

CABINET

4 FEBRUARY 2015

HOMELESSNESS GRANT FUNDING APPROVAL FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTATION OR TO HELP SUPPORT HOMELESS FAMILIES FOR 2015/16

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis – Head of Community Services
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 Since the Homelessness Act 2002, the Government has allocated grant funding to local authorities to prevent and tackle homelessness.
- 1.2 The annual grant to BDC, allocated through Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has been used each year since 2002 to fund a range of homelessness support services and schemes that focus upon the prevention of homelessness and repeat homelessness. These schemes play a role in meeting the Council's Strategic Purposes:
- Help me live my life independently
 - Help me find somewhere to live in my locality
 - Help me to be financially independent
- 1.3 BDC had made £112,000 homelessness grant available for the 2015/16 financial year. In addition to this an underspend has occurred due to the unexpected termination of the MyPlace private tenancy Scheme.
- 1.4 This report seeks Members approval to award Homelessness Grant to specific schemes recommended by the Strategic Housing Manager and delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder and Head of Service to allocate any underspend of Homelessness Grant during 2015/16.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the submissions for the funding of schemes during 2015/16 recommended by the Strategic Housing Manager (table 2) be approved to receive funding from the Council's strategic fund for Homelessness for 2015/16.
- 2.2 That the Head of Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing be granted delegated authority to allocate

any under spend during the year or make further adjustments necessary to ensure full utilisation of the strategic fund for homelessness for 2015/16 in support of existing or new schemes.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The Council has set a budget for Homelessness Grant allocation for 2015/2016 at £112,000. An underspend of £8,112 is anticipated from 2014/15 grant which will be carried forward. This will result in Homelessness Grant of £120,112 being made available for 2015/16.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 Prevention of homelessness through the initiatives and schemes developed and funded through CLG Grant assist the Council in meeting its statutory duties to homeless applicants under the Homeless provisions of the Housing Act 1996, and the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.3 Officers have identified 4 areas of committed expenditure required from the homelessness grant in Table 1. Table 2 outlines the 4 bids received for funding from homelessness grant for 2015/16. These bids were evaluated by the Strategic Housing Team and are recommended for approval.

Table 1 Committed Expenditure 2015/16

BDHT Housing Options Service – home visits	£15,000
County Homelessness Coordinator	£3,500
Night Assessment Centre	£3,000
Step Up BDC private sector scheme salary	£14,074
Total committed expenditure	£35,574

Table 2 Bids received for remaining grant of £84,538

Overview of bids prioritised and recommended for approval	Amount	Quarterly payment
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		recommended?
CAB – Money Confidence The project aims to give people the confidence and skills in how to manage their money to budget, save, understand how to access affordable credit, access on line services and benefits. This service has also been discussed and supported by the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	£17,600	Yes
Basement Drop-In The Drop In service is a valuable resource for young people, but has become more so, following substantial reductions of housing related support services. The Drop in works to prevent homelessness and repeat homelessness by exploring options such as mediation, referral to Nightstop, referral for supported accommodation and other providers. In addition to housing, young people are offered assistance to access benefits, education and employment and one to one support to develop independent living skills, access health services, workshops ie; healthy eating, budget management, IT skills etc. The Drop in has facilities such as a washing machine, shower cubicle and kitchen area. The reduced floating support contract for young people funded by the County now only relates to 18-23year olds. This means there is no dedicated service for 16/17 year olds and therefore the Drop In service will be their only way of accessing support.	£25,000	Yes
New Starts - New Home New Start NewStarts Furniture Project is the only provider of quality, reusable household goods, donated to homeless families, free of charge. In addition NewStarts provide emergency food parcels for individuals and families in need	£10,000	Yes
Fry Housing Support Service Fry are the only service to offer housing to our most vulnerable and chaotic residents. If this service was no longer available, residents who would normally be offered	£25,000	Yes

this supported accommodation would be unlikely to be able to access general needs accommodation and are the most likely client group to become rough sleepers in the District.		
Crash Pad Emergency accommodation pilot for 16/17 year olds and vulnerable 18/19 year olds. The service will offer emergency accommodation for up to 6 weeks whilst appropriate supported accommodation is secured.	£6,750	Yes
Total	£84,350	

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.4 This grant will benefit the Council's customer, by offering household's more options to prevent their homelessness and where possible to enable them to remain in their own homes. These schemes play a role in meeting the Council's Strategic Purposes:
- Help me live my life independently
 - Help me find somewhere to live in my locality
 - Help me to be financially independent

- 3.5 The grant will also benefit the larger community as opportunities to prevent homelessness will be maximised.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 If the recommended schemes are not approved there is a risk that more households who are threatened with homelessness or who are in housing need will have limited alternative options. There is the risk that they may have to make a homeless approach and this could consequently lead to the following risks:

- Increased B&B costs.
- Increased Rough Sleeping in the District
- Impacts on health, education and similar through increased homelessness.

5. APPENDICES

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None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7. KEY

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