

EXECUTIVE

12th January 2021

Homelessness Prevention Grant Allocation for 2021/22

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Craig Warhurst
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 the new Homelessness Prevention Grant which uplifts and combines Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and Homelessness Reduction 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 Homelessness Prevention grant during 2020/21 on schemes to prevent homelessness and assist those who actually become homeless.
- 1.2 The purpose of the 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. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Executive Committee RESOLVE that:-

The Homelessness Prevention Grant is allocated to the initiatives in 3.7. which meet the criteria for grant allocation

Delegated authority be granted to the Head of Community and Housing Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing to award any unallocated Grant during the year or make further adjustments to current initiatives in line with Government priorities in 1.2 as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the Grant for 2021/22.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The Council has been notified that it will receive £314,926 Homelessness Prevention Grant 2021/22 which is ring fenced by the MHCLG for the prevention of homelessness. The Temporary Accommodation Management Fee previously received through the DWP has been amalgamated into this grant.
- 3.2 The amount the Council would have ordinarily expected from the former Temporary Accommodation Management Fund of £66,380.

Legal Implications

- 3.3 The Council has statutory duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 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
- 3.4 The Homelessness Prevention Grant has been ring fenced to homelessness prevention and tackling homelessness by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.5 The main provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 have extended the period during which the Council has to treat someone as threatened with homelessness from 28 to 56 days. This applies to all eligible households who approach the Council for homeless prevention assistance regardless of any priority need, intentionality or local connection criteria.
- 3.6 There is also a duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants for up to 56 days. The Council's resources now have a greater focus on preventing homelessness wherever possible.
- 3.7 Proposed Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Grant of £314,926.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Initiatives	£ (up to)
Redditch Nightstop - Outreach Worker to support 21 to 35 year olds and prevent homelessness or work towards planned moves into suitable and sustainable accommodation.	31,500
CCP Rough Sleeper Outreach Service - 2.8 FTE posts across Bromsgrove and Redditch	53,537
Fry Accord – 18 units of supported accommodation for Ex Offenders or those likely to offend	Up to £15,000
St Basils – Provide 23 units of accommodation for young people aged 16- 23 years of age additional funding to provide 24 hour cover following a reduction in funding from County Council	14,200
Newstarts - Furniture Project to provide furniture for homeless households.	5,000
Homelessness Prevention - Spend to Save budget for use by Housing Options Officers	17,060
Temporary Accommodation Management – as 3.1 above	66,380
CCP Rapid Response Winter Weather Team – rapid outreach for any rough sleepers during the coldest months	3,500
St Basils Smallwood Almshouses - Progression Coach to offer additional support that can operate outside of normal office hours to fit around a young persons education, training and employment.	25,700
Housing Options - Tenancy Ready Officers providing training and support to housing applicants to obtain and sustain accommodation.	61,332
Total	£293,209

- 3.8 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

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to current initiatives as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the Grant for 2021/22.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.9 The Homelessness Prevention Grant will benefit customers by providing quality supported accommodation to young people and offenders, prevent homelessness and tackle rough sleeping.
- 3.10 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)
- 3.11 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 Borough
 - Impacts on physical and mental health, educational achievement, ability to work and similar through increased homelessness
- 4.2 All partner 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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