

CABINET

7th February 2018

Homelessness Grant and Flexible Homelessness Support Grant

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
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report seeks Members approval to award Homelessness Grant, Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens Funding to specific schemes recommended by the Strategic Housing Manager and delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder and Head of Community Services to allocate any underspend of Homelessness Grant and Flexible Homelessness Support Grant during 2018/19 towards dealing with and preventing homelessness.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That cabinet note the 2018/19 grant funding implications to be included as part of the medium term financial plan report to Council in February 2018 and, subject Council approval of the budget;

That Cabinet RESOLVE as follows:-

- 2.1 That the initiatives in 3.12, 3.16 and 3.17 recommended by the Strategic Housing Manager be approved to receive allocation of funding 2018/19.
- 2.2 That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Community Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing to use any unallocated Grant during the year or make further adjustments as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the Grants for 2018/19 in support of existing or new schemes.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 In addition to the annual DGLG Homelessness Grant, the Council has been awarded two more allocations, the first is Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and the second is Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens funding. This report sets out how the Council intends to

CABINET

7th February 2018

utilise this funding to create a package of support and services to prevent homelessness and support those who become homeless.

- 3.2 The annual homelessness 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 key 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
- 3.3 The Temporary Accommodation Management Fee' (TAMF) which was distributed to local authorities by the Department for Work and Pensions until the end of March 2017 has now been replaced by Flexible Homelessness Support Grant.
- 3.4 The new Flexible Homeless Support Grant has been ring fenced by the DCLG for activities that prevent and deal with homelessness.
- 3.5 Bromsgrove Council has received an allocation of £75,323.74 for 2017/18 to be carried forward into 2018/19 and will receive £82,563.96 for 2018/19 to be carried forward into 2019/2020. Now that the new Housing Agency Contract has been awarded to BDHT, the future delivery of homelessness and housing advice provision in the district is clear and carrying these grants forward enables the council to make best use of the new resources locally in light of the award of the new contract.
- 3.6 The Council has been awarded an allocation of Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens funding for a three period. The grant is not ring fenced but has been awarded to reflect the increased workload anticipated as a result of the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 in April 2018 including an update of accompanying IT systems to enable the reporting of data to DCLG.
- 3.7 The allocation of funding to local projects takes into account the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Preventing Homelessness Task Group in 2016. As a result all of the Homelessness Grant is being used for the purposes of prioritising homelessness initiatives and continues and enhances the funding in respect of offender rehabilitation and emergency accommodation for young people.

Grant	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Homelessness Grant	£111,132 Plus £11,200 from WCC	£111,512	Not Known
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant	£75,324	£82,564	Not Known
Homelessness Reduction Act New Burdens Funding	£13,839 Plus £9,000 for IT	£12,676	£18,035

The Council has agreed a budget of £111,512 for the 2018/19 Homelessness Grant allocation. In addition, Worcestershire County Council has confirmed an allocation of £11,200 to the Council to part fund the Young Persons Pathway Worker post.

- 3.8 The Council therefore has a total £122,712 for Homelessness Prevention Services in 2018/19
- 3.9 The Council has received £75,324 ring fenced Flexible Homelessness Support Grant for 2017/18 and will receive £82,564 for 2018/19 it is proposed that each years allocation is carried into the following year so that the funding will cover a two year period.
- 3.10 The Council has been awarded Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens Grant of £9,000 for IT and £13,839 2017/18, £12,676 2018/19 and £18,035 2019/20.

Legal Implications

- 3.11 Homelessness support and prevention initiatives and schemes developed and funded through DCLG Grant assists the Council in meeting its statutory duties to those threatened with homelessness and homeless applicants including those placed in Temporary Accommodation under the Homeless provisions of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended). The new resources are expected to be used to strengthen homelessness prevention in the District.

Service / Operational Implications

Homelessness Grant Allocation	2018/19 £
Young Persons Pathway Worker – support to prevent homelessness to over 100 young people a year	23,200
Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Co-ordinator – contribution towards county-wide development and delivery of housing initiatives in partnership with other agencies	6,300
St Basils Crash Pad – provide a unit of emergency accommodation to young homeless people – utilised continually during the year	7,800
Basement Drop In Service – support for young people at risk of homelessness – over 139 young people a year	20,000
Fry Housing Related Support – helping ex-offenders remain housed/seek employment – 23 people housed via 18 units in the last financial year	25,000
NewStarts Furniture Project – helping homeless/ low incomes households set up home – around 200 successful interventions a year	9,412
St Basils Foyer – provides stable accommodation/support for young people - 14 units – fully occupied during last financial year	31,000
Total committed expenditure	122,712

- 3.12 The main provisions of the new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 legislation will come into effect on Tuesday 3rd April 2018 and will extend the period during which the Council should treat someone as threatened with homelessness from 28 to 56 days. This will apply to all eligible households who approach the Council for assistance. There will also be a new duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants for up to 56 days and a new duty on public services to notify the Council if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness. Therefore, it is anticipated that there will be a significant increase in households accessing services and the Council's resources will need to be focussed on preventing homelessness wherever possible, in addition to managing the provision of Temporary Accommodation for households that do ultimately become homeless that it has a Duty to accommodate.
- 3.13 An element of the BDHT three year contract includes the management of Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Households. The new Flexible Homelessness Support Grant from the Department for

CABINET**7th February 2018**

Communities and Local Government has been allocated for the purpose of managing temporary accommodation and supporting those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Council therefore proposes to allocate £45,000 from this grant to fund this element of the service and would seek approval for this amount to be awarded across 2018/19 and 2019/20 for the period of the contract (£22,500 per annum).

- 3.14 The Councils Overview and Scrutiny Task Group in 2016 identified that the support providers listed in the table offer a valuable service and recommended that they continue to receive support from the Council. Therefore, it is recommended that the remaining grant is utilised to fund the expansion of these services and create greater resilience and self-efficacy for their particular client groups.

3.15

Flexible Homelessness Support Grant	Scheme	2018/19 £
Step Up Private Tenancy Scheme	Access to the private rented sector in Bromsgrove for households on low incomes – currently 48 ongoing tenancies	£17,800
Accord (Fry)	Funding for 0.6 of a FTE support post – enables Accord to re-introduce Floating Support to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust's tenants and transitional support for those moving from the accommodation-based service into their own accommodation	£16,140
Basement	Provide a jointly funded support worker in Bromsgrove - enables the Basement Project to offer Floating Support to new referrals of young people 16 – 25 yrs old	£15,000
NewStarts	Provide Furniture and Volunteering Opportunities for Ex-Offenders – improves future employment opportunities/reduces risk of reoffending	£3,884

BDHT	Management of Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Households – helps manage supply and demand pressures within homelessness system	£22,500
Total		£75,324

- 3.16 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens grant has been allocated on the basis that the Government expects increased workloads for Housing Options Teams on the back of the implementation of the new legislation. It is proposed to transfer this money direct to BDHT to provide additional administrative support to the Housing Options Team, as they will be delivering this service when it comes into effect on the 3rd April 2018.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Homelessness Reduction Act New Burdens Funding	£13,839 Plus £9,000 for IT	£12,676	£18,035

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.17 The Homelessness Grant, Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens Funding will benefit customers by offering household's more options to prevent their homelessness, support them to remain in their own homes or help the Council to manage and support households in Temporary Accommodation.
- 3.18 These schemes and functions 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
- 3.19 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 also therefore the risk that they may have to make a homeless approach and this could consequently lead to the following negative outcomes:

CABINET

7th February 2018

- Increased B&B costs
- Increased rough sleeping in the District
- Impacts on physical and mental health, educational achievement, ability to work and similar through increased homelessness

4.2 All recipients of Grant will enter into a grant agreement and have regular monitoring with officers on the delivery of the service

5. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

6. KEY

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Amanda Glennie a.glennie@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Tel: