

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S
REPORT TO**

Finance Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee
24 March 2022

Report Title: Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding 2022-25

Submitted by: Executive Director - Commercial Development & Economic Growth

Portfolios: Community Safety and Wellbeing

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To outline the funding bid for the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding 2022-25.

Recommendations

That the Council accepts the funding awarded by the Government as part of the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding 2022-25 for the projects outlined.

Reasons

The Council has bid for the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding 2022-25 from Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC), the outcome of which is due to be known in April, therefore it is reasonable for the Council to plan to accept the funding which is allocated and commence procurement of contracts and recruitment of officers.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Government has a published Rough Sleeper Strategy to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027. The strategy recognises that rough sleeping is the extreme form of homelessness and therefore it is right that action is taken to help people off the streets. As part of this, a key element is the prevention and recovery process for rough sleepers.
- 1.2 The Council works in partnership with a range of local partners involved in supporting homelessness and sought the views of partners and opportunities for joint working through the Newcastle Homelessness Forum and Stoke Forum.
- 1.3 The Council meets the DLUHC Homelessness Specialist Advisors on a regular basis to discuss the local rough sleeping situation and the Council's plans to address it. This approach means that the Council is able to take a co-production approach to submitting funding bids for rough sleeper funding when it becomes available. On 25th February, the Council submitted a bid for the next round of funding. These discussions with the Specialist Advisors also allow for the evaluation of existing schemes and sharing of best practice.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 The Council submits an annual rough sleeping estimate every November. For 2021 this figure was 7, compared to 9 in 2020. The Council also completes a physical bi-monthly rough sleeper

count at 5am to give an accurate picture, the last one was completed in January and found 4 people were bedding down.

2.2 The Council has been successful in securing funding in previous years and is seeking to extend these services going forward. These services are:

- The Rough Sleeper Navigator,
- The Joint Rough Sleeper Co-ordination with Stoke City Council,
- Homelessness Healthcare Worker (due to commence 1st April as there was a delay in recruitment) and community outreach vehicle for the health care worker to complete their support on the streets (this includes Covid vaccinations).
- A flexible innovative fund and cold weather fund which enables officer to support those who have previously failed to engage.

2.3 Officers have identified a range of new services in the bid:

- Tenancy Sustainment Officer, which will enable customers to attain and sustain accommodation. As part of the bid it was identified that this post will seek to incorporate move-on support if appropriate.
- Part-time Support Officer to work with rough sleepers in temporary accommodation to help them maintain their new life through diversionary activities, volunteering, education, and any activities that stop them falling back into reoccurring episodes of rough sleeping.
- Support Worker to drive the community outreach vehicle and support the healthcare worker. This post can also act as security where this is required. This enables the service to go out at times which may be unsuitable for lone working.
- Homeless Hub joint bid with Stoke City Council to provide information and advice on specialist service all in one building including health services, Police, Department of Welfare, Rough Sleeper support workers, voluntary and faith services. The Council would be looking to cover 20% of the costs of the hub.

3. **Proposal**

3.1 To accept the funding when allocated from DULHC.

4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 The Council is expected to assist the most vulnerable residents who are rough sleeping, the proposals and acceptance of the funding is in line with the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-25.

5. **Options Considered**

5.1 The Council can decide to accept or decline the grant funding.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires Local Authorities to formulate reviews and strategies in order to tackle and prevent homelessness.

6.2 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places emphasis on the prevention and relief of homelessness at an earlier stage.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 These services seek to help all people out of rough sleeping. The overall service as part of Newcastle Housing Advice has an equality impact assessment completed.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

8.1 The overall bid is for £592,041 over 3 years, this includes:

	Rough Sleeper Navigator and personalisation fund of £5,000 per year	Joint Rough Sleeper Co-ordination and personalisation fund of approx. £3,000	Homelessness Healthcare Worker (in year 1 this is for the vehicle as officer costs are carried forward from existing funding)	Flexible innovative fund and cold weather fund	Tenancy Sustainment Officer and personalisation fund of £5,000 per year	Support Officer and personalisation fund of £3,000 per year	Homelessness Hub
2022 / 23	41,940	15,000	10,000	15,000	32,705	16,168	31,520
2023 / 24	42,679	15,000	40,000	15,000	42,678	20,557	37,222
2024 / 25	43,809	15,000	40,000	15,000	43,432	20,908	38,423
Total	128,428	45,000	90,000	45,000	118,815	57,633	107,165

8.2 There is no requirement for match funding.

9. Major Risks

9.1 One of the key risks is the ability to recruit suitably qualified officers for the posts outlined, by taking this report to Cabinet in March the intention is to be prepared to recruit as soon as the funding is announced.

9.2 There is a risk that the services proposed are insufficient to meet the demand; however officers believe the proposals are appropriate taking into account current and potential needs.

9.3 Should the funding cease in 2025 the Council can end the contracts. The new officers will be appointed on temporary contracts so there will be no employment issues should the funding cease.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

10.1 As the proposals relate to improving sustainability they will impact a number of UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG). These are:-



11 **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This is a key decision as the grant is over £100,000.

12 **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 None

13 **List of Appendices**

13.1 None.

14 **Background Papers**

14.1 None.