

Subject: Homelessness Prevention Bids – Trailblazer and Rough Sleeping

Report to: Housing & neighbourhoods Committee 8th December 2016

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SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

Homelessness Prevention Bids – Trailblazers and Rough Sleeping 2017/20 H&N Committee to note this report.
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1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The Government is looking to work with local areas and across government to fundamentally reform the response to homelessness. Their aim is to put prevention at the heart of this approach to reduce the number of people who face a homelessness crisis in the first place.

As part of meeting this ambition, the government is making available £40m to prevent and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping. This will be available across two programmes and three separate fund:

- A prevention programme including a £20m Trailblazer fund running in 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 to establish a network of ambitious areas across England to work with all eligible households, whether in priority need or not to prevent them becoming homeless as early as possible.
- A rough sleeping programme including a £10m rough sleeping fund (Increased to £20m in the autumn statement) running in 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 to help new rough sleepers or people at imminent risk of sleeping rough, get the rapid support they need to recover and move-on from their homelessness and
- £10 million of outcomes funding for Social Impact Bonds, running in 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21, to support the most entrenched rough sleepers.

The closing date for submission of bids is 28th November 2016 with successful bids to be announced by the end of December 2016. Bids can only be submitted by a Local Authority although, it is noted that there is particular interest in proposals from across multi-agency partnerships and local authority boundaries, to recognise the importance other local partners play in helping people access the services they need

to get back on their feet. No match-funding is required when bidding for this funding.

2. **POTENTIAL BIDS**

As a Local Authority it is our recommendation to submit a bid for Trailblazer funding and for rough sleeping funding.

The details of these bids are as follows;

Trailblazer bid – funding would be sought for a total of three posts plus a budget to provide innovative responses to help resolve complex housing needs.

We would recruit 2 enhanced housing options advisors to work with families and single people before the point of crisis. They would carry-out homelessness prevention activity earlier and with a wider range of people not just those who are owed the statutory duty. We would be looking to collaborate with other public and voluntary sector services to obtain a universal prevention commitment to identify at-risk households and target interventions well before they are threatened with eviction. It is recognised that many of these applicants would be experiencing low level mental health issues and our intention would be to provide them with their own Wellbeing and Housing plan.

Funding would also be sought for a Private Sector Engagement Officer to look to proactively work with the private sector in the light of the impact of Universal Credit to ensure that there is a suitable supply of accommodation for customers not owed a statutory homelessness duty. It is also envisaged that this post will educate and engage with private landlords, providing alternative solutions to evicting tenants.

To enable us to assist with testing new, innovative approaches to preventing homelessness we will also be bidding for additional monies to be used for “whatever it takes” to prevent a customer’s homelessness. We envisage that there is the option of re-charging customers in certain circumstances for funding offered.

Although the posts will initially be based within the Housing Options service, it is envisaged that there will be the option to co-locate with other services and work closely with the early help hub based at Greyfriars House. The Hub steering group has agreed to support the bid. This bid has also been designed to work alongside the funding from the Rough Sleeping Programme and where possible stop people becoming street homeless.

Rough sleepers bid – funding would be sought to employ 2 dedicated workers (via Herring House Trust) to provide a direct pathway from street homelessness to resettlement. They will support people who are sleeping rough; for both those who are new to living on the street and for those whose rough sleeping is entrenched.

They will also work with those who are insecurely housed and in imminent danger of rough sleeping. Great Yarmouth has adopted a Housing First approach to working with this client group through a multi-agency forum, all service users will be offered emergency accommodation from which, they are offered intensive specialist support and ongoing housing support.

A dedicated room in Beauleah House would be used for emergency accommodation which will be free at the point of entry and funding will be bid for to support this. Each individual accessing the project will undergo a period of 7 day assessment to gather information in all their support needs and to establish their future support plan. As above we to enable us to assist with testing new, innovative approaches to preventing street homelessness we will also be bidding for additional monies to be used for “whatever it takes” to prevent street homelessness. We envisage that there is the option of re-charging customers in certain circumstances.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial contribution is required from the Local Authority. The bids will be for additional funding of;

Rough Sleeping	£163,407
Homeless Trailblazer	£253,733

These are based on the probable salary scales for the staff plus 30% for management costs and all relevant project costs.

4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

It would prove increasingly difficult to work with families and single people before point of crisis to prevent homelessness. However, the proposals of the Homelessness Reduction Bill may change this and place a duty on not just those owed the main homelessness duty. Due to increasing demands It is likely that increased incidences of rough sleeping will be seen across Great Yarmouth if an

appropriate resettlement service is not available.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Bids submitted for Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers and Rough Sleeping

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

H&N Committee to note this report.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The prospectus and bid documents can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-prevention-programme>

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	N/A
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Via EMT
Existing Council Policies:	N/A
Financial Implications:	In report
Legal Implications (including human rights):	N/A
Risk Implications:	In report
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	N/A
Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Every Child Matters:	N/A