as on site security, CCTV and close cooperation with local police are considered appropriate to reduce any risk to staff and visitors.</p> <p>It is also considered that excluding or withdrawing the provision of services from a deprived area, particularly one Where demand for service is amongst the highest in the city, just because it is a deprived area, only acts to further deprive such areas and is not in keeping with BCC commitments to assist the most vulnerable members of society.</p> <p>With the above considered the decision to locate the HACOE at the Newtown site is determined to have a positive effect on the local community by providing an increased service in an area of high demand for that same service.</p>																																									

2.3. Analysis on Initial Assessment

The proposed change to the Housing Advice Centre function has been determined to have potential impact on all customers and staff. Therefore appropriate mitigation is being implemented to minimise, in so far as is reasonably practicable, these generic impacts caused by the relocation of the Housing Advice Service. This includes:

Customers:

The future allocations scheme makes available an 'Online Application' for registration on the councils housing register (Part VI) which will enable persons wishing to make a fresh application for housing (non-homelessness) to do so from their home, library, Neighbourhood Advice Centre or any other council building with Public WiFi (Under development)

It is presently planned that customers will be able to upload proofs (ID/Income etc) direct to their housing application to reduce the need for repeat visits to verify documents/sit and wait service (in development)

Specialised Housing Advice to be available via the telephone (in development), this is to ensure people don't make wasted journeys across the city.

Visiting Officers will be available to undertake home visits or see customers at alternate locations (in the most serious of cases).

A range of specific appointment times will be made available to ensure that customers can reach the centre around commitments such as 'school runs' rather than just providing a drop-in service.

Advice and assistance made available through Birmingham Housing Options Website at www.birminghamhousingoptions.org.uk/ (in delivery)

Staff:

A Back Office function will be available.

Staff who can demonstrate that they are unable to travel to Newtown HAC for any reason can request to work from an alternative location (should one remain available) or perform 'Back Office' functions (requests to be assessed on a case by case basis as this will be available to limited numbers of staff).

The provision of Homeworking is presently being considered and may be developed.

Other staff will be subject to Birmingham Contract requirements to work from locations within the city.

In reference to day to day service provision it is important to consider that, in the existing model; a full service is not provided at all existing HAC's. Newtown presently only sees Part VII Clients by appointment. Due to staffing levels, Northfield HAC sees no pre booked appointments and therefore clients who are not roofless on the day of presenting must be referred for an appointment elsewhere. Therefore there already exists a requirement for customers, in many cases, to travel cross city to access the service already provided.

Only the centres at Sparkbrook and Erdington offer a full range of both pre booked and roofless services and both of these presently have a waiting list of over 1 month for pre-booked appointments (correct at 24/03/2015). Presently none of the 4 sites offers a full 0845-1715 daily service and all close half day once per week.

The primary reason for the present structure at HAC's is due to staffing. Due to financial constraints no new staff to bolster the service are likely to be forthcoming and it is likely that further reductions will be required in the future.

It is therefore clear that the service cannot continue in its present format. The service must change both to resolve current demands on staffing and to 'future proof' the service against further reductions in the future. The economies of scale identified within the proposed model would serve to assist in this service improvement and 'future proofing'.

Public Safety consideration has been given in respect of young people who may be involved in Gang Activity. Newtown and Aston have experienced issues with gangs and gang violence and as such presents two possible problems.

1) The safety of vulnerable persons travelling to an unfamiliar area to access services, particularly those whom would be easily identifiable.

Consideration has been given to this however and security is to be provided at the centre as a form of mitigation. Close links with the Police will assist in ensuring the safety of visitors. Concerns were raised regarding the perception of large numbers of customers making their way on foot across the estate to the proposed HACOЕ carrying their belongings. This was determined to not accurately reflect the majority of customers to the centre who will attend by appointment and not as roofless. Further mitigation will be provided for these rare cases such as the provision of transport from the centre at which they first present (as this is more likely to be at an alternate location). Geography also assists as the centre sits directly outside a bus stop on a main approach to the city centre. Thus should such cases occur the walking time from the stop to the centre is approximately 2 mins only.

2) Concern was raised for persons who are/were gang affiliated fleeing such gang violence who may be unwilling to attend the centre due to perceived gang boundaries.

Often defined by a postcode, territory has become increasingly important for many gangs and defending this geographical territory has become part of the gangs *raison d'être*, an integral part of their identity. This has led to territorial conflict.

Although not linked to any one particular protected characteristic, this is obviously a significant concern as it would put at risk some customers, exclude other customers and could result in detriment to the quality of life for residents and further damage the reputation of the area.

However, in considering this the following was noted:

Research found gang members were typically aged between 12 and 25, that Gang membership is largely a male preserve (98 per cent of gang members identified by TGAP were male), that overall, the ethnicity of gang members tends to reflect the ethnicity of the population living in that area and the majority of gang members either self-excluded (truanted) or were officially excluded from school.

In noting the above it was identified that the majority clients meeting the above criteria would not normally be dealt with by HAC's in any case and would instead be referred to the Youth Hub, located in Digbeth, which falls outside the scope of this reorganisation. In the rare cases that persons outside of this criteria require service then existing mitigation including on site security, liaison with the police and even, where necessary, interview at an alternate location would be sufficient.

In 2014 only 134 of 2,617 priority homeless decisions were due to violence or harassment (non-domestic) accounting for only 5% of all such decisions. It is considered that gang violence presents only a very small fraction of these 134 cases thus indicating that sufficient countermeasures will not be overstretched in these cases.

Victims of domestic violence were also considered as a particular risk group as they account for nearly 24% of the 2,617 Priority Homeless Decisions made in 2014 (636 decisions). Concerns were raised regarding the availability of a single walk in centre for such victims due to the possibility of alleged abusers/offenders attending the location. A full break down of 2014 Homeless Priority Decisions (by Homelessness Reason) is included at Appendix 3A of this EA.

However it is considered that this risk was sufficiently mitigated against through existing channels. Anecdotal evidence states that most reporting victims of DV presently already attend their local HAC where possible rather than traveling cross city to an alternate location thus presenting the same problem in the existing system. There are presently numerous locations where victims of DV can present themselves and begin the rehousing process safely (Police Stations, Neighbourhood Advice Centres and the Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid hub). From any of these locations the HACOЕ will be accessible via telephone and secure transport to the HACOЕ can be arranged (where necessary). Visiting officers can also be utilised in extreme cases to undertake homelessness assessments at alternate locations. On site security at the proposed HACOЕ will assist in ensuring the safety of victims and the provision of secure and separate waiting areas is being considered for use on a case by case basis.

West Midlands Police and Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid will be contacted for comment during the reorganisation process to ensure that any concerns can be addressed before the completion of this change process.

In addition to the above generic and specialist considerations which it is felt are sufficiently mitigated, it is concluded that there is potential for specific impact in on the following characteristics (of both customers/service users & staff):

- Age
- Disability
- Pregnancy & Maternity

The primary focus of this impact is travel. With particular regard to customers making Part VII Applications, it is necessary for the customer to undertake physical interaction with Housing staff, usually via a visit to a Housing Advice Centre. The closure of Northfield, Erdington and Sparkbrook for this purpose will result in a requirement for significant additional travel across the city to access the Newtown HACO.

The additional distance between these centres that customers may be expected to travel is outlined below:

Erdington (B23 6RE) HAC to Newtown HAC (B19 2SW): 4.1 miles
 Northfield HAC (B31 1PG) to Newtown HAC (B19 2SW): 7.7 miles
 Sparkbrook HAC (B11 1LU) to Newtown HAC (B19 2SW): 3.3 Miles

Data detailing Homeless Applicants for Jan-Dec 2014 was not available at the time of preparing this EA. However data was available for April 2013-March 2014 and is included here as Appendix 3C to this EA. This data shows that Citizens making homeless applications across the city of Birmingham varies highly when mapped by home address rather than the HAC to which they are presenting. As previously stated a full service is not offered at all HAC's and thus the data in Appendix 3C is contended to be a more reliable indicator of demand.

It should be noted that this data does not include out of city applicants. In 2014 this totalled 600 households and thus it is reasonable to conclude a similar number for this period.

This data clearly shows less demand for service in the far north of the city with the 4 wards of the Sutton district accounting for only 2% of applications (95 out of 4,856 in city applicants during the 2013/14 period).

Demand is more consistent in the far south of the city with the southernmost 4 wards (Longbridge, Kings Norton, Brandwood and Northfield) representing 10% of the overall demand (490 out of 4,856 in city applicants applicants).

The data shows the areas of greatest demand to be across the eastern, west & central areas of the city with 9 of the 10 areas of highest demand situated within this corridor.

The Aston ward (where the present Newtown HAC is situated) featured as the 4th highest demand area for Homeless Applicants in the city. 2 more of top 5 areas directly adjoined the Aston Ward including the area of highest demand, this being the Nechells ward.

The Sparkbrook ward, where a current HAC is already located, was the second highest demand area of the city. However as this building is, for reasons outside of the services control, no longer available for occupation, this data lends additional weight to the decision to choose Newtown as the site for the future HACO.

Although Appendix 3C demonstrates that the areas of greatest need are concentrated in the East/West & Central areas of the city relocation of the service may, in some cases, still be an issue and may be even more so for those living in the North or South of the city.

It is considered that this additional distance may, in some cases, prove problematic for those who are less able to travel distance due to age, disability or pregnancy. While capability to travel is assumed and it is anticipated that the vast majority of customers will, even those less able to travel distance, will not be unduly affected due to the extensive public transport infrastructure in the city. It is also considered that there may be rare cases where this network is insufficient and thus additional full analysis of these categories is required.

3.1. Age

3.1.1. Age –Differential Impact

Age	Relevant
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3.1.2. Age – Impact

Describe how the Function meets the needs of Individuals of different ages?	<p>Housing Advice Centres presently offer services to people of all ages either as an applicant for some form of housing or as a member of household currently receiving assistance from the service. The reorganised service will continue to do this from a single location in contrast to the four sites presently in use (not including the Youth Hub).</p> <p>Although there are concerns regarding the ability of older persons (living within the catchment area of HAC's to be decommissioned) to travel to the new centre, Evidence shows that older persons traditionally use the existing HAC Services infrequently in the first instance. Homelessness applications from people aged over 55 account for only 5% of all homeless applications and within that group, those over 65 account for only 2% of all homeless applicants.</p> <p>Households over 55 accounted for only 13% of Part VI applicants in 2014 and those over 65 only 6%. Although presenting a larger cohort, the majority of these Part VI would likely have been seeking sheltered or age restricted nonemergency housing which is accessible in Birmingham. In the future operating model the Part VI application will be undertaken online thus allowing these applicants to apply from home or utilise on site IT provided at remaining Neighbourhood Advice Centres, libraries and any other buildings with this facility close to their homes.</p> <p>It is considered that, in most cases, inability to travel just due to age should not be assumed. Many older people enjoy active lifestyles including travel far in excess of cross city. Only in extreme cases is such an inability likely. Therefore, given the small percentage of an already small customer base, the existing mitigation such as visiting officers, phone advice/assistance, online tools and provision of bus tickets (or emergency taxi's) should prove more than sufficient.</p> <p>Staff aged over 45 represent 50% of the HAC workforce. Analysis was undertaken in relation to the distance from home addresses to current workplace as well as the Newtown HAC site. this analysis showed that, on average, staff aged 55-64 will experience a decrease in their daily commute and staff aged 45-54 will experience only a slight increase in theirs well below the average for all staff</p>
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Do you have evidence to support the assessment?	Yes
<p>Comment</p> <p>A full demographic breakdown of all customers by (protected characteristics) accessing Housing Advice for the purposes of making a Part VII (Homelessness) or Part VI (Council Housing Waiting List) Application can be found at Appendix 3A of this EA and was considered in its preparation.</p> <p>The staff cohort falling within this category is outlined in section 5 of Appendix 3B to this EA which was considered in its preparation. This data shows that a primarily older workforce that is statistically likely to be impacted less than the staff group as a whole in terms of distance.</p> <p>However it is accepted that some members of staff may experience problems reaching the proposed HACOE site due to age for the same reasons as the members of the public outlined here.</p> <p>These members of staff will be identified through the staff briefing process and appropriate measures can be put in place on a case by case basis, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications for and consideration of Flexible working arrangements • Applications for Home Working (following assessment of appropriateness) • Access to Work • Requests for Reasonable adjustments • Working from alternate locations through the possible retention of back office function at Lifford House and/or Sutton New Road (although the size of the back office function is yet to be defined and may not be available to all potential applicants from the staff cohort) • Consideration of redeployment • Mobility Clause (grades 2, 3 & 4) as outlined in the Birmingham Contract of Employment 	

Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?	Records from the Northgate IT system show demographic data for customers completing Part VII and Part VI applications. For the purposes of this EA the period 01/01/2014 to 31/12/2014 (1 calendar year) was analysed. The data gathered is shown below:					
	* ED=Erdington HAC NT=Newtown HAC NF=Northfield HAC SB=Sparkbrook HAC GT=Grand Total					
	Part VII Applicants 01/01/2014-31/12/2014:					
		ED	NT	NF	SB	GT
	16-17:	1	2	3	3	9
	18-24:	244	195	230	200	869
	25-34:	423	549	413	572	1957
	35-44:	241	356	216	379	1192
	45:54:	114	130	102	138	484
	55-64:	38	51	30	49	168
	65+:	19	20	19	30	88
	Total:	1080	1304	1013	1371	4768
	Part VI Applicants 01/01/2014-31/12/2014:					
		ED	NT	NF	SB	GT
	16-17:	10	3	9	38	60
	18-24:	412	377	800	778	2367
	25-34:	786	1067	1236	1380	4469
	35-44:	515	784	740	987	3026
	45:54:	384	439	559	620	2002
	55-64:	202	207	294	297	1000
65+:	192	152	292	240	876	
Total:	2502	3031	3931	4341	13805	

	<p>Staff data (Appendix 3A) is gathered from information held by HR within the SAP IT System. The staff breakdown is detailed within Appendix 3A and summarised below:</p> <p>25-34 Years: 22%</p> <p>35-44 Years: 28%</p> <p>45-54 Years: 41%</p> <p>55-64 Years: 09%</p>
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Have you received any other feedback about the Function in meeting the needs of Individuals of different ages?	No
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Yes
<p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>For the period 2012/2013 Shelter (The Housing Charity) produced a summary of Households accepted as homeless by age. These figures (for the West Midlands) show that 86% of all homeless applicants were aged 16-44 with 10% aged 45-59 and only 3% aged 60+ thus indicating regional alignment to Birmingham's statistical data</p>	
Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals of different ages which needs highlighting?	No
<p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>The Birmingham population is predominantly younger and thus likely to be more mobile than the population as a whole.</p>	

3.1.3 Age – Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals of different ages on the impact of the Function?	Yes
If so, How did you obtain these views?	<p>Consultation on proposals to restructure the Housing Advice Service, including the statutory homeless service, from its present 4 location delivery model (excluding the Youth Hub); to a single centre model based at Newtown Customer Service Centre opened on 04th December 2015 and ran for 7 weeks before closing on 21st January 2016.</p> <p>Consultation involved three main tools,</p> <p>Consultation A: A paper based questionnaire that was handed out to Housing Advice Centre (HAC) users (between 07th December 2015 and 15th January 2016),</p> <p>Consultation B: An online consultation through the councils Be Heard online consultation site</p> <p>Consultation C: 4 face to face sessions across the city open to professionals and members of the public.</p> <p>All of these consultations were open to members of the public of all ages.</p> <p>Consultation A focused on HAC users with all customers being provided with a copy of the questionnaire and encouraged to complete it. This was undertaken to ensure sampling from as broad a section of the customer demographic as possible, this included customers of all ages and in the same proportions that persons of all ages visited HACs. 490+ responses were gathered.</p> <p>Consultation B was undertaken through the Corporate Be Heard Consultation Website offering existing HAC customers, concerned citizens and professional's opportunity to comment and respond to the proposed changes regardless of age. 63 responses were gathered.</p> <p>Consultation C involved 4 public meetings, across the 4 quadrants of the city so to be as accessible as possible. Citizens & professionals were invited to book in advance or attend on the day and face to face questions and answers were provided to identify and address any concerns raised.</p>

Comment

Consultations B & C were advertised and promoted through a variety of means including leaflets, posters and communications to third parties to reach as wide a group of people of all ages as possible.

Specific data as to the ages of respondents in Consultations A & C was not recorded for reasons outlined within the produced Consultation report. However, as previously stated, all HAC customers for the prescribed period were given opportunity to complete a questionnaire so the potential response base would match that of HAC user demographics for that period.

Although the age of individuals was not specifically recorded, during consultation A 49 out of 490 respondents identified their age as being a characteristic that would impact upon their ability to travel to Newtown.

Data on Age was gathered within Consultation B (online survey). Consultation B gathered far fewer customer/public responses than Consultation A however, in terms of customers and 'Birmingham Residents, but non users of services' responses, data shows a broad spread of respondents of all ages (detailed below):

Unanswered: 7

20-24: 2

25-29: 3

30-34: 6

35-39: 3

40-44: 6

45-49: 3

50-54: 2

55-59: 3

60-64: 0

70-74: 1

Further information regarding consultation can be found within the Report "Housing Advice Service - Citizen Consultation Feedback Report", Feb 2016, A Clarke, Birmingham City Council.

Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Function on Individuals of different ages?

Yes

If so, how did you obtain these views?

Consultation B (Online Survey) included specific sections directed at obtaining the views of stakeholders. This was advertised and promoted through a variety of means including to reach a wide a group of stakeholders people of all ages.

Many Stakeholders (including partner agencies, voluntary groups, elected members and faith/community groups) were specifically notified of the consultations by letter/email/phone and invited to take part through whatever means they felt to be appropriate.

Some success in this endeavour is evidenced by the presence of Stakeholder responses in Consultation B (Be Heard) as well as predominantly stakeholder attendance in Consultation C (Public meetings). Several written representations were also received from stakeholders and have been noted.

Specific data as to the ages of respondents in Consultations A & C was not recorded for reasons outlined within the produced Consultation report.

However this data was gathered within Consultation B (Online Survey). Consultation B gathered fewer stakeholder responses than Consultation C however, the data shows a broad spread of respondents of all ages (detailed below):

Unanswered: 5

20-24: 1

25-29: 1

30-34: 3

35-39: 3

40-44: 2

45-49: 3

50-54: 6

55-59: 3

60-64: 1

70-74: 0

	Further information regarding consultation can be found within the Report Housing Advice Service - Citizen Consultation Feedback Report, Feb 2016, A Clarke, Birmingham City Council.
<p>Comment</p> <p>Formal consultation with Housing Advice Centre staff ran from 4 January 2016 through to 4th March 2016. The consultation process involved regular meetings with Unions, Staff briefings, individual 1:2:1s with Managers and a dedicated email account was set up for questions and responses. Regular reminders were sent out to staff to allow them to express their views.</p> <p>Additionally a staff working group was set up which met (and continues to meet) moving towards the implementation of the proposal (subject to Cabinet decision).</p> <p>The entire staff group were invited to take part in the consultation which includes employees across a variety of ages (outlined in appendix 3B to this EA). There are concerns around the capacity of a single HAC to deal with volume traffic, safety concerns around the single HAC approach, Concerns about increased travel time and lack of staff car parking.</p> <p>No specific issues were noted in relation to any potential impact on staff due to age. However, for further review, a full copy of the staff consultation report can be found as an Appendix 2 to the cabinet report for which this EA also serves.</p> <p>It is noted that a number of members of HAC staff also participated in the Online Consultation (Consultation B) as part of the public consultation process. Their responses can be found at Appendix 1 to the cabinet report for which this EA also serves.</p>	
Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals of different ages which needs highlighting?	No

3.1.4. Age – Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how individuals may be impacted.	The development of an HACOE will ensure that a more consistent service is provided to all customers, including those sharing this protected characteristic. This will aid in ensuring that any unfair or inappropriate practice, however unintentional it may be, is removed from the service.
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Function has a role in preventing Individuals of different ages being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their age?	Yes
Do you think that the Function could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	No
<u>Comment</u> This function will not directly affect the fostering of good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. However by ensuring that those sharing the relevant characteristic receive the highest quality service this function will promote a more inclusive, safer and prosperous Birmingham for all citizens.	

3.2 Disability

3.2.1 Disability - Differential Impact

Disability	Relevant
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3.2.2 Disability – Impact

Describe how the Function meets the needs of Individuals with a disability?	<p>Housing Advice Centres presently offer services to people of all abilities & disabilities either as an applicant for some form of housing or as a member of a household currently receiving assistance from the service. The reorganised service will continue to do so from a single location in contrast to the four sites presently in use.</p> <p>There are concerns regarding the ability of disabled persons (living within the catchment area of HAC's to be decommissioned) to travel to the new centre, Evidence shows that disabled homelessness applicants with any form of disability accounted for 13% of all homeless applicants during 2014.</p> <p>It is considered that those with a disability should not be automatically assumed to lack capability to travel and that further exploration of the type of self-defined disabilities reported is undertaken.</p> <p>360 of these applicants (61% of all disabled applicants) were defined as being disabled due to mental health issues. It is considered that in cases of mental health, ability to travel should be assumed and it is proposed that the large majority of these individuals would be able to utilise public transport or other transport to reach the HACOE.</p> <p>Those with visual impairment may struggle to travel more so than other disabled persons. However this cohort account for only 0.2% of Part VII applicants. Thus it is considered that existing mitigation such as visiting officers, telephone advice/assistance, online tools, public transport (tickets) and (emergency) taxis are adequate to provide service to this client group.</p> <p>Those with mobility problems or 'multiple disabilities' (non-defined however may include mobility) are viewed as potentially excluded however only account for 5% of Part VII applicants (237). It is assumed that many of those with 'Multiple Disabilities' may not have a mobility problem and may be able to travel thus reducing this figure further. Even with the higher figure assumed it is still considered that the existing mitigations will be sufficient to ensure that this group can access the service. Other disabilities will also be considered on a case by case basis.</p>
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Comment

A full breakdown of Staff by this characteristic can be found at Appendix 3B of this EA. Summary details are as follows:

Staff:

Data shows that only 3 employees within the HAC staff cohort are listed as being disabled. The nature of the disability in question is not specified within the information provided however one is already employed at the Newtown site and as such impact is likely to be minimal.

Of the remaining 2 travel is considered to be the primary impact factor. The data shows that disabled staff at Erdington will experience a decrease in daily commute exceeding that of the mean average for other staff at Erdington.

Disabled Staff at Sparkbrook will experience an increased journey exceeding the average for other Sparkbrook staff.

Any issues arising for these staff and the identification of any issues for staff with a previously undisclosed disability will be identified through the staff briefing process and appropriate measures can be put in place on a case by case basis, these include:

- Applications for and consideration of Family Flexible working arrangements
- Applications for Home Working (following assessment of appropriateness)
- Access to Work
- Requests for Reasonable adjustments
- Working from alternate locations through the possible retention of back office function at Lifford House and/or Sutton New Road (although the size of the back office function is yet to be defined and may not be available to all potential applicants from the staff cohort)
- Consideration of redeployment
- Mobility Clause (grades 2, 3 & 4) as outlined in the Birmingham Contract of Employment

Do you have evidence to support the assessment?

Yes

Comment

A full demographic breakdown of all customers by (protected characteristics) accessing Housing Advice for the purposes of making a Part VII (Homelessness) or Part VI (Council Housing Waiting List) Application can be found at Appendix 3A of this EA and was considered in its preparation.

Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?

Records from the Northgate IT system show demographic data for customers completing Part VII and Part VI application by disabilities. For the purposes of this EA the period 01/01/2014 to 31/12/2014 (1 calendar year) was analysed. Summary data is shown below and a full detailed breakdown can be found at Appendix 3A of this EA.

HAC Totals:
Hearing: 25
Visual: 11
Learning: 41
Mental Health: 409
Mobility: 106
Multiple Disabilities: 139
Other Disability: 204
None/Unknown: 4176

Have you received any other feedback about the Function in meeting the needs of Individuals with a disability?

No

You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?

Yes

Comment

Of the Part VI Housing Applicants 18% had suffered from some form of disability. However from these, 722 identified that they had Mental Health Issues which are less likely to affect ability to travel (70% of all disabled applicants). 8.4% of applicants fell into the defined higher risk disabled group (visual, mobility or multiple disabilities).

Although presenting a larger cohort, in the future operating model the Part VI application will be undertaken online thus allowing these applicants to apply from home or utilise on site IT provided at Neighbourhood Advice Centres, libraries and other public buildings offering access to computers, WiFi and other IT equipment close to their homes.

Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals with a disability which needs highlighting?	No
<p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>The choice of Newtown as the site for the proposed HACO E is also relevant to access for disabled persons. Existing sites such as Sparkbrook and Erdington are both non ground floor locations accessed via a lift. While these are legislation compliant due to the lift they can be inaccessible in the event of a failure and thus less desirable than the Newtown site. The Newtown site is a modern building which is completely accessible from the ground floor and thus likely to be fully legislation compliant.</p>	

3.2.3. Disability – Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals with a disability on the impact of the Function?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	<p>Consultation on proposals to restructure the Housing Advice Service, including the statutory homeless service, from its present 4 location delivery model (excluding the Youth Hub); to a single centre model based at Newtown Customer Service Centre opened on 04th December 2015 and ran for 7 weeks before closing on 21st January 2016.</p> <p>Consultation involved three main tools,</p> <p>Consultation A: A paper based questionnaire that was handed out to Housing Advice Centre (HAC) users (between 07th December 2015 and 15th January 2016),</p> <p>Consultation B: An online consultation through the councils Be Heard online consultation site</p> <p>Consultation C: 4 face to face sessions across the city open to professionals and members of the public.</p> <p>All of these consultations were open to members of the public of all abilities and disabilities.</p> <p>Consultation A focused on HAC users with all customers being provided with a copy of the questionnaire and encouraged to complete it. This was undertaken to ensure sampling from as broad a section of the customer demographic as possible, this included customers of all abilities and disabilities and those with a disability would have been surveyed in the same proportions that disabled persons visited HACs. 490+ responses were gathered.</p> <p>Consultation B was undertaken through the Corporate Be Heard Consultation Website offering existing HAC customers, concerned citizens and professionals opportunity to comment and respond to the proposed changes regardless of age. 63 responses were gathered.</p> <p>Consultation C involved 4 public meetings, across the 4 quadrants of the city so to be as accessible as possible. Citizens & professionals were invited to book in advance or attend on the day and face to face questions and answers were provided to identify and address any concerns raised.</p>
<p>Comment</p> <p>Consultations B & C were advertised and promoted through a variety of means including leaflets, posters and communications to third parties to reach as wide a group of people of all abilities and disabilities as possible. Accessible locations were booked and promotional material (posters and flyers) were designed in 'Easy Read' to ensure accessibility for persons with a learning disability.</p> <p>Specific data as to the disabilities of respondents in Consultations A & C was not recorded for reasons outlined within the produced Consultation report. However, as previously stated, all HAC customers for the prescribed period were given opportunity to complete a questionnaire so the potential response base would match that of HAC user demographics for that period, including disability.</p> <p>Although the disabilities of individuals was not specifically recorded, during consultation A, 74 out of 490 respondents identified</p>	

their a disability as being a characteristic that would impact upon their ability to travel to Newtown.

Data on disability was gathered within Consultation B (online survey). Consultation B gathered far fewer customer/public responses than Consultation A however, in terms of customers and 'Birmingham Residents, but non users of services' responses, data shows a broad spread of respondents of with disabilities (detailed below):

Unanswered: 8
Not disabled: 20
Disabled: 8

Of these declared disabled persons 2 preferred not to declare the nature of their disability, 2 suffered from Mental Health disabilities, 1 respondents disability related to stamina/breathing/fatigue, 1 cited chronic ongoing pain and 2 declared multiple disabilities.

Further information regarding consultation can be found within the Report "Housing Advice Service – Citizen Consultation Feedback Report", Feb 2016, A Clarke, Birmingham City Council.

Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Function on Individuals with a disability?

Yes

If so, how did you obtain these views?

Consultation B (Online Survey) included specific sections directed at obtaining the views of stakeholders. This was advertised and promoted through a variety of means including to reach a wide a group of stakeholders people of all abilities and disabilities.

Many Stakeholders (including partner agencies, voluntary groups, elected members and faith/community groups) were specifically notified of the consultations by letter/email/phone and invited to take part through whatever means they felt to be appropriate.

Some success in this endeavour is evidenced by the presence of Stakeholder responses in Consultation B (Be Heard) as well as predominantly stakeholder attendance in Consultation C (Public meetings). Several written representations were also received from stakeholders and have been noted.

Specific data as to the disabilities of respondents in Consultations A & C was not recorded for reasons outlined within the produced Consultation report.

However this data was gathered within Consultation B (Online Survey). Consultation B gathered fewer stakeholder responses than Consultation C however, the data shows responses from respondents with a disability (detailed below):

Not Disabled: 24
Disabled: 2

Of these 2 respondents 1 cited multiple disabilities and another cited Ulcerative Colitis as the nature of their disability.

Further information regarding consultation can be found within the Report Housing Advice Service - Citizen Consultation Feedback Report, Feb 2016, A Clarke, Birmingham City Council.

Comment

Formal consultation with Housing Advice Centre staff ran from 4 January 2016 through to 4th March 2016. The consultation process involved regular meetings with Unions, Staff briefings, individual 1:2:1s with Managers and a dedicated email account was set up for questions and responses. Regular reminders were sent out to staff to allow them to express their views.

Additionally a staff working group was set up which met (and continues to meet) moving towards the implementation of the proposal (subject to Cabinet decision).

The entire staff group were invited to take part in the consultation which includes employees both able bodied and staff identifying as having a disability. The staff cohort known to be disabled is listed as 3 employees however this group is known to be larger as there is no requirement for staff to declare any disability. Further details regarding this are outlined in appendix 3B to this EA. Staff consultation identified that there are concerns around the capacity of a single HAC to deal with volume traffic, safety concerns around the single HAC approach, Concerns about increased travel time and lack of staff car parking.

No specific issues were noted in relation to any potential impact on disabled staff. However the potential for impact based on increased travel staff due to disability was identified and assessed at an early stage in this EA. This is explored further within Appendix 3B to this EA.

A full copy of the staff consultation report, along with relevant appendices can be found as an Appendix 2 to the cabinet report for which this EA also serves.

It is noted that a number of members of HAC staff also participated in the Online Consultation (Consultation B) as part of the public consultation process. 2 professional respondents of 28 in this consultation identified themselves as disabled however it is not known if they were among the responses originating from members of staff. Consultation B responses can be found at Appendix 1 to the cabinet report for which this EA also serves.

Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals with a disability which needs highlighting?	No
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3.2.4 Disability - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how individuals may be impacted.	The development of an HACOE will ensure that a more consistent service is provided to all customers, including those sharing this protected characteristic. This will aid in ensuring that any unfair or inappropriate practice, however unintentional it may be, is removed from the service.
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Function has a role in preventing Individuals with a disability being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their disability?	Yes
Do you think that the Function could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	No
<u>Comment</u> This function will not directly affect the fostering of good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. However by ensuring that those sharing the relevant characteristic receive the highest quality service this function will promote a more inclusive, safer and prosperous Birmingham for all citizens.	
Do you think that the Function will take account of disabilities even if it means treating Individuals with a disability more favourably?	No
Do you think that the Function could assist Individuals with a disability to participate more?	No
Do you think that the Function could assist in promoting positive attitudes to Individuals with a disability?	No

3.3. Pregnancy And Maternity

3.3.1. Pregnancy And Maternity - Differential Impact

Pregnancy & Maternity	Relevant
Comment The closure of 3 out of the 4 existing HAC's in order to develop the COE at Newtown could potentially impact upon the characteristic of Pregnancy and Maternity. Although the same level of service will be offered, there may be additional demands upon pregnant women in terms of travel. This may be particular evident in cases where a woman may reside in the south of the city and would have to travel to north/central (Newtown) to access a homeless interview. Therefore this will be explored in greater detail.	

3.3.2. Pregnancy And Maternity – Impact

Describe how the Function meets the needs of Pregnant women or those who are on maternity leave?	<p>Housing Advice Centres presently offer services to people of all ages either as an applicant for some form of housing or as a member of household currently receiving assistance from the service. The reorganised service will continue to do so from a single location in contract to the four sites presently in use.</p> <p>Data regarding pregnancy and maternity is held within Northgate however, this was not provided at the time of completing this assessment. Therefore information cannot be provided regarding the number of users of Housing Advice Centres by pregnancy/maternity.</p> <p>It is considered that, except in later stages of maternity, capability to travel should be assumed unless otherwise known. Therefore the number of customers who would experience unassailable difficulty accessing the HACOE by normal means such as public transport is likely to be small and therefore subject to sufficient mitigation through existing measures and those under development. This will include visiting officers, Bus tickets and taxi's (in emergencies); telephone/online advice and assistance (including Part VI Online) and flexible appointments around school commitments.</p>
Comment Staff: This group is identified as a potentially affected group within the HAC Staff cohort. It is acknowledged that this particular group is, unlike other groups, fluid and persons falling within this cohort can change more frequently than others. Therefore, data provided by HR may not be reliable or up to date. Therefore, to get the most up to date information, a request was sent to service managers within all 4 HAC's dated 08/04/2015. This requested confirmation of any staff within the service, known to be currently pregnant or subject to maternity arrangements. At the time of preparing this analysis only one pregnant employee and one recently returning from maternity leave had been identified.	

It is also considered, due to the small number of staff involved, existing mitigation to protect this group is sufficient to address any issues that may arise during the period of transference. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Flexible use of maternity leave
- Extended maternity leave requests
- Interchangeable paternity and maternity leave
- Applications for and consideration of Family Flexible working arrangements
- Applications for Home Working (following assessment of appropriateness)
- Access to Work
- Risk Assessment for pregnant workers
- Requests for Reasonable adjustments
- Working from alternate locations through the possible retention of back office function at Lifford House and/or Sutton New Road (although the size of the back office function is yet to be defined and may not be available to all potential applicants from the staff cohort)
- Consideration of redeployment
- Mobility Clause (grades 2, 3 & 4) as outlined in the Birmingham Contract of Employment

Do you have evidence to support the assessment?

Yes

Comment

A full demographic breakdown of all customers by (protected characteristics) accessing Housing Advice for the purposes of making a Part VII (Homelessness) or Part VI (Council Housing Waiting List) Application can be found at Appendix 3A of this EA and was considered in its preparation.

Data within Appendix 3B shows that female staff will, on average, experience an increase of 0.88 miles to their daily (one way) commute as a result of the redesign. When this data was limited to females aged 18-45 (most likely to fall within the protected staff cohort), the average daily commute increased to 1.04 extra miles per day (one way). This was very slightly higher than the average increase for male staff (0.9 miles) and the average for all staff (0.085). It is not felt that the additional 0.14 miles presents less preferential treatment to this group.

Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?

The staff cohort falling within this category is outlined at Appendix 3B of this EA. At the time of preparation only 2 staff are known to fall within this cohort and it is believed that a likely maximum of 5 may exist including missing data or any unknown persons.

Have you received any other feedback about the Function in meeting the needs of Pregnant women or those who are on maternity leave?

No

You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?

Not applicable

Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Pregnant women or those who are on maternity leave which needs highlighting?

No

3.3.3 Pregnancy And Maternity – Consultation

<p>Have you obtained the views of Pregnant women or those who are on maternity leave on the impact of the Function?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>If so, how did you obtain these views?</p>	<p>Consultation on proposals to restructure the Housing Advice Service, including the statutory homeless service, from its present 4 location delivery model (excluding the Youth Hub); to a single centre model based at Newtown Customer Service Centre opened on 04th December 2015 and ran for 7 weeks before closing on 21st January 2016.</p> <p>Consultation involved three main tools,</p> <p>Consultation A: A paper based questionnaire that was handed out to Housing Advice Centre (HAC) users (between 07th December 2015 and 15th January 2016),</p> <p>Consultation B: An online consultation through the councils Be Heard online consultation site</p> <p>Consultation C: 4 face to face sessions across the city open to professionals and members of the public.</p> <p>All of these consultations were open to members of the public, including those who were pregnant and those on maternity leave. The number of different consultative channels increased accessibility to all individuals.</p> <p>Consultation A focused on HAC users with all customers being provided with a copy of the questionnaire and encouraged to complete it. This was undertaken to ensure sampling from as broad a section of the customer demographic as possible, this included pregnant customers and in the same proportions that persons of all ages visited HACs. 490+ responses were gathered.</p> <p>Consultation B was undertaken through the Corporate Be Heard Consultation Website offering existing HAC customers, concerned citizens and professionals opportunity to comment and respond to the proposed changes regardless of pregnancy or maternity status. 63 responses were gathered.</p> <p>Consultation C involved 4 public meetings, across the 4 quadrants of the city so to be as accessible as possible. Citizens & professionals were invited to book in advance or attend on the day and face to face questions and answers were provided to identify and address any concerns raised.</p>
<p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>Consultations B & C were advertised and promoted through a variety of means including leaflets, posters and communications to third parties to reach as wide a group of people of all ages as possible.</p> <p>Specific data as to the Pregnancy/Maternity status of respondents in Consultations A & C was not recorded for reasons outlined within the produced Consultation report. However, as previously stated, all HAC customers for the prescribed period were given opportunity to complete a questionnaire so the potential response base would match that of HAC user demographics for that period.</p>	

Although the pregnancy/maternity status of individuals was not specifically recorded, during consultation A, 28 out of 490 respondents identified pregnancy as being a characteristic that would impact upon their ability to travel to Newtown.

Data on pregnancy was gathered within Consultation B (online survey). Consultation B gathered far fewer customer/public responses than Consultation A and the survey used question logic, as such only respondents identifying themselves as female were asked this question. In terms of customers and 'Birmingham Residents, but non users of services' responses, data shows 20 women were not pregnant, 1 respondent was pregnant respondent and a further that declined to say.

Further information regarding consultation can be found within the Report "Housing Advice Service – Citizen Consultation Feedback Report", Feb 2016, A Clarke, Birmingham City Council.

Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Function on Pregnant women or those who are on maternity leave?

Yes

If so, how did you obtain these views?

Consultation B (Online Survey) included specific sections directed at obtaining the views of stakeholders. This was advertised and promoted through a variety of means including to reach a wide a group of stakeholders including those who were pregnant.

Many Stakeholders (including partner agencies, voluntary groups, elected members and faith/community groups) were specifically notified of the consultations by letter/email/phone and invited to take part through whatever means they felt to be appropriate.

Some success in this endeavour is evidenced by the presence of Stakeholder responses in Consultation B (Be Heard) as well as predominantly stakeholder attendance in Consultation C (Public meetings). Several written representations were also received from stakeholders and have been noted.

Specific data as to the Pregnancy & maternity status of respondents in Consultations A & C was not recorded for reasons outlined within the produced Consultation report.

However this data was gathered within Consultation B (Online Survey). Consultation B gathered fewer stakeholder responses than Consultation C, and the survey used question logic, as such only respondents identifying themselves as female were asked this question. No stakeholders/professionals identified themselves within this category however one did decline to say.

Further information regarding consultation can be found within the Report Housing Advice Service - Citizen Consultation Feedback Report, Feb 2016, A Clarke, Birmingham City Council.

Comment

Formal consultation with Housing Advice Centre staff ran from 4 January 2016 through to 4th March 2016. The consultation process involved regular meetings with Unions, Staff briefings, individual 1:2:1s with Managers and a dedicated email account was set up for questions and responses. Regular reminders were sent out to staff to allow them to express their views.

Additionally a staff working group was set up which met (and continues to meet) moving towards the implementation of the proposal (subject to Cabinet decision).

The entire staff group were invited to take part in the consultation which includes employees any staff who are pregnant or presently exercising maternity rights. Further details regarding this are outlined in appendix 3B to this EA.

Staff consultation identified that there are concerns around the capacity of a single HAC to deal with volume traffic, safety concerns around the single HAC approach, Concerns about increased travel time and lack of staff car parking.

No specific issues were noted in relation to any potential impact on pregnant staff or those exercising maternity rights. However the potential for impact on staff falling within this protected characteristic was identified and assessed at an early stage in this EA. This is explored further within Appendix 3B to this EA.

A full copy of the staff consultation report, along with relevant appendices can be found as an Appendix 2 to the cabinet report for which this EA also serves.

It is noted that a number of members of HAC staff also participated in the Online Consultation (Consultation B) as part of the public consultation process however none identified as identifying with the pregnancy or maternity characteristic. Consultation B responses can be found at Appendix 1 to the cabinet report for which this EA also serves.

Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Pregnant women or those who are on maternity leave which needs highlighting?

No

3.3.4. Pregnancy And Maternity - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how individuals may be impacted.	The development of an HACOE will ensure that a more consistent service is provided to all customers, including those sharing this protected characteristic. This will aid in ensuring that any unfair or inappropriate practice, however unintentional it may be, is removed from the service.
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Function has a role in preventing Pregnant women or those who are on maternity leave being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their pregnancy and maternity?	Yes
Do you think that the Function could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	No
Comment This function will not directly affect the fostering of good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. However by ensuring that those sharing the relevant characteristic receive the highest quality service this function will promote a more inclusive, safer and prosperous Birmingham for all citizens.	

3.4. Race

3.4.1. Race - Differential Impact

Race	Relevant
<p>Comment</p> <p>Although there will be an impact on all customers, upon assessment it is not foreseen that the proposed change in function to the Housing Advice Service will unduly or negatively impact any person based on race. The service provided are non-race specific and persons accessing the service will be able to do so the same way regardless of their race/ethnicity.</p> <p>There are potential issues identified that relate to the wider community that are related to race however these will be explored further throughout this EA.</p> <p>Should any issues relating to race be identified following implementation of the redesigned service, this EA can be reviewed to ensure they are adequately addressed.</p>	

3.4.2. Race – Impact

<p>Describe how the Function meets the needs of Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds?</p>	<p>Housing Advice Centres presently offer services to people of all ages either as an applicant for some form of housing or as a member of household currently receiving assistance from the service. The reorganised service will continue to do so from a single location in contrast to the four sites presently in use.</p> <p>The primary impact identified in this case is the small but realistic risk of perceived favourable treatment by other communities against the local community where the HACOE is to be located.</p> <p>Newtown is a significantly deprived community with high social deprivation, low educational attainment, high unemployment, low community cohesion and significant issues with crime and disorder. Its population is predominantly BME.</p> <p>This therefore presents a risk that other communities losing their local HAC and being required to travel up to 9 miles to access the service may perceive the local Newtown population as being afforded more preferential treatment based on race or circumstance rather than choice of the centre due to its central location and more modern facilities.</p>
<p>Do you have evidence to support the assessment?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Comment</p> <p>There is no evidence for this assessment. This has been identified as a risk only. At present the only possible mitigation is via information.</p> <p>It should be considered that, when communicating with the public/members or media the reasons for the closure of the other 3 HAC's, the rationale in selecting the Newtown site for the future service be clearly explained. Beyond this no other mitigation is suggested and the risk should be accepted.</p>	
<p>Do you plan to collect any evidence?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Have you received any other feedback about the Function in meeting the needs of Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>
<p>Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds which needs highlighting?</p>	<p>No</p>

3.4.3. Race – Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds on the impact of the Function?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	<p>Consultation on proposals to restructure the Housing Advice Service, including the statutory homeless service, from its present 4 location delivery model (excluding the Youth Hub); to a single centre model based at Newtown Customer Service Centre opened on 04th December 2015 and ran for 7 weeks before closing on 21st January 2016.</p> <p>Consultation involved three main tools,</p> <p>Consultation A: A paper based questionnaire that was handed out to Housing Advice Centre (HAC) users (between 07th December 2015 and 15th January 2016),</p> <p>Consultation B: An online consultation through the councils Be Heard online consultation site Consultation C: 4 face to face sessions across the city open to professionals and members of the public. All of these consultations were open to members of the public of all races and ethnicities.</p> <p>Consultation A focused on HAC users with all customers being provided with a copy of the questionnaire and encouraged to complete it. This was undertaken to ensure sampling from as broad a section of the customer demographic as possible, this included customers of all races and ethnicities and in the same proportions that persons of all races and ethnicities visited HACs. 490+ responses were gathered.</p> <p>Consultation B was undertaken through the Corporate Be Heard Consultation Website offering existing HAC customers, concerned citizens and professionals opportunity to comment and respond to the proposed changes regardless of race or ethnicity. 63 responses were gathered.</p> <p>Consultation C involved 4 public meetings, across the 4 quadrants of the city so to be as accessible as possible. Citizens & professionals were invited to book in advance or attend on the day and face to face questions and answers were provided to identify and address any concerns raised.</p>
<p>Comment</p> <p>Consultations B & C were advertised and promoted through a variety of means including leaflets, posters and communications to third parties to reach as wide a group of people of all races and ethnicities as possible.</p> <p>Specific data as to the race or ethnicity of respondents in Consultations A & C was not recorded for reasons outlined within the produced Consultation report. However, as previously stated, all HAC customers for the prescribed period were given opportunity to complete a questionnaire so the potential response base would match that of HAC user demographics for that period.</p> <p>Although the race/ethnicity of individuals was not specifically recorded, during consultation A, 23 out of 490 respondents identified their race as being a characteristic that would impact upon their ability to travel to Newtown.</p> <p>Data on race & ethnicity was gathered within Consultation B (online survey). Consultation B gathered far fewer customer/public responses than Consultation A however, in terms of customers and 'Birmingham Residents, but non users of services' responses, data shows a broad spread of respondents of all races (detailed below):</p>	

Unanswered: 11
 Asian British: 1
 Sikh/Indian: 1
 Black Caribbean: 2
 Black African: 1
 White British: 15
 White Irish: 2

Further information regarding consultation can be found within the Report "Housing Advice Service - Citizen Consultation Feedback Report", Feb 2016, A Clarke, Birmingham City Council

Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Function on Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds?

Yes

If so, How did you obtain these views?

Consultation B (Online Survey) included specific sections directed at obtaining the views of stakeholders. This was advertised and promoted through a variety of means including to reach a wide a group of stakeholders people of all races and ethnicities.

Many Stakeholders (including partner agencies, voluntary groups, elected members and faith/community groups) were specifically notified of the consultations by letter/email/phone and invited to take part through whatever means they felt to be appropriate.

Some success in this endeavour is evidenced by the presence of Stakeholder responses in Consultation B (Be Heard) as well as predominantly stakeholder attendance in Consultation C (Public meetings). Several written representations were also received from stakeholders and have been noted.

Specific data as to the race of respondents in Consultations A & C was not recorded for reasons outlined within the produced Consultation report.

However this data was gathered within Consultation B (Online Survey). Consultation B gathered fewer stakeholder responses than Consultation A, however, the data shows a broad spread of respondents of all races (detailed below):

Unanswered: 7
 Asian Bangladeshi: 1
 Asian Indian Other: 2
 Sikh/Indian: 3
 Black Caribbean: 1
 Black African: 1
 White British: 13

Further information regarding consultation can be found within the Report Housing Advice Service - Citizen Consultation Feedback Report, Feb 2016, A Clarke, Birmingham City Council.

Comment

Formal consultation with Housing Advice Centre staff ran from 4 January 2016 through to 4th March 2016. The consultation process involved regular meetings with Unions, Staff briefings, individual 1:2:1s with Managers and a dedicated email account was set up for questions and responses. Regular reminders were sent out to staff to allow them to express their views.

Additionally a staff working group was set up which met (and continues to meet) moving towards the implementation of the proposal (subject to Cabinet decision).

The entire staff group were invited to take part in the consultation which includes staff of all races. Further details regarding this are outlined in appendix 3B to this EA.

Staff consultation identified that there are concerns around the capacity of a single HAC to deal with volume traffic, safety concerns around the single HAC approach, Concerns about increased travel time and lack of staff car parking.

No specific issues were noted in relation to any potential impact on staff due to race. Impact in relation to race was identified and assessed at an early stage in this EA. However this impact was customer and wider community specific and did not impact on staff.

A full copy of the staff consultation report, along with relevant appendices can be found as an Appendix 2 to the cabinet report for which this EA also serves.

It is noted that a number of members of HAC staff also participated in the Online Consultation (Consultation B) as part of the public consultation process. Consultation B responses can be found at Appendix 1 to the cabinet report for which this EA also serves.

Is there anything about the Function and the way it affects Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds which needs highlighting?

No

3.4.4. Race - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how individuals may be impacted.	<p>The development of an HACOE will ensure that a more consistent service is provided to all customers, including those sharing this protected characteristic. This will aid in ensuring that any unfair or inappropriate practice, however unintentional it may be, is removed from the service.</p> <p>The selection of the Newtown site will also provide an improved service to a predominantly deprived BME community.</p>
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Function has a role in preventing Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their ethnicity?	Yes
Do you think that the Function could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	No
<p><u>Comment</u> This function will not directly affect the fostering of good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. However by ensuring that those sharing the relevant characteristic receive the highest quality service this function will promote a more inclusive, safer and prosperous Birmingham for all citizens.</p>	

3.5. Concluding Statement on Full Assessment

An Equality Impact Session took place on 25/03/2015 which was attended by members of Pre Tenancy and Homelessness Service with representatives from Business Change team. During this session all protected characteristics were discussed, potential impacts were explored and mitigation/countermeasures agreed.

The protected characteristics explored in the full analysis are the ones deemed to be most likely to experience any additional impact from the proposed change in function. The majority of these impacts relate to the distance they may be expected to travel to access the proposed HACOES.

It is considered that the mitigation and countermeasures outlined in this EA will be sufficient to account for the small number of customers who will experience any additional detrimental impact exceeding that of a normal member of the public.

The majority of customers will experience some impact due to having to travel further to access the service. However it is considered that it will be negligible and not disproportionately impactful for users of public transport.

The additional distance from existing HAC's to the proposed HACOES site is shown below along with route options for a member of the public accessing the HACOES via public transport from former sites:

Erdington (B23 6RE) HAC to Newtown HAC (B19 2SW), 4.1 miles (estimated 9 mins driving).

Bus 115: 30-33 Mins - Total walking time 15 mins, Total Bus time 15 mins.

Bus 905 & Bus 33: 28 Mins - Total walking time 7 mins, Total bus time 14 mins.

Nearest Rail: Erdington, 6mins from Erdington HAC. Rail requires change in B'Ham New Street and transfer from New Street to Snow Hill for a second train. Final stop in Jewellery Quarter Rail Station, 26 Mins walk from Newtown HACOES.

Northfield HAC (B31 1PG) to Newtown HAC (B19 2SW), 7.7 miles (estimated 16 mins driving)

Bus 63 & 51: 52 Mins - Total walking time 14 mins, Total bus time 38mins

Bus 61 & 886: 45 Mins - Total walking time 7 mins, Total bus time 33 mins

Nearest Rail: Northfield 20 mins walk from HAC. One train journey which stops at Jewellery Quarter Rail Station, 26 Mins from Newtown HAC.

Sparkbrook HAC (B11 1LU) to Newtown HAC (B19 2SW), 3.3 Miles (estimated 9 mins driving)

Bus 8C: 54 Mins - Total walking time 13 mins, Total bus time 41mins

Bus 6 & 33: 37 Mins - Total walking time 12 mins, Total bus time 20mins

Nearest Rail: Small Heath, 14 mins walk from HAC, Final stop at Jewellery Quarter Rail Station, 26 Mins from Newtown HAC.

All options are viable for an older person with good mobility. Bus options remain viable for older persons with some mobility limitations.

For those with severe mobility limitations further mitigation is in place and will remain available. This includes the use of visiting officers to undertake assessments at alternate locations, Part VI applications available on line, provision of bus tickets in occasional cases where persons are unable to reach the HACOES and in extreme cases the service will consider the use of taxi's and other non-public transport.

In considering the limited numbers of older adults approaching the existing service a reasonable level of mobility is assumed and the ability to use public transport should prove sufficient for most, many of whom will have access to a free bus pass.

It is therefore considered that the mitigation in place for the remaining small minority will be both sufficient and not place an unmanageable financial, resource or logistical burden on the service.

However, in view of the potential impacts additional analysis of accessibility at a ward and district level has been undertaken, including analysis of emergency & crisis customer transport arrangements. This document can be found at Appendix 3D to this document.

Extensive consultation has taken place with customers, citizens and stakeholders regarding the potential impacts of the proposed reorganisation. This included discussion on and study of protected characteristics.

From consultation A (which attracted 490 responses from HAC customers) 340 do not feel any of the protected characteristics impacted upon their ability to travel to Newtown. Of the remaining respondents 4 characteristics attracted over 20 responses from customers who felt that one or more of these would impact upon their ability to travel to Newtown. These 'Top 4' responses support the content of this EA, matching the groups which have been identified, discussed and mitigated. These being age, Pregnancy, Disability and Race.

Respondents were invited to select multiple characteristics if they deemed them relevant and from this, other trends were noted.

Nearly half of those identifying pregnancy as an equality issue also identify with Disability as an equality issue with accessing Newtown (12 of 26).

Nearly half of those identifying Gender as an equality issue also identify with Pregnancy as an equality issue with accessing Newtown (7 out of 14).

Nearly half of those identifying Race as an equality issue also identify with Disability as an equality issue with accessing Newtown (10 out of 23).

From responses within all consultations the distance that will be required for some customers to travel was highlighted as excessive due to their disability or age. Several customers identified this directly within their responses and other cases were highlighted on their behalf by stakeholder professionals.

Further information regarding consultation responses can be found within the document Housing Advice Service - Citizen Consultation Feedback Report, Feb 2016, A Clarke, Birmingham City Council.

Staff subject to the transfer to the HACOE will also be impacted. The requirement to work from alternate locations within the city forms part of the Birmingham Contract and thus there is an expectation that the majority of staff will be able to do so. However it is also accepted that a small number of staff falling within the same protected groups identified for customers may also experience difficulties with the distance to Newtown. These staff will be identified and adjustments will be considered on a case by case basis.

A full copy of the staff consultation report can be found as an Appendix 2 to the cabinet report for which this EA also serves. No direct equality issues were noted in relation to concerns raised during the staff consultation however during review of this document. However further review of this document is recommended when considering this EA. Appendix 2A (Union Q&A) did identify an issue potentially relating to gender stating "Car parking is an issue at Newtown. Having to park on the main road can present potential safety risks. 72% of affected staff are female" However it is not considered that such risk is exclusive to female staff and it is not felt appropriate to prioritise car parking with preference to gender. The service has responded to this issue stating that "We will be ensuring that we secure as many parking spaces for our staff as possible if the proposal is accepted. We will work with staff to ensure this is distributed fairly and in particular for any staff who are working late but of course we will also need to consider disabilities and where people have a parking space as a reasonable adjustment. Although I accept this is a concern for staff and we will ensure safety wherever possible staff across locations park in the street and walk to their office location".

In the event of any equality issue developing that has not been accounted for within this assessment then a review can be conducted in order to identify appropriate steps to resolve it.

A full review will take place approximately one year from implementation to ensure that the relevant issues have been captured and addressed within this EA.

01 Jan 2014-31 Dec 2014 Part VII Apps

HAC Totals: 5111 Applicants

Ethnicity:	1912 White British/White Other
	1002 Asian British/Asian Other
	1070 Black/Black British
	17 Chinese
	306 Mixed Race
	455 Not Declared
	349 Other Ethnic Group
Gender:	3757 Female
	1354 Male
Sexuality:	3301 Hetrosexual/Straight
	29 Bisexual
	17 Gay
	31 Lesbian
	1733 Not Disclosed/Refused/Unknown
Age:	16-17: 94
	18-24: 1117
	25-34: 1960
	35-44: 1198
	45-54: 485
	55-64: 169
	65+: 88
Disability:	Hearing: 25
	Visual: 11
	Learning: 41
	Mental Health: 409
	Mobility: 106
	Multiple Disabilities: 139
	Other Disability: 204
	None/Unknown: 4176
Religion:	Buddhist: 20
	Christian: 1086
	Hindu: 9
	Jewish: 5
	Muslim: 1067
	No Religion: 777
	Not Known: 2053
	Other: 57
	Rastafarian: 4
	Sikh: 33

Marital Status: Not Recorded

Erdington HAC Totals: 1080 Applicants

Ethnicity:	560 White British/White Other
	105 Asian British/Asian Other
	184 Black/Black British
	2 Chinese
	73 Mixed Race
	123 Not Declared
	33 Other Ethnic Group
Gender:	867 Female
	213 Male
Sexuality:	777 Hetrosexual/Straight
	5 Bisexual
	3 Gay
	6 Lesbian
	289 Not Disclosed/Refused/Unknown
Age:	16-17: 1
	18-24: 244
	25-34: 423
	35-44: 241
	45-54: 114
	55-64: 38
	65+: 19
Disability:	Hearing: 1
	Visual: 4
	Learning: 5
	Mental Health: 72
	Mobility: 19
	Multiple Disabilities: 19
	Other Disability: 36
	None/Unknown: 924
Religion:	Buddhist: 3
	Christian: 323
	Hindu: 2
	Jewish: 1
	Muslim: 113
	No Religion: 279
	Not Known: 346
	Other: 9
	Rastafarian: 1
	Sikh: 3
Marital Status:	Not Recorded

Newtown HAC Totals: 1304 Applicants

Ethnicity:	214 White British/White Other
	297 Asian British/Asian Other
	463 Black/Black British
	9 Chinese
	56 Mixed Race
	126 Not Declared
	139 Other Ethnic Group
Gender:	961 Female
	343 Male
Sexuality:	625 Hetrosexual/Straight
	7 Bisexual
	1 Gay
	4 Lesbian
	667 Not Disclosed/Refused/Unknown
Age:	16-17: 2
	18-24: 195
	25-34: 550
	35-44: 356
	45-54: 130
	55-64: 51
	65+: 20
Disability:	Hearing: 9
	Visual: 2
	Learning: 6
	Mental Health: 52
	Mobility: 19
	Multiple Disabilities: 13
	Other Disability: 27
	None/Unknown: 1176
Religion:	Buddhist: 7
	Christian: 236
	Hindu: 4
	Jewish: 0
	Muslim: 231
	No Religion: 149
	Not Known: 638
	Other: 22
	Rastafarian: 2
	Sikh: 15
Marital Status:	Not Recorded

Northfield HAC Totals: 1013 Applicants

Ethnicity:	610 White British/White Other
	54 Asian British/Asian Other
	135 Black/Black British
	4 Chinese
	60 Mixed Race
	105 Not Declared
	45 Other Ethnic Group
Gender:	778 Female
	235 Male
Sexuality:	637 Hetrosexual/Straight
	6 Bisexual
	5 Gay
	7 Lesbian
	358 Not Disclosed/Refused/Unknown
Age:	16-17: 3
	18-24: 230
	25-34: 413
	35-44: 216
	45-54: 102
	55-64: 30
	65+: 19
Disability:	Hearing: 5
	Visual: 3
	Learning: 11
	Mental Health: 133
	Mobility: 26
	Multiple Disabilities: 34
	Other Disability: 59
	None/Unknown: 742
Religion:	Buddhist: 7
	Christian: 241
	Hindu: 0
	Jewish: 3
	Muslim: 50
	No Religion: 207
	Not Known: 486
	Other: 16
	Rastafarian: 0
	Sikh: 3
Marital Status:	Not Recorded

Sparkbrook HAC Totals: 1371 Applicants

Ethnicity:	368 White British/White Other
	514 Asian British/Asian Other
	227 Black/Black British
	2 Chinese
	72 Mixed Race
	74 Not Declared
	114 Other Ethnic Group
Gender:	950 Female
	421 Male
Sexuality:	987 Hetrosexual/Straight
	3 Bisexual
	4 Gay
	6 Lesbian
	371 Not Disclosed/Refused/Unknown
Age:	16-17: 3
	18-24: 200
	25-34: 572
	35-44: 379
	45-54: 138
	55-64: 49
	65+: 30
Disability:	Hearing: 9
	Visual: 2
	Learning: 10
	Mental Health: 103
	Mobility: 41
	Multiple Disabilities: 66
	Other Disability: 69
	None/Unknown: 1071
Religion:	Buddhist: 3
	Christian: 218
	Hindu: 3
	Jewish: 1
	Muslim: 612
	No Religion: 436
	Not Known: 315
	Other: 78
	Rastafarian: 1
	Sikh: 12
Marital Status:	Not Recorded

01 Jan 2014-31 Dec 2014 Part VII Apps

Count of Person Reference	Ethnic Group							
HAC	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Mixed Race	Not Declared	Other Ethnic Group	White	Grand Total
Erdington	105	184	2	73	123	33	560	1080
Newtown	297	463	9	56	126	139	214	1304
Northfield	54	135	4	60	105	45	610	1013
Sparkbrook	514	227	2	72	74	114	368	1371
Grand Total	970	1009	17	261	428	331	1752	4768

Count of Person Reference	Sex		
HAC	Female	Male	Grand Total
Erdington	867	213	1080
Newtown	961	343	1304
Northfield	778	235	1013
Sparkbrook	950	421	1371
Grand Total	3556	1212	4768

Count of Person Reference	Sexuality							
HAC	Bisexual	Gay	Heterosexual	Lesbian	Not Disclosed	Refused	(blank)	Grand Total
Erdington	5	3	777	6	138	14	137	1080
Newtown	7	1	625	4	63	6	598	1304
Northfield	6	5	637	7	91	12	255	1013
Sparkbrook	3	4	987	6	110	24	237	1371
Grand Total	21	13	3026	23	402	56	1227	4768

Appendix A: HAC Equalities Data (Part VII & VI Applicants 01/01/2014-31/12/2014)

Count of Person Reference	Age Group							
HAC	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Over 65	Grand Total
Erdington	1	244	423	241	114	38	19	1080
Newtown	2	195	549	356	130	51	20	1304
Northfield	3	230	413	216	102	30	19	1013
Sparkbrook	3	200	572	379	138	49	30	1371
Grand Total	9	869	1957	1192	484	168	88	4768

Count of Person Reference	Disability											
HAC	Hearing impairment	Learning Difficulties	Mental Health Issues	Mobility	Multitple Disabilities	Not Applicable	Not Disclosed	Other Disability	Refused	Visual Impairment	(blank)	Grand Total
Erdington	1	5	72	19	19	791	119	36		4	14	1080
Newtown	9	6	52	19	13	842	302	27	3	2	29	1304
Northfield	5	11	133	26	34	486	229	59		3	27	1013
Sparkbrook	9	10	103	41	66	812	233	69	3	2	23	1371
Grand Total	24	32	360	105	132	2931	883	191	6	11	93	4768

Count of Person Reference	Religion												
HAC	Buddhist	Christian	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Not Applicable	Not Disclosed	Other	Rastafarian	Refused	Sikh	(blank)	Grand Total
Erdington	3	323	2	1	113	132	346	9	1	10	3	137	1080
Newtown	7	236	4		231	91	58	22	2	4	15	634	1304
Northfield	7	241		3	50	202	229	16		5	3	257	1013
Sparkbrook	3	218	3	1	612	199	73	7	1	5	12	237	1371
Grand Total	20	1018	9	5	1006	624	706	54	4	24	33	1265	4768

01 Jan 2014-31 Dec 2014 Part VI Apps

Count of Person Reference	Ethnic Group								
HAC	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Mixed Race	Not Declared	Other Ethnic Group	White	(blank)	Grand Total
Erdington	205	445	7	117	293	104	1331		2502
Newtown	674	1086	15	119	244	277	616		3031
Northfield	179	492	5	151	555	197	2350	2	3931
Sparkbrook	1114	611	5	174	449	340	1648		4341
Grand Total	2172	2634	32	561	1541	918	5945	2	13805

Count of Person Reference	Sex					
HAC	Female	Male	Transgender	Unknown	(blank)	Grand Total
Erdington	1610	891			1	2502
Newtown	1737	1294				3031
Northfield	2512	1419				3931
Sparkbrook	2592	1747	1	1		4341
Grand Total	8451	5351	1	1	1	13805

Count of Person Reference	Sexuality							
HAC	Bisexual	Gay	Heterosexual	Lesbian	Not Disclosed	Refused	(blank)	Grand Total
Erdington	12	9	1302	5	351	20	803	2502
Newtown	15	5	1093	4	159	30	1725	3031
Northfield	16	15	2098	14	328	58	1402	3931
Sparkbrook	18	10	2297	12	261	83	1660	4341
Grand Total	61	39	6790	35	1099	191	5590	13805

Appendix A: HAC Equalities Data (Part VII & VI Applicants 01/01/2014-31/12/2014)

Count of Person Reference	Age Group								
HAC	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Error	Over 65	Grand Total
Erdington	10	412	786	515	384	202	1	192	2502
Newtown	3	377	1067	784	439	207	2	152	3031
Northfield	9	800	1236	740	559	294	1	292	3931
Sparkbrook	38	778	1380	987	620	297	1	240	4341
Grand Total	60	2367	4469	3026	2002	1000	5	876	13805

Count of Person Reference	Disability											
HAC	Hearing impairment	Learning Difficulties	Mental Health Issues	Mobility	Multitple Disabilities	Not Applicable	Not Disclosed	Other Disability	Refused	Visual Impairment	(blank)	Grand Total
Erdington	19	18	123	132	73	1323	675	57		12	70	2502
Newtown	10	11	78	78	63	1628	934	80	7	10	132	3031
Northfield	33	49	287	198	215	1769	1045	163	4	21	147	3931
Sparkbrook	29	40	234	180	166	2157	1261	128	7	17	122	4341
Grand Total	91	118	722	588	517	6877	3915	428	18	60	471	13805

Count of Person Reference	Religion												
HAC	Buddhist	Christian	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Not Applicable	Not Disclosed	Other	Rastafarian	Refused	Sikh	(blank)	Grand Total
Erdington	5	611	3	2	180	268	569	26	2	16	7	813	2502
Newtown	5	447	7	1	472	149	105	17	3	26	19	1780	3031
Northfield	10	988	4	3	232	538	657	32	7	27	8	1425	3931
Sparkbrook	7	720	4	1	1057	548	214	43	3	33	20	1691	4341
Grand Total	27	2766	18	7	1941	1503	1545	118	15	102	54	5709	13805

2014 Homeless Priority Applicants by Homelessness Reason (HO)	Total
1. Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	396
10a. Left Prison	3
10b. Left Hospital	12
10c. Left other institution or LA care	39
10c. Left SCH Care	74
11a. Left HM Forces	7
11b. Other Including H/Less In Emergency	95
2. Other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	259
3. Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner:	125
4a. Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	473
4b. Violent breakdown of relationship involving associated persons	124
4d. Other forms of violence	42
5a. Racially motivated harassment	4
5b. Other forms of harassment	83
6. Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)	34
7a. Local authority or other public sector dwellings	15
7b. Registered social landlord or other housing association dwellings	11
7c. Private sector dwellings	57
8a. Termination of assured shorthold tenancy	530
8b. Disrepair	50
8b. Overcrowding	61
8b. Perpetrator of DV/ASB	5
8b. Reasons other than termination of assured shorthold tenancy	54
9. Required to leave National Asylum Support Service accommodation	64
Grand Total	2617

Housing Advice: Equality Assessment

APPENDIX B

Staff demographic and Impact analysis (Ref EA000673):

1. Introduction:

- 1.1. The information here is intended to give an overview of the staff impacted by the proposed centralisation of the Housing Advice Service from 4 Housing Advice Centres (HAC's) to 1 centre based at the current Newtown HAC Site.
- 1.2. Data has been provided by the Continuous Improvement Team (CIT), however due to staff movement within the service in response to changing needs and demand there will be variations which have not yet been electronically recorded.
- 1.3. Data provided has been validated against existing staff structures and up to date information gathered during a service mapping exercise undertaken in March 2015 and is determined to be sufficiently accurate for the purposes of analysis.

2. Scope:

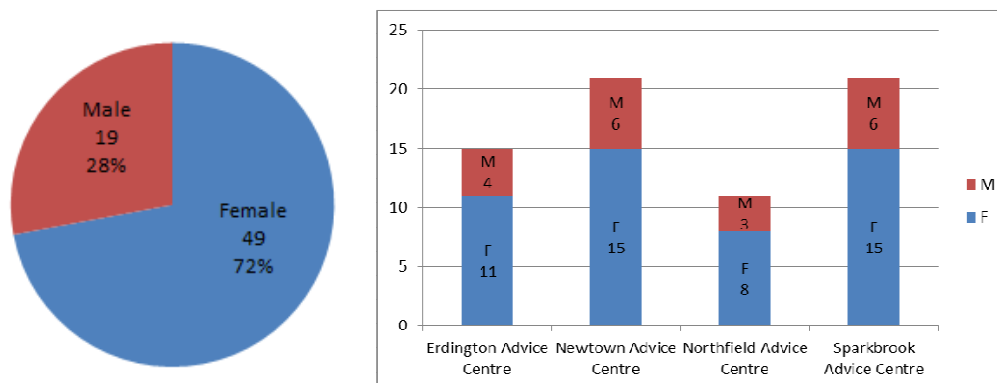
- 2.1. Housing Advice Centres are based within Customer Service Centres. CSC's are managed by the Neighbourhood Advice & Information Service (NAIS) which are part of the Place Directorate with their own service transformation project and thus fall outside the scope of this analysis. This analysis excludes NAIS staff but will consider staff within the Housing Needs service as part of the People Directorate.
- 2.2. A small number of PSS Staff are assigned to Housing Advice Centres. Detailed information as to their status has not been provided at this time and thus they have been included in this analysis to ensure that any needs have been considered should they too relocate to the proposed Newtown HAC.

3. Assumptions, Limitations and Constraints:

- 3.1. Detailed data regarding all protected characteristics for all staff within the service is not compulsory and thus data cannot be provided regarding all protected characteristics. Whatever data is known has been collected for analysis here. Given the small number of staff affected by the service redesign, it is considered that any issues relating to protected characteristics that develop during the project can be managed locally through identified mitigation and counter-measures.
- 3.2. The Equality Assessment has identified 3 particular characteristics that may be impacted by the service redesign more so than others. These characteristics are age, disability and pregnancy & Maternity and particular focus will take place on these areas.

4. Staff Demographic (Gender):

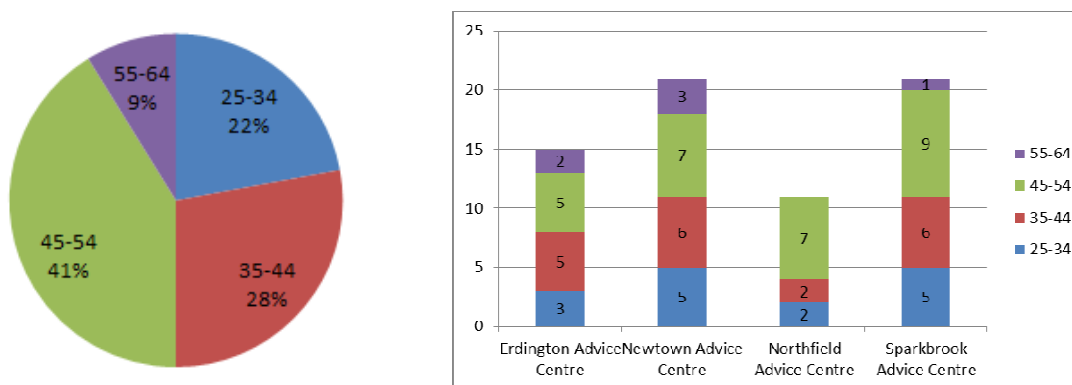
HAC Staff by Gender



4.1. The affected staff group comprises of 49 females (72%) and 19 males (28%). The data shows that Housing Advice Centre's personnel are predominantly female staff however gender has not been determined to be a factor which is particularly impacted by the proposed service redesign.

5. Staff Demographic (Age):

HAC Staff by age group

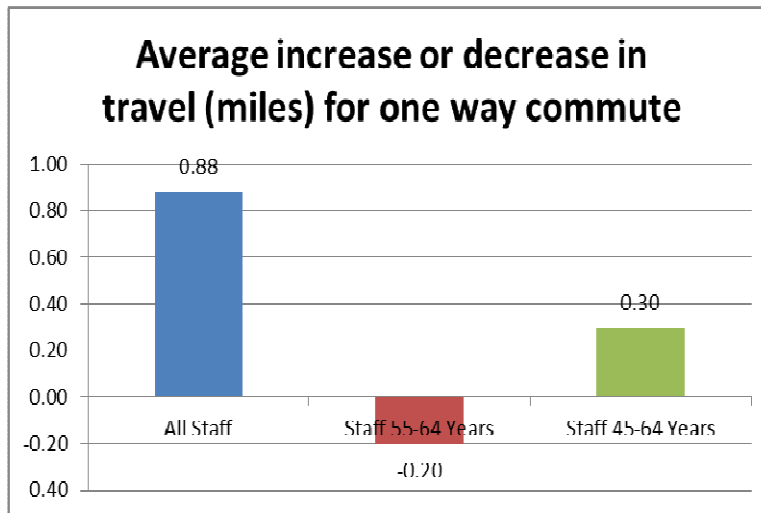


5.1. The HAC staff cohort is predominantly middle aged with 41% of the workforce being aged 45-54. A further 9% are aged 55-64 thus representing an older workforce. Age was identified as a potentially impacted group in the Equality Analysis and thus this large group of older employees can be considered further.

5.2. However, in the absence of other data to qualify this further it is also considered that the largest group of the workforce is also over 10 years away from retirement age and thus should be considered fit and healthy to travel unless otherwise stated.

5.3. Concern due to additional travel for the older workforce was considered. Data from s13 (Staff Geography) was limited to those staff aged 45-64 and those aged 55-64 and then compared to the overall workforce to be analysed.

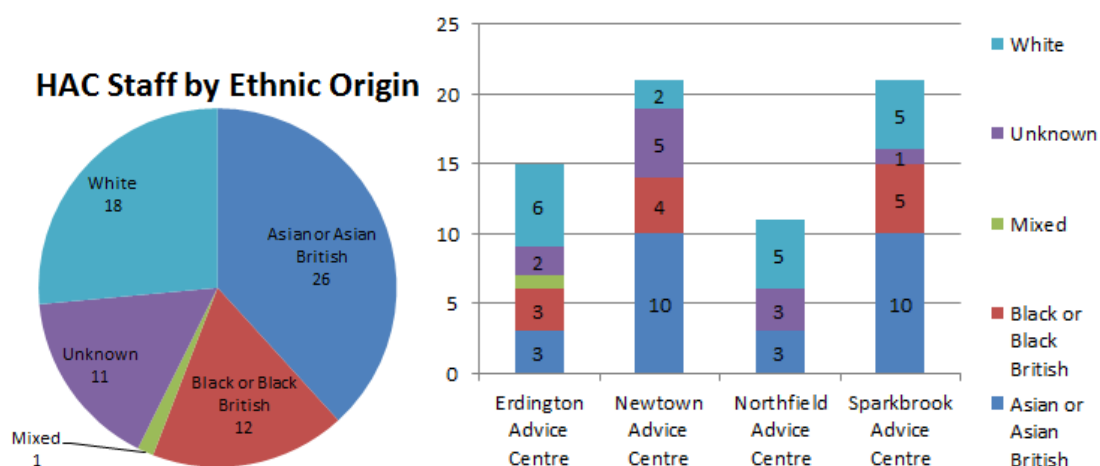
5.4. The data below clearly shows that the oldest in the workforce experience, on average, the smallest increase in commute and are thus located closer to the Newtown site than their younger comparators. It is therefore not considered that the older workforce is disproportionately affected by the proposed redesign.



5.5. It is accepted that there will be exceptions to the 'average' figures analysed here however it is felt that the number of staff who experience issues will be small enough to be assessed on a case by case basis for individual planning using the suite of countermeasures identified.

5.6. Any requests for special consideration due to excessive travel can be evaluated and considered during the staff consultation/information phase of the redesign.

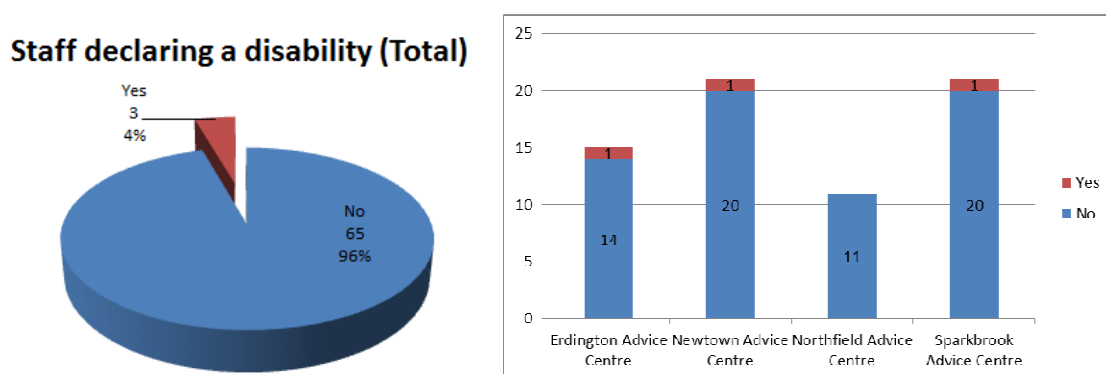
6. Staff Demographic (Race):



6.1. The Housing Advice workforce is made up predominantly of BME Staff (57% of staff). Of these, Asian or Asian British is the largest group with 38% of staff identifying this way. 26% of staff identify themselves as White and Black or Black British staff account for 17% of the remaining staff.

6.2. There is an identified gap in data with the ethnicity of 16% of the workforce remaining unknown. However, as stated previously this data is not compulsory and is gathered by staff self-declaring. Furthermore, race has not been determined to be a factor which will be particularly impacted by the proposed service redesign and thus this data is for information only.

7. Staff Demographic (Disability):



7.1. Within the affected staff group there are 3 members of staff declared as having a disability. Staff are not required to declare this and thus this figure may be subject to some change. One member of staff is already working from the Newtown HAC site and the remaining 2 work from Erdington & Sparkbrook.

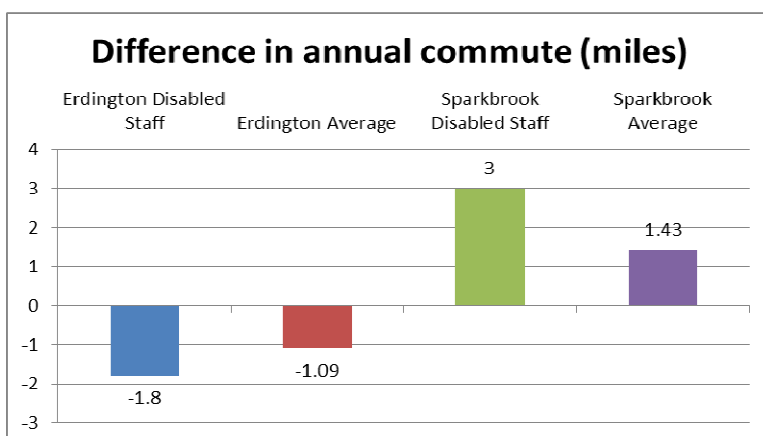
7.2. Disability was identified as a potentially impacted group in the Equality Analysis and thus this group of employees should be considered further.

7.3. The proposed Newtown HAC site is ground floor accommodation and thus more suited to employees with a physical/mobility disability than other sites such as Sparkbrook and Erdington which are reliant upon the functionality of lifts. Access to work equipment provided for employees will be retained and can be transferred to the new site.

7.4. Staff transferring will be existing staff as further recruitment is not planned. Therefore it is not foreseen that any issues for those with hearing or visual impairment will arise from the building itself that were not possible to overcome at previous work locations.

7.5. Disabled employees who are particularly impacted are likely to be impacted by the possibility of additional travel time/distance to the Newtown HAC site. It is anticipated that the majority of employees drive and have access to a vehicle however the use of public transport has also been considered and full details can be found in s13 – Staff Geography.

7.6. With such a small cohort of known disabled staff it has been possible to detail differences in daily one way travel (shown below). Disabled staff at Erdington will experience a decrease in daily commute exceeding that of the mean average for other staff at that HAC. Disabled Staff at Erdington will experience an increased journey exceeding the average for that staff group.



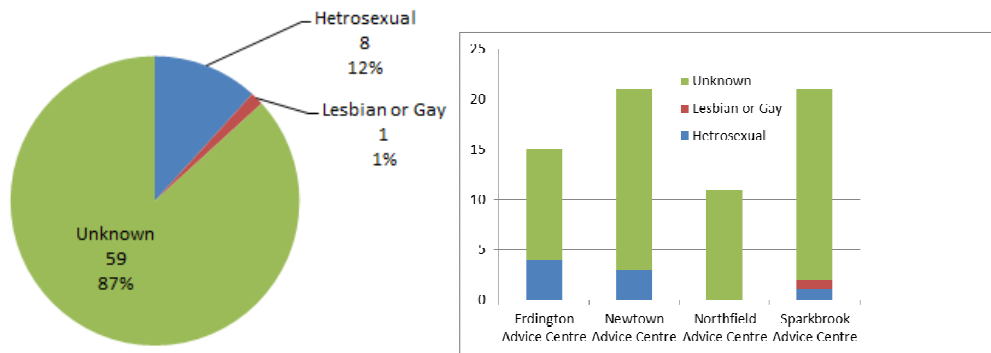
7.7. Taking account of the above it should not be assumed that disabled staff are automatically disadvantaged, particularly in the absence of any detailed data on the nature of the disabilities for the members of staff in question. It should also be noted that there are non-disabled staff who will experience an increased commute exceeding the one outlined here and thus the staff in question are not disproportionately disadvantaged.

7.8. In consideration of the above it is considered that due to the small group of staff involved, any issues arising as a result of the redesign, can be managed and resolved through existing counter measures.

8. Staff Demographic (Sexual Orientation):

8.1. Detailed information regarding the staff demographic in terms of Sexual Orientation is not gathered as mandatorily and is reliant on self-reporting by staff. At present the sexual orientation of 87% of the HAC workforce is not known. Details are shown below:

Staff Sexual Orientation

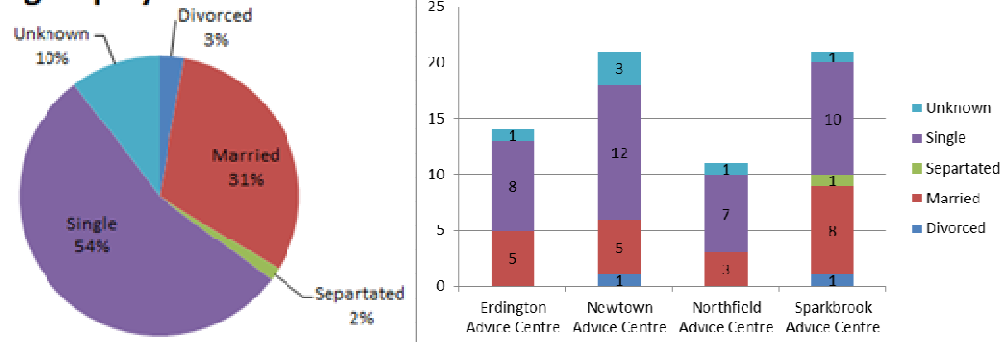


8.2. Sexual Orientation was not identified as a potentially impacted group in the Equality Analysis and thus this group of employees is identified for information only.

9. Staff Demographic (Marriage & Civil Partnership):

9.1. The majority of the HAC workforce identify themselves as Single (54%) and 31% of the workforce are married. 10% are unknown and 3% are divorced.

Staff group by martial status

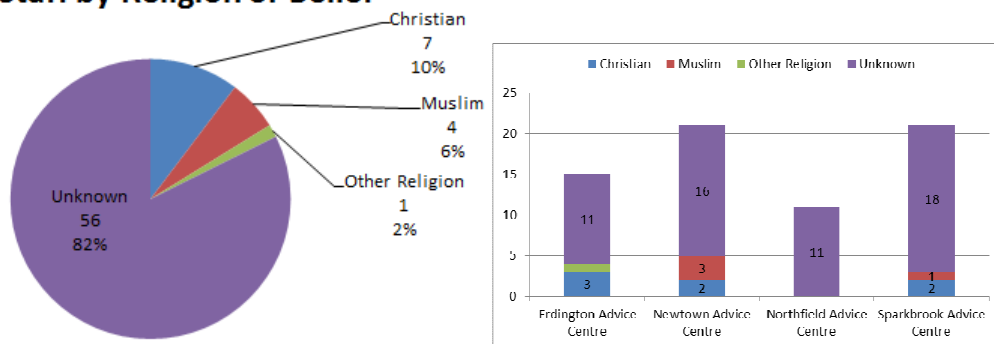


9.2. Marriage or Civil Partnership were not identified as potentially impacted groups in the Equality Analysis and thus this group of employees is identified for information only.

10. Staff Demographic (Religion or Belief):

10.1. Detailed information regarding the staff demographic in terms of Sexual Orientation is not gathered as mandatory process and is reliant on self-reporting by staff. At present the religion or belief of sexual orientation of 87% of the HAC workforce is not known. Details are shown below:

HAC Staff by Religion or Belief



10.2. Religion or Belief was not identified as a potentially impacted group in the Equality Analysis and thus this group of employees is identified for information only.

11. Staff Demographic Gender Reassignment):

11.1. Detailed information is not available regarding the staff demographic in terms of any gender reassignment status. This data is not presently collected.

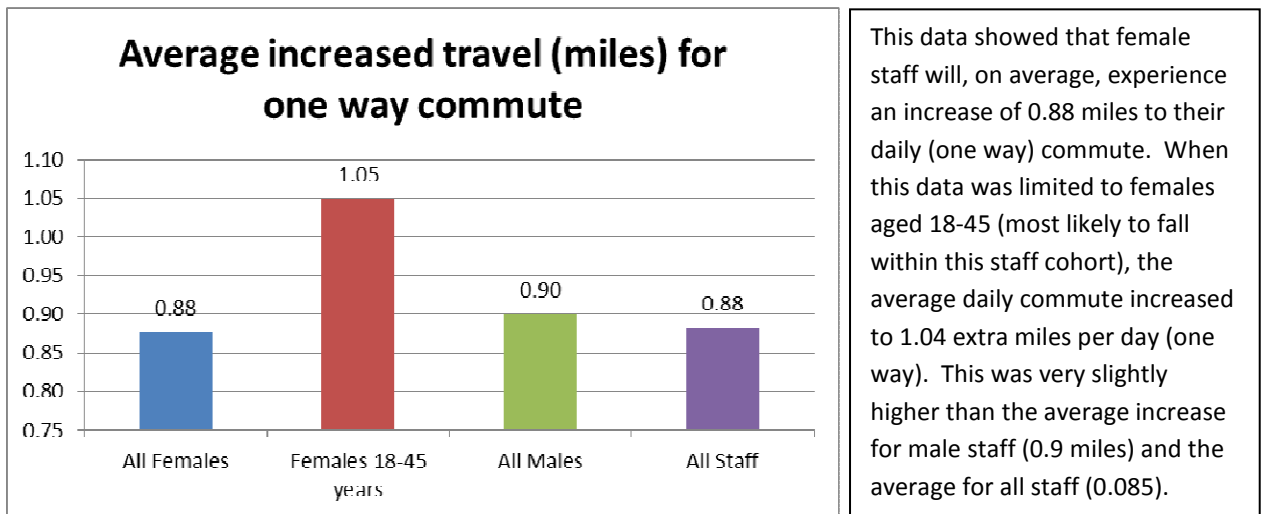
11.2. Gender Reassignment status was not identified as a potentially impacted group in the Equality Analysis and thus this group of employees is identified for information only.

12. Staff Demographic (Pregnancy & Maternity):

12.1. This group was identified as a potentially affected group within the HAC Staff cohort. It is acknowledged that this particular group is, unlike other groups, fluid and persons falling within this cohort can change more frequently than others. Therefore, data provided by HR may not be reliable or up to date.

12.2. Therefore, to get the most up to date information, a request was sent to service managers within all 4 HAC's dated 08/04/2015. This requested confirmation of any staff within the service, known to be currently pregnant or subject to maternity arrangements. At the time of preparing this analysis only one pregnant employee and one recently returning from maternity leave had been identified.

12.3. A concern exists that members of staff whom are either pregnant or in the maternity period may experience difficulty in travelling to an alternate place of work some distance from their existing one. In consideration of this data, staff geography (s13) data was analysed and limited to females who will be changing workplace.



12.4. While the staff most likely to fall within this group will, on average, travel further it is not felt that the additional 0.14 miles presents less preferential treatment to this group.

12.5. It is also considered that existing mitigation to protect this group is sufficient to address any issues that may arise during the period of transference. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Flexible use of maternity leave
- Extended maternity leave requests
- Family Friendly Working Requests
- Flexible working requests
- Interchangeable paternity and maternity leave
- Agile working from other sites such as CAB's (back office & decision functions)

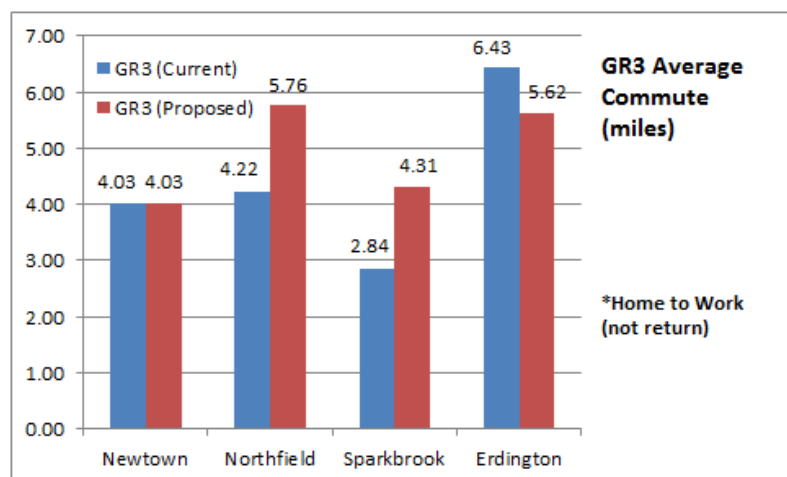
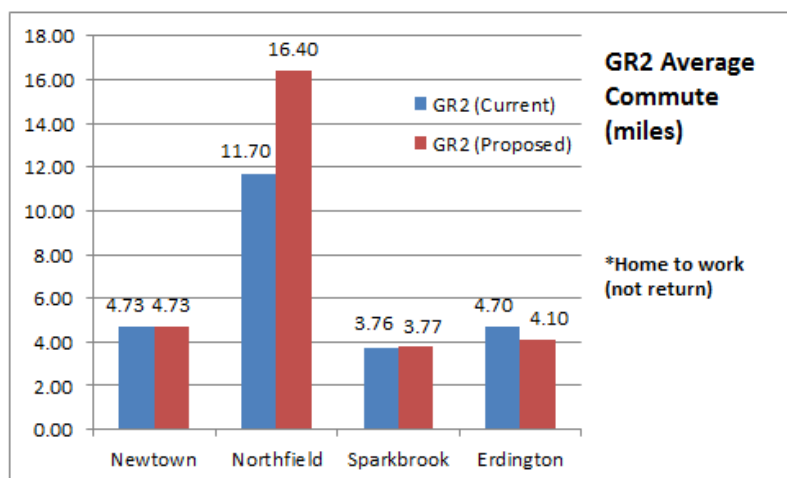
13. Staff Geography:

13.1. Data from HR was provided detailing the home postcodes of all employees impacted by the proposed geographical change in location. This was compared to their current work postcode and the postcode for the Newtown HAC site to show distance. Full details are retained in the source data but not disclosed here for confidentiality purposes.

13.2. In terms of travel distance, Newtown employees will not be impacted as there is an assumption that they will continue to work at their current location. Therefore they have been excluded from some calculation

Average Commute (Miles)	GR2 (Current)	GR2 (new)	GR3 (Current)	GR3 (new)	GR4 (Current)	GR4 (new)	GR5 (Current)	GR5 (new)
Newtown	4.73	4.73	4.03	4.03	3.58	3.58	8.80	8.80
Northfield	11.70	16.40	4.22	5.76	5.95	7.88	N/A	N/A
Sparkbrook	3.76	3.77	2.84	4.31	4.05	5.00	5.90	9.20
Erdington	4.70	4.10	6.43	5.62	7.43	7.98	5.10	1.60
Average Milage by Grade	6.22	7.25	4.38	4.93	5.25	6.11	6.60	6.53

13.3. Comparison by Grade :

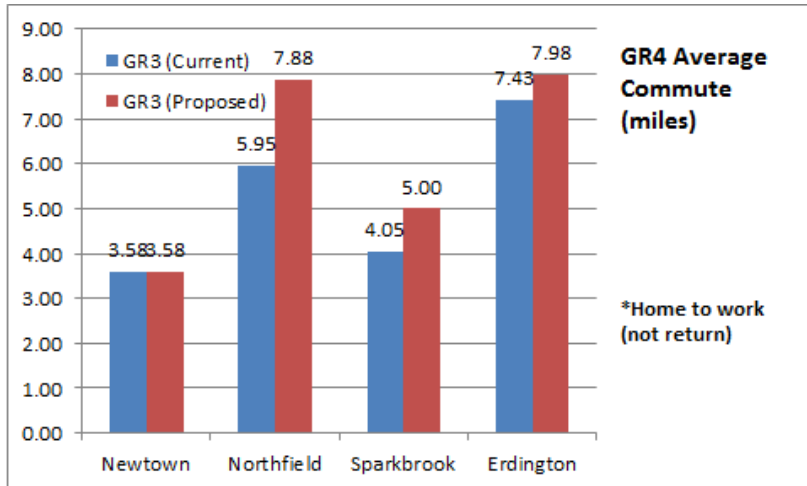


The data shown here shows the 'mean average' distance for an employee from their home address to their current work address and the proposed Newtown site side by side.

GR2 travel distance for staff based at Sparkbrook & Erdington HAC's remains similar. GR2's at Northfield show a significant increase. Analysis of the data shows this is due to the small number of GR2's at Northfield with staff commuting over 24 miles one way, thus increasing the mean average.

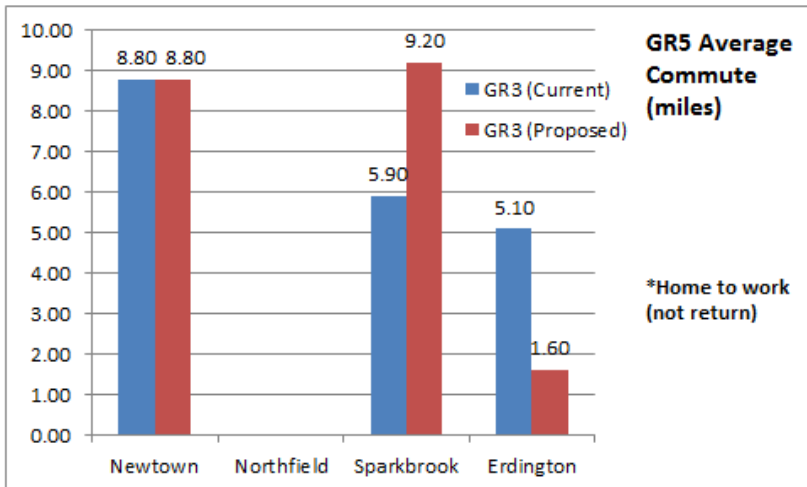
GR3's are impacted predominantly at Sparkbrook and Northfield with Northfield staff seeing the most significant average increase of 1.54 miles in their daily one way journey. Staff at Erdington HAC live on average, closer to the Newtown HAC than their current workplace and thus experiencing a reduction in travelling distance

Appendix B: Staff Equalities and Demographic Analysis (Housing Advice)



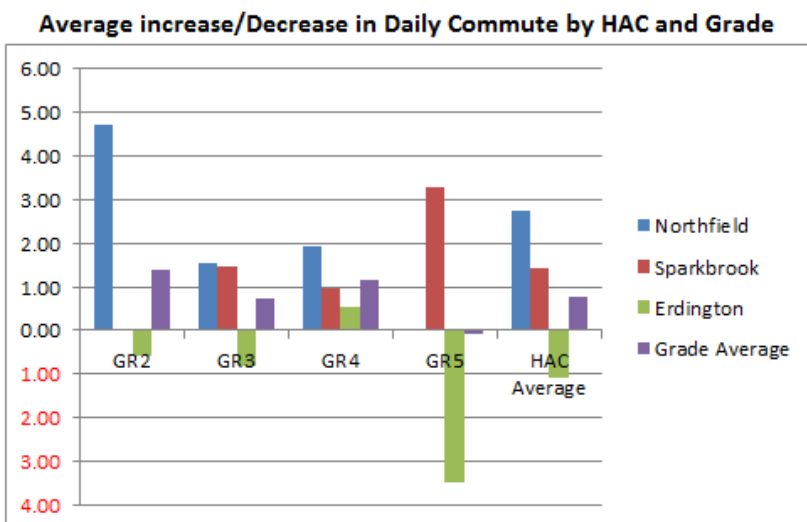
Travel for Erdington Staff remains similar and staff at Sparkbrook experience an average 1 mile increase to their daily one way journey. Again, staff at Northfield experience a more significant increase in their commuting distance (1.93 miles).

Given the location of the Northfield HAC this increased impact on staff is expected. Northfield is statistically the furthest HAC from the Newtown site.



Grade 5 staff experience the most drastic increase in commuting distance with a 3.3 mile increase at Sparkbrook and a 3.5 mile decrease at Erdington, however this should be considered against the small sample number of GR5 staff as part of the whole affected workforce (3 x GR5 excluding 1 vacant post, the future of which is yet to be determined).

13.4. Increases and Decreases in Travel:



Staff based at Newtown will experience no increase or decrease in Travel cost/time/distance and have thus been excluded from this calculation.

Statistically the majority of employees moving will experience a 1-2 mile increase in their daily one way journey to work. A small but significant group from the Erdington HAC will experience a reduction in this journey.

14. Public Transport

- 14.1. In cases where employees are reliant on public transport Birmingham has an excellent bus, rail and metro network. The Newtown HAC site is approximately 1.4 miles from the city centre including 3 main rail stations (Moor St, New St & Snow Hill), Perry Bar Rail station is located 1.3 miles away and Aston Rail Station is 1.2 miles away. The Midland Metro also serves the local area from Snow Hill (1.5 miles away), Jewellery Quarter (1.2 miles away) and St Pauls (1.1 miles away). Buses and trains from other parts of Birmingham and surrounding areas into the city centre are abundant and numerous.
- 14.2. The Newtown HAC site is directly served by a number of buses direct from the city centre and buses from the Aston and Great Barr areas (including Perry Barr Rail station). It is suggested that the vast majority of employees who are reliant on public transport will be able to reach the site via train or bus with a maximum of one change.
- 14.3. It is not feasible to plot a public transport route for each individual employee however as part of Appendix A public transport routes via bus from the 3 alternate HAC sites were plotted and it is suggested that this will give a reasonable indication as to public transport access to the site. The table is shown below however in all cases a member of the public could reach the Newtown Site from an existing HAC in a time between 30mins and 1hr.

Erdington (B23 6RE) HAC to Newtown HAC (B19 2SW)	4.1 miles 9 mins driving	Bus 115: 30-33 Mins Total walking time 15 mins, Total Bus time 15 mins. Bus 905 & Bus 33: 28 Mins. Total walking time 7 mins, Total bus time 14 mins.	Nearest Rail: Erdington, 6mins from HAC
Northfield HAC (B31 1PG) to Newtown HAC (B19 2SW)	7.7 Miles 16 mins driving	Bus 63 & 51: 52 Mins Total walking time 14 mins, Total bus time 38mins Bus 61 & 886: 45 Mins Total walking time 7 mins, Total bus time 33 mins	Nearest Rail: Northfield 20 mins walk from HAC
Sparkbrook HAC (B11 1LU) to Newtown HAC (B19 2SW)	3.3 Miles 9 mins driving	Bus 8C: 54 Mins Total walking time 13 mins, Total bus time 41mins Bus 6 & 33: 37 Mins Total walking time 12 mins, Total bus time 20mins	Nearest Rail: Small Heath, 14 mins from HAC

15. Findings & Recommendations:

- 15.1. The proposed service redesign is likely to cause some disruption and disadvantage to many employees across the service regardless of circumstance.
- 15.2. In relation to the protected characteristics identified as being subject to potential disadvantage (Age, Disability, Pregnancy & Maternity), it is considered that there is possibility for some disadvantage in excess of that experienced by others. However it is also found that such disadvantage is likely to be minimal and, in the vast majority of cases, no more significant than that experienced by all employees being relocated.
- 15.3. The Newtown HAC site is a more central location with ground floor access and modern facilities and is thus, more likely to be better suited to employees with a disability.
- 15.4. The Birmingham City Council Contract of Employment provides for transfers of Work Location (Pg 4) *“If there is a business need you might be required to work in any Directorate or location within the Birmingham Conurbation at the discretion of the Council. Any job transfer would be commensurate with your current grade and level of experience. The transfer would be made in accordance with your conditions of service and following a period of meaningful consultation”*.
- 15.5. The contract also provides a mobility clause (Pg 4-5) *“This appointment is subject to this mobility clause, which provides for the movement of staff to alternative work locations for business reasons and the reimbursement of any additional travelling costs for up to a three month period. The entitlement to claim travelling costs related to a work location change covers Grades 1, 2 and 3 only”*.
- 15.6. The likely size of any group staff impacted adversely due to a protected characteristic is likely to be very small and manageable through existing mitigation and countermeasures on a case by case basis. Available countermeasures include (but are not limited to):
- Flexible working requests
 - Agile Working
 - Access to Work and other Reasonable Adjustments
 - Mobility Clause *
 - Home Working Requests
 - Reasonable Adjustment Requests
 - Working from alternate locations (Back office functions at Lifford Hse and Sutton New Rd)**

*Grades 1, 2 & 3 only

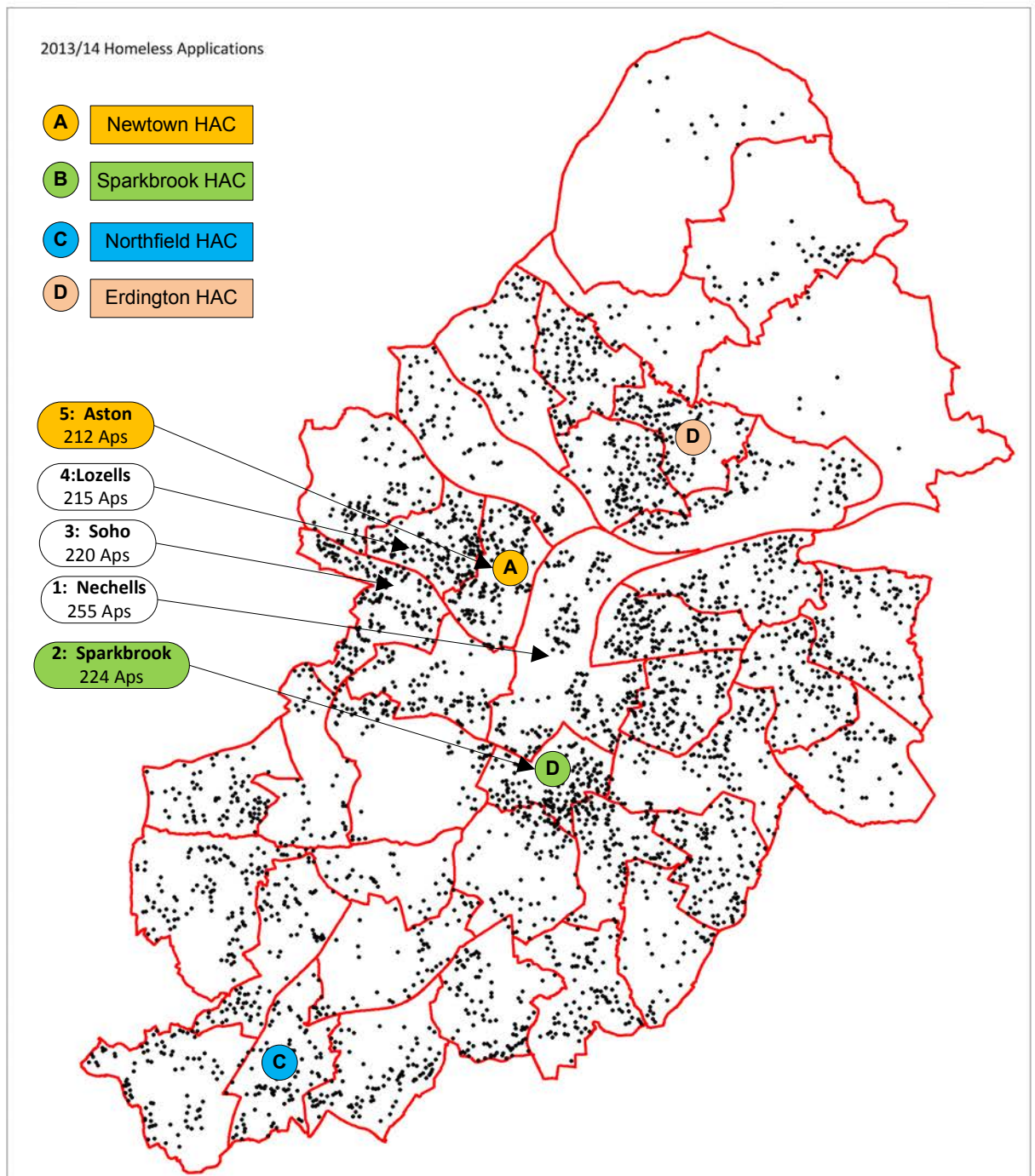
** Future of Back Office functions at Sutton New Rd and Lifford House are TBC

15.7. It is recommended that meaningful consultation with staff commences at the earliest opportunity in order to identify any member/group staff who may be significantly and/or disproportionately disadvantaged due to a protected characteristic. Following identification efforts can be made to deal with issues arising using the suite of available countermeasures. This consultation is also required as a part of the Birmingham Contract of Employment prior to undertaking a change of workplace for staff involved.

Appendix C: Homeless Applicants by Geographic Location (2013/2014)

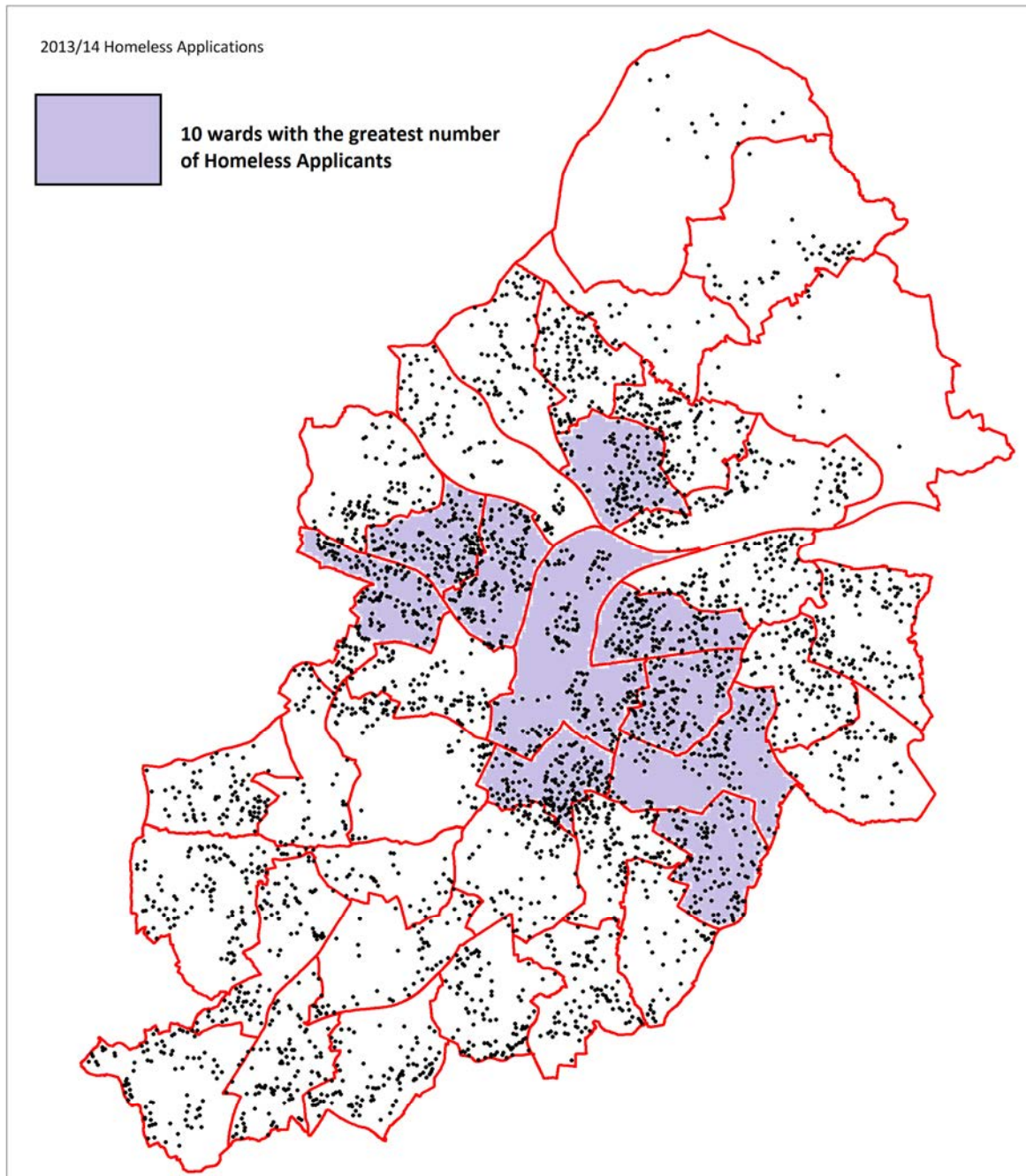
Ward Name	Homeless Applications
NECHELLS	255
SPARKBROOK	224
SOHO	220
LOZELLS AND EAST HANDSWORTH	215
ASTON	212
WASHWOOD HEATH	183
STOCKLAND GREEN	182
BORDESLEY GREEN	161
ACOCKS GREEN	158
SOUTH YARDLEY	148
BARTLEY GREEN	146
SPRINGFIELD	144
HODGE HILL	142
TYBURN	142
SHARD END	138
KINGSTANDING	137
NORTHFIELD	131
KINGS NORTON	130
BILLESLEY	126
BRANDWOOD	126
ERDINGTON	126
STECHFORD AND YARDLEY NORTH	114
WEOLEY	113
HANDSWORTH WOOD	109
MOSELEY AND KINGS HEATH	109
EDGBASTON	104
LADYWOOD	103
LONGBRIDGE	103
PERRY BARR	103
QUINTON	93
OSCOTT	83
BOURNVILLE	75
SHELDON	55
HALL GREEN	53
HARBORNE	53
SELLY OAK	45
SUTTON TRINITY	43
SUTTON VESEY	22
SUTTON FOUR OAKS	15
SUTTON NEW HALL	15

Appendix C: Homeless Applicants by Geographic Location (2013/2014)



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Ward Name	Homeless Applications
NECHELLS	255
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SOHO	220
LOZELS AND EAST HANDS	215
ASTON	212
WASHWOOD HEATH	183
STOCKLAND GREEN	182
BORDESLEY GREEN	161
ACOCKS GREEN	158
SOUTH YARDLEY	148

Customer Accessibility Analysis for Housing Advice Reorganisation (Single HAC Model)

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1. Introduction:

- 1.1. It is currently proposed to restructure the Housing Advice Service and reduce the number of centres at which a face to face service is provided. Currently there are four Housing Advice Centres (HAC's) that cover the city, currently based at Sparkbrook, Erdington, Northfield and Newtown. We are seeking to move to a single site approach based at the current Newtown HAC site.
- 1.2. The aim of this report is to provide an overview of customer accessibility to the site via public transport and outline emergency arrangements for accessibility. Existing mitigation and information outlined in the Equality Analysis (EA) to which this document is attached is not affected by the data outlined here.

2. Methodology:

- 2.1. In view of the size of the Birmingham City area, reviewing transport arrangements for customers accessing the service at a street or estate level is not a viable option. Analysis of travel arrangements based on a district area would however provide data too generalised in view of the size of these districts and would not give an accurate representation of the public transport networks available to customers.
- 2.2. It was therefore determined that a ward level analysis was the most appropriate and realistic means of indicating customer accessibility in relation to the proposed one HAC model for Housing Advice.
- 2.3. It is assumed that customers will not have access to their own vehicle or to another's that can be relied upon in times of crisis. However this is not a universal assumption and it should be considered that many customers may well have such access. Therefore consideration was given to those accessing the proposed HAC centre in Newtown via private transport as well as public.
- 2.4. Using data from Ward profiles a single site was selected within each ward of Birmingham City. This site was selected as a recognised point within each ward and in most cases is the site (or one of the sites) where the local Ward Committee meet. Where this information was unavailable a site such as a local community centre or other site referenced in the ward profile was selected.
- 2.5. This site was then used as a basis to map distance (via road networks) from the proposed HAC site in Newtown and thus gives an indication as to travel distance and time for those accessing the HAC via their own vehicle or another private means of transport.
- 2.6. This same site was also used as the starting point to undertake a journey planner via public transport (National Express Busses) to the proposed HAC site. The journey time and number of changes was recorded also. These sites are accurately

represented in relation to their positioning in the ward and marked on the map provided with this document (2.10 & 9).

- 2.7. In mapping Public Transport journeys consideration was given to journeys to and from public transport pick up/drop off and interchange points. Recognising the difficulty elderly customers, those with young children and those with disabilities may experience in walking long distances, routes were planned for expedience however estimated total walking times (over the duration of the journey) were limited to 15 minutes.

3. Assumptions and Constraints

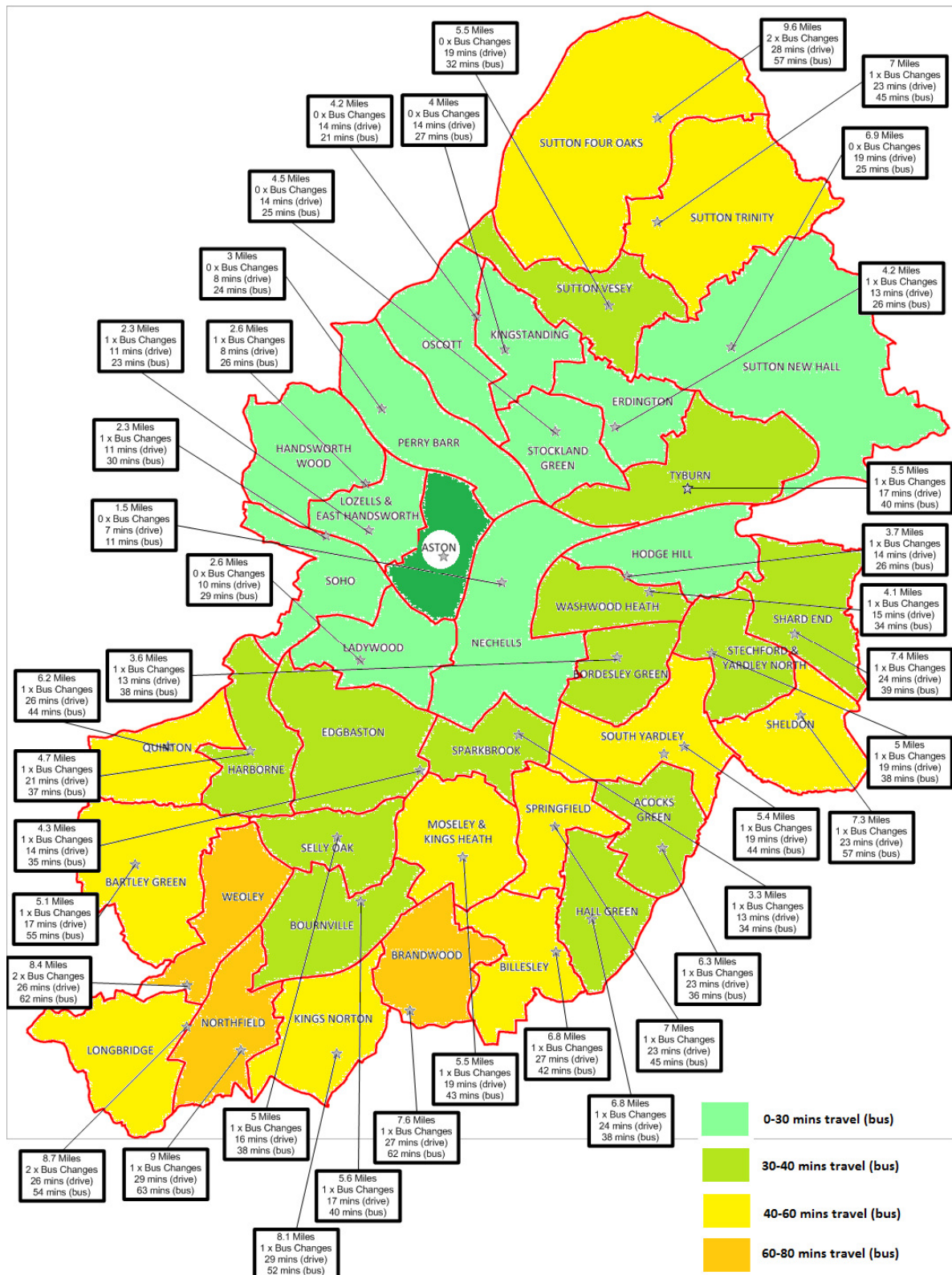
- 3.1. The data analysis is limited to a ward level. In larger wards customers may have to travel via an alternate route which may or may not involve additional walking times and additional bus interchanges. However, given the similar journey times noted in ward locations within close proximity to each other (identified during the analysis) it is not anticipated that this will impact significantly on journey times for customers.
- 3.2. Public Transport routes are subject to change and may do so at any time during and following the Housing Advice Redesign project. Bus timetables also vary in frequency throughout the day. For the purposes of this analysis and for consistency each journey started at 0930hrs and is therefore aligned to a morning timetable.
- 3.3. National Express Journey Planner assumes an average walking speed (considered 5kmph). It is recognised that elderly customers, those with young children and those with disabilities may take longer to walk the same distances.
- 3.4. Data from July 2014 shows that the average UK daily Commute for work purposes was 54 minutes¹. In considering that many of these persons will equally use public transport an assumption is made that this time (+/-10%) is an acceptable travel time for access to the service.
- 3.5. Distance from selected locations to the proposed HAC site is calculated via Google Maps. Travel time is calculated via the National Express West Midlands Journey Planner. Data is therefore dependant on the accuracy of these systems however they are considered accurate and fit for purpose.
- 3.6. It should be noted that some customers may wish to use a train to cross the city as Birmingham is served by a good rail network, particularly the cross city line. However we have assumed that the majority of customers will utilise the bus service or their own transport.

¹ <http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/life/493116/Commuting-facts-from-around-the-world> accessed 23.07.2015

4. Summary Data:

- 4.1. A total of 32.5% of wards within Birmingham (13) are able to access the Newtown HAC site by utilising public transport within 30 minutes or less.
- 4.2. A further 25% (10 wards) are able to access the site within 30-40 minutes.
- 4.3. 35% (14) of the wards in the city can reach the site within 40-60 minutes.
- 4.4. Only 7.5% of wards (3) take in excess of 60 minutes to reach the site via public transport. All of these wards exceed the 1hr barrier only minimally with none taking more than 63 minutes to reach the site.
- 4.5. The citywide (mean) average distance for those travelling by car is 5.21 miles equating to an average travel time of 18 minutes. The citywide average travel time for those traveling by public transport is 37 minutes.
- 4.6. Referring to 2013/14 Homeless Applicant data, 4 out of the 5 wards of highest demand are within 0-30 minutes travel from the Newtown site. These wards being Aston, Lozells, Soho & Nechells.
- 4.7. The remaining ward of highest demand (Sparkbrook) is within 30-40 minutes travel by public transport.
- 4.8. 37 (93%) of Birmingham's 40 wards can access the Newtown HAC site by public transport on 2 buses or less. Of these 9 wards (23%) can access the site via a direct bus with no changes.
- 4.9. Only 3 wards require 2 bus changes to access the site.
- 4.10. Birmingham City Council will, where necessary, provide tickets for customers with no other means, in order for them to access public transport. These tickets are limited to Bus only and detailed further in (7). It is foreseen that this will not be a regular occurrence.
- 4.11. In many cases customers may choose to access the HAC via other forms of public transport, for which they will be financially responsible. This includes trains and Midlands Metro.
- 4.12. Birmingham has an extensive rail and metro network serving a large area of the city. There are presently 32 rail stations which service 20 of Birmingham's wards. In addition there are a further 6 Midland Metro stations servicing 5 of Birmingham's wards (presently in the process of extension).
- 4.13. This rail/light rail covers a large area of the city and provides customers with improved travel options. A table showing this network can be found at section 10.

4.14. A map showing summary data of the Ward level analysis in relation to accessibility is shown below. A larger version can be found at 9. On Page 20.



Datasheet

Ward	District	Central Point	Postcode	Distance to HAC (Miles)	Drive Travel Time (Mins)	Buses	Changes	Bus Travel Time (Mins)	Travel Time Group
Acocks Green	Yardley District	Fox Hollies Forum	B27 7RA	6.3	23	T, 51	1	36	30-40
Aston Ward	Ladywood District	Newtown Community Centre	B19 2SW	0	0	0	0	0	0-30
Bartley Green	Edgbaston District	Bartley Green School	B32 3QJ	5.1	17	X64, 33	1	55	40-60
Billesley	Selly Oak District	Yardley Wood Library	B14 4DU	6.8	27	T, 7	1	42	40-60
Bordesley Green	Hodge Hill District	Bordesley Green J&I	B9 5XX	3.6	13	97, 33	1	38	40-60
Bournville	Selly Oak District	Stirchley Library	B30 2JT	5.6	17	47, 51	1	40	40-60
Brandwood	Selly Oak District	Bells Farm Community Centre	B14 5QP	7.6	27	50, 51	1	62	60+
Edgbaston	Edgbaston District	Edgbaston Cricket Ground	B5 7QU	4.3	14	47, 51	1	35	30-40
Erdington	Erdington District	Erdington HAC	B23 6RE	4.2	13	904, 33	1	26	0-30
Hall Green	Hall Green District	Highfield Hall	B28 0HS	6.8	24	T, 7	1	38	30-40
Handsworth Wood	Perry Barr District	Handsworth Wood Road	B20 2DR	2.6	8	11C, 952	1	26	0-30
Harborne	Edgbaston District	Harborne Pool & Fitness Centre	B17 9QS	4.7	21	24, 37	1	37	30-40
Hodge Hill	Hodge Hill District	Ward End Library	B8 2HF	3.7	14	94, 8A	1	26	0-30
Kingstanding	Erdington District	Kingstanding Leisure centre	B44 0EW	4	14	20	0	27	0-30
Kings Norton	Northfield District	Ark Kings Academy	B38 9DE	8.1	29	45, 51	1	52	40-60
Ladywood	Ladywood District	Ladywood Health & Community Centre	B16 8RP	2.6	10	8C	0	29	0-30
Longbridge	Northfield District	The Meadows Primary School	B31 2SW	8.7	26	63, X64, 33	2	54	40-60
Lozells and East Handsworth	Perry Barr District	Welford Primary School	B20 2BL	2.3	11	46, 51	1	23	0-30

Appendix D: Customer Accessibility & Travel Analysis (Housing Advice)

Ward	District	Central Point	Postcode	Distance to HAC (Miles)	Drive Travel (Mins)	Buses	Changes	Bus Travel (Mins)	Travel Time Group
Moseley and Kings Heath	Hall Green District	Kings Heath Primary School	B14 7AJ	5.5	19	35, 33	1	43	40-60
Nechells	Ladywood District	Nechells Community Centre	B7 5DT	1.5	7	8A	0	11	0-30
Northfield	Northfield District	West Heath Community Assco	B31 3QY	9	29	45, 51	1	63	60+
Oscott Ward	Perry Barr District	610 Community Centre	B44 9SH	4.2	14	935	0	21	0-30
Perry Barr	Perry Barr District	Perry Barr Methodist Church	B42 1QF	3	8	952	0	24	0-30
Quinton	Edgbaston District	Quinbourne Community Centre	B32 2TW	6.2	26	24, 7	1	44	40-60
Selly Oak	Selly Oak District	Elim Church Centre	B29 6EU	5	16	X64, 33	1	38	30-40
Shard End	Hodge Hill District	The Pump, Kitts Green Road	B33 9SB	7.4	24	14, 8A	1	39	30-40
Sheldon	Yardley District	Sheldon Community Centre	B26 2RU	7.3	23	17, 51	1	57	40-60
Soho	Ladywood District	Soho Health Centre	B21 9RY	2.3	11	75, 7	1	30	0-30
South Yardley	Yardley District	South Yardley Library	B25 8LT	5.4	19	900, 33	1	44	40-60
Sparkbrook	Hall Green District	Sparkbrook Community and Health Centre	B11 1LU	3.3	13	37, 51	1	34	30-40
Springfield	Hall Green District	The Springfield Centre	B13 9NY	4.8	20	6, 33	1	39	30-40
Stechford and Yardley North	Yardley District	Stetchford Police Station	B33 8RR	5	19	53, 8A	1	38	30-40
Stockland Green	Erdington District	Highcroft Community Centre	B23 7JG	4.5	14	65	0	25	0-30
Sutton New Hall	Sutton Coldfield District	Walmley Community Hall	B76 1NP	6.9	19	65	0	25	0-30
Sutton Four Oaks	Sutton Coldfield District	Mere Green Community Centre	B75 5BT	9.6	28	78, 904, 51	2	57	40-60
Sutton Trinity	Sutton Coldfield District	Sutton Town Hall	B73 6AB	7	23	110, 51	1	45	40-60
Sutton Vesey	Sutton Coldfield District	The Carpenters Arms	B73 5UY	5.5	19	907	0	32	40-60
Tyburn	Erdington District	Castle Pool	B35 7JE	5.5	17	116, 33	1	40	40-60
Washwood Heath	Hodge Hill District	Thornton Road Primary School	B8 2LQ	4.1	15	55, 51	1	34	30-40
Weoley	Northfield District	Allens Cross Community Centre	B31 1RH	8.4	26	61, X64, 33	2	62	60+

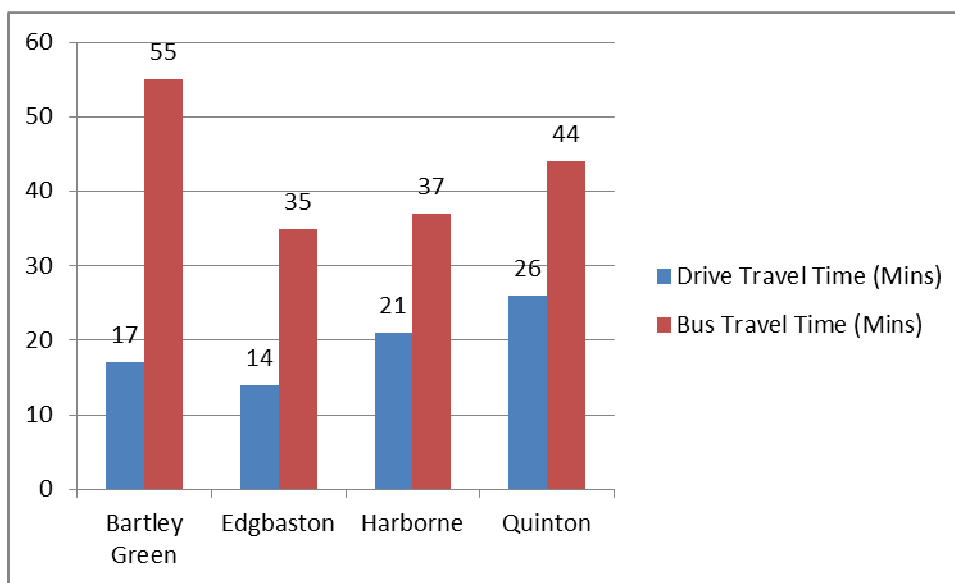
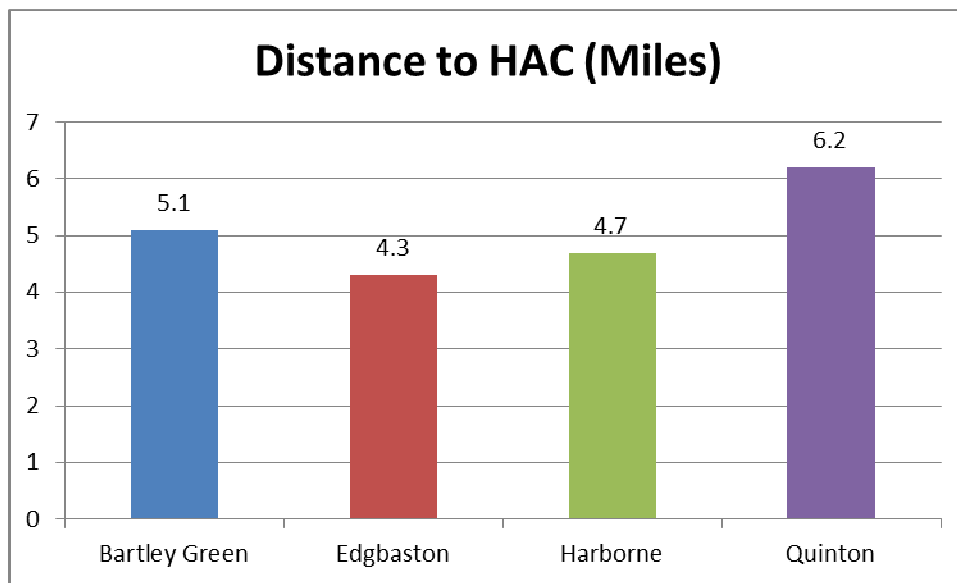
5. District & Ward Summaries

5.1. Edgbaston District:

5.1.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to Edgbaston district is 5.3 miles. Quinton is the furthest from the site at 6.2 miles. All wards are within 14-26 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 35-55 minutes.

5.1.2. Those utilising Public Transport can all access the HAC in not more than 2 bus journeys.

5.1.3. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.

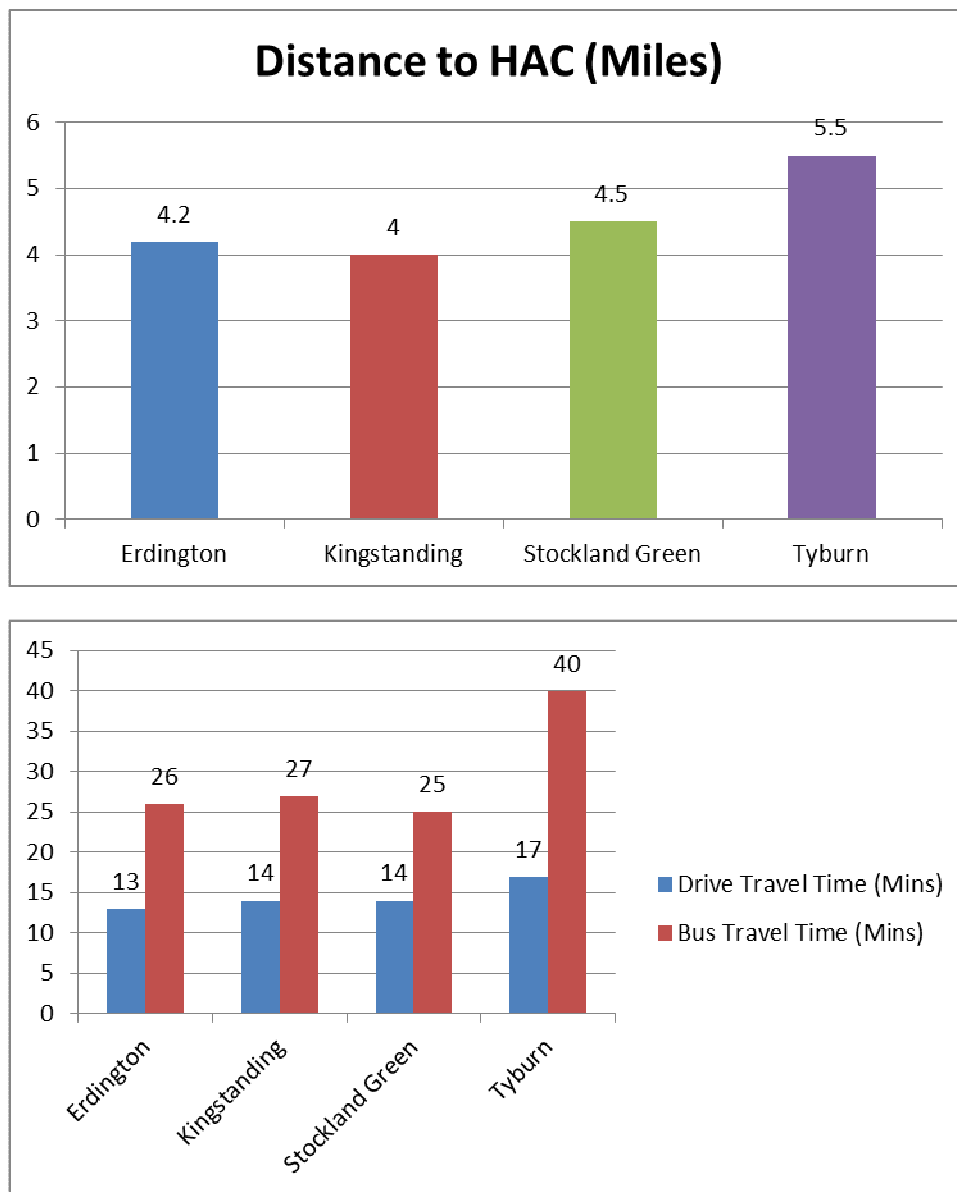


5.2. Erdington District

5.2.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to Erdington District is 4.6 miles. Tyburn is the furthest from the site at 5.5 miles. All wards are within 13-17 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 25-40 minutes.

5.2.2. Those utilising Public Transport can all access the HAC in not more than 2 journeys maximum and those from Kingstanding & Stockland Green can access the site via a direct bus route.

5.2.3. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.

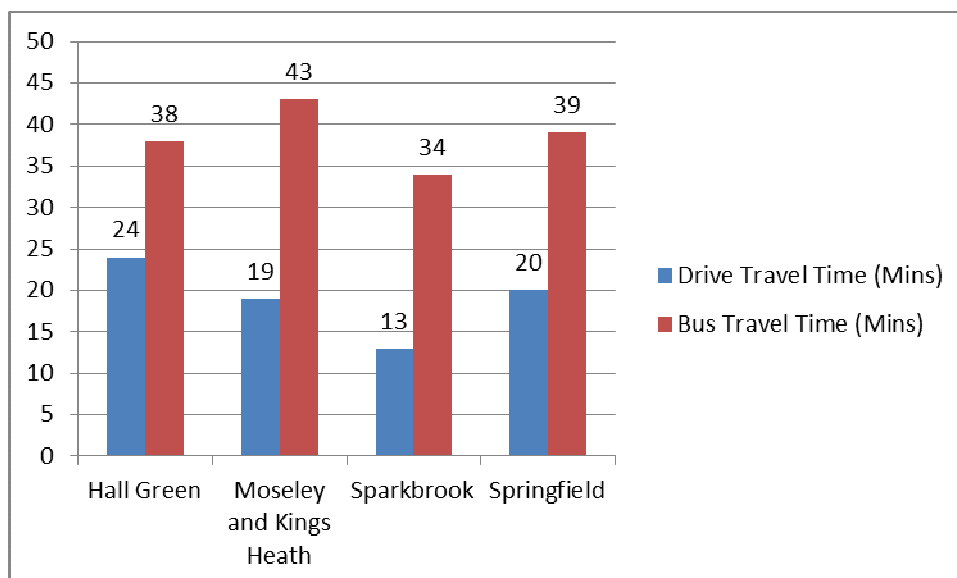
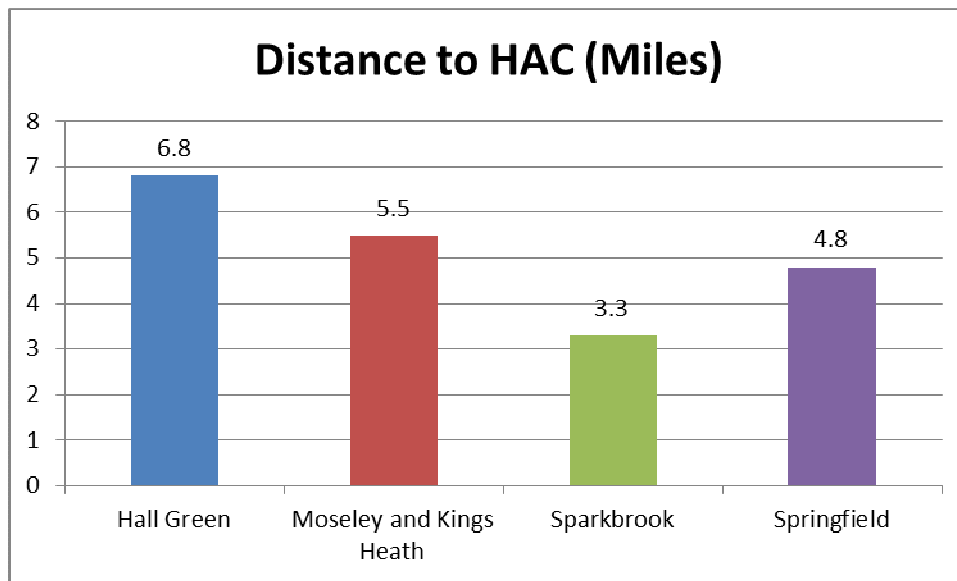


5.3. Hall Green District:

5.3.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to Hall Green District is 5.1 miles. Hall Green is the furthest ward from the site at 6.8 miles. All wards are within 13-24 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 34-43 minutes.

5.3.2. Those utilising Public Transport can all access the HAC in not more than 2 bus journeys.

5.3.3. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.

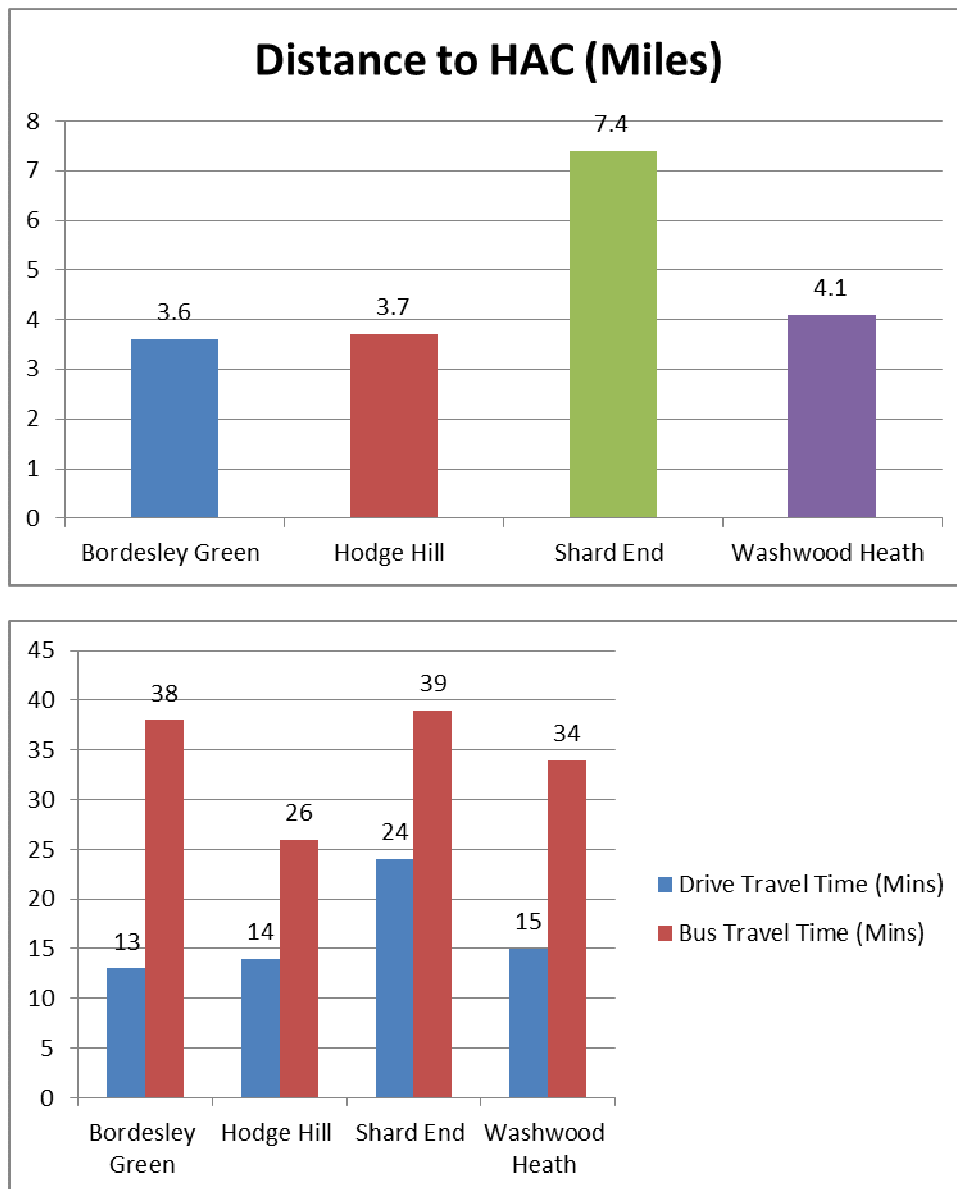


5.4. Hodge Hill District:

5.4.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to Hodge Hill District is 4.7 miles. Shard End is the furthest ward from the site at 7.4 miles. All wards are within 13-24 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 26-39 minutes.

5.4.2. Those utilising Public Transport can all access the HAC in not more than 2 bus journeys.

5.4.3. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.



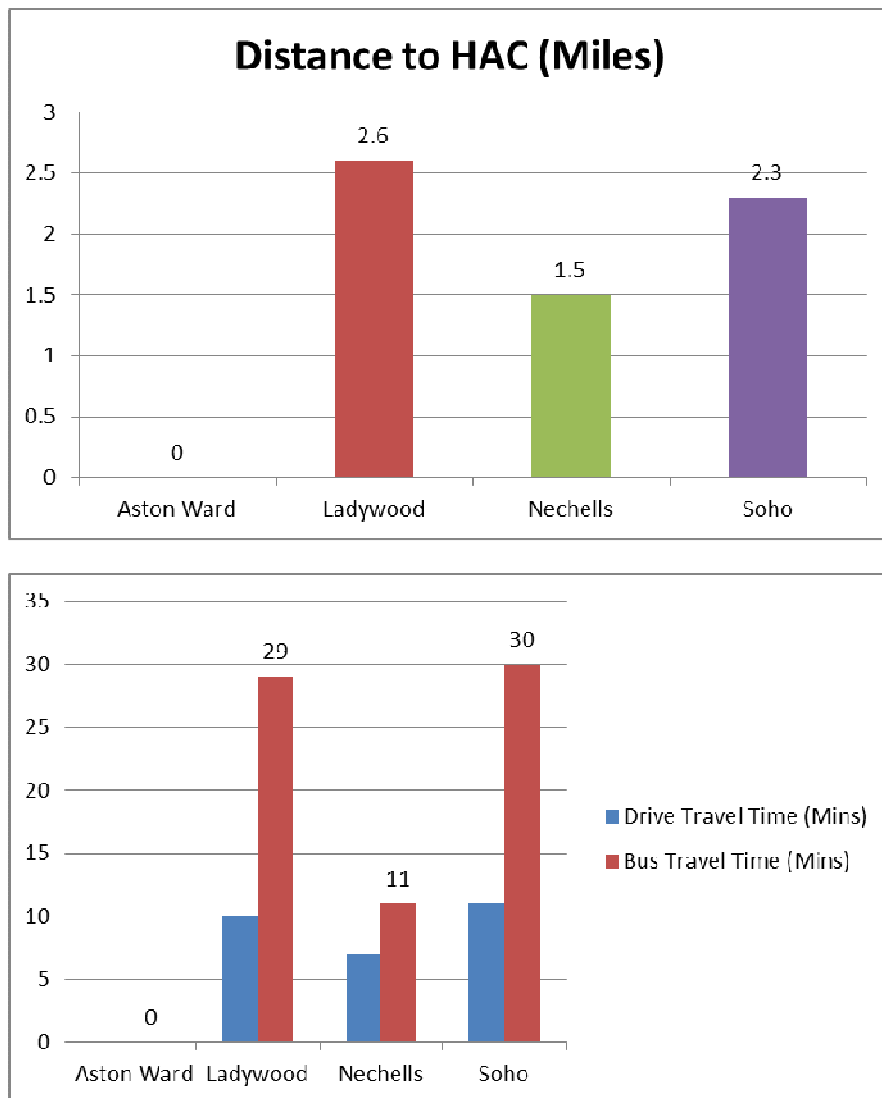
5.5. Ladywood District

5.5.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to wards within the Ladywood District is 2.1 miles. For the purposes of this assessment Aston Ward is excluded as the Newtown HAC sits within this ward and would therefore provide skewed data.

5.5.2. Ladywood is the furthest ward from the site at 2.6 miles. All wards are within 7-11 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 11-30 minutes.

5.5.3. Most of those utilising Public Transport (Ladywood & Nechells wards) can access a direct bus route to the site save for those in the Soho ward who will have to change buses once.

5.5.4. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.



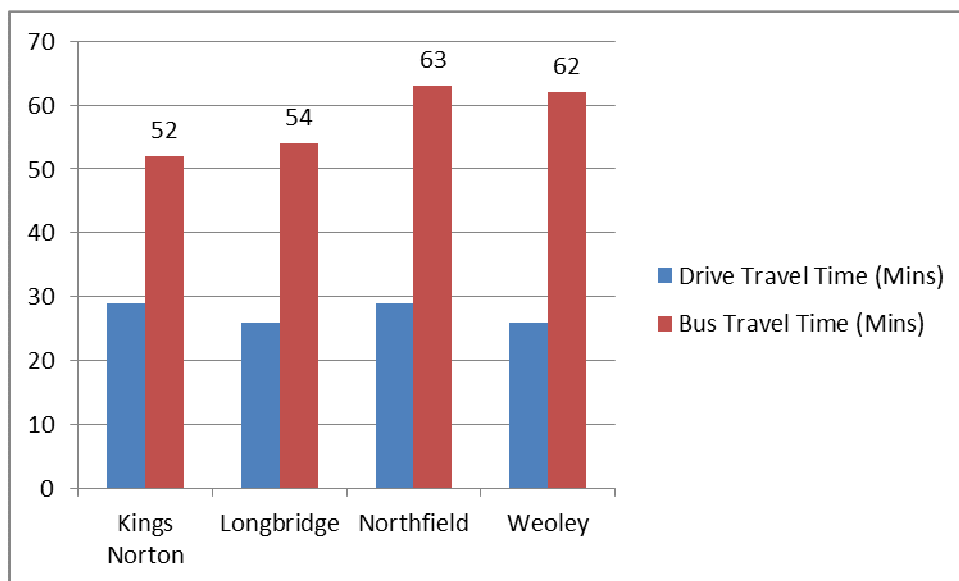
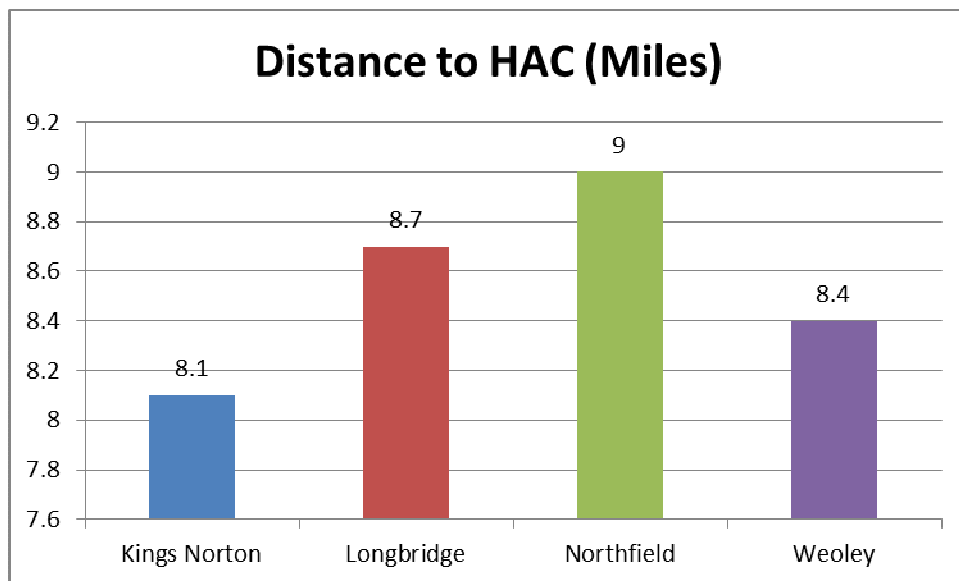
5.6. Northfield District

5.6.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to Northfield Hill District is 8.55 miles.

Northfield is the furthest ward from the site at 9 miles. All wards are within 30 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 52-63 minutes.

5.6.2. Those utilising Public Transport in Northfield & Kings Norton Wards can all access the HAC in not more than 2 bus journeys. Those coming from Longbridge & Weoley will require an additional change and travel via 3 busses.

5.6.3. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.

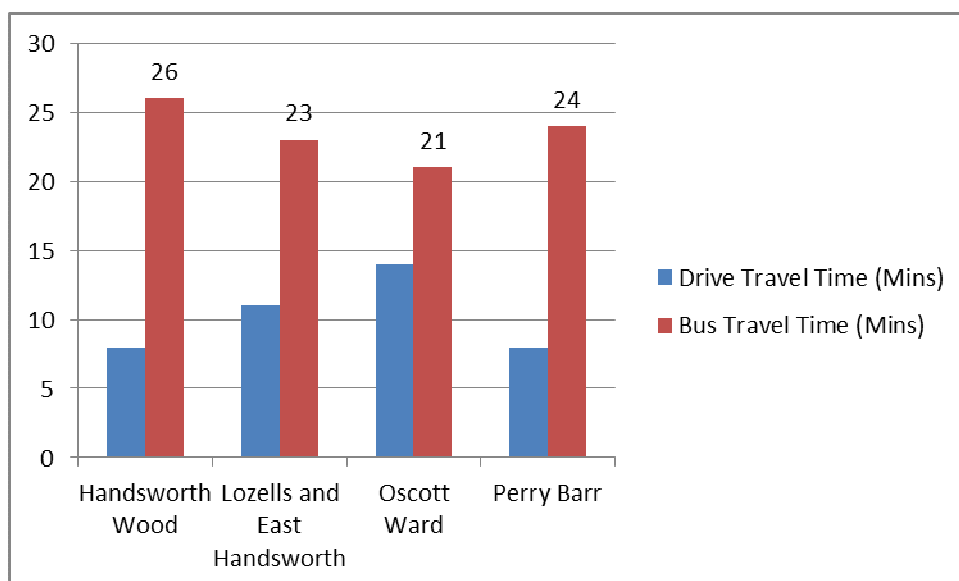
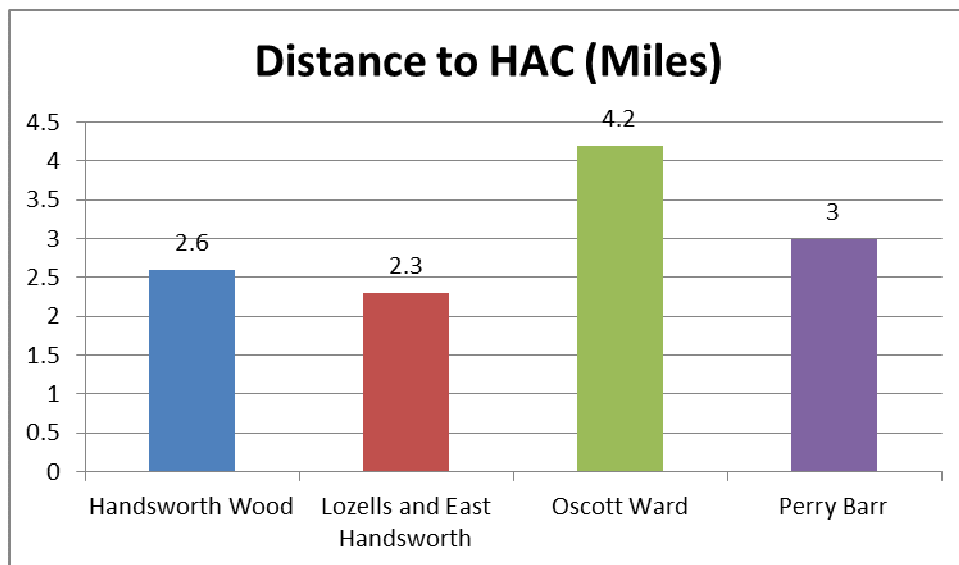


5.7. Perry Barr District:

5.7.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to Perry Bar District is 3.05 miles. Oscott is the furthest ward from the site at 4.2 miles. All wards are within 8-14 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 21-26 minutes.

5.7.2. Those utilising Public Transport from Oscott or Perry Barr Wards can reach the Newtown Site via a direct bus route. Those coming from Handsworth Wood & Lozells and East Handsworth Wards will require an additional bus journey.

5.7.3. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.

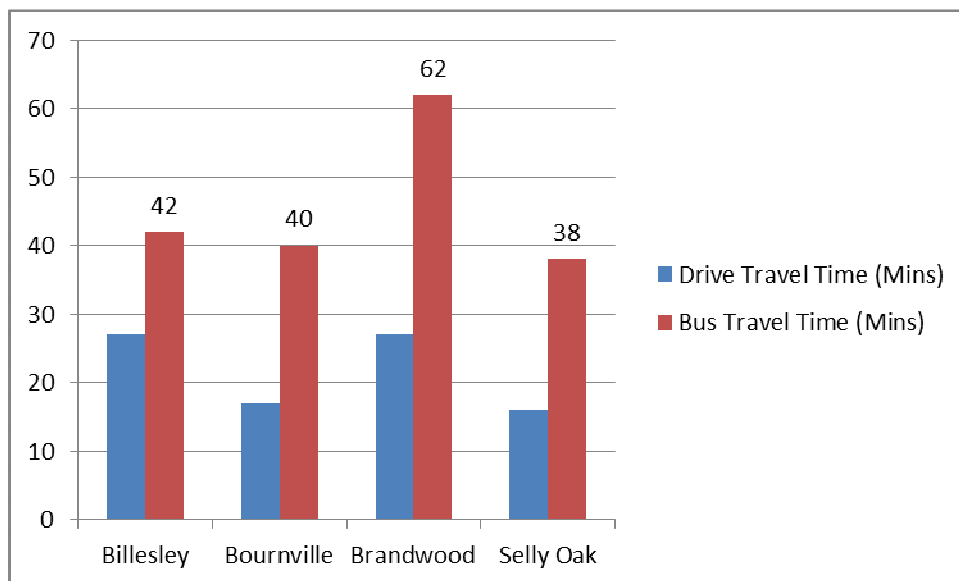
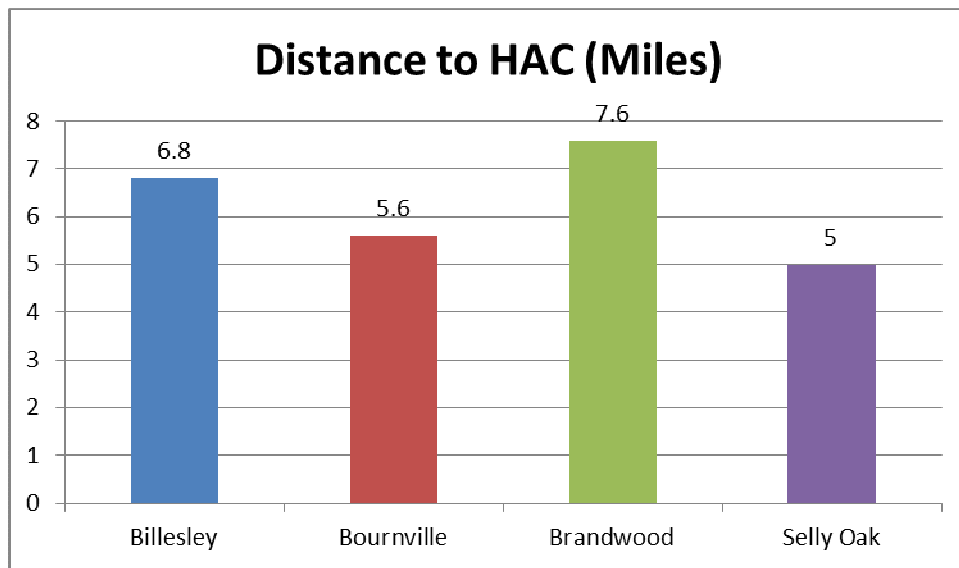


5.8. Selly Oak District:

5.8.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to Selly Oak District is 6.25 miles. Brandwood is the furthest ward from the site at 7.6 miles. All wards are within 16-27 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 38-62 minutes.

5.8.2. Those utilising Public Transport can all access the HAC in not more than 2 bus journeys.

5.8.3. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.

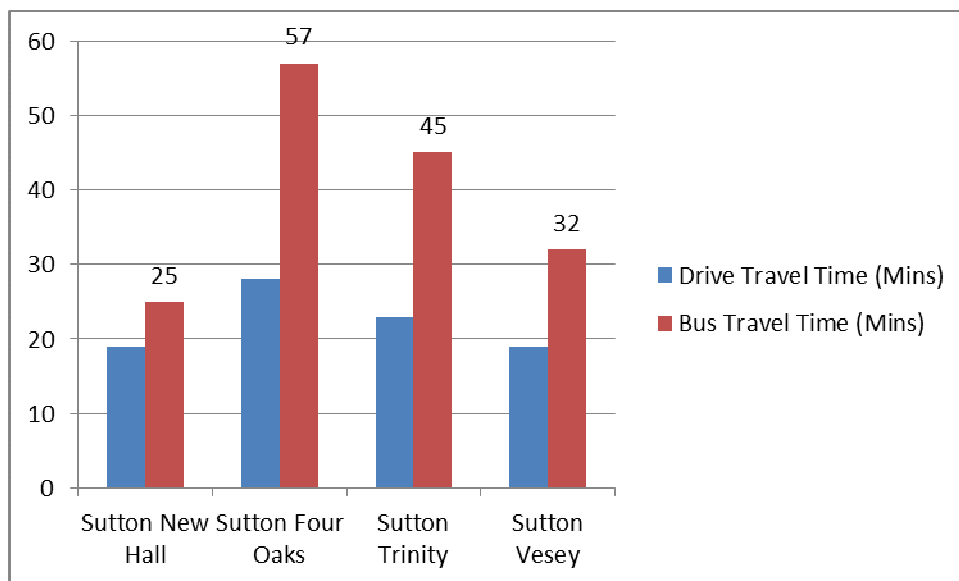
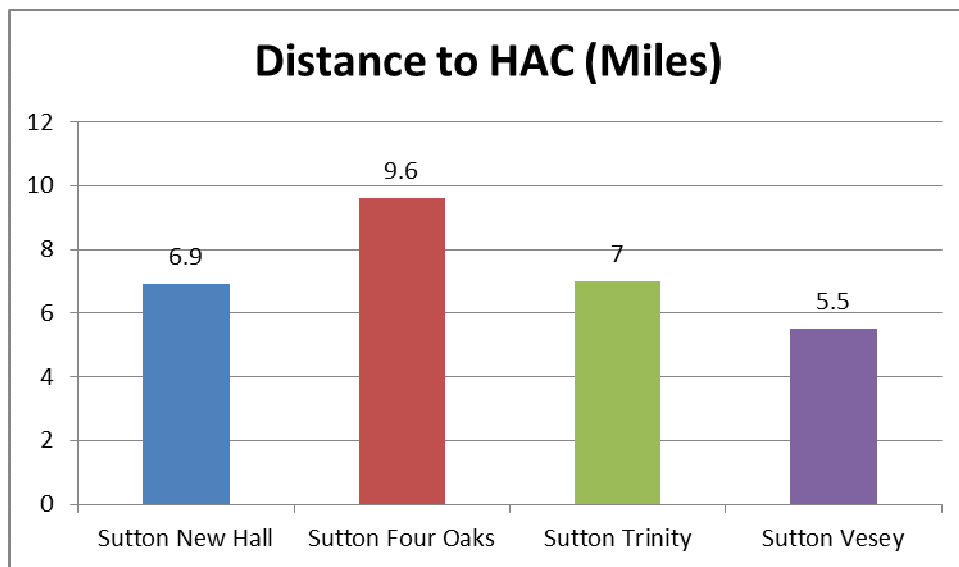


5.9. Sutton Coldfield District

5.9.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to Sutton Coldfield District is 7.25 miles. Sutton Four Oaks is the furthest ward from the site at 9.6 miles. All wards are within 19-28 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 25-57 minutes.

5.9.2. Those utilising Public Transport from Sutton New Hall and Sutton Vesey can access the site via a direct bus route, those visiting from Sutton Trinity can all access the HAC in not more than 2 bus journeys however those from Sutton Four Oaks ward will require an additional bus journey

5.9.3. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.

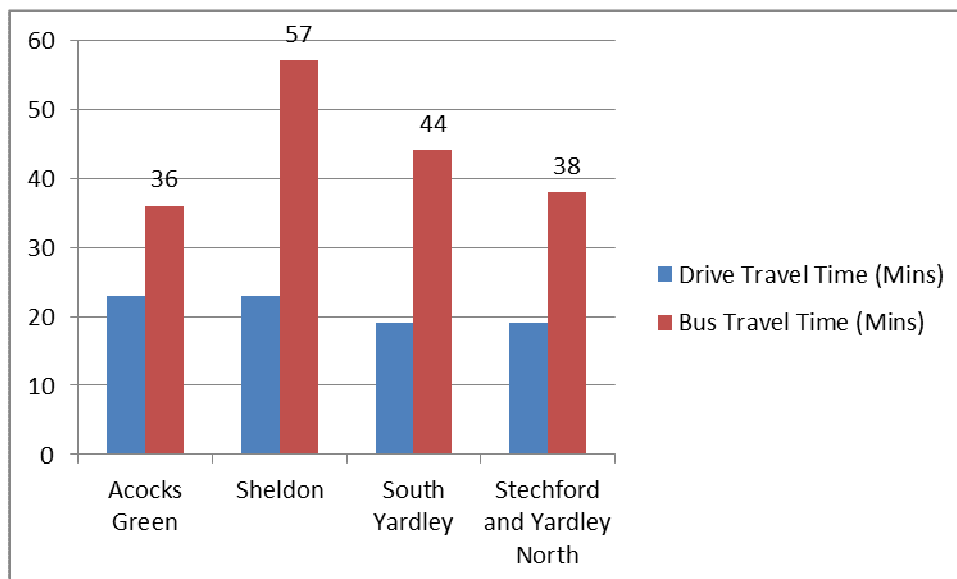
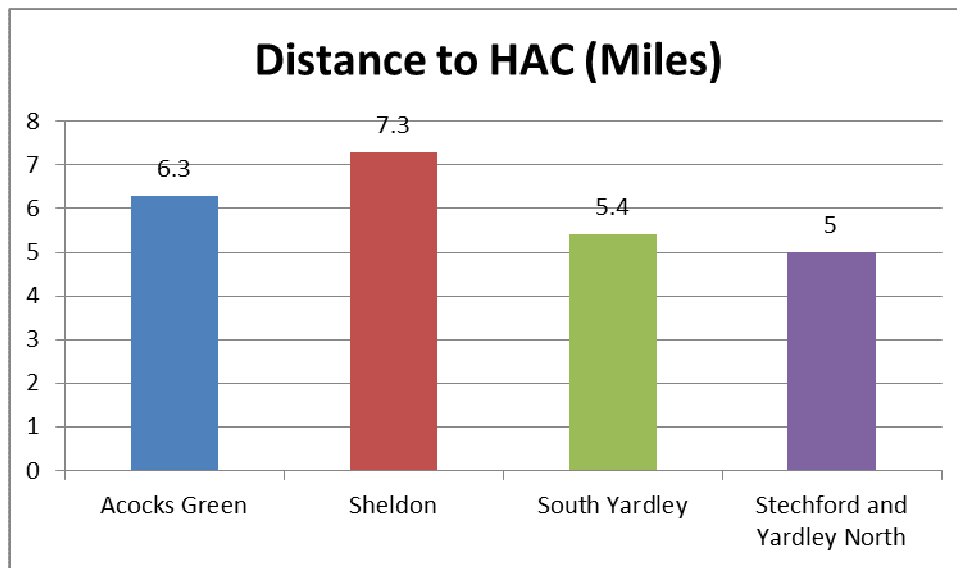


5.10. Yardley District

5.10.1. The average distance from Newtown HAC to Yardley District is 6 miles. Sheldon is the furthest ward from the site at 7.3 miles. All wards are within 19-23 minutes travel by car and the site can be reached from all wards by public transport in between 36-57 minutes.

5.10.2. Those utilising Public Transport can all access the HAC in not more than 2 bus journeys.

5.10.3. Summary data by Ward is shown below graphically.



6. Emergency & Crisis Planning:

- 6.1. All public travel analysis has been undertaken using National Express bus routes. This is to ensure that the practice of providing bus tickets for those who are unable to reach a Housing Advice centre can be maintained.
- 6.2. The Neighbourhood Advice & Information Service (NAIS) is presently undertaking a restructure of services and the future sites which these services will be delivered from is not known at the present time. However it is believed that the former HAC Sites at Erdington, Northfield and Sparkbrook will continue to provide a face to face service.
- 6.3. The Homeless and Pre Tenancy Service will cooperate with NAIS to develop protocols to allow for the issue of 'Day Saver' bus tickets from these sites to assist those financially unable to reach the Newtown site by themselves. This will ensure that the move from four centres to one will, save for travel time, provide a continuity of service to that currently available.
- 6.4. The provision of enhanced phone advice will allow customers unable to reach the new site to receive telephone advice and, where necessary, be directed to one of these NAIS centres where travel arrangements can be made.
- 6.5. Alternatively customers who present at one of the former HAC sites expecting a service will be able to use a phone to contact an adviser and be advised whether to attend on the same day or can book a suitable appointment (taking into consideration the time the customer could get to Newtown for.)
- 6.6. As the service develops it is presently the intention to seek to expand this network of locations where travel tickets can be issued from to include other BCC public facing offices (such as Social Care and Landlord Services). However these arrangements will require additional development.
- 6.7. For those unable to utilise the public travel network the EA to which this document is appended provides for mitigation in the form of visiting officers and the provision of taxi's in the most urgent and serious cases. This number is expected to be small and the provision of taxis in such cases will be locally administered.
- 6.8. The provision of both Day Saver Tickets and Taxi's has clear cost implications for BCC if incorrectly administered and therefore the provision of such will need to be assessed on a case by case basis and provided at the discretion of local Homeless and Pre Tenancy Service Managers.
- 6.9. A formal procedure will be developed to manage the process of dealing with emergency situations and will address the process of travel arrangements prior to go live of the remodelled service.

7. Conclusions:

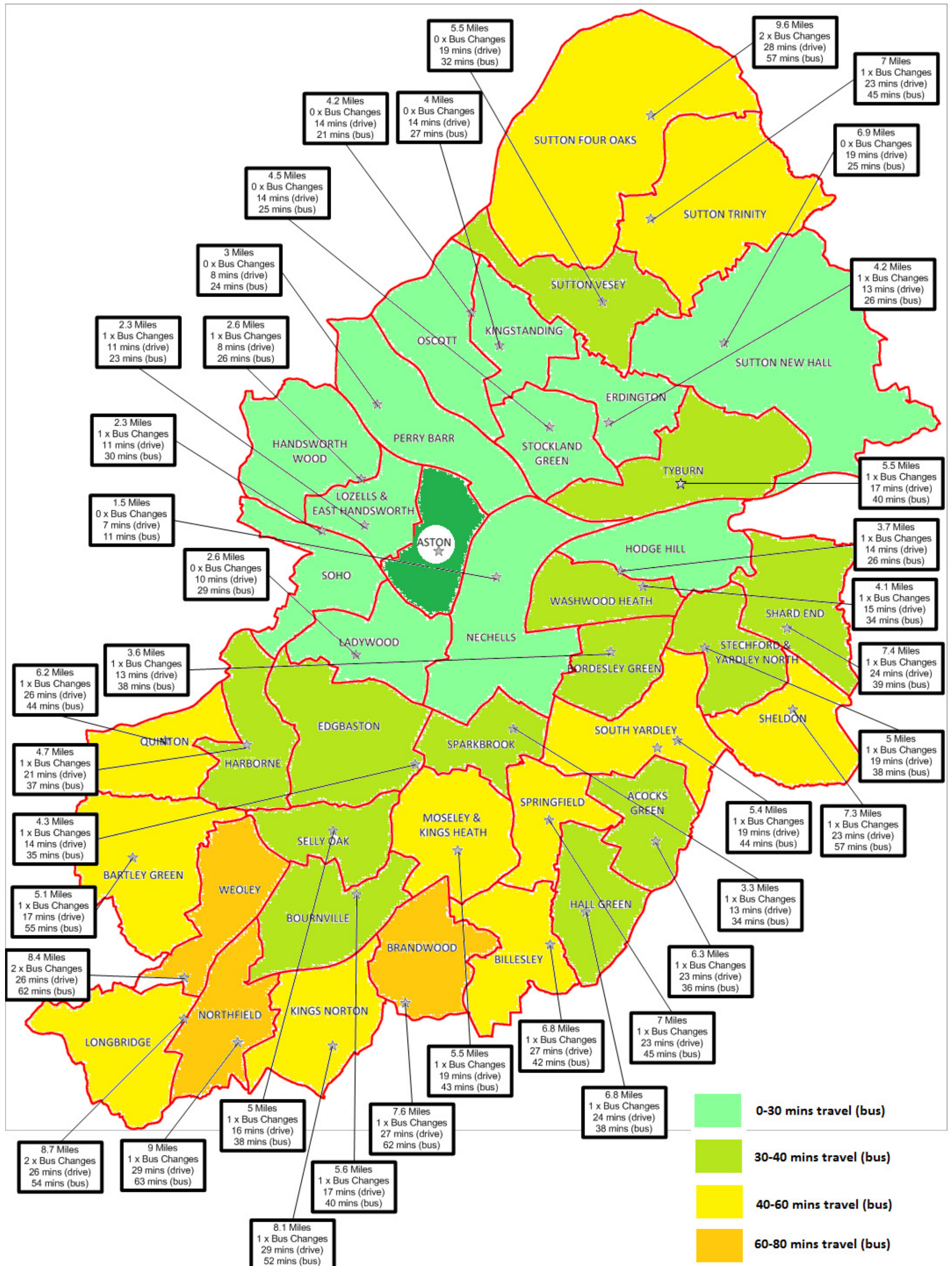
- 7.1. The additional customer travel incurred by a single HAC option does not, in view of the number of trips that would be required in order to access the service, appear excessive. With the adoption of Online housing applications it is unlikely that most customers will be required to visit a HAC on more than one or two occasions in any time of crisis.
- 7.2. The provision of enhanced online and telephone advice as well as online housing applications in the future HAC/Housing Advice model is intended to provide a greater flexibility in appointments and reduce un-necessary visits thus reducing the number of repeat visits as well as the overall total of visitors to the HAC.
- 7.3. There is likely to be some limited additional inconvenience to customers however this is unlikely to exceed the average daily commute undertaken by a large number of the Birmingham population. In view of the provision of alternate service options (8.1 & 8.2) reducing the number of repeat visits to the site it is again suggested that occasional visits would not create an excessive additional burden on customers in terms of travel.
- 7.4. There is sufficient mitigation in place to deal with crisis situations (where people are financially or physically unable to reach the proposed site) in visiting officers, telephone advice, online services and the provision of buses and taxis (in the most extreme circumstances) however future plans to increase the number of locations where the issue of bus tickets is available will improve the resilience of the service against any challenge to single site provision.

Report Produced by

Andy Clarke
Business Analyst

Business Change Team (Projects)
24/07/2015
Tel: 07730282801
Email: andrew.j.clarke@birmingham.gov.uk

9: Citywide Travel Analysis



10. Birmingham Rail & Light Rail Network by Ward

Station	Ward	Direct Line to Aston	Postcode
Blake Street	Sutton Four Oaks	Y	B74 4EB
Butlers Lane	Sutton Four Oaks	Y	B75 5HR
Four Oaks	Sutton Four Oaks	Y	B74 2RX
Sutton Coldfield	Sutton Trinity	Y	B73 6AY
Wylde Green	Sutton Vesey	Y	B73 5LA
Chester Road	Sutton Vesey	Y	B73 5JS
Erdington	Erdington	Y	B23 6UB
Gravelly Hill	Erdington	Y	B23 7NH
Duddeston	Hodge Hill	Y	B8 1AR
Five Ways	Edgbaston	Y	B15 1SF
University	Edgbaston	Y	B15 2SA
Selly Oak	Selly Oak	Y	B29 6DW
Bournville	Bournville	Y	B30 2LP
Kings Norton	Kings Norton	Y	B30 3EL
Northfield	Northfield	Y	B31 2PY
Longbridge	Northfield	Y	B31 2TW
Lea Hall	Stetchford & Yardley North	N	B33 8JU
Stetchford	Stetchford & Yardley North	N	B33 8AH
Adderley Park	Nechells	N	B9 4TG
Bordesley	Nechells	N	B9 4HF
Small Heath	South Yardley	N	B10 DP
Tyseley	South Yardley	N	B11 2HH
Acocks Green	Acocks Green	N	B27 6EB
Spring Road	Springfield	N	B11 3DP

Appendix D: Customer Accessibility & Travel Analysis (Housing Advice)

Hall Green	Hall Green	N	B28 8AA
Yardley Wood	Hall Green	N	B28 0BY
Witton	Aston	Y	B6 6NS
Perry Barr	Lozells & East Handsworth	Y	B20 3JE
Hamstead	Perry Barr	Y	B42 1NJ
Snow Hill	Ladywood	Y	B3 2BJ
New Street Station	Ladywood	Y	B5 4AH
Aston	Nechells	Y	B6 7PR
Handsworth Booth Street (Metro)	Soho	N	B21 0NG
Winson Green Outer Circle Metro Stop	Handsworth Wood	N	B21 9PY
Soho Benson Road Metro Stop	Lozells & East Handsworth	N	B1 9BX
Jewellery Quarter Metro	Ladywood	N	B3 1RJ
St Pauls Metro Stop	Aston	N	B19 3JT
Snow Hill Metro Stop	Ladywood	Y	B3 2BJ

Report to:	CABINET
Report of:	Acting Strategic Director of Place
Date of Decision:	19 April 2016
SUBJECT:	BIRMINGHAM CULTURAL STRATEGY 2016-19 - IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY AND ENTERPRISE
Key Decision: Yes	Relevant Forward Plan Ref: 000313/2015
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved <input type="checkbox"/> O&S Chairman approved <input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Penny Holbrook – Skills, Learning & Culture
Relevant O&S Chairman:	Councillor Victoria Quinn – Economy, Skills & Sustainability
Wards affected:	All

1. Purpose of report:
<p>1.1 To seek approval from Cabinet for a new cultural strategy for the city to go forward to Full Council for adoption.</p> <p>1.2 To inform Cabinet of plans to establish partnership-based arrangements for delivering the strategy.</p>

2. Decision(s) recommended:
<p>That the Cabinet:-</p> <p>2.1 Approves the Cultural Strategy attached to this report at Appendix One and recommends it to progress for discussion and adoption at Full Council (provisional date 14 June 2016).</p> <p>2.2 Notes the intention to establish a new Partnership for Culture which will co-ordinate delivery, commission activities jointly or in alignment with partners and monitor progress as set out in Section 5.</p> <p>2.3 Notes the actions for the Council, which are set out in Appendix Two and will be delivered within existing budgets in the Culture & Visitor Economy Division.</p>

Lead Contact Officer:	Val Birchall, Assistant Director, Culture & Visitor Economy
Telephone No: E-mail address:	0121 303 2919 val.birchall@birmingham.gov.uk

3. Consultation
<p>3.1 <u>Internal</u></p> <p>Councillor Meirion Jenkins has been a member of the Steering Group for the strategy. Members of the Economy, Skills & Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Committee have been sent a copy of the strategy and their comments have been incorporated. If Cabinet approves the strategy to progress, it will be considered by Full Council at its meeting on in June 2016, because the Cultural Strategy forms part of the corporate policy framework.</p> <p>3.2 <u>External</u></p> <p>The strategy is a partnership document. It was drafted by five working groups, each chaired by a representative of the city's cultural sector, overseen by a Steering Group. Public consultation events and two periods of public consultation have been held.</p>
4. Compliance Issues:
<p>4.1 <u>Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?</u></p> <p>The previous cultural strategy (Big City Culture) ran from 2010-2015. In the intervening period, the city has also developed a Heritage Strategy and a Public Art Strategy. Key actions from these documents are captured in the new strategy document. The development of a new cultural strategy was an action from the Leader's policy statement. The Council's Business Plan and Budget 2016+ sets a vision for A Strong Economy, A Great Future for Young People and Thriving Local Communities, and the cultural strategy plays a part in achieving these outcomes. The Business Plan also charges us with developing an approach which is partnership-led, not Council-led.</p> <p>4.2 <u>Financial Implications</u></p> <p>The strategy document sets a course of direction for partners across the city. The actions identified for the Council to progress are set out in Appendix Two and will be delivered within the Culture & Visitor Economy budget.</p> <p>4.3 <u>Legal Implications</u></p> <p>Under the general power of competence per Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council has the power to enter into the arrangements set out in this report which also are within the boundaries and limits of the general power of competence Section 2 and 4 of the Localism Act 2011. The power to award grants and to do, or arrange for the doing of, or contribute towards the expenses of doing, anything necessary or expedient for the provision of entertainment is given under Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972.</p> <p>4.4 <u>Public Sector Equality Duty</u></p> <p>A copy of the Equality Act 2010 – Public Sector Duty statement is appended – Appendix Three together with the initial equality assessment screening – Appendix Four (EA000500).</p>

5.	Relevant background/chronology of key events:
5.1	The Cultural Strategy is a part of the corporate policy framework. The previous strategy (Big City Culture) was developed as part of the work to assemble Birmingham's bid for the UK City of Culture title in 2010 and expired in 2015.
5.2	In the intervening period, a series of related strategic documents, most notably the Heritage Strategy 2015-19 and the Public Art Strategy 2015-19 have been developed through partnership processes. The Cultural Strategy (attached at Appendix One) is consistent with the main actions in these strategies, and some of the headline actions are also included specifically.
5.3	Although the strategy is part of the Council's policy framework, in keeping with the new policy direction to be partnership (not Council) led, in 2015 the Cabinet Member for Skills, Learning & Culture invited five cultural leaders in the city to join a steering group and to chair the working groups which developed the document.
5.4	Each working group comprised representatives drawn widely from the cultural sector. The working group chairs were Tom Jones and Deirdre Figueiredo (Culture on Our Doorstep), Noel Dunne (Next Generation), Anita Bhalla (A Creative City), Wanjiku Nyachae and Gavin Wade (Our Cultural Capital) and Stuart Rogers (Our Cultural Future).
5.5	Following the development of a first draft of the strategy, a public consultation day was held on 12 th October 2015. Over fifty people attended including representatives from the cultural, voluntary and Higher Education sectors. Public consultation via Be Heard took place at the same time. The strategy was then updated to reflect important points concerning revised narrative and outcomes under each of the themes and measures of success and a second period of consultation then took place which closed on 15 January 2016. Specifically, changes made included stressing links to the health and voluntary sectors, the importance of the amateur arts sector, residents' (including young people's) roles in leading, planning and delivery, explicit commitments from cultural companies and clearer reference to proactive planning for business resilience and sustainability.
5.6	As the strategy is a partnership document, it is appropriate for a partnership to govern its delivery and a Partnership for Culture (PfC) is proposed for this purpose. The PfC will include the working group chairs, as well as representatives of organisations with an interest in the city's continued thriving and vibrant cultural life. It is intended that the partnership will develop Terms of Reference which enable joint and aligned commissioning of activities to progress actions in the strategy as necessary. Separate oversight of the Heritage and Public Art strategies is already in place.
6.	Evaluation of alternative option:
6.1	Not to agree a Cultural Strategy – Birmingham would have no up to date framework for cultural development. The strategy has been advanced by a wide partnership and provides direction for the development of cultural activities across the city. Without an agreed strategy it would be more difficult to co-ordinate provision to meet the objectives determined with partners and to take advantage of funding opportunities.

7. Reasons for Decision(s):	
7.1	To provide a recommendation to Full Council for the adoption of the draft Cultural Strategy (Appendix One), as part of the Council's policy framework. This will provide policy direction to underpin delivery of the actions to be taken by the Council (Appendix Two) and support the cultural sector in co-ordinating and delivering the activities set out in the strategy.

Signatures		<u>Date</u>
Cabinet Member Cllr Penny Holbrook, Skills Learning & Culture
Chief Officer Jacqui Kennedy, Acting Strategic Director of Place

List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:
1. Big City Culture – Birmingham's Cultural Strategy 2010-15

List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):
1. Draft Cultural Strategy
2. Actions for the Council
3. Equality Act
4. Equality Analysis EA000500

Report Version		Dated	<u>5 April 2016</u>
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IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY AND ENTERPRISE
Birmingham Cultural Strategy 2016-19

Birmingham is a non-stop city of culture¹ with local roots and international reach - a capital of imagination, creativity and enterprise.

THEMES

The strategy has five themes through which the vision will be delivered:

1. **Culture on Our Doorstep**
Becoming a leader in cultural democracy where people come together to co-create, commission, lead and participate in a wide range of locally relevant, pluralistic and community driven cultural ventures.
2. **Next Generation**
Ensuring that all children and young people have opportunities to engage with a diverse range of high quality arts and cultural experiences at every stage of their development and which they value as worth it.
3. **A Creative City**
Supporting and enabling the growth of creative and cultural SMEs and micro-businesses and individuals through business support, skills and talent development and access to finance.
4. **Our Cultural Capital**
Cementing Birmingham's role and reputation as a centre of imagination, innovation and enterprise, with local roots and international reach.
5. **Our Cultural Future**
Adapting our business models to ensure they are capable of sustaining and growing the sector into the future through collaboration, diversification, rebalancing and devolution.

Each chapter sets out what we want to achieve in terms of our intended outcomes (sustainable positive changes) for the themes, and the actions that we plan to take collectively across the city to make these changes a reality.

PARTNERSHIP FOR CULTURE

This strategy has been developed and is owned by a wide group of stakeholders from across the city. Its implementation will be overseen by the Birmingham Partnership for Culture, a new partnership body which will bring together the public and private sector stakeholders with an interest in delivering the vision. The Partnership for Culture will seek to co-ordinate contributions

¹ For the purposes of this strategy, "culture" means performing arts, visual art, craft, film, media (including digital media), combined arts, museums, heritage, libraries, public art, creative industries and tourism related activity.

from across the city towards the objectives of the strategy, and will commission activities to support the delivery of the actions.

Chapter 1: **Culture on Our Doorstep**²

Becoming a leader in cultural democracy where people come together to co-create, commission, lead and participate in a wide range of locally relevant, pluralistic and community driven cultural ventures.

Culture crosses all types of boundaries and has the power to change our lives – collectively and individually - for the better. Culture improves everyone's sense of well-being. It enables us to articulate pride in who we are whilst simultaneously encouraging us to interact with each other: a vehicle for generating mutual understanding. The belief that culture is a force for good and owned by all of us in differing ways underpins the concept of 'Culture on Our Doorstep'

Birmingham has the potential to become a leader in cultural democracy where people come together to commission, lead, participate in, and create not only arts activities but also a wider range of cultural ventures: a place where people live life to the full.

Many of us lead rich cultural lives and enjoy not only those activities facilitated by publicly funded venues, commercial independent promoters and faith based organisations but also those generated by ourselves amongst communities of interest, place and faith, individuals, families and friends, in voluntary groups and through active participation in cultural organisations as creators, managers, co-producers, arts activists or entrepreneurs and as audiences.

Research shows that for many more of us there are real barriers to participation including disposable income, available child-care, transport, ready access to information as well as the socio-political perceptions that 'culture' is either generically the domain of others or something specific to ourselves. However, recent action research across the city shows that these barriers can be surmounted by activities that are collaboratively devised and locally undertaken. This provides a starting point for re-thinking a strategy for Culture on Our Doorstep.

Each Birmingham district in terms of population is equivalent to a small town, and especially when taken in the context of a future West Midlands forms a rich, multifarious and highly varied mosaic of diverse communities characterised by their plurality, own interests, circumstances and loyalties.

Whilst benefiting from centralised arts, culture and heritage programmes, emanating from arts, cultural and heritage providers of national and international standing including large scale cultural festivals, these diverse communities of interest place high value on activities that are socially and geographically localised in their specific contexts.

² Note that the term "resident" also includes young people. The Next Generation theme provides further, specific, actions in relation to 0-25s.

Throughout the last decade, Birmingham City Council has steadily paved the way for a structurally and conceptually democratic citywide approach to culture and the arts through introducing a range of seminal initiatives. For example, an Arts Champion scheme paired each of the major cultural institutions with a specific District. Arts Forums have generated effective infra-structures appropriate to each District. An open access grant programme supports cultural activities in community facilities, social and commercial centres, and in parks and streets. Taken together, these form a unique platform for strategic development that can be owned and shared by a wide range of cultural facilitators, voluntary groups and arts and heritage agencies across the region.

This platform can be envisaged as a localised cultural ecology characterised by the organic interaction of three sectors of interest:

Home Grown Culture

Whilst this sector can be taken literally as domestically based, it also covers all forms of localised voluntary arts engagement and creativity through amateur groups as well as individual DIY culture often involving interactions with new technology and social media. It represents the closest point of contact between cultural interests and the general population and thus epitomises the concept of 'Culture on Our Doorstep'. Significantly, it also conceptualises quality as 'fitness for purpose', extends the 'arts' way beyond institutionally defined categories, and links the learning and social values of culture. Agents in this sector typically include Local Arts Forums, national or regional organisations with focused cultural interests, faith based organisations, amateur producers and promoters and groups involved in amateur theatre/performance, music, multi-media, dance, singing, art and craft.

Publicly Funded Culture

This sector covers all those localised activities that, whilst undertaken by various agencies, depend directly or indirectly on public funding. It includes research and development, and activities that break new ground, take risks or challenge conventions. These activities are often devised to mesh with wider concerns such as social cohesion, health and well-being, quality of life, and local regeneration. Agents in this sector typically include, amongst others, educational institutions including universities, arts champions, organisations and foundations, museum trusts, health authorities, and collaborative commissions from Birmingham City and Borough Councils in the West Midlands.

Commercial and Independent Culture

Neither publicly funded nor voluntary (though some intersect), cultural activities in this sector are designed to make a profit and use a variety of spaces. Though this condition might exclude some localised cultural activities, many people are prepared and able to – at least in part - pay for what they value. With regard to culture, the commercial sphere includes attending any form of indoor or outdoor festival, music gig, performance or display/exhibition, paying membership or subscription fees, or simply buying created artifacts. In addition, profit-making arts often undertake commissions or projects that require them to provide wider socio-cultural benefits. Thus, typical agents in this sector are independent promoters/producers, publicly accessible commercial galleries, theatres and other performance venues (eg pubs and community/religious centres) and arts centres.

Within each of these sectors of interest, the agents concerned demonstrate, articulate and shape the arts and culture according to their partial perspectives. However, the radical economic and political unpredictability of the next five years predicates that strategic development in 'Culture on Our Doorstep' must be a matter, less of rigid centralisation and homogenised policies, and more one of organic, dynamic and self-directed interaction within this rich mosaic. This is particularly pertinent in a city where ethnic plurality is becoming the norm and there is a significant demographic population shift. By 2024 Birmingham is predicted to become a 'super-diverse' city having no single ethnic group in a majority. In order to establish and sustain a democratic ecology of culture across Birmingham and the West Midlands, all agents, though operating within their sectors of interests and specific remits, will need to engage more systematically in collaborative activities that:

- Enable us (people who live and/or work in the city) to become more active in creating and shaping cultural events, especially through co-designing.
- Create cultural activities that are high quality in being fit for purpose and focused on 'place-making' in being more relevant to our local needs, circumstances and perspectives.
- Encourage us all to become active contributors to the communities of interest in which we live, work, learn, worship, relax or play, thereby increasing socio-cultural confidence and transferable skills.
- Make imaginative use of and inhabit a wide range and type of spaces – outdoor, indoor and digital, creating sustainable hubs of creativity.
- Generate individual as well as collective financial or in-kind resources from a diverse range of sources including local businesses through corporate social responsibility.
- Enable practitioners, facilitators, managers, project organisers and communicators within arts communities to become active and influential within other communities of which they are also members.
- Conversely, enable members of other communities of interest to become active and influential within arts communities.
- Open up progression routes, signpost further opportunities, lever new resources, and encourage new initiatives within and between differing types of community.
- Seek to connect agents that too often operate separately within arts and culture, such as those categorised as amateur or professional, those that operate locally or internationally, and those with a specific focus point or a far ranging scope.
- Seek to connect arts and culture agents with those in other spheres of local interest such as health and well-being, housing, regeneration, faith and other socio-cultural networks, thereby extending instrumental functions of the arts.
- Explore the use of technologies, old as well as new digital ones, in sharing and producing localised activities, celebrating localised and/or thematic cultural identities, forging our sense of belonging, encouraging our willingness to tolerate difference, and shaping our socio-cultural identities in future

The evolution of Culture on Our Doorstep in Birmingham and the region requires a wide range of agents, including regional councils, to buy into the shared vision of a cultural ecology.

Correspondingly, measures for the extent to which this vision is realised need to be process rather than product orientated, with the above bullet points as measures for the individual and collective effectiveness of agents in creating a shared ecology of culture for our region. Nevertheless, the councils, especially that of Birmingham City or a combined authority, would have additional

functions. In a cultural ecology, they would need to shift from control and centralised provision to devolution and co-production by becoming connectors, enablers, co-coordinators, and facilitators – of a regional cultural ecology.

Outcomes

- The cultural voice of residents is valued, enabled, developed and shared.
- More people are involved in cultural activities in the city.
- The profile of artists, audiences, participants and cultural leaders in the city better reflects our population.
- Residents have the confidence, agency and skills to create, facilitate, commission, attend or host a variety of cultural opportunities that are relevant and accessible to them.
- Local arts fora are sustainable and effective vehicles for initiating, coordinating and delivering culture at a local level.
- Increased range and type of space/s are imaginatively used as hubs for cultural activity.
- A better sense of place, local identity, better quality of life, health & wellbeing and social cohesion for all

Actions

1. Residents will co-design their own cultural provision in a wide range of places and spaces, increasing its relevance and immediacy to local communities.
2. We will work with the Local Arts Fora to devise mechanisms which enable them to collaborate, thrive, flourish and become sustainable as principle vehicles and hubs for facilitating and resourcing local cultural activities.
3. We will improve co-ordination and signposting of opportunities and encourage volunteering to help residents develop skills and to deepen their engagement as creators, producers, artists, audiences, participants and leaders.
4. We will promote culture as a driver and vehicle for positive change and work with public sector agencies for health, skills, housing etc to develop mechanisms for commissioning cultural activities to deliver our shared outcomes.
5. We will improve use of, and access to, technology to enable residents to utilise open source tools, promote local activities and celebrate local cultural identity, and to support innovation in production.
6. We will encourage and support the recording of local heritage.³

³ Action from Heritage strategy.

7. Through the local arts forum network we will support activities to increase participation and engagement and overcome barriers of transport, isolation and cultural difference.
8. We will work with local businesses to increase support for locally produced culture through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda, in-kind contribution and/or sponsorship of local events and festivals.

Chapter 2: **Next Generation**

Ensuring that all children and young people have opportunities to engage with a diverse range of high quality arts and cultural experiences at every stage of their development and which they value. These experiences are created for, with and by children and young people and engage their imagination and interest and inspire them then to take part in arts and cultural activities during and beyond their childhood.

This statement of intent reflects the best current thinking of around 30 artists, creatives, teachers and academics from across the creative & cultural and education sectors of Birmingham. It is not finished but it is different. It needs to be. Darren Henley, CEO of Arts Council England, recently launched the Cultural Education Partnership initiative. He talked about persistent inequality of access:

“We know that there is startling evidence that those from the most educationally deprived backgrounds are least likely to engage with cultural activities, perpetuating the cycle of exclusion.”

According to statistics from Arts Council England Birmingham remains an area of low engagement with culture.

Subsidised arts & cultural organisations are working out how to maintain the learning offers with a lot less money and in a competitive market place that works against collaboration. Arts subjects in schools are under pressure from the cumulative effect of education reforms Ebaccs, STEMs, SATs and a host of other demands within and beyond the curriculum. Artists who have decades of experience of working with children in schools are seeing huge gaps in calendars that only a few years ago had few empty spaces.

So it might seem perverse that where we’ve got to calls for more provision, greater equity, better quality and louder acclamation of arts and cultural education for all children, young people and young adults in our city. It’s because we deem it unacceptable that the level of inequality of access, opportunity and progression still exists – and this is a view backed by Government at all levels.

But we’re the legacy of arts education pioneers such as Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Bolton, Brian Way, Oozells Street Board School....

It is now our responsibility to pioneer again. There are fantastic things happening in our city. The Birmingham bounce is well underway. But not yet for everyone. For all of us with a connection to supporting the arts and cultural education of children, young people and young adults we are going to need to find ways of working together more effectively. We’re only going to do more, better and greater if we contribute whatever we to do towards that aspiration.

2016 is a great year to start this. The High Sherriff Jonnie Turpie MBE has made the focus of his tenure in office the arts and young people, the Birmingham Rep are hosting ON THE EDGE, the World Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences in July 2016, DanceXchange lead the International Dance Festival, Open Theatre Company are organising a conference called 'Is That All There Is' and a Festival called 'Can Can Can' in March 2016 to promote and celebrate the cultural work of young people with learning disabilities in the city and beyond. 2016 has also been declared the Year of Arts and Young People and arts organisations from across the city are working alongside Birmingham City Council to co-ordinate and communicate a cultural offer to the city's young people that takes in theatres, galleries, concert halls, arts organisations, independent companies, creative industries, schools, colleges, universities and community groups.

That's a great start, but to achieve our aspiration each and every one of us is going to need to do at least one thing differently this year so we can start to build towards fulfilling the pledges of the strategy and work towards meeting the ambitious outcomes we have set ourselves.

This means we're going to have to organise ourselves in completely different ways: it can't rely on Local Authorities and national agencies. Those of us with a commitment to making things happen will have to step up and work out how we work with those we know – and those we don't. New relationships with other agencies and people will need to be formed:

- people from the business community who need us to develop the talent they want to employ;
- people from the Higher Education Sector who need our young people to compete for places on their prestigious courses;
- people across the public sector involved with health, policing, social services and the third sector who are often working with young people with the least access to cultural education.

This is what some members of the advisory group who started this strategy have committed to do: <http://birminghamculture.org/arts-young-people/2016-the-year-of-arts-young-people> we invite you to add yours.

Creative Alliance - create twice as many apprenticeship opportunities for talented young people within the creative and cultural sector in Birmingham so at least 80 young people in Birmingham are moving into employment by the end of the year

Open Theatre Company - have set up and will mentor throughout 2016 a company called 'Because We Can Can Can' which will be run by 12 emerging young artists with learning disabilities: they will develop their skills to professional standards through a range of practical projects, including theatre, film, visual arts and solo performance in stand-up comedy and rapping

Birmingham REP - provide at least 35,000 drama participation opportunities for children and young people across the city and produce the World Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences bringing the best children's theatre from around the world to the city in July 2016

Friction Arts - will make art with children and young people in the places where they live, learn and play to ensure they learn that art is part of life, not separate from it, no matter what their background.

Birmingham City University - Junior Conservatoire and BA Applied Performance productions, both reaching hundreds of children in the region and Junior Art, recently launched and bringing school groups in to the School of Art.

Outcomes

- Greater equity of access to diverse high quality cultural activity for 0-25s: the city's cultural provision reflects and serves the needs, interests and aspirations of young people of all backgrounds and abilities.
- The cultural voice of young people is valued, enabled, developed and shared and their contribution to the city's cultural life is recognised and more young people have a meaningful voice in cultural planning and provision.
- Young people are confident and feel informed about the creative and cultural opportunities that exist within Birmingham and beyond and understand how to broaden and deepen their engagement with arts and culture.
- All professionals working with young people are better informed about the benefits of arts activity for young people and feel confident about integrating cultural activity into their work.
- More young people, including those with identified talent, are supported to develop their full potential as creators, performers, technicians or producers and more young people are provided with high quality careers education so they can make the transition from engagement to employment within the city's creative and cultural sector.
- More young people from diverse backgrounds and abilities are engaged in arts and cultural opportunities as creators, participants, audiences and leaders, are supported to develop their talents and leadership capability and are employed within the creative and cultural sector.

Actions

We

- the arts and cultural organisations, creative businesses, artists and creative practitioners;
- the schools, colleges and universities;
- the public, private and third sector organisations that work with children and young people;

Will

9. Develop activities for children and young people as creators, participants/practitioners, informed audiences, and leaders, and encourage them to develop their cultural lives

from a range of first time experiences, through a choice of organised activities and into independent engagement.

10. Prioritise the allocation of resources and activities to ensure greater equity of access.
11. Showcase the creative output of young people across Birmingham through the creation and promotion of opportunities aimed at children and young people.
12. Ensure the voices of young people are heard in cultural planning and delivery and throughout 2016 and beyond we will engage more widely with young people to develop plans for future action.
13. Link cultural education with high quality creative careers advice, guidance & support for accessing employment opportunities within the creative industries and ensure this is embedded within wider strategies for children and young people.
14. Support the professional development of non-arts professionals, alongside cultural educators, to promote peer learning and professional development.
15. Change volunteering, recruitment and employment approaches to ensure young people of more diverse backgrounds and abilities are employed within the sector.
16. Promote the citywide delivery of the young people's Arts Award qualification alongside other accreditation opportunities.
17. Develop collaborative research projects which map and measure the impact of cultural engagement for young people across Birmingham and the wider region.
18. Develop partnership links relating to communication, funding, sharing resources and information and best practice to support growth & sustainability in the sector underpinned by encouraging us all to sign up to the Creative Futures Pledges.

Measures of Success

By 2019 there will be more arts and cultural activity developed with, for and by children and young people, that is regarded as better quality by young people, parents, educators and arts professionals and which means that more young people of diverse backgrounds and abilities are taking part in arts and culture.

1. There are more opportunities and experiences for children and young people provided by arts and cultural organisations and by schools, colleges and universities as reported by a sample selection of 10% of these bodies in 2016 and 2019. This is particularly in areas or with communities where there is little current provision.

2. More children and young people are taking part in arts and cultural activities as creators, participants, audiences and leaders as reported by the membership of Birmingham Arts Partnership in 2019 compared to 2016.
3. Children and young people are taking part in more arts and cultural activity within the school curriculum and in out of school activities and more young people are following arts courses as reported by a sample selection of 10% of Birmingham schools and colleges. This is reflected in a 25% increase in Arts Awards achievements between 2016 and 2019.
4. More children and young people from diverse backgrounds are working within the arts and cultural sector as reported by the employment surveys submitted by members of Birmingham Arts Partnership.
5. 75% of the city's arts and cultural organisations, schools, colleges and universities and public, private and third sector organisations have signed up the Creative Future pledges and incorporate them into the policies and strategies.

This can only be achieved by greater collaboration and cohesion among arts and cultural organisations, including the city's creative industries. By 2019 artists, producers and practitioners are reporting closer working relationships resulting in more opportunities and experiences for children and young people.

Chapter 3: **A Creative City**

Supporting and enabling the growth of creative and cultural SMEs and micro-businesses and individuals through business support, skills and talent development and access to finance.

The Cultural Strategy provides a welcome opportunity to consider the breadth of the creative and cultural sector, its strengths and opportunities, its stakeholders and leading lights and define a sense of ambition in real and deliverable terms. It allows us to further and reset arrangements with key national partners based on strong regional ideas and leadership drawn from the region's public, private and academic sectors

We know that the sector is underpinned by a spectrum of creative enterprise from the arts and cultural sector through to the more commercially focussed creative industries working with and alongside significant, and increasingly well-resourced, partners in Higher Education. The sector employs nearly 55,000 people, including 17,000 freelancers in the Greater Birmingham areas in more than 6,000 organisations.

To move up a gear, we need to develop *sector specific business support* to address shrinkage in those businesses with medium and high growth potential, enabling them to break through the glass ceiling. Our SMEs will target new markets. They will achieve greater confidence and success in

developing resilient business models, accessing finance, and tapping into national grant schemes and programmes.

Working with our universities and adventurous businesses we will contribute to the Midlands Engine; using the potential of research into *cross-innovation* our SMEs will develop spill-over practices which stimulate new product in other sectors. As a partnership, we will seek new spaces where businesses can work with new partners to understand their needs and prototype new practice, products and services for these new and less familiar markets.

We will release the potential of our film and digital media sector, by supporting a three-legged stool of production, audience development and skills. We will exploit opportunities in the ongoing redevelopment and master planning of key areas of the city to ensure that new development integrates cultural planning, whether in housing or office/mixed use projects, and helps meet the cultural needs of residents as well as stimulating growth in the creative economy.

We will position our arts and cultural organisations and festivals as the drivers of our *visitor economy* and will work with colleagues to encourage developments in transportation which support mobility and connect visitors and local audiences with the cultural offer more effectively.

We will build a comprehensive *skills partnership* drawing in schools, FE, HE and businesses will underpin improved career pathways in the region, better reflecting the nature of opportunities in the region, and determinedly plug the gap in specialist skills for the new cultural and creative economy.

Outcomes

- Creative and cultural businesses diversify their markets through cross-innovation and spill-over, leading to business growth.
- Creative and cultural businesses are more entrepreneurial with more resilient and sustainable business models.
- Spaces for creative and cultural businesses promote and enable clustering, creative networking, knowledge transfer and spillover innovation to support growth.
- The city's young and diverse population develops skills necessary to enable creative and cultural businesses to grow.
- Residents have more and better opportunities in direct and indirect creative and cultural sector jobs.

Actions

19. We will promote network events and introduce themed business support, training and mentoring to support growth through product and service innovation and collaboration to reach new local, national and international markets.

20. We will deliver campaigns, events and activities to communicate best practice in the use of finance and availability of grants.⁴
21. We will broker relationships with HE, key national agencies, business support to improve take up of finance & more ambitious approaches to key national funding programmes
22. We will explore policy measures which organisations and partnerships can pursue to create better conditions for SME growth.
23. We will work with Higher Education, and the advanced Manufacturing and Health sectors to improve knowledge transfer and develop effective spill-over innovation.
24. We will convene an effective partnership to support the growth of a critical mass in the Film & TV production sectors and we will explore the potential for creation of space for production of film and television.
25. With industry bodies, we will develop plans to expand the advertising, design and marketing sectors.
26. We will tackle identified sector-specific skills gaps in the broadcast, film and digital media sectors; business leadership, high level design/IT skills for digital media, line production and writing skills for film & TV, skills modernisation and business skills for the jewellery sector, uptake of creative courses at NVQ3.⁵
27. We will initiate a variety of programmes to develop core skills and establish the creative and cultural sector as a career option.
28. We will develop low cost workspace for creative businesses and to support cross innovation.
29. We will create an integrated online skills hub for employers.
30. Develop a citywide programme to support business start-ups in the creative and cultural sector.

Chapter 4: **Our Cultural Capital**

Cementing Birmingham's role and reputation as a centre of imagination, innovation and enterprise, with local roots and international reach

Birmingham is our cultural capital – a growing city of the arts. We want the people of Birmingham and the world to use our cultural capital in as many different ways as possible.

⁴ Actions 17-19 arise from recommendations of the GBSLEP's Creative City Access to Finance research

Birmingham's proud history as 'the city of a thousand trades' still informs our cultural vision of many forms of art, connecting, supporting and enriching the communities, places and events that make up our industrious city.

Over the last decade Birmingham's arts, heritage, culture and creative industries have flourished and this city has become a better place for people of all walks of life to experience the arts, live, work, study and forge new careers.

We are a city that attracts the best in the world, where creative people are nurtured, and artists and makers want to make their home – a city that inspires imagination, innovation and enterprise. A place where distinctive work is made and people come to seek it out.

We are a non-stop city of the arts, of heritage and production, of visual art, digital art, music, film, craft and jewellery, of dance, theatre, food and street art, of literature, photography and public art. We are admired for our collections and libraries, the quality of our venues, productions, festivals, events, exhibitions, talent and collaborative spirit.

We are committed to making the most of this cultural capital and making more of its potential to enrich the city. We want our arts and culture to be recognised as a source of pride for the people of Birmingham, a motivation for young people, an inspiration for artists, an attraction for visitors, an asset to our businesses and universities, and a driver for creativity, research and innovation.

Through our cultural capital, we will strive to cement Birmingham's role as a centre of imagination, innovation and enterprise, with local roots and international reach.

Outcomes

- More artists, creators, makers, producers, performers and curators attracted to train, live and work here and contribute to Birmingham.
- Birmingham has a compelling, consistent and clear story about the quality, range and depth of its cultural ecology locally, citywide and internationally.
- Birmingham's status and reputation as a cultural capital leads to improved opportunities for international partnerships and inward investment.
- Local confidence, identity and awareness of the cultural offer are improved with added "feel-good" factor.
- Birmingham's accessibility as a destination, and the attractiveness and depth of the cultural offer, drives more overnight stays from visitors, growing the visitor economy and providing more and better opportunities in direct and indirect jobs for local people.

Actions

31. We will identify and lead on the key cultural messages and actively promote our achievements as part of a confident and coherent city story.
32. We will improve our physical and promotional signposting about the city's cultural assets and centres, in and out of the city centre.
33. We will promote the Jewellery Quarter as both a significant heritage site and visitor destination, and as a centre for contemporary making.
34. We will develop Digbeth and Eastside as both cultural destinations and homes for digital and creative businesses; a combined centre of innovation.
35. We will support development of capital projects in the cultural sector with clear links to our strategic ambitions and outcomes including places for artist development and production, and for artists to live and work.
36. We will improve the practice and funding base for commissioning and developing Public Art.⁶
37. We will support, develop and promote a range of arts and cultural festivals, established, growing and new that contribute to achieving economic, social and cultural impact for the city.⁷
38. We will encourage the city's key property developments actively to enhance and support our cultural ambitions.
39. We will ensure heritage is properly considered in planning and development processes.⁸
40. We will influence transport policy and capitalise on developments in transport links to connect the local offer and create a more effective visitor offer.
41. We will explore the potential for a "Birmingham Prize" – a major international prize in a culturally related discipline.

Chapter 5: Our Cultural Future

Culture in Birmingham has been, and continues to be, one of the city's great success stories, contributing not only to the quality of life for residents, but to the city's £5bn visitor economy, to the growth of creative industries, to the city's reputation as a place to invest or to study, and to its role as a thriving centre for the West Midlands region. Sustained public investment over a prolonged period of over thirty years has established the most developed cultural infrastructure in the country outside London. The fourteen largest cultural organisations in the city have a combined turnover of £85million, 66% of which is generated through commercial activity.

⁶ Headline from Public Art strategy, underpinned by sub-actions

⁷ Headline from the Birmingham Festivals Strategy, underpinned by sub-actions

⁸ Headline from Heritage strategy, underpinned by sub-actions

This thriving cultural sector brings benefits to the region's businesses, universities, schools and colleges and helps deliver other important public sector agendas such as health and wellbeing, community cohesion and the environment. Traditionally, however, the overwhelming majority of investment into the cultural sector has come from Birmingham City Council and Arts Council England. The city council is now finding it increasingly difficult to protect its relatively generous level of investment in culture and the Arts Council's investment levels are likely to be at standstill at best.

As public spending levels continue to decline and other claims on the public purse grow, the amount allocated to arts and culture is likely to be squeezed. For the city's cultural sector to thrive in response to these external competitive pressures our arts organisations and leaders will need to hone further their entrepreneurial skills, seeking new markets and opportunities to exploit without losing sight of their individual artistic visions.

The building blocks of our planned approach to securing the stability of the city's cultural life and identifying opportunities for growth and development over the next three years can be summed up in three words – collaborate, devolve and re-balance.

Collaborate –

The city's cultural organisations have a strong record of collaboration, regularly working with each other on a wide range of projects that cross artform and size boundaries. Birmingham Arts Partnership (BAP) has already delivered two large-scale city-wide free festivals (Four Squares in 2013 and the Birmingham Weekender in 2015), and runs Arts Connect in partnership with Wolverhampton University – the collaboratively-managed “bridge” organisation funded by Arts Council England to connect the worlds of culture and education in the region.

The city's larger arts organisations work regularly with smaller companies and/or artists in the city in a variety of artistic and organisational partnerships, production and promotion. From April 2016 onwards this collaborative work will be further strengthened and expanded through BAP transforming itself into Culture Central, a new membership-based organisation open to all not-for-profit companies and individuals working in the cultural sector. This new organisation will open up new funding streams and develop and enable delivery of a range of new collaborations across marketing, data-sharing, production, training, production and learning and participation.

Similarly, the current forum in which the city's wide range of arts festivals regularly meet to discuss matters of common concern and the emerging collaboration between the ten local arts forums in the city will both offer strong and supportive foundations for future collaboration. Together, and with the myriad individual artists, companies and partnerships active in Birmingham, these arrangements will deliver the city's cultural offer more effectively. Building on existing collaborations and creating new collaborative initiatives will be vital to our efforts to ensure the sustainability of the city's cultural life over the next three years and beyond.

Devolve -

The city council has traditionally played a leading role in shaping Birmingham's cultural offer and that, together with the significant financial investment that has accompanied it, has been enormously successful in producing the impressive cultural infrastructure we now enjoy. The council's inability to continue to invest at past levels will, however, necessitate a related review of its ability to play such a direct role. As the city's culture budget and internal resources shrink over the

life of this plan, there will be an increasing need for cultural planning, events programming, project management and funding streams to be led by the appropriate collaborative network in the city.

One of the keys to retaining and, we hope, growing the quality and quantity of cultural activity in the city over this challenging period will be in the way that the city council enables, supports and works actively in partnership with the emerging clusters of artists, producers and cultural organisations in the city. While it will still be an important partner in “place-shaping”, this will be in partnership with other interested parties through the Partnership for Culture commissioning arrangements. The sector itself, which has led the development of this strategy, will play a greater part in steering debate and in leading the delivery of the actions, and will be an active voice in the partnership.

Re-balance –

While local government resources for culture look set to reduce, funding from DCMS and other national bodies is relatively secure. However, this funding is skewed disproportionately across the country, including through Arts Council England, Creative England, Creative & Cultural Skills, Creative Skillset and the BBC.

Work undertaken by the GBSLEP’s Access to Finance programme has found that this problem is compounded by Birmingham’s relatively poor performance in accessing national funding streams and work to support applicants to make more effective applications to funds that are available is referenced in the Creative City section above.

Funding from philanthropy, sponsorship and commercial activity is growing in the cultural sector in the city, but not as quickly as the decline in local government funds; and there is still less availability of funding from these sources, and from residents’ disposable income, in Birmingham than in the South East.

To achieve our aims over the next three years, it is vital that we find ways to re-balance the finances of the cultural sector, replacing what is likely to be lost as public funding from the city council and other public bodies with income from as wide a range of different sources as possible. Most of the cultural organisations in the city already receive funding and/or earn income from a plurality of sources, but an increased emphasis on further diversification will be necessary.

We will work to secure greater local influence over national funding through the devolution deal, so that culture is placed at the very heart of the plans for the Midlands to become the “engine of growth” and delivers the greatest impact for the local economy. We will use our cultural resources to support WMCA’s positioning in national and international markets. We will take the opportunities presented by the flexibilities of the devolution arrangements to identify and secure new funds to ensure that cultural activity continues to play an active part in regional growth, through its proven ability to create jobs, attract inward investment, develop tourism and contribute to cross-sector innovation.

We will make the strongest case possible that culture is placed at the very heart of the plans for the Midlands to become the “engine of growth”. We will identify and secure new funds through the combined authority to ensure that cultural activity continues to play an active part in regenerating the region through its proven ability to create jobs, attract inward investment and develop tourism. The cultural sector’s unique ability to promote health and wellbeing, social cohesion and environmental awareness will be a key factor in attracting new sources of public funding and we need to ensure that the cultural voice is heard in the appropriate forums.

We will work to develop an integrated strategy for the WMCA which links the cultural, creative and tourism agenda clearly to the emerging Strategic Economic Plan in the areas of transportation (to connect the offer), skills (to support education and employment) and marketing (to attract investment and visitors). We will seek to join up programmes and funding through a single approach to central government with our local WMCA partners.

The Arts Council is committed to increasing its investment of Lottery revenue outside of London and we must continue to work closely with them to ensure that we have the quality of proposals to attract significant investment to our region.

The strength of the current and emerging collaborative cultural partnerships in the city will be a key factor in identifying and bringing other new sources of funding and investment into the city's cultural life. Major trusts and foundations, commerce, the education sector, philanthropists and investors will each be important sources for new income, and a strong network of independent cultural clusters actively supported by the city council will give us the best possible chance of securing it.

Whilst attracting new sources of income will be key to our ability to thrive, continuing to improve the efficiency of the cultural sector will also play a part. Culture Central, a strengthened partnership between the city's festivals and the new collaboration between the arts forums will each offer opportunities to identify and implement new ways of working and sharing to ensure that resources are exploited to their full.

Outcomes

- The business model for cultural delivery makes best use of available resources, and provides more opportunities for artists' employment and audience participation.
- A wider range of partners contribute to resourcing culture in the city, drawing in those who benefit directly or indirectly from Birmingham's cultural capital to meet (and exceed) the gap resulting from the decline in public funding.
- An increased and fairer share of national resources is used to deliver the cultural strategy, enabling greater impact.
- Planning and delivery of the city's key agendas of skills and employment, health and wellbeing and the cultural, creative and visitor and economy are better integrated, leading to improved health, skills and social cohesion and enabling greater impact.

Actions

We

the arts and cultural organisations, creative businesses, artists and creative practitioners;
the schools, colleges and universities;
the public, private and third sector organisations

Will

42. encourage collaboration between cultural organisations, in the city and beyond, as a means to optimise the business model through driving out unnecessary cost and opening up opportunities for artists, audiences and income generation.
43. encourage all stakeholders in the city with an interest in the outcomes of a flourishing cultural sector to contribute to its resourcing.

44. support organisations to develop the knowledge, contacts and products to diversify their income base, including exploring new markets.
45. explore innovation in our funding models, including reviewing potential for the use of capital, equity and earn-back approaches.
46. work with the West Midlands Combined Authority to advocate for national resources for culture to be rebalanced at pace, and to provide resources to sustain and grow our offer.
47. work with the West Midlands Combined Authority to develop a model which integrates cultural investment with local planning and seek to secure greater freedom over national resources available to deliver our strategic aims.

Measures of Success

6. By 2019 there will be a greater range of high quality arts and cultural activity happening in the city.
7. Birmingham City Council's investment level in cultural activity by the not-for-profit sector is stabilised at a realistic and sustainable level.
8. Regular and sustainable investment in cultural activity by the not-for-profit sector in the city is being secured from a variety of sources within the public, commercial and education sectors.
9. The majority of not-for-profit cultural organisation and individual artists based in the city are members of Culture Central and working collaboratively to secure new investment, produce great art and grow and diversify audiences.
10. Arts Council England's investment in the cultural life of the city is a higher %age of its total UK investment than it is in 2016.
11. A single integrated approach to cultural and creative development and a commitment to investment in cultural activity are fully embedded in the West Midlands Combined Authority plans.

Version 7 March 2016

Appendix Two

Actions for Birmingham City Council Arising from the Cultural Strategy 2016-19

Birmingham City Council cannot continue to provide all the services which historically supported this sector. The strategy clearly indicates that the future role of the Council is likely to be in working better together internally to support cultural outcomes, in bringing partners together, in enabling activities and, to a limited extent, in funding/commissioning activities to support BCC priorities where these will otherwise go un-delivered. All of this needs to be done within a severely constrained budget.

Birmingham City Council's responsibilities in supporting the partners to deliver the strategy are:

- a) Facilitate the continued development of the LAF network, No11 Arts and the cultural co-design approach
- b) Support signposting/communicate information
- c) Through the Partnership for Culture, advocate for the impact of culture on a range of other agendas, including health, skills, investment
- d) Through the Heritage Strategy Group, advocate for the recording of local heritage and through the Library of Birmingham and the contract with BMT, support the provision of records of heritage, and the celebration and understanding of the city's heritage (including through Heritage Week)
- e) Ensure Heritage is properly considered in planning and development processes
- f) Where funds allow, work with the Partnership for Culture to commission activities to meet identified gaps in provision or meet BCC priorities
- g) Support and encourage the showcasing of young people's cultural achievements
- h) Enable the voice of young people, and of local communities, in decision-making about cultural provision
- i) Champion the Creative Future pledges through Council services
- j) Work with GBSLEP to connect activities of the Business & Learning programme in the library service to the Growth Hub offer
- k) Disseminate information about available funding
- l) Work with partners to develop a shared approach to grow the film and tv economy
- m) Collaborate across the Council to improve conditions for business start-up and growth, particularly in Digbeth, Eastside and Jewellery Quarter
- n) Collaborate across the Council to plan appropriately for cultural infrastructure and programmes within key developments
- o) Through Marketing Birmingham, work with the cultural sector to promote a coherent message about our achievements and ambitions and to improve physical and promotional signposting
- p) Continue to improve the practice and funding base for public art, through the internal Public Art Gateway Group
- q) Facilitate the continued development of the network of festival organisers
- r) Work with colleagues in the WMCA to influence improvements to the transportation links across the visitor offer
- s) Through the Partnership for Culture, review business models and support diversification of income streams and the development of innovative financing
- t) To work with WMCA colleagues to advocate for national resources for culture to be rebalanced at pace, and to seek to secure greater freedom over national resources available

PROTOCOL PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 1 The public sector equality duty drives the need for equality assessments (Initial and Full). An initial assessment should, be prepared from the outset based upon available knowledge and information.
- 2 If there is no adverse impact then that fact should be stated within the Report at section 4.4 and the initial assessment document appended to the Report duly signed and dated. A summary of the statutory duty is annexed to this Protocol and should be referred to in the standard section (4.4) of executive reports for decision and then attached in an appendix; the term 'adverse impact' refers to any decision-making by the Council which can be judged as likely to be contrary in whole or in part to the equality duty.
- 3 A full assessment should be prepared where necessary and consultation should then take place.
- 4 Consultation should address any possible adverse impact upon service users, providers and those within the scope of the report; questions need to assist to identify adverse impact which might be contrary to the equality duty and engage all such persons in a dialogue which might identify ways in which any adverse impact might be avoided or, if avoidance is not possible, reduced.
- 5 Responses to the consultation should be analysed in order to identify:
 - (a) whether there is adverse impact upon persons within the protected categories
 - (b) what is the nature of this adverse impact
 - (c) whether the adverse impact can be avoided and at what cost – and if not –
 - (d) what mitigating actions can be taken and at what cost
- 6 The impact assessment carried out at the outset will need to be amended to have due regard to the matters in (4) above.
- 7 Where there is adverse impact the final Report should contain:
 - a summary of the adverse impact and any possible mitigating actions (in section 4.4 or an appendix if necessary)
 - the full equality impact assessment (as an appendix)
 - the equality duty – see page 9 (as an appendix).

Equality Act 2010

The Executive must have due regard to the public sector equality duty when considering Council reports for decision.

The public sector equality duty is as follows:

1	<p>The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
2	<p>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
3	<p>The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.</p>
4	<p>Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.
5	<p>The relevant protected characteristics are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) age (b) disability (c) gender reassignment (d) pregnancy and maternity (e) race (f) religion or belief (g) sex (h) sexual orientation

Equality Analysis

Birmingham City Council Analysis Report

EA Name	2016-19 Culture Strategy
Directorate	Economy
Service Area	Culture & The Visitor Economy
Type	New/Proposed Policy
EA Summary	To review the implications of a new strategy for culture 2016-19 developed in partnership with the sector
Reference Number	EA000500
Task Group Manager	Symon.Easton@birmingham.gov.uk
Task Group Member	
Date Approved	2016-04-07 01:00:00 +0100
Senior Officer	val.birchall@birmingham.gov.uk
Quality Control Officer	caroline.alexander@birmingham.gov.uk

Introduction

The report records the information that has been submitted for this equality analysis in the following format.

Overall Purpose

This section identifies the purpose of the Policy and which types of individual it affects. It also identifies which equality strands are affected by either a positive or negative differential impact.

Relevant Protected Characteristics

For each of the identified relevant protected characteristics there are three sections which will have been completed.

- Impact
- Consultation
- Additional Work

If the assessment has raised any issues to be addressed there will also be an action planning section.

The following pages record the answers to the assessment questions with optional comments included by the assessor to clarify or explain any of the answers given or relevant issues.

1 Activity Type

The activity has been identified as a New/Proposed Policy.

2 Overall Purpose

2.1 What the Activity is for

What is the purpose of this Policy and expected outcomes?	A new Cultural Strategy (Imagination, Creativity & Enterprise 2016-19) has been developed through working in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders across the city including major cultural organisations and small scale independent sector arts organisations and individuals. The outcome is to deliver objectives through a range of actions under five main themes - Culture on our Doorstep, Next Generation, A Creative City, Our Cultural Capital and Our Cultural Future. This refreshed strategy is to be monitored under the newly created Partnership For Culture (P4C).
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For each strategy, please decide whether it is going to be significantly aided by the Function.

Public Service Excellence	No
A Fair City	Yes
A Prosperous City	Yes
A Democratic City	Yes

2.2 Individuals affected by the policy

Will the policy have an impact on service users/stakeholders?	Yes
Will the policy have an impact on employees?	Yes
Will the policy have an impact on wider community?	Yes

2.3 Analysis on Initial Assessment

The new strategy will take forward Cultural Policy reflecting the changing context and landscape that the city council and its partners now operate in. Objectives and Actions will be developed in partnership with stakeholders across the city to present new proposals that; enhance residents' quality of life - especially at a local level including young people, help improve the economic prosperity of the city - especially amongst the creative industries sector, enhance the city's reputation and profile as a cultural centre / visitor destination, improve skills and learning in the creative sector and, provide a sustainable model for the cultural sector across the city going forward.

3.1 Age

3.1.1 Age - Differential Impact

Age	Relevant
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3.1.2 Age - Impact

Describe how the Policy meets the needs of Individuals of different ages?	The Strategy encompasses residents of all ages (and visitors across the city)
Do you have evidence to support the assessment?	Yes
Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?	Culture Commissioning projects. Revenue funded organisations summary data. Connecting Communities programme / research
Have you received any other feedback about the Policy in meeting the needs of Individuals of different ages?	Yes
Please record the nature of such feedback.	Strategy working groups. Public Consultation day 12 Oct
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Yes
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Individuals of different ages which needs highlighting?	No

3.1.3 Age - Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals of different ages on the impact of the Policy?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Through engagement of working group partners and public consultation. There is also a specific focus on Young People
Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Policy on Individuals of different ages?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Strategy working groups and public consultation
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Individuals of different ages which needs highlighting?	Yes

3.1.4 Age - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how.	The strategy is designed to have a positive effect encompassing all ages
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Policy has a role in preventing Individuals of different ages being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their age?	No
Do you think that the Policy could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	Yes

3.2 Disability

3.2.1 Disability - Differential Impact

Disability	Relevant
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3.2.2 Disability - Impact

Describe how the Policy meets the needs of Individuals with a disability?	The strategy is designed to encompass all residents and citizens.
Do you have evidence to support the assessment?	Yes
Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?	Culture Commissioning projects. Revenue funded organisations summary data. Connecting Communities programme / research. Strategy working groups, public consultation day
Have you received any other feedback about the Policy in meeting the needs of Individuals with a disability?	Yes
Please record the nature of such feedback.	Through working group stakeholders and public consultation
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Not applicable
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Individuals with a disability which needs highlighting?	No

3.2.3 Disability - Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals with a disability on the impact of the Policy?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Strategy working groups, Public consultation, citizenspace
Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Policy on Individuals with a disability?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Strategy working groups included arts organisations who have worked with people with disability and people with disability attending consultation event
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Individuals with a disability which needs highlighting?	No

3.2.4 Disability - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how.	The strategy is designed to have a positive impact for all sectors of the community
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Policy has a role in preventing Individuals with a disability being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their disability?	No

Do you think that the Policy could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	Yes
Do you think that the Policy will take account of disabilities even if it means treating Individuals with a disability more favourably?	Yes
Do you think that the Policy could assist Individuals with a disability to participate more?	Yes
Do you think that the Policy could assist in promoting positive attitudes to Individuals with a disability?	Yes

3.3 Religion or Belief

3.3.1 Religion or Belief - Differential Impact

Religion or Belief	Relevant
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3.3.2 Religion or Belief - Impact

Describe how the Policy meets the needs of Individuals of different religions or beliefs?	The strategy is designed to encompass all citizens and residents
Do you have evidence to support the assessment?	Yes
Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?	Culture Commissioning projects. Revenue funded organisations summary data. Connecting Communities programme / research. Strategy working groups, public consultation days, citizenspace.
Have you received any other feedback about the Policy in meeting the needs of Individuals of different religions or beliefs?	No
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Yes
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Individuals of different religions or beliefs which needs highlighting?	No

3.3.3 Religion or Belief - Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals of different religions or beliefs on the impact of the Policy?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Strategy working groups, public consultation day, citizenspace
Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Policy on Individuals of different religions or beliefs?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Strategy working groups, public consultation day, citizenspace
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Individuals of different religions or beliefs which needs highlighting?	No

3.3.4 Religion or Belief - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how.	The strategy is designed to encompass cooperation and cohesiveness across all sectors of the community
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	Yes
Do you think that the Policy has a role in preventing Individuals of different religions or beliefs being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their religion or belief?	No

Please explain what work needs to be done.	On-going monitoring by all stakeholders and the oversight Partnership for Culture group
Do you think that the Policy could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	Yes

3.4 Gender

3.4.1 Gender - Differential Impact

Gender	Relevant
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3.4.2 Gender - Impact

Describe how the Policy meets the needs of Men and women?	The strategy is designed to encompass all residents and citizens
Do you have evidence to support the assessment?	Yes
Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?	Culture Commissioning projects. Revenue funded organisations summary data. Connecting Communities programme / research. Strategy working groups, public consultation,
Have you received any other feedback about the Policy in meeting the needs of Men and women?	No
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Yes
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Men and women which needs highlighting?	No

3.4.3 Gender - Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Men and women on the impact of the Policy?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Strategy working groups, public consultation day, citizenspace
Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Policy on Men and women?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Strategy working groups, public consultation day, citizenspace
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Men and women which needs highlighting?	No

3.4.4 Gender - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	No
Do you think that the Policy has a role in preventing Men and women being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their gender?	No

3.5 Race

3.5.1 Race - Differential Impact

Race	Relevant
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3.5.2 Race - Impact

Describe how the Policy meets the needs of Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds?	The strategy is designed to encompass all residents and citizens
Do you have evidence to support the assessment?	Yes
Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?	Culture Commissioning projects. Revenue funded organisations summary data. Connecting Communities programme / research. Strategy working groups, public consultation day, citizenspace
Have you received any other feedback about the Policy in meeting the needs of Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds?	No
You may have evidence from more than one source. If so, does it present a consistent view?	Yes
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds which needs highlighting?	No

3.5.3 Race - Consultation

Have you obtained the views of Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds on the impact of the Policy?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Strategy working groups, public consultation day, citizenspace
Have you obtained the views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Policy on Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds?	Yes
If so, how did you obtain these views?	Strategy working groups, public consultation day, citizenspace
Is there anything about the Policy and the way it affects Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds which needs highlighting?	No

3.5.4 Race - Additional Work

Do you need any more information to complete the assessment?	No
Please explain how.	The strategy is designed to encompass all citizens and residents and help foster good relations amongst communities.
Is there any more work you feel is necessary to complete the assessment?	Yes

Do you think that the Policy has a role in preventing Individuals from different ethnic backgrounds being treated differently, in an unfair or inappropriate way, just because of their ethnicity?	No
Please explain what work needs to be done.	Maintain robust monitoring of this area
Do you think that the Policy could help foster good relations between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it?	Yes

3.6 Concluding Statement on Full Assessment

The new strategy will take forward Cultural Policy reflecting the changing context and landscape that the city council and its partners now operate in. Objectives and Actions have been developed in partnership with stakeholders across the city to present new proposals that; enhance residents quality of life - especially at a local level and amongst young people, help improve the economic prosperity of the city - especially amongst the creative industries sector, enhance the city's reputation and profile as a cultural centre / visitor destination, improve skills and learning in the creative sector and, provide a sustainable model for the cultural sector across the city going forward.

Following a series of Steering Group and working group meetings during 2015, various objectives and actions were developed under five themes to take the policy forward from 2016. These are - Culture on our Doorstep, Next Generation, A Creative City, Our Cultural Capital and Our Cultural Future. The resulting proposals were consulted on via Citizenspace and at a public Consultation on 12.10.2015. The strategy is to be monitored under the newly created Partnership For Culture (P4C). The strategy has been approved by partners and is to be submitted for approval at Cabinet in April 2016 followed by Full Council in June.

4 Review Date

30/09/16

5 Action Plan

5.2 Age

Issue	There is also a specific focus on Young People
Action	There is a specific chapter for Next Generation in the Culture Strategy and also a separate Creative Futures Strategy for Young People. There is a specific Next Generation theme for small scale independent arts projects across the city for young people.
Resources	Mainly delivered through partnerships with arts and cultural organisations in the city including Birmingham Museums Trust
Target Start Date	01/04/2016
Target Completion Date	31/03/2017
Lead Officer	
Recommendations	There is a specific chapter for Next Generation in the Culture Strategy and also a separate Creative Futures Strategy for Young People
Monitoring	The Creative Futures Strategy is monitored by a CF working group and the Culture strategy will be monitored through the Birmingham Partnership for Culture (B4P)
Outcomes	The initiatives for young people have already been well addressed in the Strategy and the existing Creative Futures strategy. Specific example include the Year of Arts & Young people 2016 (YAY 2016) already underway.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC REPORT

Report to:	CABINET
Report of:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PROCUREMENT
Date of Decision:	19th APRIL 2016
SUBJECT:	PLANNED PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES (JUNE 2016 – AUGUST 2016)
Key Decision: No	Relevant Forward Plan Ref: n/a
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "tick" box)	Chief Executive approved <input type="checkbox"/> O&S Chairman approved <input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Member(s):	Cllr Stewart Stacey, Commissioning, Contracting & Improvement
Relevant O&S Chairman:	Cllr Waseem Zaffar, Corporate Resources
Wards affected:	All

1. Purpose of report:
1.1 This report provides details of the planned procurement activity for the period June 2016 – August 2016. Planned procurement activities reported previously are not repeated in this report.

2. Decision(s) recommended:
That Cabinet
2.1 Notes the planned procurement activities under officer delegations set out in the Constitution for the period June 2016 – August 2016 as detailed in Appendix 1.

Lead Contact Officer (s):	
Telephone No: E-mail address:	Nigel Kletz Corporate Procurement Services Corporate Resources 0121 303 6610 nigel.kletz@birmingham.gov.uk

3. Consultation

3.1 Internal

This report to Cabinet is copied to Cabinet Support Officers and to Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee and is the process for consulting with relevant cabinet and scrutiny members. At the point of submitting this report Cabinet Members/ Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair have not indicated that any of the planned procurement activity needs to be brought back to Cabinet for executive decision.

3.2 External

None

4. Compliance Issues:

4.1 Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies

Details of how the contracts listed in Appendix 1 support relevant Council policies, plans or strategies, will be set out in the individual reports.

4.2 Financial Implications

Details of how decisions will be carried out within existing finances and resources will be set out in the individual reports.

4.3 Legal Implications

Details of all relevant implications will be included in individual reports.

4.4 Public Sector Equality Duty

Details of Risk Management, Community Cohesion and Equality Act requirements will be set out in the individual reports.

5. Relevant background/chronology of key events:

- 5.1 At the 1 March 2016 meeting of Council changes to procurement governance were agreed which gives Chief Officers the delegated authority to approve procurement contracts up to the value of £10m over the life of the contract. Where it is likely that the award of a contract will result in staff employed by the Council transferring to the successful contractor under TUPE, the contract award decision has to be made by Cabinet.
- 5.2 In line with the Procurement Governance Arrangements that form part of the Council's Constitution, this report acts as the process to consult with and take soundings from Cabinet Members and the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.3 This report sets out the planned procurement activity over the next few months where the contract value is between the EU threshold (£164,176) and £10m. This will give members visibility of all procurement activity and the opportunity to identify whether any procurement reports should be brought to Cabinet for approval even though they are below the delegation threshold.
- 5.4 Individual contracts can be referred to Cabinet for an executive decision at the request of Cabinet, a Cabinet Member or the Chair of Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee where there are sensitivities or requirements that necessitate a decision being made by Cabinet.
- 5.5 Procurements below £10m contract value that are not listed on this or subsequent monthly reports can only be delegated to Chief Officers if specific approval is sought from Cabinet. Procurements above £10m contract value will still require an individual report to Cabinet in order for the award decision to be delegated to Chief Officers if appropriate.
- 5.6 A briefing note including financial information is appended to the Private report for each item on the schedule.

6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):

- 6.1 A report approved by Council Business Management Committee on 16 February 2016 set out the case for introducing this process. The alternative option is that individual procurements are referred to Cabinet for decision.

7. Reasons for Decision(s):

- 7.1 To enable Cabinet to identify whether any reports for procurement activities should be brought to this meeting for specific executive decision, otherwise they will be dealt with under Chief Officer delegations up to the value of £10m, unless TUPE applies to current Council staff.

Signatures:**Date:**

.....
Nigel Kletz – Assistant Director (Procurement)

.....

.....
Councillor Stewart Stacey, Commissioning, Contracting & Improvement

List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:**List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):**

Appendix 1 - Planned Procurement Activity June 2016 – August 2016

Report Version	1	Dated	04/04/2016
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APPENDIX 1 – PLANNED PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES (JUNE 2016 – AUGUST 2016)

Type of Report	Title of Procurement	Ref	Brief Description	Contract Duration	Directorate	Portfolio Commissioning, Contracting & Improvement Plus	Finance Officer	Contact Name	Planned CO Decision Date	Comments - including any request from Cabinet Members for more details	Living Wage apply Y / N
Approval To Tender (SCN)	Short Breaks for Disabled Children with Complex Needs	TBC	Short breaks are provided during all school holidays, at weekends and after school, plus there is an overnight short breaks respite service. The objective of the service is to provide a short break for disabled children and young people which also offer parents and carers a break.	Proposed 9 month extension for 1 service and 7 x 6 month extensions	People	Children's Services	Anil Nayyar	John Freeman	27/05/2016		Y
Delegated Extension Award	Parks Catering Licences (alteration to 16th February 2016 PPA)	F0164	(i) Licences to sell Ice Creams in various Parks (ii) Lease agreements to run the tea rooms at Bham Nature Centre & Banners Gate, Sutton Park	(i) Mobile catering - 3 years & 5 months (ii) Tea rooms - 2 years & 9 months	Place	Sustainability	Simon Hunt	Andrea Webster	31/03/2016		Y
Approval To Tender Strategy	Framework Agreement for Miscellaneous Drainage Works	P0331	Works to watercourses as part of the Council's responsibilities as Lead Local Flood Authority and Land Drainage Authority, drainage works associated with the Council as land and property owners. The works will include flood defence, property level protection, reservoir maintenance, watercourse improvement and maintenance, environmental works and the replacement and repair of general drainage infrastructure and sustainable drainage maintenance.	1 year, 8 months plus 1 year option to extend	Place	Development, Transport and the Economy	Simon Ansell	Mohammed Yahiah	03/06/2016		Y