

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

16th January 2019

HOMELESSNESS GRANT FUNDING APPROVAL FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND SUPPORT 2019/20

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 The annual homelessness grant to BDC, allocated through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) 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

1.2 In addition to the annual DGLG Homelessness Grant, the Council is awarded two more allocations, the first is Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and the second is Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens funding.

1.3 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 2019/20 towards dealing with and preventing homelessness.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That cabinet note the 2019/20 grant funding implications to be included as part of the medium term financial plan report to Council in February 2019 and, subject Council approval of the budget;

That Cabinet RESOLVE as follows:-

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- 2.1 That the initiatives in 3.8, 3.10 and 3.11 recommended by the Strategic Housing Manager be approved to receive allocation of funding 2019/20.
- 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 2019/20 in support of existing or new schemes.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The Council receives an annual homelessness grant and an additional two grants have been confirmed for 2019/20 (table below) from the MHDCLG, the Flexible Homeless Support Grant has been ring fenced by the MHDCLG for activities that prevent and deal with homelessness.

Grant	2019/20
Homelessness Grant	£112,010
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant	£83,012
Homelessness Reduction Act New Burdens Funding	£18,035

- 3.2 Bromsgrove Council has received a Flexible Homelessness Support Grant allocation of £82,563 for 2018/19 to be carried forward into 2019/20 and will receive £83,012 for 2019//20 to be carried forward into 2020/2021.
- 3.3 The Council was 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.
- 3.4 The Council has agreed a budget of £112,010 for the 2019/20 Homelessness Grant allocation. Worcestershire County Council is anticipated to make an allocation of £11,200 to the Council to part fund the Young Persons Pathway Worker post. However, this is yet to be confirmed. In addition the Council carried forward an underspend last

year and received income for the emergency crash pad accommodation resulting in a carry forward for 2019/20 of £11,500.

- 3.5 The Council therefore has a total £134,710 for Homelessness Prevention Services in 2019/20.

Legal Implications

- 3.6 Homelessness support and prevention initiatives and schemes developed and funded through MHDCLG 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

- 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.
- 3.8 The table below identifies the projects the Housing Strategy Team is recommending for approval from the Homelessness Grant.

Homelessness Grant Allocation	2019/20 £
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	9,235
Basement Drop In Service – support for young people at risk of homelessness – over 170 young people a year	35,000
Fry Housing Related Support – helping ex-offenders remain housed/seek employment – 23 people housed via 18 units in the last financial year	28,708

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St Basils Foyer – provides stable accommodation/support for young people - 15 units – fully occupied during last financial year	30,000
HOPES – rough sleeper service	2,267
Total committed expenditure	134,710

- 3.9 An element of the housing agency contract awarded to BDHT includes the management of Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Households. The Flexible Homelessness Support Grant has been allocated for the purpose of managing temporary accommodation and supporting those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This report proposes to allocate £22,500 from this grant to fund this element of the service.
- 3.10 The table below identifies the projects the Housing Strategy Team is recommending for approval from the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant.

Flexible Homelessness Support Grant	Scheme	2019/20 £
Step Up Private Tenancy Scheme	Access to the private rented sector in Bromsgrove for households on low incomes	£17,070
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	£14,494
Caring for Communities and People (CCP)	CCP offer an outreach and prevention service targeting rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping. The office rough sleeper estimate this year was reported as zero. The Government funding ends in July and therefore we would like to continue this service utilising Flexible Homelessness Support Grant.	£16,500
New Starts	Provide Furniture and Volunteering Opportunities for Ex-Offenders – improves future employment opportunities / reduces risk of reoffending – 125 households in the	£12,000

	last year, 30 of whom had been in homeless	
BDHT	Management of Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Households – helps manage supply and demand pressures within homelessness system	£22,500
Total		£82,564

- 3.11 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has increased workloads for the Housing Options Teams. Therefore it is proposed to transfer this New Burdens grant to BDHT as previously done in 2018/19.

	2019/20	2020/21
Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens Funding	£12,676	£18,035

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.13 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.
- 3.14 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
- 3.15 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:

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- 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

Homelessness Grant and Flexible Homelessness Support Grant 2018
Cabinet Report 7th February 2018

6. KEY

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