

Item

## HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANTS 2020-21

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Communities  
Housing Scrutiny Committee 15/01/2020

**Report by:**

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**Wards affected:**

All

Key Decision

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines grant funding to organisations providing homelessness prevention services. It provides an overview of the process, eligibility criteria and budget in Section 3 and Appendix 1 details the applications received with recommendations for 2020-21 awards.

### 2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the Homelessness Prevention Grants to voluntary, community and statutory organisations for 2020-21, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report, subject to the budget approval in February 2020 and any further satisfactory information required of applicant organisations.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. The Homelessness Prevention Grants are funded from the General Fund. The programme is specifically designed to relieve pressure on

the Council’s statutory and non-statutory homelessness services and, while most recipients are from the voluntary and community sector, the Council will consider funding statutory partners and internal departments where the funding outcomes are met.

3.2 **The outcomes** for the Homelessness Prevention Grant fund are as follows:

**Primary Outcome** - Reduce the levels of homelessness and rough sleeping in Cambridge

**Strategic Outcomes** - As well as the primary outcome activities must achieve one or more of the following strategic outcomes:

- Prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in Cambridge
- Relieve homelessness and rough sleeping in Cambridge

3.3 **Budget** – there is a budget of £477,530 available for Homelessness Prevention Grants 2020-21 subject to approval of the Council’s budget in February 2020. Other budget provisions are as follows:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
Change, Grow, Live	Street Outreach Project contract to March 2021	181,980
Homelessness Link	IT software for homeless client information to be documented and securely exchanged between partners	10,000
YMCA/Riverside	Young person’s emergency bed spaces	10,000
Trailblazer Project	Contribution to sub regional early homelessness prevention project	10,000
Recharges	Internal recharge costs	59,760
Homelessness Prevention Grant Fund		<b>477,530</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>749,270</b>

3.4 The 2020-21 Homelessness Prevention Grants programme opened in August 2019 for applications and closed on 1st October 2019. A communications and publicity plan was implemented including a press release, newsletter articles, workshops, emails, networking and targeted conversations to promote the grant fund.

- 3.5 A range of activities have been undertaken to support organisations to understand the funding criteria and requirements needed for a successful application, including:
- Attending organisation's committee meetings, individual meetings
  - Training sessions and application workshops held jointly with Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS)
  - Application Guide detailing the priorities, outcomes and eligibility criteria and giving guidance on requirements, question by question
  - Factsheets, templates and signposting to other funding providers
- 3.6 Even though organisations were encouraged to engage with us for help and support with their applications some chose not to and some applications were received which did not meet the basic criteria of the fund, requesting funds for non-targeted activity.
- 3.7 The Homelessness Prevention Grants fund continues to fund Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) for several properties supporting the funding outcomes. These are listed in Appendix 1.
- 3.8 All applications were assessed against the same assessment matrix developed around the priorities and outcome used for community grants in previous years, ensuring a consistent approach. These assessments were then moderated by strategy officer meetings informing the award recommendations detailed in Appendix 1. The Executive Councillor attended a meeting with officers to review the process and outcomes.
- 3.9 Where no funding is proposed it will be due to one or more of the following not being adequately met:
- Grant scheme outcomes
  - Identifying need
  - Quality or viability of the project, or
  - Proposals were the remit of another service or organisation such as the County Council, Health, etc or
  - In the case of applications 21 and 27 this work is covered by application 14 and the reintroduction, in early 2020, of the clinical service dealing with people on the street with both mental health and substance abuse problems.
- 3.10 If the recommended awards are approved there will be £6,590 remaining for officers to consider enquiries during the year.
- 3.11 **Corporate Grants Gateway** – in 2018 the Executive Councillor for Communities approved a review of grants to voluntary and community

sector organisations across the Council to achieve greater transparency, consistency and accountability and to explore the potential for the development of a single grants gateway for major grants.

3.12 The Grants Gateway has been implemented for the 2020-21 funding round for the following funds:

- Community Grants
- Area Committee Community Grants
- Homelessness Prevention Grants
- Sustainable City Grants

3.13 These funds are now managed by one team using the same process and timescale. The awards are considered across the funds at the same time to ensure a consistent and accountable process by experienced officers from the different service areas. The funds remain within their appropriate portfolios for decision making and to ensure alignment to each fund's strategic priorities.

3.14 Now that processes have bedded in this year, the 2021-22 funding round will consider offering some multi-year (up to 3-year) funding allocations to:

- Provide greater stability for projects which require more than one year to develop and deliver
- Increase the sustainability of the sector at a time when organisations are experiencing greater financial pressures
- Reduce the administrative load and refocus time on outcomes, monitoring and voluntary sector support

## 4. Implications

**a) Financial Implications** - Set out in 3.3 and 3.10 of the report

**b) Staffing Implications** - There are no staffing implications

**c) Equality and Poverty Implications** - Equalities Impact Assessments were carried out as follows:

- EQIA undertaken September 2018 on the grant fund

**d) Environmental Implications** - Funded organisations are expected to have or develop environmental policies.

- e) **Procurement Implications** - The Council's approach to grant aid through the Homelessness Prevention Grants is via an application process rather than through the direct commissioning of services.
- f) **Community Safety Implications** - Some of the funded projects will have a positive impact on community safety.

## **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

Applicants were notified when this report was published detailing recommended awards, giving an indication of proposed funding from April 2020. This adhered to the Cambridgeshire Compact framework to give three months' notice of funding changes. Officers will continue the process of award notification, signposting and support, and implementing and monitoring awards.

## **6. Background papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

## **7. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Homelessness Prevention Grants 2020-21 Award Recommendations

## **8. Inspection of papers**

If you have a query on the report please contact James McWilliams, Housing Services Manager  
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