

Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP Round 2 and 4) Grant Funding from DLUHC 2024-25

Date: 5th February 2024

Report of: Head of Commissioning (Housing Related Support and Public Health)

Report to: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

To seek approval to receive funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) through the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) Rounds 2 and 4, and award grants up to a total value of £270,853.

In addition, the report seeks approval to award £80,000 of DLUHC Rough Sleeping Initiative funding granted to Leeds City Council in July 2023 to Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust for specialist psychologist input.

The grants provide funding for a number of posts and interventions to support people who are rough sleeping.

Recommendations

- a) The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment is recommended to accept the grant funding of £270,853 from DLUHC for the RSAP Programme Round 2 and 4 for 2024-25.
- b) To approve an award of up to £145,819 as a grant to St George's Crypt for 3 Housing Support Workers for 2024-25 across the Clarion Service and Don Robbins House (RSAP 2).
- c) To approve an award of up to £125,034 as a grant to Together Women for 2024-2025 for 2 Support Workers and operating costs at the Somewhere Safe to Live service (RSAP 4)
- d) To approve an award of up to £80,000 Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Funding for a Specialist Psychologist input to Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust for the period 1st July 2023 to 31st March 2025. The decision to accept this grant from DLUHC by Leeds City Council was taken in July 2023 (D56567).

What is this report about?

- 1 The government published its national Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018. The national strategy includes the targets to halve rough sleeping numbers (from the 2017 baseline) by 2022 and to end rough sleeping by 2027.
- 2 The delivery of the proposed staff and support identified in this report directly contributes to the Council's response to preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping. Furthermore, this funding will help to aid people's recovery, build positive lives, and prevent people from returning to rough sleeping. This is part of an Ending Rough Sleeping Strategy that has been produced with partners from the Silver Street Support Partnership.
- 3 In December 2021, Leeds City Council was successful in a bid for funding from DLUHC to provide the next stage of accommodation in our female housing pathway to be run by Together Women, a service named Somewhere Safe to Live commencing in 2022. Leeds City Council and Together Women support women in Leeds, who have multiple and complex needs and experienced significant and/or repeated homelessness and at risk of rough sleeping to access high quality, secure and safe move on accommodation. Through this scheme, the women are offered high intensity support to sustain their tenancies and ultimately to rebuild their lives. Leeds City Council and Together Women have worked alongside Foundation and LATCH (housing providers) to build up a portfolio of 15 self-contained, dispersed, 1-bedroom properties. The scheme provides safe accommodation and specialist, trauma-informed, gender-specific support to women, empowering them and supporting them to live healthy and fulfilling lives. The award in this report continues the funding of Somewhere Safe to Live through 2024-25.
- 4 St George's Crypt provide 6 units of accommodation and support at Don Robbins House and support a further 9 units of modular accommodation at the Clarion site for homeless people who are, or are at risk of, rough sleeping. All the clients have access to visiting support that will engage them in training and activities to acquire life skills required for independent living. In addition to visiting support, clients are supported to engage with training and employment opportunities that enable them to prepare for employment and secure long term employment. The continued funding for the 3 support workers will provide each client with a bespoke training package and work with a range of training and employment providers.
- 5 The provision of psychologist hours will provide support to the Housing First Pilot, to people in emergency and supported accommodation and particularly to people in most need. This will strengthen our trauma informed approach. The Psychologist input will also support staff across the system, particularly Navigators, to enhance our overall offer and approach. Developing and implementing a psychologically informed service requires intensive input from a senior psychologist. It will complement and optimise the wide range of existing services and will support us to provide the best holistic, individualised support plans for clients suffering with the effects of complex trauma.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 6 The Silver Street Support Partnership Leeds produces an annual Rough Sleeping Action Plan that outlines the strategies in place to contribute to preventing single homelessness and ending rough sleeping. This document is signed off by Gold Partnership and used by DLUHC to track Leeds progress against the agreed objectives. The funding will enable the continuation of

partnership work to sustain the outreach, safeguarding and accommodation offer and to reduce the number of people rough sleeping in Leeds.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 7 The accommodation services work directly with some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people living in the City. They help to achieve goals of reducing inequality, improving health outcomes for the most disadvantaged, and ensuring people access good quality accommodation. This scheme also supports the three pillars of the National Rough Sleeping Strategy:
- To **prevent** new people from starting to sleep rough
 - To **intervene** rapidly when people start to sleep rough to help them off the street
 - To promote a person's **recovery** once they are off the street to build positive lives and prevent a return to rough sleeping

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 8 Consultation has taken place with key partners working across the city with people who are rough sleeping to design a bid for the funding, identifying key activities and initiatives which would be eligible for the grant funding. The initiatives suggested for grant support were developed in response to the feedback from people using services during the Covid outbreak and based on an analysis of action required to achieve the city's ambition to reduce the number of people rough sleeping completed as part of the bidding process.
- 9 The Executive Member for Housing has been consulted and is supportive of the proposals.

What are the resource implications?

- 10 The grant monies will be paid to Leeds City Council by DLUHC via a ringfenced section 31 grant. The total value of the grants to be awarded is £350,853.
- 11 The activities listed in this report will be fully funded by the grant.
- 12 There are no longer-term resource implications, all providers are aware of the short-term nature of the funding and the proposals in this report can be scaled up or scaled down depending on future funding allocations.
- 13 The funding is for support 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 and submission of financial returns and will not exceed the amount approved in this report. Payment will be made in instalments.
- 14 Monitoring processes are in place by the Adults and Health Commissioning Team to ensure value for money and quality of delivery for the duration of the grant.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 15 The funding proposals listed in this report are being allocated to organisations to deliver additional support to people who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping. Should the organisations fail to deliver this support then there is a risk that Leeds City Council could have to repay the grant to DLUHC. This will be mitigated by payment in instalments, through robust monitoring by Adults and Health Commissioning Team and through ongoing updates and communication with DLUHC.
- 16 All the services outlined in this report are already delivered by the providers who have specialist knowledge in their field. They have received funding for similar purposes for several years.

Awarding the grants to the named organisations in this way could leave the Council open to a potential claim from other providers, to whom this grant could be of interest, that it has not been wholly transparent. However, the risk of this would appear to be low.

What are the legal implications?

- 17 The value of the grants in total is below £500k, for this reason it has been determined that approval is a Significant Operational Decision and is not subject to Call-In. There are no grounds for keeping the contents of this report confidential under the Access to Information Rules.
- 18 As the Council will be entering into grant arrangements with the organisations stated, the Council will have no contractual control over enforcement of the terms. The only sanction available with grant payments is for the Council to claw-back grant monies unspent or spent on matters for which the grant wasn't provided.
- 19 There is a risk of challenge that a grant payment is not a grant. Legally there is some confusion about when a grant can and cannot be used as there is a fine line between a grant (which is not caught by the procurement rules) and a contract for services (which is caught by the procurement rules). Although no longer directly applicable due to the UK's departure from the European Union the preamble to EU Procurement Directive 2014/24/EU (from which the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 were transposed into English law) is still persuasive and the directive makes it clear at paragraph (4) that "the mere financing, in particular through grants, of an activity, which is frequently linked to the obligation to reimburse the amounts received where they are not used for the purposes intended, does not usually fall within the scope of the public procurement rules".
- 20 As such, unconditional grants are unlikely to meet the definition of a contract as set out in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015). However, where grants are used with strict qualification criteria and an obligation to pay back money if certain targets are not reached, the position is less straightforward and it is possible that an arrangement referred to as a grant could meet the definition of a contract set out in the PCR 2015 and, if it does, the PCR 2015 may apply. It is therefore extremely important to ensure that, if providing grants, the process followed does not fall within the definition of a "public contract" as set out in PCR 2015 which states –"contracts for pecuniary interest concluded in writing between one or more economic operators and one or more contracting authorities and having as their object the execution of works, the supply of products or the provision of services."
- 21 A Subsidy Control Assessment has been completed and found that the grants do not qualify as subsidies under the Subsidy Control Act 2022.
- 22 There is no overriding legal obstacle preventing the award of the grants and the contents of this report should be noted. In making their final decision, the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment should be satisfied that the course of action chosen represents best value for the Council. Procurement and Commercial Services have inputted into this report.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

23 Consultation took place prior to the bid being submitted with colleagues from Safer Leeds, Silver Street Support Partnership, Leeds Housing Options and Adults and Health to agree the funding required to continue to provide support and accommodation. Ideas for funding have been co-produced with partners. The organisations selected are best placed to respond to the Government grant funding framework, specific to this client group.

How will success be measured?

24 Leeds City Council is committed to ending rough sleeping and it is key strategic priority for the city. This vision is underpinned by three key approaches: Prevention; Intervention; Recovery with the desired collective outcome being: People 'move in' to appropriate and suitable accommodation; People 'move-on' by accessing the right support at the right time, to aide their personal recovery and as a result fewer people return / end up on the street and more feel socially connected to their neighbourhood. To achieve this, a rough sleeping action plan is in place that has a suite of indicators to measure success, including:

- Reduce the number of people 'at risk' of rough sleeping
- Reduce evictions and restrictions from emergency and supported accommodation
- Support people with tenancies back to accommodation if found rough sleeping
- Increase tenancy sustainment beyond 6 months for people with a history of rough sleeping
- Ensure all who need it have a safe place to stay. Develop and extend choice of accommodation options
- Develop new and improved options for emergency accommodation (self-contained with 24 / 7 support)

The indicators will be monitored by the Commissioning Team, Adults and Health.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

25 The accommodation schemes included in this report form part of an existing programme of work which commenced in 2021 (RSAP) and this funding award will continue them for the financial year 2024-25. The funding for LYPFT (RSI) is also to continue until March 2025 and will be implemented this financial year, following approval. The Commissioning Team, Adults and Health will be responsible for implementation and monitoring.

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- Equality Diversity Cohesion Integration Impact Screening