

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE	15 JUNE 2021	5
ROUGH SLEEPER INITIATIVE FUNDING 2021-2022			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

In December 2018 Fylde BC, working jointly with Lancaster City and Wyre Council, were awarded Rapid Re-housing funding from Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The funding was launched as part of MHCLG Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018 and the commitment under the Rough Sleeping Strategy August 2018, to half rough sleeping in the UK by 2022 and to end it by 2027. Fylde Council were awarded £30,000.

MHCLG have announced a continuation of the Rough Sleeper Initiative funding for 2021/22. Fylde Council have been awarded a further £52,000. £27,000 is from the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding with an additional £25,000 emergency funding for accommodation, support and move on costs.

The initial funding enabled a Rapid Rehousing Officer to be employed to undertake support for clients presenting with multiple complex support needs, at risk of, or sleeping rough. Initially the post was funded till March 2022. The funding was not received till the Autumn of 2019 and the post was in place by January 2020. In January 2021, this Committee, and the Finance and Democracy Committee approved a revision to the Flexible Homeless Support Grant (FHSG) and Homeless Reduction Act (HRA), funding received in 2019/20 be used to continue the Rapid Rehousing post from 2022 to 2026.

Fylde Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 has a vision to work to prevent and relieve homelessness in Fylde and provide homelessness services that are accessible, professional and make a difference. We work with clients facing homelessness to ensure they have the expertise needed to enable them to engage with a range of services to support them to resolve their housing situation and improve their health and well-being and give them the confidence to access and a tenancy with the skills required to ensure their home is affordable, settled and if they are facing difficulties know who to approach for help.

The purpose of this report is to update Committee on proposals to utilise the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding, no longer required to fund the Rapid Rehousing Officer, to continue the Next Steps programme developed in 20/21 and bring in extra support for 21/22 for clients presenting with substance misuse and related problems, including mental health issues, to improve their self-worth, access and continue with the support that is available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee are requested to:

- Note the contents of the report and the Rough Sleeper Initiative funding announced for 2021/22.
- Recommend to Finance and Democracy Committee approval of a fully funded budget increase to provide external support for clients with substance misuse and related problems, for £27,000 in 2021/22 to be met

from MHCLG funding under the Rough Sleeper Initiative, for 2021/22.

3. Recommend to Finance and Democracy Committee approval of a fully funded budget increase to the Next Steps funding programme, for £25,000 in 2021/22 to be met from MHCLG funding under the Rough Sleeper Initiative, for 2021/22.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

[Policies on the Procurement and Allocation of Temporary Accommodation 23/02/2016](#)

[Lancashire Single Homelessness Initiative evaluation 06/09/2016](#)

[Fylde Coast Homeless Prevention Trailblazer 14/03/17](#)

[Homeless Reduction Act 2018](#)

[Fylde Coast Homelessness Trailblazer Evaluation 05/06/18](#)

[Final update on Fylde Homelessness Strategy 2013-18 06/11/2018](#)

[Fylde Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2015 draft for consultation 03/09/2019](#)

HYPERLINK

"<https://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1099/Committee/19/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>" [Fylde Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 07/01/2020](#)

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[s://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1099/Committee/19/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx](https://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1099/Committee/19/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx)" [Final Fylde Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 07/01/2020](#)

[/fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1156/Committee/17/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx](https://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1156/Committee/17/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx) [MHCLG Next Steps Funding to support homeless households 19/10/2020](#)

[.com/fylde/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1164/Committee/19/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx](https://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1164/Committee/19/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx)" [Update Fylde Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025](#)

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	√
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	

REPORT

BACKGROUND

Fylde Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping 2020-2025

1. **Environmental Health and Housing Committee on the 7th January 2020 approved Fylde Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025.** The Strategy covers; an overview of homelessness legislation since 1977 to present day, a picture of homelessness in the borough and achievements under the 2013-18 Homeless Strategy.
2. Our vision is to work to prevent and relieve homelessness in Fylde and provide homelessness services with our partners that are accessible, professional and make a difference. We will work to ensure all our clients facing homelessness have:
 - Access to expertise needed to enable clients to engage with a range of services that will support them to resolve their housing situation and improve their health and well-being.

- The confidence to access and maintain a tenancy with the skills required to ensure their home is affordable, settled and if they are facing difficulties know who to approach for help.
3. The Strategy has three strategic aims for Fylde Housing Services in order to achieve this vision and Appendix 2 contains an action plan that comments on how we will deliver these aims. Then action plan has been developed in partnership with Fylde Homeless Partnership group.
 - Priority One – Developing a service that is focussed on preventing homelessness
 - Priority two – Developing a service that is focussed on relieving homelessness
 - Priority three – Partnership working to achieve our vision and values
 4. **The Homeless Reduction Act 2018 fundamentally changed the way local authorities support homeless people in their areas.** The Act was enacted from April 2019 and prevention and relief statutory duties are available to any household vulnerable to homelessness in 56 rather than 28 days. This broader definition of homelessness beyond priority need groups means that local authorities are able to support households that are currently considered the hidden homeless and will provide greater assistance to single person households not in a priority need category.
 5. **Fylde Coast Homeless Response Cell – Covid 19** was established following MHCLG writing to all local authorities and statutory partners outlining a joint responsibility to safeguard as many homeless people as possible from COVID-19. MHCLG outlined a strategy based on NHS medical guidance and support which aims to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on people facing homelessness and ultimately prevent deaths during this public health emergency.
 6. Guidance suggested that all partners need to be involved in a coordinated and planned way including; Local Authority – for leading on securing and funding accommodation, Local Authority public health including commissioned drug and alcohol treatment services, social care and support; NHS –for commissioning and provision of primary care, community services, urgent and emergency care, hospital discharge and mental health; Voluntary Sector for providing shelters, hostels, outreach support and food banks. It stated that this multi-agency response should be organised and coordinated through local response cell and via emergency response arrangements, specifically with Local Resilience Forums (LRF).
 7. Within the Fylde Coast a Homeless Response Cell was set up in March 2020. This Cell is in operation to present day and discusses the support needs of homeless clients within the service across Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre local authorities. As a result direct referrals are made into support agencies on day of presentation to the homeless service and regular updates are provided which includes engagement in support in place and non-engagement.

ROUGH SLEEPER INIATIVE FUNDING £27,000

Support for clients with substance misuse related problems

8. Fylde Council Housing Service would like to use the opportunity presented by this funding, to explore options to support clients with substance misuse related problems, to initially engage, and continuation of that engagement, with support services that are available. The intention is to reduce the likelihood of clients with substance misuse and related problems re-presenting to the Homelessness Service.
9. Related problems can include tenancy failure within 6 months of a tenancy being established, anti-social behaviour once tenancy has been established, detrimental effect on an individual's mental health, self-sabotage of support put in place by professionals concerned about an individuals health and well-being and vulnerable individuals being targeted, to retract back into life choices that impact on their ability to sustain tenancies and abstain from substance mis-use.
10. The Covid 19 Fylde Coast Homeless Response Cell ensured referrals for support with clients presenting with substance misuse related problems were immediate, however, some clients due to non-engagement after the initial referral, stopped engaging with the support and became closed to those services. Though at any point in time a new referral can be made.
11. Fylde Housing Services have in place a Tenancy Support Policy that provides 3 levels of tenancy support determined by presenting needs, for example history of failed tenancy, drug/alcohol addiction, mental health

and family breakdown. Appendix 1 provides an overview diagram of the Tenancy Support Service.

12. Clients who present with 6-8 support needs are provided with 12 weeks tenancy support to ensure the tenancy is set up, all bills are in payment and benefits are in place.
13. Clients who present with 8-10 support needs are referred into the Rapid Rehousing Support Service as soon as they present to the Local Authority as homeless. This service works with clients throughout their journey within the service – prevention, relief and main housing duty – and then for a minimum of 12 weeks of tenancy support once accommodation has been sourced. However, in our experience many clients require support beyond the 12 weeks.
14. Once the tenancy has been set and the tenancy support has ended, the homelessness service will not be made aware that clients with identified support needs for substance misuse related problems, have stopped engagement with the support in place, until they re-present to the Homelessness Service.
15. There are several common reasons why people stop engaging with support that is available specifically focussed on substance misuse and related problems:
 - Form of self-sabotage, as once they leave the support made available, they are likely to relapse back to alcohol and drugs,
 - The individual did not want to go engage with the support in the first place, and are not fully committed to recovery,
 - Their vulnerability, enhanced as being homeless, can often affect their confidence to continue with treatment and support,
 - Individual's feel overwhelmed with the withdrawal symptoms.
16. The intention is to explore utilising the experience and skills of substance specific services to provide external floating support to clients who present to the Homelessness Service with a history of substance misuse and related problems, that have resulted in tenancy failure.
17. Support will include:
 - Assist clients to maintain their health, well-being and personal safety
 - Assisting to engage with individuals, professionals and other bodies concerned about a client's welfare
 - Ensuring support within the community and drug/alcohol services is accessed
 - Support to cope with the practicalities of everyday life
 - Providing life skills training
 - Assisting with personal budgeting and debt counselling
 - Assisting to deal with relationships and disputes
 - Assisting to deal with benefit claims and other professional correspondence related to maintaining a tenancy
 - Responding to emergency alarm calls 24 hours a day when an individual feels they are struggling with treatment
18. Clients will be referred into the support by Fylde Council Homelessness Service where a prevention or relief duty under the Homeless Reduction Act has been accepted and there is a history of non- engagement with individuals, professionals and other bodies concerned about a client's welfare.
19. The costs of support and length of support required are still to be determined and approaches have been made to each of the organisations listed below to begin initial discussions.
20. Substance misuse services in Fylde include (links to websites are included at the end of the report):
 - Change, Grow, Live (CGL formally known as Inspire). CGL are commissioned and funded by NHS and Lancashire County Council (LCC) to provide substance mis-use services across Fylde and Wyre.
 - Brighstarts are a Community Interest Company dedicated to providing high quality homes and support for people with substance misuse related problems. They also provide external floating support for clients referred into their service.

- Mulberry Projects are an independent non-commissioned Supported Housing Project which provides adstinent based recovery housing and support for those in recovery from alcohol/drug misuse.
- Allerton is an integrated social care, housing, and development company, working so that everyone can live the life they choose in a home they love.

ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION FUNDING £25,000

21. During the Covid pandemic Fylde Council working with Wyre Council, were awarded Next Steps Funding from MHCLG to help vulnerable accommodated as part of the Covid 19 emergency response. The Next Steps Accommodation Programme made available the resources needed to support local authorities and their partners to ensure that the current provision that has been set up to safeguard people who were taken safely from the streets is able to continue, until appropriate and suitable accommodation can be sourced, having particular focus on the successful resettlement and recovery of those who have or are at risk of rough sleeping.
22. The funding was awarded jointly with Wyre Council and in total across the two authorities is £112,210 (Fylde £55,444.50 and Wyre £56,765.50). The funding has several distinct elements - securing of 5 rooms in B&B accommodation in St Annes, Rent in Advance, Rent in Advance top up for under 35's who are only entitled to the shared room rate and essential items required to establish the tenancy, for example white goods, carpets and furniture.
23. The intention is to use the Emergency accommodation funding to continue the Next Steps programme until the resources are spent. The allocated budget of £55,444.50 awarded in the Autumn of 2020/21 was fully spent by the end of March 2021.
24. The Next Steps Funding has enabled:
 - A Housing Options Customer Services Specialist Post to deal with all initial housing enquiries from customers to provide a comprehensive front line housing service and signposting to other organisations with a focus on preventing homelessness wherever possible. The role provides advice and assistance to households on the range of housing options available to them in Fylde and make appointments with the Homelessness and Housing Advice Officers and Private Sector Team, as appropriate.
 - This post was funded by Next Steps to the end of March 2021 and has been extended to March 2022, shared equally between Housing and Customer Services, funded by remaining FHSG and HRA funding for 20/21.
 - A requirement of the funding was that additional accommodation was secured and available for clients to be placed in emergency temporary accommodation within the local authority area of Fylde. The funding has been used to secure 5 rooms in B&B and apartments in St Anne's, supporting a total of 17 single people and families.
 - Provided funding for the accommodation, when they were not occupied or were required to remain empty for a period prior to a deep clean.
 - Where requested, the funding enabled a deep clean of the rooms/apartments when they became empty.
 - Fund damage to rooms and this was requested on 3 occasions.
 - Provide basic household items for 3 households which included bedding, small electrical items, cooking equipment and eating utensils.
 - Provided funding to clear rent arrears for 3 clients where the arrears were acting as a barrier to them entering social rented accommodation.
 - Provided 8 clients with funding for rent in advance and rent bond to enable them to access both the social and private rented sectors.
 - Provided 16 clients with an essential electrical items package from Salisbury's in Kirkham which included fridge, freezer and cooker.

- Provided 6 clients with carpets throughout the accommodation, where the carpets had been removed by the landlord or previous tenant.
- Enabled the service to secure emergency accommodation within B&B in Blackpool for during the Christmas period.
- During lockdown the funding was used to provide evening meals for clients in B&B including Christmas Day, and where the B&B owners were unable to provide meals, provided microwaves in rooms.

CONCLUSION

25. Note the contents of the report and the continuation of MHCLG funding for 2021/22 under the Rough Sleeper Initiative funding.
26. Recommend to Finance and Democracy Committee approval of a fully funded budget increase to provide external support for clients with substance misuse and related problems, for £27,000 in 2021/22 to be met from MHCLG funding under the Rough Sleeper Initiative, for 2021/22.
27. Recommend to Finance and Democracy Committee approval of a fully funded budget increase to the Next Steps funding programme, for £25,000 in 2021/22 to be met from MHCLG funding under the Rough Sleeper Initiative, for 2021/22.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The report recommends that Finance and Democracy Committee be asked to approve fully funded budget increases as follows: to the Next Steps programme of £25,000 in 2021/22 and support for clients with substance misuse and related problems of £27,000 in 2021/22.
Legal	None
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Change Grow Live	18/05/2021	HYPER https://www.changegrowlive.org/ https://www.changegrowlive.org/
About Bright Start Recovery Homes	18/05/2021	HYPE http://www.brightstarhomes.co.uk/about_us.html http://www.brightstarhomes.co.uk/about_us.html
Allerton Care	18/05/2021	https://www.allerton.co.uk/ https://www.allerton.co.uk/
Fylde Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025	2020	https://new.fylde.gov.uk/funding-approved-to-support-the-homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-strategy-2020-2025/ https://new.fylde.gov.uk/funding-approved-to-support-the-homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-strategy-2020-2025/

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Attached Documents

Appendix 1 – Fylde Council Tenancy Support