

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL
REQUEST FOR THE USE OF EMERGENCY POWERS –
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

SUBJECT: Homelessness Provision – Covid-19

1. **Originating / Department / Service –**

Housing & Building Services – Housing Solutions Team

2. **Reason for Seeking Emergency Powers –**

PLEASE SPECIFY BELOW and attach appropriate Committee report / minute/ memo * (* delete as appropriate)

The Housing Solutions Team requested permission from CMT to block book hotel/B&B accommodation to enable us to provide emergency / temporary accommodation on the following basis:

Increase in homelessness / rough sleeping

- Potential increase in homelessness / rough sleeping due to the corona virus which could include prison leavers (Probation have already advised that there are ex-offenders who are rough sleeping in the Vale of Glamorgan) people fleeing domestic violence/abuse and family/relationship breakdowns.
- Reduction in move on from current supply of temporary accommodation / hostel accommodation / refuge accommodation due to the current requirement for people to remain at home and the lack of move on opportunities as lettings are put on hold by social landlords.
- The potential need to have alternative accommodation for people in shared accommodation if an outbreak of the virus occurs and we are unable to ensure residents can self-isolate in line with Public Health Wales guidance.

Welsh Government Guidance

- The Welsh Government have issued guidance on rough sleeping (<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-local-authority-support-for-rough-sleepers-html>) and have outlined £10 million of funding available for local authorities to accommodate and support rough sleepers (<https://gov.wales/written-statement-coronavirus-and-local-government>.)
- The guidance for claiming this funding should be released by the end of this week, but we have been advised to date that anything mentioned within the support for rough sleepers guidance will be eligible for this funding.

B&B Accommodation

We have the opportunity to block book the following accommodation:

	B&B costs	Total costs	B&B plus dinner costs
Tadcross	£30 x 16 rooms (4 x double / 4 x twin / 4 x family 4 x single)	£480 per night £3,360 per week £40,320 for 12 week period	<i>Dinner can be provided at £4 per person</i>
Celtic International (Airport Hotel)	£35 x 15 single rooms	£525 per night £3,675 per week £44,100 for 12 week period	tbc

Recommendation:

- We book the 16 rooms at the Tadcross for 12 weeks at the total cost of £40,320 for B&B (dinner to be provided at cost of £4 per person as required if individuals need to self-isolate)
- We book 15 rooms at the Celtic International Hotel for 12 weeks at the total cost of £44,100 for B&B (costs for dinner to be confirmed).
- Please note that £103.85/week or £14.83/day can be reclaimed for those eligible for Housing Benefit during their placement which would significantly reduce the cost.

The main risks to consider:

- The establishments will close if we do not block book them asap and this will mean we will not have any B&B accommodation available to us in the area for single people and families to meet the expected increase in need as outlined above. Other hotels in the area have already closed i.e. Premier Inn.
- If the Tadcross and Celtic International Hotel close we will need to consider more expensive options including hotels outside the county which will mean placing vulnerable people outside of the area, may be more costly and we may not be able to secure accommodation outside the county as other local authorities are trying to source B&B accommodation.
- There is also likely to be significant competition from other Local Authorities to secure temporary accommodation, who may also be looking to block book B&B.
- There is a risk that we may not get the funding back from the Welsh Government, however we have a statutory duty to house these individuals/families and will need to rehouse them within our own stock where we have reduced capacity as outlined above.
- We may also fall foul of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 risking judicial review were we unable to accommodate priority and vulnerable households. Whether or not hotels have been block booked B&B will undoubtedly become a much

needed resource during this coronavirus situation for a host of reasons highlighted above.

- Significant increase of stress on staff were suitable temporary options be challenging to secure.

3. **Policy Framework and Budget** –

PLEASE INDICATE as appropriate that the matter that you are seeking the use of Emergency Powers for is a Cabinet or Council function.

Cabinet

Council

4. **Relevant Scrutiny Committee** – Homes and Safe Communities

IMPORTANT

The following sections **must** be completed **prior** to the request being submitted to the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Section for processing.

I confirm

~~(a) — That there are no financial implications and the relevant Cabinet Member, Leader and / or the Deputy Leader has been consulted and is in agreement with the use of Emergency Powers; **or**~~

(b) That, in view of the financial commitments, the Head of Financial Services, the appropriate Chief Officer, the relevant Cabinet Member, Leader and / or Deputy Leader have been consulted and are in agreement with the use of the Emergency Powers and that

~~(c) — For matters relating to the Planning Committee the Chairman of the Planning Committee has also been consulted and is in agreement with the use of Emergency Powers;~~

~~(d) — For matters relating to the Licensing Committee the Chairman of the Licensing Committee has also been consulted and is in agreement with the use of Emergency Powers.~~

~~(e) — For matters relating to the Welsh Church Act Estate Committee the Chairman of the Welsh Church Act Estate Committee has also been consulted and is in agreement with the use of Emergency Powers.~~

(f) For matters relating to policy the relevant Scrutiny Committee Chairman has been consulted and is in agreement with the use of Emergency Powers.

Signed: ..M Ingram **Date:** 26/.3/20
(Instructing Chief Officer)

Please print name: M Ingram.....

I hereby approve under my Emergency Powers the attached recommendation(s) on behalf of the Cabinet / Council (please delete as appropriate).

Signed: ...D R Thomas..... **Date:** ..26/3/20.....
Managing Director

NB Should the relevant portfolio Cabinet Member be unable to be consulted only the Leader and / or Deputy Leader be consulted in their absence.

N.B. Cabinet: 23rd March, 2020 Minute No. 295