

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**15<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

**Homelessness Prevention Grant Allocation for 2023/24**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis Head of Community and Housing Services
Report Author	Job Title: Amanda Delahunty Contact email:a.delahunty@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881269
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Not Applicable
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work and financial independence</li><li>• Living independent, active and healthy lives</li><li>• Affordable and sustainable homes</li><li>• Communities which are safe, well maintained and green</li></ul>
Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet RESOLVE that:-

- 1.1 That the initiatives in 3.5 be approved to receive allocation of funding 2023/24.
- 1.2 That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Community and Housing 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 2023/24 in support of existing or new schemes.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 This report seeks Members approval to award the DLUHC Homelessness Prevention Grant and Homelessness Grant to specific schemes recommended by the Strategic Housing Manager. Additionally, it seeks to delegate authority to the Head of Community and Housing Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to allocate any underspend of grant during 2023/24 on

schemes to prevent homelessness and assist those who become homeless.

2.2 The purpose of the ringfenced Homelessness Prevention Grant fund is to give local authorities control and flexibility in managing homelessness pressures and supporting those who are at risk of homelessness. The Government expects local authorities to use it to deliver the following priorities:

- To fully enforce the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness.
- Reduce family temporary accommodation numbers through maximising family homelessness prevention
- Eliminate the use of unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation for families for longer than the statutory six week limit.

2.3 The council received a number of applications for this funding and this criteria was used to support the award of this grant.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 In addition to the annual Homelessness Grant, the Council has been awarded by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Homelessness Prevention Grant £165,612. 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 Homelessness Prevention Grant has been ring fenced by DLUHC for activities that prevent and deal with homelessness.

3.3 The Council has agreed a budget of £112,000 for the 2023/24 Homelessness Grant allocation. In addition, the DLUHC Homelessness Prevention Grant award is £158,594.

3.4 The Council therefore has the following for Homelessness Prevention Services and Housing Options in 2023/24 as follows:

<b>Grant</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Homelessness Grant	£112,000
Homelessness Prevention Grant	£158,594

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Underspend from 2022/23	£40,000
Total Grant Available	£317,612

3.5 It is recommended that the Grant monies are allocated as follows:

<b>Grant Allocation</b>	<b>2023/24 £ (up to)</b>
Housing Agency Agreement Top Up	52,475
Young Persons Pathway Worker – support to prevent homelessness for under 25's	18,811
Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Co-ordinator – contribution towards county-wide development and delivery of housing initiatives in partnership with other agencies	8,300
Single Person and Childless Couples Homelessness Prevention Service	18,347
St Basils Crash Pad – provide a unit of emergency accommodation to young homeless people	12,409
NewStarts - Provide Furniture and Volunteering Opportunities for Ex-Offenders – supports tenancy sustainment and provides future employment opportunities/reduces risk of reoffending	10,000
GreenSquare Accord Housing Related Support – helping ex-offenders remain housed/seek employment	24,114
St Basils Foyer – provides stable accommodation/support for young people - 14 units – fully occupied during last financial year	30,000
CCP- outreach and prevention service targeting rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping.	27,852
North Worcestershire Basement Project - Support for young people at risk of homelessness	26,666
Step Up – Private Tenancy Scheme	22,000
Sunrise Project intensive support (2 year project agreed 2021)	39,000
Citizens Advice – Targeted Debt Intervention	16,333
<b>Total committed expenditure</b>	<b>306,307</b>

- 3.7 These are voluntary organisations and without this funding it is unlikely this support would be offered or available which in turn would lead to increase direct revenue costs for the council.
- 3.8 An element of the grant supplements the cost of the Housing Agency Agreement 5 year contract.
- 3.9 The difference between the grant available and grant expenditure of £11,305 is being held in reserve for anticipated additional spend on Bed and Breakfast during 2023/24.
- 3.10 Delegated authority be granted to the Head of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing to use any unallocated Grant during the year or make further adjustments to current initiatives as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the Grant for 2023/24.

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council has statutory duty under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) to assist those who are threatened with homelessness or experiencing actual homelessness and has placed additional duties on the Council regarding preventing and relieving homelessness
- 4.2 The Homelessness Prevention Grant has been ring fenced to homelessness prevention and tackling homelessness by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

**5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**

**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 Homelessness Prevention Grant allows the Council to support a range of holistic services to help prevent or tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the District. The combination of practical support such as furniture compliment those services that provide outreach support to help clients access accommodation, sustain tenancies, manage budgets, engage in positive activities and access employment. The breadth of services available provide opportunities for:
- Work and financial independence through the provision of support services and debt advice
  - Living independent, active and healthy lives through the provision of support to access positive activities including healthy eating and exercise.

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- Affordable and sustainable homes through the provision of supported accommodation.
- Communities which are safe, well maintained and green through the provision of supported accommodation.

**Climate Change Implications**

- 5.2 The recycling of furniture supports the Council's green thread as it minimises waste and provides reuse and recycling of household items wherever possible.

**6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 The Homelessness Grant and Homelessness Prevention Grant 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.
- 6.2 The grant will also benefit the larger community as opportunities to prevent homelessness will be maximised.

**Operational Implications**

- 6.3 The management and administration of grant forms a significant part of the Strategic Housing Team's day to day operations.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 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 with 80% having to be picked up by the local authority.
- Increased rough sleeping in the District
- Impacts on physical and mental health, educational achievement, ability to work and similar through increased homelessness.

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

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

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**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb	1 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2022
Lead Director / Head of Service	Judith Willis Head of Communities and Housing Services	10/1/2023
Financial Services	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy Section 151 Officer	10/1/2023
Legal Services	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	10/1/2023
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Not applicable	10/1/2023
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Bough, Strategic Housing Manager	10/1/2023