

CABINET

15th January 2020

Homelessness Grant and Flexible Homelessness Support Grant Allocation for 2020/21

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Shirley Webb
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. It also seeks to delegate authority to the Head of Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to allocate any underspend of Homelessness Grant and Flexible Homelessness Support Grant during 20120/21 towards dealing with and preventing homelessness.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet RESOLVE as follows:-

- 2.1 That the initiatives in 3.8, 3.11 and 3.12 be approved to receive allocation of funding 2020/21.
- 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 2020/21 in support of existing or new schemes.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 In addition to the annual MHCLG 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. This report sets out how the Council intends to 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 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 Vision:

'To enrich the lives and aspirations of all our residents, businesses and visitors through the provision of high quality services, ensuring that all in need receive the appropriate help and support'.

- 3.3 Flexible Homeless Support Grant has been ring fenced by the MHCLG for activities that prevent and deal with homelessness.
- 3.4 The Council is being awarded an allocation of Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens funding at the same value as this current year's award. The grant is not ring fenced but reflects the increased workload on Housing Options Services due to the administrative burden relating to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 3.5 The Homelessness Grant is prioritised for homelessness initiatives in respect of rough sleeping, offender rehabilitation and emergency accommodation for young people.

The Council has agreed a budget of £112,000 for the 2020/21 Homelessness Grant allocation. In addition, Worcestershire County Council has allocated £11,200 to the Council to part fund the Young Persons Pathway Worker post. The Council received an income for the Crash Pad which will be carried forward into the 2020/21 budget.

- 3.6 The Council therefore has a total £206,212 for Homelessness Prevention Services in 2020/21 (including grant from Worcestershire County Council), as follows:

Grant	2020/21
Homelessness Grant Including YPPW and Crash income	£127,200
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant	£83,012
Homelessness Reduction Act	£18,035

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New Burdens Funding	
Total Grant Available	£228,247

Legal Implications

- 3.7 Homelessness support and prevention initiatives and schemes developed and funded through MHCLG Grant assist the Council in meeting its statutory duties to those threatened with homelessness and those who are actually experiencing homelessness including those placed in Temporary Accommodation under the Homeless provisions of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.8 It is recommended that the Homeless Grant monies are allocated as follows:

Homelessness Grant Allocation	2020/21 £ (up to)
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
Single Person and Childless Couples Homelessness Prevention Service top up	1,924
Rapid Response Winter Weather Workers	3,500
No Second Night Out Rough Sleeping Accom	1,000
Entrenched Rough Sleeper Crash Pad and Personal Budget – to provide rent in advance and deposit in order to access accommodation and then provide a personal budget to assist with tenancy sustainment.	3700
St Basils Crash Pad – provide a unit of emergency accommodation to young homeless people – utilised continually during the year	9,627
NewStarts - Provide Furniture and Volunteering Opportunities for Ex-Offenders – improves future employment opportunities/reduces risk of	15,000

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reoffending	
Fry Housing Related Support – helping ex-offenders remain housed/seek employment	22,000
St Basils Foyer – provides stable accommodation/support for young people - 14 units – fully occupied during last financial year	30,000
Total committed expenditure	116,251

- 3.9 An element of the BDHT three year contract includes the management of Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Households. The Flexible Homelessness Support Grant from the Department for 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 £15,500 from this grant to fund this element of the service, as listed below
- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 It is recommended that the Flexible Homeless Support Grant is allocated as follows:

Flexible Homelessness Support Grant	Scheme	2020/21 £ (up to)
BDHT	Managing Temporary Accommodation Costs for BDHT	£15,500
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	£31,041

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	therefore we would like to continue this service utilising Flexible Homelessness Support Grant.	
Basement Drop in Service	Support for young people at risk of homelessness – over 139 young people a year	£35,000
Total		£81,541

- 3.12 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens grant has increased workloads for Housing Options Teams. Therefore it is proposed to transfer this to bdht as was done in 2019/20.

	2020/21
Homelessness Reduction Act New Burdens Funding	£18,035

- 3.13 This leaves a remaining amount of £12,420 unallocated and as in previous years it is recommended that this is delegated to Officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to ensure full utilisation of the Grants for 2020/21 in support of existing or new schemes.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.14 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.
- 3.15 These schemes and functions play a role in meeting the Council's Strategic Vision:
'To enrich the lives and aspirations of all our residents, businesses and visitors through the provision of high quality services, ensuring that all in need receive the appropriate help and support'.
- 3.16 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:

- 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

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