

<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 07 September 2022
<b>Subject:</b>	Housing support service: young people 18-25 years – Part A	
<b>Report of</b>	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health, and Wellbeing	

**Summary**

1. The Community Commissioning Adult Social Care (ASC) Specialist Housing programme, was approved by Cabinet on 1st June 2022, responding to the demand to provide more housing for our residents with additional needs.
2. Following this, Merston (property developer) and Inclusion (Registered Housing Provider) approached the Authority and offered to purchase 2-4 Crompton Street BL9 0AD for our customers. The property offers high quality accommodation (flats) in the town centre, with a staff unit and space for communal activities.
3. This proposal outlines an innovative support service, which will provide a transitional home for 7 young Bury adults with Learning Disabilities and /or autism, aged 18-25 years. Young adults will be supported to learn skills for independent living over a period of up to 2 years, with a further 2 years outreach support available to them after they leave.
4. This support service is the first of its kind in Bury, offering an aspirational “own front door” accommodation to young adults, with support which encourages them to be independent and progress to other housing opportunities. The outreach support offered to them for up to 2 years is based on best practice; and designed to offer continuity of support at a time of change and prevent escalation of challenging behaviour (and more expensive placements) as a result.

**Recommendation(s)**

5. To confirm commissioning intentions to Merston and Inclusion to proceed with the Crompton Street project. Therefore, confirming the building can be secured for Bury clients.

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

6. This innovative support scheme offers a transitional living service for young adults with Learning Disability aged 18-25 years. The potential for cost savings/cost avoidance has been demonstrated. The scheme offers 7 units towards our corporate and ASC housing commitments and supports our ‘Let’s Do It’ strategy in offering an opportunity for people to live locally, independently, and with choice.

## **Alternative options considered and rejected**

### **7. Option 1: Not to proceed with the scheme**

The impact of this will mean young adults continue to be placed in more expensive placements. This accommodation and model of care (including follow-up support to prevent escalation of crisis/ challenging behaviour), follows best practice. Not to proceed with the scheme would be a missed opportunity to:

- i) pilot a new transitional offer for young adults
- ii) contribute towards our ASC housing targets, which provide people with learning disabilities the chance to live locally, independently, with choice
- iii) save and prevent costs compared to people living independently/placing young people in more expensive placements.

Option 1 was therefore rejected.

### **8. Option 2: To proceed with the scheme using an alternative property/landlord**

This scheme was brought to our attention by the property developer Merston. ASC operational social work lead and commissioning staff viewed the property for suitability along with providers. All agreed the property as suitable for this type of service. The property developer and vendor have been very supportive in the current fast-paced housing market. Whilst we could pursue the scheme with another property and landlord, time would be lost and the objectives of the scheme (outlined above) not achieved for another 6 months.

Option 2 was therefore rejected.

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## **Report Author and Contact Details:**

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## **Background**

9. The Community Commissioning Adult Social Care (ASC) Housing Programme was approved by Cabinet on 1st June 2022 and outlined the vision and plans to develop housing for people with additional needs.
10. The ASC commissioning team are therefore developing various housing schemes, including the 2-4 Crompton Street offer.
11. Merston (property developer) and Inclusion (social housing landlord) approached the Authority and offered to invest and acquire 2-4 Crompton Street, Bury for Bury customers.

12. The vision for the scheme, developed with a wide range of stakeholders, is:
- The provision of a home with support, to further develop independent living skills, for up to 2 years
  - Focused on young adults aged 18-25 years, with low/medium need Learning Disabilities and/or autism and/or mental health issues
  - After a maximum of 2 years in Crompton Street, there is further outreach support available for the young adults for 2 years as they adjust to living independently within the community, if required.
13. The general description of 2-4 Crompton Street is:
- 8 self-contained flats in the property.
  - Refurbished to a high specification that reflects the Council's quality standards expected for our customers.
  - Situated in the town centre, close to all amenities, educations, employment and public transport networks to encourage and enable independent living.
  - Seven "own front door" flats will be for Bury customers; and one flat available for staff office and communal space.
14. Visits to the property were made by ASC Operations social worker (LD), Integrated Commissioning Officers and Care Providers. Feedback was people were impressed by the quality of the flats and keen for the scheme to progress.
15. The Adult Social Care commissioning and operational teams recognised there is a demand for this type of property. A number of young adults in receipt of social care have been identified for referral as potential customers. Traditionally, this cohort would likely have been placed in higher-cost placements as current housing stock and care solutions does not meet their requirements and aspirations.
16. There is currently no provision of this type in Bury; and offering this type of transitional home, with follow up support prevents high cost out of borough placements; escalation of behaviour and crisis management. This scheme would support both improved outcomes for people aged 18-25 years and cost savings.

## **Sustainability of Crompton Street**

### **Affordable rent setting**

17. One of the crucial matters for Inclusion before the scheme was progressed, was to ascertain the rent levels and ensuring that this was agreed by the Council's Revenue and Benefit department. This has been agreed.

### **Void arrangements**

18. The Voids policy from the landlord has been shared with the Council and Care Providers and discussed at a "Question and Answer session" on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The Care Provider and Inclusion share the accountability of any voids cost 50/50.

This would ensure joint liability and therefore joint interest from both parties to ensure there were no voids.

19. Merston would buy the building, then Inclusion, as their partner would rent directly to our customers. The care provision would be block-purchased for the building separately via an open market tender process.
20. The service level agreement (SLA) between the Care Provider and Landlord has been published as part of the open market tender exercise. The lease will be for 20 years, the SLA with the support provider will be for 10 years. There is provision in the agreement to enable assignment / novation if a new Provider is appointed in the future.
21. There is assurance from the housing LIN data that there is a current and future demand for this type of provision, therefore should offset any concerns about void risk and associated costs.
22. It has been agreed that we have 100% nomination rights for the Council, given the strength of expected demand.

### **Costs of Care**

23. The costs of care is the subject of a Part B paper later on this agenda.

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### **Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

24. The scheme provides local accommodation for those with additional needs in Bury: both now and in the future.
25. It increases housing choices for our young adults with additional needs, enabling an increased number of people to live independently with support, encouraging them to move on into homes of their own in the future.
26. This scheme has several innovative aspects; also noting the local investment into property by the housing developer and creation of jobs expected locally by the Care Provider.
27. We are working together to design quality, fit-for-purpose homes for people with additional needs in Bury, which ensures inclusivity throughout the housing agenda.
28. Taking a strengths-based approach to recognise the assets and strengths of our residents – the aim of the scheme is to develop independent living skills, to empower young Bury adults to move on to homes of their own, retaining control and independence.

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**Equality Impact and Considerations:**

29. People with additional needs – for example – people with learning or physical disabilities are disadvantaged in terms of accessing services and having opportunities: this scheme specifically addresses the inequities of access to the housing market and support services, responding to the needs and demand recognised in the Specialist Housing Programme, approved by Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022.

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**Environmental Impact and Considerations:**

30. The housing scheme is based above commercial premises in the town centre, with good links to public transport for staff and customers, therefore the carbon footprint is expected to be reduced as we bring people back from out of borough or from existing premises where clients and staff currently have to travel by other means.

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**Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:**

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Property being put back on the market by vendor (fast-moving housing market versus timescales to award contract to Care Provider)	Close and ongoing liaison with the property developer and landlord, who have been supportive.

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**Legal Implications:**

31. The proposed arrangement is highly beneficial to the Council as it is not required to fund the purchase of the property. As the property will not be owned by the Council, the Council will not have any contractual relationship with either the Developer or the Owner. There will be a tri-partite Service Level Agreement between the Developer, the Owner and the Care Provider (whom the Council commissions). The Council will monitor the arrangements and ensure compliance through enforcement of its contract with the Care Provider.
32. The procurement procedure followed for the appointment of the Care Provider is in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

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**Financial Implications:**

33. There are no direct financial implications to the Council from this Part A paper as it is not required to fund the purchase of the property. As the property will not be

owned by the Council, the Council will not have any contractual relationship with either the Developer or the Owner.

34. The costs associated with the provision of care are detailed in the Part B paper later on this agenda.

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**Background papers:**

None.

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning