

Chagossian British Overseas Territories Citizenship: Strategic Housing Staffing Needs

July 2024

(Report No. DCE/018)

Introduction & Purpose

In April 2023 Report DCE/015 (attached) proposed the creation of a small, dedicated staffing team within Strategic Housing in response to the British Overseas Territories Citizenship scheme for the Chagossian community based in Mauritius. It was anticipated that this would be an initial resource, but the potential scale of arrivals could well mean a larger team was required. There is no capacity within the existing team to carry out this work due to the unprecedented levels of local demand the service is facing, and without additional capacity the risk is that the Council is unable to fulfil its statutory duties.

The last months have seen a marked increase in Chagossian arrivals. In June alone, the Council received 90 households (over 200 individuals) approach it for housing. This included the mass arrival of 77 people on 10 June 2024, that continues to stretch Council resources with over 30 people still resident at the Northgate Community Centre despite the rest centre provision having closed. There has also been a further high-profile encampment next to the Town Hall.

This scale, plus the additional barriers faced by our Chagossian arrivals, mean that additional resources are now needed within this project team. The intention is that this will be fully funded through the Home Office's New Burden's Fund to cover the cost of any Council in delivering its statutory duties as a result of this scheme. However the Council does not as yet have that guarantee and so needs to make provision for additional spend.

Recommendation

To approve a supplementary revenue estimate of up to £366.5k to address the significant additional pressures on the Homeless Service created by the Chagossian BOTC programme.

To note the intention to reclaim this amount through the Home Office's New Burdens Funding monies.

Reason for Urgency

This decision is to be made using Urgency Powers. The significant increase in numbers seen in June, and the impact of the mass arrival on 10 June 2024, plus the expectation of a continuation of these trends, means that the Council must respond if it is to meet its statutory duties. With the summer holiday period commencing.

Were the Council not to use urgency routes, then it would not be able to proceed until October 2024. This three month delay, in addition to recruiting timeframes, is considered to be too great a risk given the demands being faced.

The delays in assessing New Burdens Funding by Government, and belated confirmation that statutory duties will be applicable, superseding previous guidance, means that the Council needs to move now to put capacity in place.

Background

In November 2022, the Government went live with the Chagossian BOTC Scheme. This seeks to address a historic wrong where Chagossians were forcibly removed the population from Diego Garcia to enable the establishment of a strategic American military base. However, in taking this decision no impact analysis was undertaken, or planning for how this would be managed.

Crawley is currently home to approximately 3,500 Chagossians. It is by far the largest such community in the UK. The FCDO have predicted that the majority of the estimated 3-5,000 Chagossians expected to take up this opportunity will in the first instance come to Crawley. If, say, this was a figure of 4,000, this would represent a 3% increase in our population.

Since the application process went live in November 2022, there have been over 7,000 applications, although some of these will be duplicates or will fall away. The 3-5,000 figure is therefore deemed credible, and possibly towards the higher end of this range.

Arrivals to the UK have been slow to start as people progressed through first the application process, then the Citizenship Ceremony and finally the passport processes. In 2023, the Council received 28 applications for housing. In the first quarter of 2024 a further 38 applications were received, and in the second quarter this has increased to 151. This included the mass arrival on 10 June 2024, with 52 flight arrivals joined by a further 25 already in the country approaching the Council. This required the Council to set up rest centre facilities for those to whom a housing duty was not owed, and 33 individuals continue to reside at Northgate Community Centre despite provision have been brought to an end.

The experience to date is that applications from this community are much more resource intensive than the average application. To some extent, given language and other barriers this was anticipated and planned for. However, the reality has been greater again. The involvement of the wider community, obtaining accurate information and the impact of appeals have all been factors. So too the fact that there are often two assessments, one to assess whether or not the Habitual Resident Test and second once that test is passed.

For example the service currently has 48 s202 reviews, of which 28 are from the Chagossian arrivals. Each of these requires significant time, and there is a statutory deadline of eight weeks to meet. If this deadline is not met it leaves the Council open to legal avenues that could be very time consuming and deadly, have a further impact on the service.

New Burdens Assessment

Following significant lobbying by the Council, on 4 December 2023, the Home Office confirmed the availability of up to £13m of New Burdens Funding to meet 'unexpected cost pressures that may arise should significant numbers of Chagossian British citizens arrive in a local authority area'. The use of this funding for temporary accommodation is clear, but for staffing remains unproven at this stage, although there have been verbal undertakings with regards to the first cohort of staff within the Chagossian team.

At the beginning of July 2024, the costs incurred by the Council were as follows:

Chagossian expenditure		
2023/24		
Staffing & Recruitment	137,671.62	
Operational Costs	7,277.35	
TA	119,429.70	
Total 23/24	264,378.67	
2024/25 YTD		
Staffing & Recruitment	54,346.73	
Operational Costs	20,088.46	
TA	163,443.38	
Total 24/25	237,878.57	
Of which incident costs		
Staffing	13,071.04	Includes estimate for Wates, unknown hourly rate
Operational Costs	15,848.00	K2, security and catering
TA	-	Not housed in TA, at rest centre or referred to social services
	28,919.04	

A claim has been submitted to the Home Office for 2023/24 costs, but monies have not yet been received. A further claim for Q1 2024/25 will be submitted shortly. This will not include the costs associated with the rest centre provision following the arrivals on 10 June 2024, as these as part of a different conversation with Government departments.

Proposed Way Forward

As with the previous report in April 2023 (DCE/015), the Council is left with little choice but to increase its staffing capacity further to deal with the volumes of work associated with Chagossian arrivals. The risks to not doing so, both in terms of the Council's wider temporary accommodation pressures, and the risks associated with the s202 reviews, are simply too great.

The immediate and forecasted pressures indicate that the following resources are required as a means of preparing for, and responding to this increased demand:

- Housing Resettlement Operations Manager (Scale N)
- Reviews Officer (Scale I)
- Accommodation Officer (Scale F)

The posts will be temporary in nature, however in order to obtain the right calibre of staff, it is proposed that these posts are advertised on a 2-year fixed term contract basis. Calibre will be important given the scale and the pace required. There is a risk here given that funding is only being sought for one year, but this is in the knowledge that the New Burdens Funding should be available.

This should be seen as a second phase of building the team. Should numbers continue to rise, further expansion may be required.

Finance Comments

The s151 Officer has been consulted and a supplementary estimate is required in order for the recruitment to go ahead. There is a risk that the expenditure may not be fully funded by New Burdens funding (see Risks section) which would result in the cost falling on the Council.

Legal Comments

In accordance with Full Council Procedure Rule 15 (Urgent Action), the Acting Chief Executive has sought and received the written agreement of the Mayor that this urgent decision be taken.

This decision will be reported to the next available Ordinary Meeting of the Full Council.

Options and Risks

The risks in relation to not taking this course of action are:

- The Council does not meet its statutory duties and opens itself up to further legal challenge, up to and including Judicial Review. This is assessed as a likely eventuality given legal representations already being made. The impact would be significant, both in terms of time and resource, but potentially also costs and reputation.
- The sustainability of current staffing levels is a key consideration. Across the service, caseloads are already well above the desired level, and these are teams under strain with the levels of demand being faced. The current Chagossian workload has the potential to make this significantly worse if additional resources are not found. This is also true of management capacity which has been severely stretched in recent weeks, which will impact on the performance of the wider service, and related costs, over time if not addressed.

The risks associated with the option recommended are:

- The costs are not recoverable from the New Burdens Fund, which requires ongoing staffing growth. This is a possible outcome, but the Council is well placed currently to apply substantial pressure.
- It proves challenging to recruit the right staff. This is an ongoing challenge but should not prevent the option being chosen. A variety of options will be considered to secure the right personnel.

Chagossian British Overseas Territories Citizenship: Strategic Housing Staffing Needs

April 2023

(Report No: DCE/015)

Introduction & Purpose

This paper sets out a proposal for additional staffing in Strategic Housing to deal with the unique challenge to Crawley posed by British Overseas Territories Citizenship (BOTC) for the Chagossian community based in Mauritius. These staffing costs are the subject of New Burdens Assessment (see Appendix A), but this process is taking too long to complete.

On learning recently that the first new citizens likely to present to the Council in early summer, a small team is now urgently needed to plan for this. There is no capacity within the existing team to carry out this work due to the unprecedented levels of local demand the service is facing, and without additional capacity the risk is that the Council is unable to fulfil its statutory duties.

Recommendation

It is recommended to approve a supplementary revenue estimate of £200k to fund four temporary posts in addition to the Council's establishment to prepare for the anticipated housing demand created by the Chagossian BOTC programme in the absence of receiving timely New Burdens Funding.

Reason for Urgency

This decision is to be made using Urgency Powers. The delays in assessing New Burdens Funding by Government, and belated confirmation that statutory duties will be applicable, superseding previous guidance, means that the Council needs to move now to put capacity in place.

The annual cost of the four temporary posts is estimated to be in the region of £200k and given the delays to date in the New Burdens assessment, officers are seeking a years' worth of funding to be made available. It should be noted that the posts will be offered on a two-year basis with the expectation that New Burdens Funding will be available within the next year.

Making such provision within the budget would require a Council decision. Given the point in the Council year, any such decision would be weeks away, increasing potential risks relating to Strategic Housing services. It is therefore proposed to take this decision under urgency powers, before reporting this back to an ordinary meeting of the Council in July.

Background

In November 2022, the Government went live with the Chagossian BOTC Scheme. This seeks to address a historic wrong where Chagossians were forcibly removed from Diego Garcia to enable the establishment of a strategic American military base. However, in taking this decision no impact analysis was undertaken, or planning for how this would be managed.

Crawley is currently home to between 3,000 and 3,500 Chagossians. It is by far the largest such community in the UK. The FCDO have predicted that the majority of the estimated 3-5,000 Chagossians expected to take up this opportunity will in the first instance come to Crawley. If, say, this was a figure of 4,000, this would represent a 3% increase in our population.

Since the application process went live in November 2022, there have been over 4,700 applications, and this number increases at around 100 per week. The 3-5,000 figure is therefore deemed credible, and possibly towards the higher end.

The first successful applications are anticipated in May/July of this year. For those based in Mauritius, this will be completed once a Citizenship Ceremony has taken place (these now starting to be organised). The majority in Mauritius do not have passports and will need to secure one to be able to travel. Arrivals from Mauritius in any great number remain some months away.

Of the 4,700 current applications, approximately 10% are from Chagossians from within the UK. These individuals will still need to attend a Citizenship Ceremony, but do not require a passport. Very recently it was confirmed that as citizens, and when in country, statutory duties will apply immediately. This supersedes previous advice received that there would be a 12-week qualifying period.

Community Implications

There are a number of considerations here, but first and foremost is housing. Unlike the Hong Kong BOTC scheme, the Chagossian scheme does not require a minimum level of assets. The majority of Chagossians are unlikely to have the means to secure their own accommodation. We already know that homes within the existing community tend to be overcrowded, often housing multiple generations. The stock within the existing community will not be able to absorb new arrivals.

It is difficult to estimate the likely scale but the attached document, prepared as the basis for the New Burdens Funding, assumes a demand for 600 units spread over 12 months. It sets out the staffing levels that would be required to meet this demand without impacting upon the current service, which is already stretched near to breaking point, with record levels of Temporary Accommodation and demand. It also sets out the estimated costs of accommodation.

New Burdens Assessment

The submission for consideration of New Burdens Funding is attached as Appendix A. Despite providing this information to Government Departments in November, we still await the outcome. Ministers have met and requested that this process is expedited, however we have recently learned that whilst the assessment has been made, there is no reliable

timeframe for its agreement. Given the timeframes set out above, this is too late to put in place the arrangements needed.

We should also be clear that in providing New Burdens Funding the Government will simply pass on an issue of its making to the Council. Even should the funding be made available, it will take to put staffing in place, and to source the units required given the limits on current stock. Indeed, it is likely that the Council will not be able to source sufficient staff or units to meet this need.

Proposed Way Forward

The Council is left with little choice but to start preparing ahead of the confirmation of New Burdens Funding. The delay in the assessment, the recent confirmation of immediate application of statutory duties, plus the existing strain on the existing service, means that the Council now need proceed despite uncertainty. To not do so would be to risk the Council not being able to meet its statutory duties. This would have significant reputational impacts and would result in costs to the Council.

It is proposed that the Council quickly seeks to obtain the following additional resources as a means of preparing for, and responding to initial demand:

- Team Manager/Project Manager role to begin planning
- Housing Options Officer x2 to develop assessment routes and begin sourcing potential accommodation (both within and outside of boundaries)
- Housing Needs Officer

The posts will be temporary in nature, however in order to obtain the right calibre of staff, it is proposed that these posts are advertised on a 2-year fixed term contract basis. Calibre will be important given the scale and the pace required. There is a risk here given that funding is only being sought for one year, but this is in the knowledge that the New Burdens Assessment has been completed and any award should not take longer than 12 months.

This team will provide an initial response and significant expansion of these resources would be required over time to adequately respond to the full anticipated demand and continue to meet the Council's statutory duties.

Finance Comments

The supplementary estimate is required in order for the recruitment to go ahead. The timely recruitment is essential for the Council to be able to fulfil its statutory housing duties. There is a risk that the expenditure may not be fully funded by New Burdens Funding (see Risks section).

Legal Comments

The annual cost of the four temporary posts is estimated at up to £200k. Given the delays to date in the assessment of New Burdens Funding, officers are seeking the surety of a year's funding. Decisions of over £100k require Council sign off, but the last meeting of the Council year has already taken place.

As this level of funding requires a Full Council decision, given that no such decision could take place prior to July, and the urgency to begin planning as set out elsewhere in this report, this decision is being taken through Chief Executive Urgency Powers. This decision has been taken in consultation with, and agreement in writing from, the Mayor.

The decision must then be reported to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

Risks

The key immediate risks are:

- Not putting additional staffing in place (given the existing pressures) is highly likely to result in the Council being unable to meet its statutory duties. The reputational risks here are significant and the Council would in any case face costs as a consequence.
- The New Burdens Assessment has already been delayed. If it is either delayed further (i.e., beyond the 12 months covered by this decision) or does not cover costs being incurred through this decision, the Council will have taken on this financial liability, and further decisions will be required. This is not considered likely, but in that event the Council will need to consider its options.
- Unable to source required staffing and so it is not possible to meet this demand, creating wider issues in the service which is already at capacity and working with over 1000 households. The advertisement of these posts on a two-year basis, despite the risk of funding for the full period not yet being secure, is designed to minimise this risk.
- Loss of staff from the existing service who are already exposed to unprecedented workloads in responding to escalating levels of local need. The development of a separate team is designed to mitigate this risk; however, it should be noted that the current Service Manager has just resigned, in no small part due to pressures on the service.

CHAGOSSIAN IMPACT PAPER: NOVEMBER 2022

Purpose

This paper has been produced to quantify, as far as practically possible currently, the likely impacts, risks and resource implications arising for the Council's Housing Options, Housing Needs and associated services as a consequence of the Government's decision to give Chagossian Nationals the opportunity to apply for British Passports.

Background

Existing services are already stretched beyond capacity in the face of unprecedented levels of demand which are expected to continue in an upwards trajectory over the next two years in this challenging economic climate. Recruitment and retention of staff to maintain the existing staffing establishment to deal with local demand is proving extremely difficult in these challenging times and there has been a concerning rise in the number of staff experiencing stress and anxiety requiring additional support and/or medical intervention within these front-line service areas. This situation is already being exacerbated by the predicted rise in local demand and assurances have been given to the existing staff team in line with the stance the Council has taken with central government that they will not and cannot be expected to absorb this additional demand. A potential 50-60% increase in the number of cases currently being assisted will require the setting up of a separate team of staffing resources sourced through recruitment agencies together with additional management resources to support and performance manage this bespoke team.

Brief Given/Information Known:

- British Passports will be issued to Chagossian Nationals from the 23rd November 2022 to approximately 4,000 Individuals.
- A notional figure of 2,000 individuals coming to Crawley equating to 500-600 Households that CBC may have a duty towards at some point.
- No special exemptions confirmed so will not initially be habitually resident or eligible for Local Housing Authority Homelessness Services. But it is for CBC to determine this should they approach.
- No contacts provided to be able to confirm if accommodation available in Mauritius for Statutorily Homeless purposes (and Intentionally Homeless Decisions).
- The Home Office have been offered space in Crawley Borough Council's Town Hall to occupy and/or run a telephone service from.
- WSCC Centenary House can be used as a Rest Centre during the day, staffed by WSCC, but not available overnight.
- Chagossian Households range from single person households to large multi-generational household sizes.

- Private Rented Sector Landlords are reluctant to rehouse this group due to their lack of tenancy skills and the wear and tear on properties due to the high levels of occupation.
- Family members already resident in Crawley are likely to overcrowd and/or breach the tenancy conditions of their current accommodation to help.
- Substance Dependence and Domestic Abuse issues have previously presented at a higher rate for this group.
- Expectations for housing and transport are high.

1. Current staffing establishment:

The Housing Options Service currently comprises of 26 posts directly to deal with homeless approaches and the Prevention, Relief, Review work and management associated with these (this excludes the three private sector housing officers and one private sector housing manager post).

This team of 26 posts is currently unable to meet the demands associated with the 387 households in Temporary Accommodation (of which 187 of which are in nightly paid) and 1005 households in various stages of the Homeless Process overall. As a consequence there are backlogs in the system which are proving challenging to address.

The Housing Needs Team comprises 4.5 posts to assess new housing register applications, re-assessments considering new information provided and the allocation of all properties available through the Council's Housing Register. This level of staffing is insufficient to deal with the rising demand from those looking to join and those already on the Housing Register and significant backlogs in assessing cases have arisen. An additional 1FTE post has been brought in on a 12-month fixed term contract to deal with the existing backlogs.

2. Assessment of additional demand from Chagossian households and staffing resource requirements

600 Households spread equally over 12 months equates to 50 approaches a month and 11-12 approaches per week. This is likely to require a team of dedicated officers as detailed below (see Section 3 for details of the work):

- 3 x Assessment Officers (existing officers currently allocated an average of 5 new Homeless Application Forms per week)
- 4 x Housing Options Officers (existing officers currently allocated an average of 3 new cases per week and carrying an average caseload of 40 cases with the requirement to participate in the statutory Out of Hours rota)
- 2 x Homeless Accommodation Officers (existing officers currently placing an average of 9 households per week and 11 moves per week = 5 per Officer)
- 1 x Homeless Reviews Officer (existing HRO working at capacity but % of Reviews likely to be higher due to Non-Priority Decisions, Intentionally Homeless Decisions, and suitability challenges)
- 1 x Private Rented Tenancy Officer (to respond to issues of overcrowding, landlord and tenant disputes and tenancy breaches) – (existing officers currently carrying a caseload of 163 CDS tenancies per officer and accessing 1 new tenancy per month).

- 2 x Housing Needs Officers (existing officers currently allocated an average of 7 new housing register applications per week, plus 5 cases under review per week and carrying a caseload of 372 applicants)
- 2 x Team Leader (to recruit, train and manage agency staff and assist the Housing Options and Housing Needs Managers. Span of control of existing leaders has increased to 10 per Team Leader making effective performance management challenging. Agency staff can bring additional management challenges and turnover is often high).

3. Details of the Work Required, Roles and Responsibilities:

The Local Housing Authority have a legal duty to assess any homeless approach, to determine if and what duty may initially be owed to the household. This initial process is carried out by an **Assessment Officer** to ascertain if the applicant has capacity to make an application and if they may be Eligible, Homeless or Threatened with Homelessness within 56 days and in Priority Need as defined by the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).

If the Assessment Officer has reason to believe an applicant has capacity, may be Eligible, Homeless or Threatened with Homelessness within 56 days and in Priority Need, a duty to provide interim accommodation is triggered whilst further investigations are made/ and or the case is handed back to a Housing Options Officer to progress. The Local Housing Authority are required to make all reasonable enquiries as it is not for the applicant to evidence this. The Assessment Officer will also request a Temporary Accommodation Placement.

If the Assessment Officer does not have reason to believe the applicant has capacity to make and understand a homeless application and process, Eligible, Homeless or Threatened with homelessness within 56 days or in Priority Need, a written decision letter is required to be issued detailing the reasons for this. These enquiries and decisions are likely to be difficult and complex to make with and for this client group.

If an accommodation duty is not triggered due to the applicant being Eligible and Homeless or Threatened with Homelessness within 56 days, but no reason to believe they may be in Priority Need, there is a duty for the local housing authority to work with the individual to help them prevent or relieve their homelessness. This is done through an Assessment of Housing and Support needs and Personal Housing Plan, detailing the steps that both the authority and the individual will take. The Assessment Officer and/or Housing Options Officer can start and progress this work.

The Housing Options Officers will carry out an Assessment of Housing and Support needs which will feed into a Personal Housing Plan, detailing the steps that both CBC and the individual will take to help the household to prevent or relieve their homelessness. They will progress cases through Prevention (56 days), Relief (56 days) and Main duty stages as applicable and will discharge duties at the required time. They will make and write legally complaint section 184 decision letters and consider discharges of duty relating to loss of Temporary Accommodation and final offers of settled housing.

The Homeless Accommodation Officers will source and arrange suitable accommodation. This includes contacting providers and liaising around vacancies, assessing household circumstances to ensure the placement meets the suitability requirements. Administration around the setting up of tenancy and rent accounts as well as ongoing payment of accommodation through invoicing and credit card (for commercial hotels). Clients with children (or pregnant) need to be moved on from accommodation if facilities are shared within six weeks and the current demand and lack of available self-contained nightly paid accommodation creates additional work through such moves. Due to the demand currently

faced in the service this is likely to be out of borough and within nightly paid. This generates additional demand on the service due to the increased level of contact from clients who have been placed out of the borough. Any complaints or issues raised are initially dealt with by the Homeless Accommodation Officer and/or Team Leader.

The Homeless Reviews Officer carries out all section 202 Reviews under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended); fast track and standard reviews. The role will be involved in any section 204 County Court Appeals, Letters before Action, Judicial Reviews and Subject Access Requests. 49 complex and time consuming reviews were carried out last year. The number for this cohort is likely to generate at least the same, if not more reviews as the number of Not Eligible, Not Homeless, Not in Priority Need and Not Homeless Decisions is likely to be higher.

The **Private Rented Tenancy Officers** help to facilitate, match and sustain tenancies in the private rented sector and to advise and support the landlord and tenant relationship to Prevent, Relieve and Discharge the Council's duties into the private rented sector, both as part and outside of the Council's Crawley Deposit Service. From previous experience, the number of households who would be tenancy ready is likely to be low and the number of landlords willing to accept these households as tenants is also likely to be low. However, issues within any tenancies that are created is likely to require intensive support and for those already in such tenancies choosing to accommodate family/friends/associates the risk of jeopardising their own tenancies becomes an additional burden requiring intensive support.

The **Housing Needs Officers** assess new applications to join the Council's Housing Register, re-assess applications considering new/additional information as circumstances change, assist with reviews of bandings when customers disagree with the decision made and allocate all properties through the Housing Register in accordance Council's Published Allocations Scheme to help Prevent and Relieve Homelessness along with Discharging the Council's main Housing Duty. This work will increase as the number of homeless households and those seeking accommodation increases.

Team Leaders are involved in the recruitment, training, support and operational management of the above processes. They assist officers on complex cases, deal with customer escalations and complaints, maintain and improve multi-agency working, represent the council in meetings, performance manage their teams and approve Temporary Accommodation Invoices.

3. Staff Costs (Agency Rates):

- 2 x -Team Leader/Managers @ £41-£48 per hour. £48 x 37 hours = £1,776 per week = £92,352 per year x 2 Managers = £184,704 per year
- 3 x Assessment Officers £30-£34 per hour. £34 x 37 hours = £1,2528 per week = £65,416 per year x 3 Officers = £196,248 per year
- 4 x Housing Options Officers £32-£36 per hour. £36 x 37 hours = £1,332 per week = £69,264 per year x 4 Officers = £276,656 per year
- 2 x Homeless Accommodation Officers £30-£34 per hour. £34 x 37 hours = £1,2528 per week = £65,416 per year x2 Officers = £130,832 per year
- 1 x Review Officer £38-£42 per hour. £42 x 37 hours = £1,554 per week = £80,808 per year
- 1 x Private Rented Tenancy Officer £30-£34 per hour. £34 x 37 hours = £1,2528 per week = £65,416 per year

- 2 x Housing Needs Officers £30-34 per hour. £34 x 37 hours = £1,252 per week = £65,416 per year x2 Officers = £130,832 per year

Total Estimated Staff Costs = £1,065,496 per year and is likely to be needed over a 2-3 year period, with a phased recruitment at the start and tapering off the front end as new approaches diminish towards the end of that period and cases work through the process through to settled accommodation.

4. Current Temporary Accommodation Costs and Average Rehousing Times:

Household	Highest cost per household per night in nightly paid TA
Single	£109
Couple	£110
Family with 1 or 2 children	£125
Family with 3 or 4 children	£105
Family with 5 or more children	£120

The data in the table below uses average stay in TA for households that have been rehoused (prevented/relieved/main duty discharged), but these figures are quite low.

If we only look at cases who have had a main duty discharged the figures increase to 241 days (singles), 183 days (couples), 230 days (families with 1 or 2 children), 324 days (families with 3 or 4 children) and 293 days (families with 5 or more children).

Given that the additional volume of households in the system is likely to clog up turnover and increase the time spent awaiting rehousing, we may want to consider using highest waits, which for main duty discharged cases is 598 days (singles), 306 (couples), 571 (families with 1 or 2 children), 503 (families with 3 or 4 children), 334 days (families with 5 or more children).

Household	Average time in TA by household size (days) Prevented/Relieved/Main Duty Discharged	Average time in TA by household size (days) Main Duty Discharged	Longest tie in TA by Household size (days) Main Duty Discharged
Single	147	241	598
Couple	94	183	306
Family with 1 or 2 children	190	230	571
Family with 3 or 4 children	235	324	503
Family with 5 or more children	252	293	334

Household	Highest cost per household per night in nightly paid TA	Net Cost Per day (figure is nightly paid cost less the TA subsidy of £138.46 per week per household)	Longest time spent in TA by Household size (days) Main Duty Discharged	Net Cost to the council per household for the current average stay	Number of 600 Households split evenly across household types	Indicative Net TA Costs by household type/estimated length of stay
Single	£109	£89.22	241	£21,502.02	120	£2,580,242.40
Couple	£110	£90.22	183	£16,510.26	120	£1,981,231.20
Family with 1 or 2 children	£125	£105.22	230	£24,200.60	120	£2,904,072.00
Family with 3 or 4 children	£105	£85.22	324	£27,611.28	120	£3,313,353.60
Family with 5 or more children	£120	£100.22	293	£29,364.46	120	£3,523,735.20
Total Indicative TA Costs						£14,302,633

5. Other Potential Implications, Costs and Risks:

- a) Increase in Interpretation and Translation Costs as Chagossian Nationals speak French Creole and many have very limited or no understanding of English. The current spend of £1,282 from the 1st April this year, (overspent on the year's budget of £1,000), is generally for telephone interpreting, and is projected to increase to costs of approximately £6,000 per year for this cohort.
- b) Lack of Temporary Accommodation Provision due to current pressures locally and with other local housing authority placements being made in Crawley and increase in prices due to demand and increase in costs to heat and run them.
- c) Lack of Commercial Hotel Provision due to local hotels accommodating 842 refugees in Bridging accommodation and 513 asylum seekers in the borough. Hotel capacity does not currently exist in Crawley and may not exist across West Sussex so the implications of placing and supporting households in other boroughs may require additional staff to those detailed above.
- d) Loss of Commercial Hotels willing to work with the Council due to issues arising from individuals placed with them during the "Everyone In" initiative and/or have now become Bridging/Asylum Hotels.
- e) Legal breaches of families/Care Leavers in shared TA over six weeks - Judicial Review resulting in potential costs and reputational damage to the Council.
- f) Legal breaches of families placed outside of Crawley - Judicial Review resulting in potential costs and reputational damage to the Council.
- g) Financial claims on CDS Service / loss of landlords and already diminishing access to private rented sector accommodation affecting move-on due to families helping. The

current average claim value is £1320 with a claim rate of 17% (i.e. 17% of tenancies ending end in a claim).

- h) Expansion of support services currently commissioned by CBC to support those either in Temporary Accommodation or to seek alternative accommodation e.g., Pathways Home and Transform Housing. Current costs of Transform and Pathways Home is £107,500 per year funded through Homelessness Prevention Grant. To increase capacity by 50% would be an additional £53,750 per year which cannot be met within existing grant levels.
- i) Increase in the number of single rough sleepers in Crawley from this group and the perceived treatment from the Council, the complaints this will attract, the damage to the town centre offer and the Council's reputation along with the cost and impact on wider services in Crawley.
- j) Impact on wider services in Crawley e.g., Crawley Open House, Foyer, Camfield, Schools, GP's, Drug and Alcohol Services, Domestic Abuse Services, food banks.
- k) Tensions within the different/wider Chagossian Community and Faith Groups already established within Crawley
- l) Calls to the Out of Hours Service are likely to increase so would potentially need to have two Officers on out of hours to manage the demand. Current Out of Hours costs are £1,081.96 per officer per year, with Toil awarded on top for time spent on calls. This does not usually apply to agency staff as would need to pay by the hour (5pm – 9am equates to 16 hours @ £36 per hour = £576 per day and £4,032 per week on call at an average of 6 weeks per year per officer = £24,192 x 2 officers = £48,384, which will cause inequalities and likely to lead to grievances from existing staff who do not earn the same amount.
- m) Loss of existing staff due to pressures of the job and poor recruitment prospects,.
- n) The ability to fully staff and retain agency staff to posts. Increased cost of recruitment. (Cost to recruit non-agency staff is in the region of £3,000 per post)
- o) The impact of the water neutrality requirements has led to a reduced number of new affordable homes (121 units) due for handover during the next 18 months with an anticipated further 414 units spread over the following 2-3 years assuming these start on site as anticipated. Beyond this delivery is uncertain and likely to fall away significantly due to the lack of land opportunities. Set against likely Right to Buy losses this means that the pool of housing will not significantly increase but will be spread across a significantly larger and growing number of people. This will inevitably lead to tensions as local people are forced to wait longer for housing and those with less housing need face the reality of being unable to access social housing.
- p) No provision has been made for increased management capacity (at Head of Service and Service Manager level). Such a significant increase in service demand and staffing will inevitably require senior management capacity which does not exist currently and would need to be created through disengagement in other corporate and partnership activities and/or an alternative resource.