



Report of Head of Commissioning, Adults and Health

Report to Director of Resources and Housing

Date: 7th August 2019

Subject: Rapid Rehousing Pathway – Request for approval to provide grant funds to St Anne’s Community Services to pilot a Somewhere Safe to Stay HUB at the St Anne’s Resource Centre.

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main issues

- An opportunity has arisen to fund some additional targeted work with people who are rough sleeping or begging, as a result of a successful bid for funds to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) from the Rapid Rehousing Pathway Grant. A grant of £132,950 has been awarded to the Council for a pilot project with St Anne’s Community Services.
- This report recommends that the grant should be allocated to St Anne’s Community Services to set up a Somewhere Safe to Stay Female Hub at the St Anne’s Resource Centre that will help rough sleepers, and those at risk of rough sleeping, access the support and settled housing they need to leave the streets for good. These arrangements would be in place as a pilot for 12 months. An assessment of demand and need which will be conducted by Adults and Health Commissioning Team as part of the Street Based Review 2019 / 2020.

2. Best Council Plan Implications

- The extra support provided is in line with the Best Council plan ‘tackling poverty and reducing inequalities’.

- The pilot will help 'keep people safe from harm and protecting the most vulnerable' and will 'minimise homelessness through a greater focus on prevention'

3. Resource Implications

- Funding for this project is being provided by a grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Recommendations

The Director of Resources and Housing is recommended to:

- a) Note the success of the bid for grant funding of £132,950 from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for the project with St Anne's.
- b) Approve the allocation of up to £132,950 grant to St Anne's Community Services to implement a Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub pilot for women for a period of 12 months.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 Supporting people who are rough sleeping and begging is a priority for the Council. A model for housing related support services has been put in place following an extensive review. This includes a number of new services including Beacon and Engage alongside the retention of key services such as St George's Crypt Overnight service and the Street Outreach Service. In addition a new multi-agency approach via the Leeds Street Support Team has been established to help co-ordinate aspects of this work.
- 1.2 There is an opportunity to fund additional targeted activity following receipt of funding support from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) via the Rapid Rehousing Pathway. The purpose of this report is to set out proposals for how this resource will be utilised and to seek authority from the Director of Resources and Housing to allocate this grant funding to St Anne's Community Services.

2. Background information

- 2.1 A report to Cabinet and CLT in March 2017 provided an overview of the incidence of rough sleeping and begging in the city and the challenges associated with tackling this issue and encouraging the take up of support. Numbers of people rough sleeping has increased substantially nationally and although numbers in Leeds are lower than comparable cities, they have risen. The majority of this vulnerable group sleep rough on an irregular and infrequent basis, but there is a smaller cohort of people who sleep rough on a regular basis.
- 2.2 In September Safer Leeds established the Leeds Street Support Team through funds awarded by MHCLG to focus efforts on tackling the issue and to reduce rough sleeping. The team do more targeted outreach work, coordinate case conferencing arrangements and facilitate fast access to key support services.
- 2.3 Like many other cities, Leeds has seen an increase in the numbers of people begging. Many people who beg are vulnerable individuals, affected by their life experiences and/ or circumstances. The reasons why they beg are often very complex, and can be compounded by a range of mental and physical ill health issues and challenging behaviours, all of which can be real barriers to engaging with services.
- 2.4 Leeds has a number of commissioned services that are specifically targeted towards supporting people who are vulnerable and have complex needs. These include Forward Leeds, Street Outreach, Engage and Beacon. There is close partnership working with statutory agencies and with other services such as WYFi.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The Government has set targets to halve rough sleeping numbers from the 2017 baseline by 2022 and to end rough sleeping by 2027. For Leeds this means reducing rough sleeping numbers to 14 by 2022.
- 3.2 Leeds has a multi-agency rough sleeper pathway, the cornerstone being the Street Support team. A collective of all agencies led by Safer Leeds and including staff from CGL Street Outreach Team, Forward Leeds, St Anne's Resource Centre, Beacon, West Yorkshire Police, Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team (LASBT), Leeds Housing Options, City Centre Liaison, Bevan Health Care and Adult Social Care)

with wider partners, which work together to offer a seamless pathway from the streets to independence mirroring the 3 cornerstones of the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) 'Prevention, Intervention, Recovery'.

- 3.3 A grant is available to fund a Somewhere Safe to Stay HUB model accessible from 6pm-7am 7 days a week. 5 beds will be made available and this will be focussed on females with complex needs. It is likely that the female recipients of this hub accommodation may be rough sleeping or vulnerably housed, they may be women at risk of domestic violence, those with significant health issues and those who engage in risk taking behaviour such as substance misuse. The HUB will ensure a place of safety whilst a housing solution is pursued or becomes available.
- 3.4 Our existing hub provision in St Georges Crypt is predominantly male occupied, and women, due to their vulnerabilities do not necessarily want to access accommodation that is mixed. This is a gap in our emergency accommodation offer which we are wanting to address through Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding.
- 3.5 As St Anne's Resource Centre is already delivering directly related services and have the necessary premises and infrastructure, they are considered uniquely placed and suitably experienced to do this work.
- 3.6 St Anne's currently have a number of services co-locating from their building therefore the new service will work closely with the Police, Leeds Housing Options, Forward Leeds, Bevan Health Care, DWP, CGL Street Outreach Team, St George's Crypt, Beacon, Engage, WYFi and other relevant services.
- 3.7 Outcomes anticipated from this additional work will include individuals having a pathway to accommodation which could include emergency housing, supported accommodation, permanent accommodation or tenancy sustainment; engagement with drug and alcohol and health services; educational and employment opportunities and reducing poverty and improved health and wellbeing.
- 3.8 St Anne's Resource Centre offers shower and washing facilities and access to clean clothing, providing clean towels and toiletries all day within the working week to maintain dignity. Unique also to St Anne's Resource Centre is the provision of a 'safe mail address' that can be accessed by those rough sleeping or vulnerably housed.
- 3.9 It is suggested that funds are available for a 12 month period when the pilot will be reviewed in line with the street based review. The amount of funding allocated will be up to £132,950.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Discussion has taken place with a range of stakeholders about the grant from MHCLG and the allocation of funds received. The bid was specifically for funds to set up a Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub for women at St Anne's. Conversations have focussed on how pathways to and from this service will work and how women will be supported.
- 4.1.2 All key partners support the investment of funds from the MHCLG and it is ratified via the Street Support Steering Group.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 Additional Hub provision in Leeds will support vulnerable women with nowhere to stay and will mean that extra help and support will be provided. The workers with St Anne's Community Services will encourage service users to engage with statutory and third sector services, to access housing and address health needs and will work closely with Leeds Housing Options.
- 4.2.2 People who are rough sleeping and begging may be vulnerable and at risk of abuse or may present safeguarding risks to others in the city. Additional support will reduce risk to all concerned.
- 4.2.3 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration screening tool has been completed and is attached.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 This work will contribute to the work of the Leeds Street Support Team established by Safer Leeds. The work also contributes to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 – 2022, particularly the outcomes related to reducing homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 4.3.2 The work proposed supports the Council's ambition for Leeds to be a compassionate and caring city by helping to reduce rough sleeping and begging and the negative impacts of this across the City. It also supports the 'Vision for Leeds 2011-2030' and the delivery of wider outcomes relating to community safety, health and well-being, social inclusion and employment and training.
- 4.3.3 The extra support provided is in line with the Best Council plan 'tackling poverty and reducing inequalities'.
- 4.3.4 The services will also make a contribution to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2016-2021) in terms of helping to ensure that 'people will live in healthy, safe and sustainable communities'.
- 4.3.5 These services also contribute to priorities within the new Leeds Drug and Alcohol Strategy to be published in the Autumn, by delivering health promotion and helping to increase the number of successful completions from drug and alcohol treatment programmes to support recovery.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.6 This report relates to a grant to pilot an emergency accommodation service for vulnerable women. The service will operate from a city centre location to ensure easy access for service users, and therefore minimising the need to travel and encouraging the use of public transport. This helps to reduce carbon emissions and environmental pollution which contributes to city actions to better manage air quality. As well as accommodation the service will aim to improve the health and well-being of women being supported which helps ensure we better manage our use of resource intensive (and high footprint) health and care services.
- 4.3.7 The service is required to meet all legislation, guidance and good industry practice in environmental management and the objectives of the Council's sustainability policies. Officers from Adults and Health work with St Anne's Community Services through the established contract management process to ensure the service is proactively seeking to minimise its carbon footprint and thereby support the Council in achieving its ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 The costs of the service will be met by the grant from the MHCLG Rapid Rehousing Pathway. The grant is for £132,950. This grant has been injected into the Resources and Housing budget.
- 4.4.2 The funding is to pilot a Somewhere Safe to Stay HUB for women and includes set up of the building and staffing costs including management costs and on costs. Salaries for posts funded are in line with other similar posts. Payment will be based on actual costs based on submission of financial returns and will not exceed the amount approved in this report.
- 4.4.3 Performance monitoring processes will be put in place by the Adults and Health Commissioning Team to ensure value for money and quality of delivery for the duration of the Hub.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 The value of the grant is £132,950 and as such this is a Significant Operational Decision that is not subject to call.
- 4.5.2 Planning permission has been obtained.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 A risk plan will be produced that will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.
- 4.6.2 Risk management is built into the work of St Anne's Community Services who have experience and skills to manage risks of working with this vulnerable client group including delivering residential services, managing lone working and aggressive and volatile behaviour.
- 4.6.3 The Somewhere Safe to Stay Female Hub is a pilot and will be reviewed by Adults and Health Commissioning Team to help inform future commissioning decisions.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 There is an increasing number of people rough sleeping and begging nationally and in Leeds. Some people have entrenched and complex issues and do not engage with offers of assistance. This pilot will support new ways of working and explore the effectiveness of a somewhere safe to stay hub for women at the Resource centre.
- 5.2 Additional resource will mean that additional support can take place and this will help to better understand need and demand.
- 5.3 A grant is available from the MHCLG Rapid Rehousing Pathway to pilot a somewhere safe to stay hub at St Anne's Resource Centre for 12 months.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Note the success of the bid for grant funding of £132,950 from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for the project with St Anne's.
- 6.2 Approve the allocation of up to £132,950 grant to St Anne's Community Services to implement a Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub pilot for women for 12 months.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.