

REDDITCH COUNCIL POLICY
HOMELESSNESS AND HOMELESSNESS
PREVENTION GRANTS

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 From time to time the Government will make allocations of Grant funding to Local Authorities to prevent homelessness or help those who are experiencing actual homelessness.
- 1.2 This Grant can be utilised by the Council to provide a range of services including elements of the Housing Options Service and services that support this for example; housing related support, furniture projects, and private sector incentives.
- 1.3 These schemes and functions play a role in meeting the Council's Strategic Purposes:
 - Help me live my life independently (including health and activity)
 - Help me find somewhere to live in my locality
 - Help me to be financially independent (including education and skills)

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies only to the allocation of Central Government Grant awarded for the purposes of preventing or tackling homelessness that is made available to the voluntary sector and other partner organisations. It does not apply to any other means of financial support from the Council that may be available under other schemes.

3. Funding Framework

- 3.1 The framework will be based on four key elements:

Analyse – understanding the priorities, values and purpose, the needs they must address and the environment in which they operate.

Plan – identifying priorities and how these are, or are not, currently being met and where gaps are identified, how these will be addressed within available resources.

Do – ensuring that the services needed are delivered as planned, to efficiently and effectively deliver the priorities, values and purpose set out in the Council's Strategic Purposes and Homelessness Strategy.

Review – reviewing the delivery of services and assessing the extent to which they have achieved the purpose intended.

- 3.2 Ordinarily, grant is offered for a twelve month period over one financial year. Where an existing service is in place and can demonstrate the

quality and value for money required the Council reserves the right to re-negotiate with the current provider.

4. Purpose of Grant Funding

- 4.1 The Council may provide grant to support its Strategic Purposes and its statutory homelessness function in order to assist households who are threatened with, or experiencing, homelessness.
- 4.2 Funding will only be provided where it can be demonstrated that a defined impact will be made. Organisations should demonstrate an outcomes focus in their applications for funding.
- 4.3 The Council will require that all grant awards support the Council's Strategic Purposes and Homelessness Strategy.

5. Which Organisations are eligible to apply for a Grant?

- 5.1 In order to be eligible to apply for a grant, an organisation must be able to prove that:
 - a) it is a 'not for profit' organisation (charity, social enterprise, community organisation etc.);
 - b) Is registered with the charities commission or regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency.
 - c) The services that they provide support the Council's Strategic Purposes and Homelessness Strategy.
- 5.2 The Council will not provide funds for the furtherance or propagation of a faith promoted by any organisation which is, or is deemed by the Council to be, of a religious nature. This will not preclude religious organisations applying for assistance to provide social or welfare work connected with their organisation which do not directly promote a religious aspect.

6. What will and will not be funded by a grant

- 6.1 Grants will only be considered for work that will be undertaken in Redditch Borough, and/or will be wholly or principally for the direct benefit of residents of the Borough.
- 6.2 Grants to other organisations will not be used for retrospective funding; that is to replace money that has already been spent, or to cover items or services that have already been bought, ***this will include consultancy and brokering fees. There may be exceptions to this eg: 'payment by results' services or other expenditure as agreed by the local authority.***
- 6.3 Any grant awarded must only be spent for the approved purpose, i.e. applicants must be able to demonstrate that the funding has been

spent as outlined in the grant application form as amended by the final grant offer letter for example by providing receipts or monitoring information.

7. Risk Considerations

- 7.1 The Council has a duty to ensure that best use is made of limited resources. This section considers risk in grant giving. It expects the organisation to take responsibility for the risk assessment of, for example, items related to health and safety etc
- 7.2 The Council acknowledges that creativity and innovation can carry risks for non-delivery, for example where a new idea does not work out as intended.
- 7.3 The Council uses the general principle of requiring a lower level of risk the higher the amount of funding provided. Maximum levels of funding will only be provided where the risk of non-delivery is very low.
- 7.4 Grant applications where the Council will look more favourably will:
- a) have a strong evidence base of need;
 - b) provide strong evidence that the proposed approach is likely to achieve the desired outcomes;
 - c) do not contain high revenue costs that cannot be sustained;
 - d) demonstrate how a lasting benefit will be achieved.
- 7.5 The higher the sum of money applied for, the greater the need for applications to:
- a) be from organisations with a good track record of delivery;
 - b) be from organisations with a range of funding streams;
 - c) meet the Strategic Purposes of the Council;
 - d) support delivery of multiple actions contained within the Homelessness Strategy or other appropriate document;
 - e) demonstrate co-operative working relationships with other organisations.
- 7.6 Payment schedules will balance the need for the Council to ensure proper accountability for use of public money with appropriate recognition of cash-flow issues that may be experienced by voluntary/charitable organisations. The general principle will be that payment is made in advance of project delivery, with instalment frequency and size commensurate with the overall size of the grant awarded. General guidelines for payment schedules are:
- a) Grants of a total of £5,000 or less will be paid in full in advance of the project being delivered, payment will be made to successful applicants within 1 month of the start of the financial year in which the grant is payable or within four

- weeks of receipt of invoice, with monitoring information required prior to any subsequent homelessness grant bidding round or at the end of the financial year.
- b) Grants in excess of £5,000 will be paid by quarterly instalments in advance of project activity. Each instalment will only be released after satisfactory monitoring information has been supplied on progress of the project.

8. Grant Conditions

- 8.1 Information on the conditions that will apply to a grant will be made available to applicants before they apply.
- 8.2 Monitoring information will be required on all grants, as outlined in section 11.
- 8.3 All grant offers will be subject to the grant recipient accepting the grant conditions. A full set of grant conditions and monitoring requirements will be agreed with grant recipients before the grant award is made. No changes will be made after this time without the consent of the local authority.

9. Assessment Process

- 9.1 Part of the Grant may be ring-fenced for services currently provided by the Council or its agent. Other areas of funding will be advertised for a four week period and some funding may be made available for more innovative pieces of work.
- 9.2 All opportunities for grant funding from the Council will be openly advertised by circulating notice of the opportunity among an appropriate network or infrastructure organisation.
- 9.3 Information provided to grant applicants will include as a minimum:
- The amount of money that is available in total or any funding ceiling;
 - Clear information on the purposes for which funding is offered;
 - Clear information on eligibility criteria;
 - Details of the full assessment criteria against which applications will be judged;
 - A full list of conditions that will apply to the grant, including payment schedules and monitoring information;

Grant application forms will be made available in paper and electronic formats.

- 9.4 Applicants must complete a Standard Application form and provide relevant supporting documents. This is to ensure objective

assessment of all grant applications. The Council will not award any grant to an organisation whose application has not been formally assessed.

- 9.5 All grant applications will be assessed using pre-selected assessment criteria. The details of the assessment criteria will be made available to all applicants before they apply for funding. The assessment criteria will be chosen as relevant for the funding opportunity, but as a minimum will include:
- Details of how the service will support the Council's Strategic Purposes and Homelessness Action Plan.
 - Clear outline of how the purposes for which the grant is made available will be met;
 - The outcome(s) that the proposal will achieve;
 - The structure and delivery plan that will support the achievement of the stated outcomes;
 - The clarity of the proposal's financial outline;
 - The sustainability of work after the period of grant aid.
- 9.7 All assessment criteria will be based on meeting the Council's Strategic Purposes and the needs identified within the Homelessness Action Plan.
- 9.8 All grant applications will be assessed by the Council's Housing Strategy Team and approval is delegated to the Housing Strategy Manager in consultation with the Strategic Housing Portfolio Holder.
- 9.9 Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their application.
- 9.10 There is no right of appeal against the decision, however, applicants who are dissatisfied about the way the application was processed can make a complaint to the Head of Community Services/Deputy Chief Executive.
- 9.11 In exceptional circumstances, where timescales do not allow this grant process to be followed a decision may be made by the Head of Service and Portfolio Holder to award some grant funding. There would need to be evidence of urgent need and potential adverse impact to justify this award.

10. Assessment Timescales

- 10.1 Grant applications will need to have been submitted by the deadline given for consideration of suitability by the Strategic Housing Team. This process ordinarily takes 12 weeks.

- 10.2 Successful applicants will be notified of their grant award and monitoring requirements before the commencement of the financial year in which the grant is awarded.

11. Monitoring

- 11.1 All grant funded projects will be regularly monitored with applicants obliged to submit details of how the project is progressing. Monitoring requirements that will apply to a grant will be commensurate with the amount of money awarded, and will be agreed with the funded organisation before final confirmation of a grant award is made.
- 11.2 The Council reserve the right to withhold future payments and reject any further applications if they are dissatisfied with how grants funds have been used.

12. Collaborative Working

- 12.1 The Council recognises the potential benefits of working collaboratively with other funders. The Council will investigate all opportunities for working with other funders where this will provide a better use of Council resources.
- 12.2 The Strategic Housing Team engages with the multi-agency Homelessness Strategy Steering Group to initiate partnership working. This Group will also make recommendations of areas that projects should focus on and around the suitability of Grant Applications.