



To: Executive Councillor for Housing (and Deputy Leader): Councillor Catherine Smart  
Report by: Director of Customer and Community Services  
Relevant scrutiny committee: Community Services Scrutiny Committee 16/1/2013  
Wards affected: All Wards

## **HOUSING GENERAL FUND GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS 2014-16**

### **Key Decision**

#### **1. Executive summary**

This report reviews the grants that were awarded by Community Services Scrutiny Committee from the Housing General Fund for 2012-14 in the context of the corporate policy and makes recommendations to continue to grant fund the organisations during 2014/15 and 2015/16.

#### **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- 1) To agree, subject to the budget setting process and formal adoption by Council of the 2014/15 and 2015/16 budgets, the funding to the voluntary sector organisations as detailed in this report
- 2) To note, for information, the proposed Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Homelessness Prevention Grant budget allocation for 2014-15

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Housing General Fund (HGF) grants for 2012/13 and 2013/14 were awarded by Community Services Scrutiny Committee as follows:

| <b>Grant Offered</b>  | <b>Amount</b>   |
|---|-----------------|
| Provision of independent specialist housing advice services through CAB.  | £30,110         |
| Supporting Women's Aid to provide an outreach service for Women and children fleeing domestic violence.                       | £42,130         |
| Supporting Cambridge Re-use to provide furniture to those affected by poverty and disadvantage.                               | £7,860          |
| Supporting Cyrenians to provide services to homeless people in need of support.   | £11,400         |
| The Learning & Development Service provided by Wintercomfort  | £59,050         |
| Total amount to cover shortfall in discretionary business rate relief for Cyrenians, CWA, Cambridge Re-Use and Wintercomfort. | £7,490          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>£158,040</b> |

3.2 The grants listed above benefited from a small inflationary uplift in 2013/14

3.3 The voluntary sector provides key services to homeless people, including services, which enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations. Housing grants enable the voluntary sector to provide services to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and, through the provision of specialist housing and support services, improve service users' quality of life, help tackle social exclusion and prevent repeat homelessness.

3.4 The recipients of Housing General Fund grants also receive grant aid from other organisations both statutory and voluntary. All grant agreements contain a requirement that such awards are reported to the City Council

3.5 HGF grants are proposed for 2014-16 on two year grant agreements and there are no changes recommended to the list of grant recipients. Grants are subject to a 2% inflationary uplift on last year and are listed in the table below:

| <b>Grant Offered</b>  | <b>Amount</b> |
|---|---------------|
| Provision of independent specialist housing advice services through CAB.                                | £31,320       |
| Supporting Women's Aid to provide an outreach service for Women and children fleeing domestic violence. | £43,830       |

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Supporting Cambridge Re-use to provide furniture to those affected by poverty and disadvantage.                               | £8,180          |
| Supporting Cyrenians to provide services to homeless people in need of support.   | £11,860         |
| The Learning & Development Service provided by Wintercomfort  | £61,430         |
| Total amount to cover shortfall in discretionary business rate relief for Cyrenians, CWA, Cambridge Re-Use and Wintercomfort. | £8,220          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>£164,840</b> |

- 3.6 A priority policy fund (ppf) bid has been submitted as part of the 2014/15 budget process for funding to employ a tenancy support worker. The bid is requesting £35,000 in total of which 75% is to be drawn from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and 25% from the Council's Homelessness Prevention Grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The bid is a response to a recommendation from the *Review of Street-Based Anti-Social Behaviour* report, which was approved at Strategy and Resources Committee in October 2013  
<http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=159&MId=1119&Ver=4>
- 3.7 Responsibility for allocating funds under the Homelessness Prevention Grant is under delegated authority to the Head of Strategic Housing until March 2015.
- 3.8 Members can see all proposed allocations under the DCLG Homelessness Prevention Grant at appendix 1.

#### 4. Implications

##### (a) Financial Implications

The grants detailed above can be contained within existing budgets and represent a continuation of the awards policy of the previous two year period

##### (b) Staffing Implications

There are no new staffing implications

##### (c) Equal Opportunities Implications

These grants support disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. All agencies funded operate equal opportunity policies and work actively to promote equal opportunities awareness through the services they provide.

**(d) Environmental Implications**

+L - funding of furniture recycling by Cambridge Reuse helps to prevent landfill. There are no known adverse implications arising from the award of funding to any of the organisations contained within this report.

**(e) Procurement**

The arrangements for all funding recipients contained within the main body of this report are governed by grant agreements and are not deemed to be procurements subject to competitive tender. The street and mental outreach service detailed at appendix 1 is subject to competitive tender process and is jointly commissioned with the County Council.

**(f) Consultation and communication**

The Council runs a quarterly Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group. This meeting involves key delivery partners in the statutory and voluntary sector and members of the group have been asked for views on funding distributions as part of this process.

**(g) Community Safety**

Work by Wintercomfort, Cyrenians and other groups help to reduce rough sleeping and thus impacts on community safety (e.g. by reducing aggressive begging). Cambridge Women's Aid provides refuge and support for victims of domestic violence and makes a significant contribution to community safety in so doing.

## **5. Background papers**

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

None

## **6. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – DCLG Homelessness Prevention Grant allocations 2014/15

## 7. Inspection of papers

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

Author's Name: David Greening  
Author's Phone Number: 01223 - 457997  
Author's Email: david.greening@cambridge.gov.uk