



To: Executive Councillor for Housing (and Deputy Leader): Councillor Catherine Smart
Report by: Pat Strachan, Cambs HIA Manager
Relevant scrutiny committee: Community Services Scrutiny Committee
Wards affected: All Wards

URGENT
DECISION

PROPOSAL TO BID FOR GRANT FUNDING TO DEVELOP CAMBS HIA – LOCAL HOUSING AND CARE OPTIONS SERVICE

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This decision is needed to enable the new shared Cambs Home Improvement Agency (operating across City, South Cambs and Huntingdonshire) to complete and submit an application on 4 June 2013 to bid for 18 months grant funding (available from Oct 2013 if successful).
- 1.2 Cambs HIA is seeking to develop an approach to secure authority (from both the City council and from partners) to be able to respond to new opportunities and develop its activities outside the City Council's budget setting process.
- 1.3 This decision, if approved, will enable Cambs HIA to submit a bid for EAC (Elderly Accommodation Council) First Stop Partnership Grant. This grant is funded by DCLG. This will support developing a more holistic approach to meeting peoples housing needs across the council areas covered by Cambs HIA by (1) helping people to identify how suitable their homes are as they get older (2) what options they have to meet their current or future needs. Although suitable alternative housing may not be available, this service will enable people to consider carefully whether adaptations to their current home (that are costly and can take a lengthy period to complete) are the best long term solution.
- 1.4 This does not have a direct impact on the City Councils own budget, but if successful will require costs to be reclaimed monthly in arrears subject to satisfactory performance (i.e. initial costs and risks of failure to deliver will be the responsibility of Cambs HIA).

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- 2.1 To approve the completion of a bid by Cambs HIA. This will enable Cambs HIA to be considered for a Local Housing Options Partnership Grant. This approval is being granted on the basis that this has a neutral financial implication, with all

costs anticipated to be fully met by the grant. However, if funding is awarded it will be paid in arrears and be subject to satisfactory performance. The risks and up front costs would be met from the Cambs HIA ring-fenced budget.

- 2.2 To require the completed bid and implementation plan to be submitted to Community Services Scrutiny Committee for information and endorsement, should the bid be successful.
- 2.3 To approve the immediate recruitment of a Housing Options Adviser by Cambs HIA, should the bid be successful. Successful bidders will be notified by the end of June and must be able to confirm the appointment of a Housing Options Adviser by 1 October. If this application for urgent decision by Cambridge City Council is approved, preparations will be made to be able to start the recruitment process as soon as the bid decision is confirmed.

3. Background

- 3.1 The new shared Cambs HIA was officially established in April 2012, in a partnership agreement between Cambridge City, South Cambs and Huntingdonshire District Councils. The City Council (as the lead authority) provides financial, HR, policy and management support. A Management Board comprising of officer representatives of the three councils oversees, monitors and provides strategic direction for the Agency. The Management Board members have been notified of this proposal. Formal approval at a Cambs HIA Management Board will be sought at its next meeting on 3 July.

Expenditure	18 mths (Oct 13 – Mar 15)
Staff: Housing Options Adviser (32 hrs pw) & Admin support (2 hrs pw) incl on-costs	46,560
Other staff & volunteer costs (travel, phone, training)	990
Promotional materials & PR	400
IT capital (laptop and remote access)	780
Admin & support costs	1110
Total	£49,840

4. Implications

- (a) **Financial Implications**
This proposal is being submitted for approval on the basis that it has neutral financial implications to Cambridge City Council. However, grant funding awarded will be paid monthly in arrears.
- (b) **Staffing Implications**
A full-time Housing Options Advisor must be appointed by 1 October as a condition of all successful bids. An existing member of the admin team will be offered additional hours to support the record keeping and reporting for this project.
- (c) **Equal Opportunities Implications**
This proposal has no equal opportunities implication for Cambridge City Council and does not involve any change to existing policies or procedures.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

This proposal will have no environmental implications in Cambridge City.

(e) **Procurement**

There are no procurement implications associated with this report.

(f) **Consultation and Communication**

The proposal has been put forward with the support of Alan Carter, Head of Strategic Housing Services and communicated to the Cambs HIA Management Board for formal approval at the 3 July meeting).

(g) **Community Safety**

This proposal will have no community safety implications in Cambridge City.

5. Background Papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- EAC First Stop/ Care & Repair England Local Housing Options Service-application form and guidance notes
-

6. Appendices

There are no appendices associated with this report

7. Inspection of Papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

Author's Name: Pat Strachan
Author's Phone Number: 01954 – 713456 (general number 01954 - 713330)
Author's Email: pat.strachan@cambshia.org