

# Decision Pathway – Report



**PURPOSE:** For noting

**MEETING:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 23 January 2024

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Barton House – Emergency evacuation</b>	
<b>Ward(s)</b>	Lawrence Hill	
<b>Author:</b> Paul Sylvester	<b>Job title:</b> Head of Housing Options	
<b>Cabinet lead:</b> Cllr Kye Dudd, Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Energy	<b>Executive Director lead:</b> John Smith, Interim Executive Director Growth and Regeneration	
<b>Proposal origin:</b> BCC Staff		
<b>Decision maker:</b> Cabinet Member <b>Decision forum:</b> Cabinet		
<p><b>Purpose of Report:</b> To note an urgent key decision taken by the Executive Director Growth and Regeneration on the 12<sup>th</sup> January to authorise spend of up to £2.7m in addition to the £2.6m authorised in previous Urgent Officer Key decision for Barton House evacuation giving a total spend of £5.3m to support the temporary accommodation needs of Barton House residents, including the extension of the Holiday Inn contract and for remedial works to Barton House to enable residents to return.</p>		
<p><b>Evidence Base</b></p> <p><b>1. Background</b></p> <p>This report follows on from the cabinet report of 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 which noted the previous officer decision and set out the initial approval for spend to manage the evacuation of Barton House residents <a href="#">Barton House emergency evacuation - final version.pdf (bristol.gov.uk)</a>.</p> <p><i>Since 5<sup>th</sup> December:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have received the draft survey reports from our contracted engineers, following the completion and conclusion of intrusive survey works at Barton House.</li> <li>• These surveys demonstrate that the structure of Barton House is safer than indicated by earlier surveys reported on in November 2023.</li> <li>• Despite renewed confidence in the safety of the block, engineers have recommended undertaking additional works at Barton House to ensure residents can return safely.</li> <li>• The engineers recommendations have been shared with Avon Fire and Rescue Service (AFRS), who have supported our approach.</li> <li>• It was agreed to proceed with the installation of a central fire alarm system and the addition of extra fireproofing in parts of the building. Residents have also been advised that water testing needs to be carried out in unoccupied flats to check for legionnaire bacteria.</li> <li>• Residents have been advised that should remedial works continue on time and with the required access to properties being secured, we aim to support residents to move back into Barton House by 23 February.</li> <li>• We have continued to engage with residents regularly by maintaining officer presence at Barton House and the Holiday Inn, provided regular written updates and maintained a free helpline for people to call for help.</li> </ul>		

- The Mayor, Cabinet Member and senior officers have met with residents at City Hall on two occasions to provide updates on the work at Barton House, to answer questions and hear resident feedback. The Mayor and Cabinet Members have also met residents at the Holiday Inn
- Working with partner organisations we've continued to support residents, providing activities for children and families over the festive period, engaging residents in hotel menu choices and working to support residents in the reforming of a residents association for Barton House.

In order to authorise entering into an extension of contract with the Holiday Inn and spend on remedial works to Barton House a further urgent officer key decision was needed and as this could not wait until the next Cabinet meeting (23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024), it was taken by the Executive Director . Before taking the decision, and in compliance with the provisions of the Council's constitution the Executive Director consulted with the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Finance Officer, the Mayor, the relevant Cabinet Member and the relevant scrutiny chair. The Chief Executive was aware of the decision that needed to be made.

## **2. Summary of contract extension with the Holiday Inn**

The contract with the hotel has been extended from 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 to the 29th February 2024. There is the option to further extend or step down our use of rooms on a floor by floor basis with notice depending on progress with the works at Barton House.

The terms and conditions are the same as set out in the December cabinet report. With the following exceptions: is this right? Can we double check as negotiations are ongoing.

- Reduced security. Security provision will be reviewed weekly and stepped up or down as needed
- The frequency of room cleaning will increase from weekly to every 4 days

## **3. Financial analysis**

The following financial analysis of actual costs to date and forecast costs covers the period 14/11/2023 to 22/03/2024.

Accommodation	Families	Invoiced (£000's)	Forecast (£000's)
<u>Holiday Inn</u>	96		
Guest Rooms		986.6	1,349.9
Function Room		168.8	258.0
Subsistence		0.0	958.3
Security & Parking		208.6	521.8
Guest Laundry			81.6
Cleaning			39.2
		1.6	5.9
<u>Clayton Hotel</u>	19		
Guest Rooms		17.7	17.7
<u>Leonardo Hotel</u>	19		
Guest Rooms		14.5	14.5
<u>Serviced Accommodation</u>	15		442.9
<b>Disturbance Payments</b>	14	36.2	119.6
<b>Security At Barton House</b>			
Additional Waking Watch		109.4	196.0
Temporary Fire Alarms			250.0
Fire boxing of goal posts			263.4
Legionella testing			22.0
<b>Building Surveys</b>			165.6
			0.0
<b>Removal Costs</b>		3.0	10.0
			0.0
<b>Taxis</b>		1.1	90.4
			0.0
<b>Contingency</b>			480.7
		1,547.5	5,287.4

### Remedial works to Barton House

We anticipate the following works will be completed in time for residents to return to Barton House from 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024.

- Fire protection to steel frames - 'goalposts' - in 42 flank wall properties,
- Simultaneous evacuation alarm in accordance with NFCC guidance
- Legionella testing in dwellings left empty for a prolonged period of time

### Accommodation

The financial assessment is based on use of 96 rooms until 22/03/24. This allows for any unforeseen delays in works being completed and residents returning to Barton House.

### Disturbance Payments

As mentioned above, 14 households have elected to stay with friends and family. As a result, these households are entitled to disturbance payments at the following rates: -

Household Composition Element	Nightly Rate
Head of Household	£35
Each Additional Adult	£12
Per Child Over 1 Year	£10
Per night for Kennel/Cattery	£10

To date, a total of £34k has been paid to 14 households for a period of 57 nights. Although additional capacity

has been secured to move these households into hotel or serviced accommodation, and it is expected there will be some movement, it is not possible to determine exactly who will move and when. The Executive Decision taken as detailed in this report puts aside sufficient financing to continue these payments at the current level until 22nd March 2024.

### Security At Barton House

Additional waking watch costs have been planned. Although the building is largely empty, the risk of fire remains, however with less people in the building, the opportunities of discovering a fire are greatly reduced, therefore the need to increase the waking watch. The enhanced patrols will be in place until such time as fire alarms are installed and operational.

### Building Surveys

These are the costs associated with undertaking the required additional intrusive building surveys, as well as the appointment of a specialist concrete breaking out contractor, necessary to minimise damage to the fabric of the building, and concrete scanners and operatives. The anticipated value of these surveys is £145k, with a further £21k set aside for potential Legionella checks.

### Removal Costs

Costs associated with the removal and storage of residents' possessions from those units that have been identified for further intrusive testing. Agreed costs are £1,000 per unit, with a total of three units having already been emptied, and a maximum of a further seven estimated.

### Taxis

The analysis undertaken identifies that the journeys booked are regular and consistent, and sufficient to estimate the average number of journeys taken. The forecast costs to 22nd of March 2024 is based on an Invoice received on the 28th of December 2023 and we will look to further review and reduce the costs.

### Contingency

Set at 10% of all forecast costs.

### Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Note
  - a) the urgent key decision taken on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024 as outlined in this report and attached at Appendix A
  - b) that reprioritisation of HRA budgets will be required to accommodate the spend.
  - c) The arrangements that are ongoing to support the Tenants who have been displaced

**Corporate Strategy alignment:** HC1 Housing Supply. Ensure the affordability, availability, diversity and sustainability of housing for all.

**City Benefits: One city approach to ensure that residents are supported in an emergency**

**Consultation Details: N/A**

### Background Documents:

[Officer Executive Decision published 24 November 2023](#)

[Mayor's Executive Scheme of Delegation \(bristol.gov.uk\)](http://bristol.gov.uk)

[Officer Executive Decision published 12 January 2024](#)

<b>Revenue Cost</b>	£2,687,400	<b>Source of Revenue Funding</b>	HRA reserves, one off
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<b>Capital Cost</b>		<b>Source of Capital Funding</b>	
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>

**Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:**

**1. Finance Advice:** This report is to note a recent Officers Executive Decision taken in relation to the required extension of the contract with the Holiday Inn, and other additional costs, as a result of the evacuation of Barton House on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023..

Approval for a further £2.7m in spend has been granted via the OED, taking the total estimated spend to £5.3m.

It should be noted that at this point a number of assumptions have necessarily been made around levels of room occupation and security levels, the main drivers behind these costs. Actual spend will be monitored against these assumptions in the coming weeks.

No savings to fund this spending have been identified. These costs will therefore need being met from HRA reserves.

The full £5.3m send has been reflected in the base position of the 2024/25 draft Business Plan. Whilst the Business Plan remains fully funded and viable, inevitably capacity within the plan has been reduced.

**Finance Business Partner:** Martin Johnson – Interim Finance Manager Housing and Landlord Services 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024

**2. Legal Advice:**

The report notes an urgent key decision taken to continue to support arrangements in relation to the emergency evacuation of Barton House. This decision was taken in accordance with the Council’s constitutional requirements.

The procurement process must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations and the Councils own procurement rules. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

**Legal Team Leader:** Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024

**3. Implications on IT:** I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity

**IT Team Leader:** Alex Simpson Lead Enterprise Architect 10 January 2024

**4. HR Advice:** There are no HR implications evident

**HR Partner:** Celia Williams HR Business Partner 10 January 2024

<b>EDM Sign-off</b>	John Smith, Interim Executive Director Growth and Regeneration	12 January 2024
<b>Cabinet Member sign-off</b>	Cllr Kye Dudd, Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Energy	
<b>For Key Decisions - Mayor’s Office sign-off</b>	Mayor’s Office	15 January 2024

<b>Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal</b> Officer Executive Decision	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix D – Risk assessment</b>	<b>NO</b>

<b>Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix G – Financial Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix H – Legal Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix I – Exempt Information</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix J – HR advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix K – ICT</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix L – Procurement</b>	<b>NO</b>