

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO HOUSING & WELLBEING SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 17 MARCH 2022 PART A: REPORT

SUBJECT:	Grant Funded Homelessness Expenditure
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REPORT AUTHOR:	Claire Dyke , Housing Options Manager
DATE:	17 March 2022
EXTN:	37717
PORTFOLIO AREA:	Residential Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report details expenditure in relation to Government Grants and Funding received in respect of tackling and preventing homelessness and rough sleeping, and to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Committee is asked to approve expenditure of the following grants:

- a) Homelessness prevention grant (2nd Tranche)
- b) Accommodation for Ex-Offenders Grant
- c) Covid Management Fund (COMF)
- d) Protect & Vaccinate Fund

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 There are a number of ring-fenced grants that have been received from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and West Sussex County Council during 2021/2022.

1.2 Homelessness Prevention Grant

1.2.1 The Council receives an annual Homelessness Prevention Grant from DLUHC to prevent and relieve homelessness. The 2021/22 Homelessness Prevention Grant has been “topped up” with a further £169,954 to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on private rented sector tenancies. The purpose of the additional “Support for Vulnerable Renters” is to help low-income private renters with COVID-19 related rent arrears to avoid eviction or find a new home where necessary to prevent homelessness.

1.3 Accommodation for Ex-Offenders

1.3.1 In Spring 2021, Local Authorities were invited to bid for funds to support Ex-Offenders who may be at risk of rough sleeping. In July 2021 the outcome of the bid was announced, and Arun DC was awarded £201,432 (£192,432 in 21/22 and £9,000 in 22/23) to run the project in partnership with Stonepillow. Funding covers staff costs and incentives to increase access to private rented housing and should be spent by March 2022.

1.4 Covid Management Fund

1.4.1 West Sussex County Council were awarded Covid Management Funding last year but due to issues with mobilisation, these funds have been devolved to the seven Districts and Boroughs. The Housing Options Team has been awarded £95,000 to support the delivery of preventative services including staff costs, assistance with removals and storage and enhanced discretionary housing payments. Funding is to be spent by March 2023.

1.5 Protect & Vaccinate

1.5.1 In December 2021, in light of the Omicron strain of COVID-19, DLUHC announced that they would be issuing Protect and Vaccinate funding to Local Authorities, and an award of £127,294 was made to the Council. The fund supports the costs incurred in ensuring that all rough sleepers in Arun have a safe place to sleep to limit their exposure to COVID-19. A small part of this funding £14,581 is to be used to increase the take up of vaccinations. All funding should be spent by March 2022.

1.6 Summary

Funding Stream	Amount	To be spent by
Homelessness Prevention Grant Top Up	£169,954	March 22
Accommodation for Ex-Offenders	£201,432	£192,432 in 21/22 and £9,000 in 22/23
Covid Management Fund	£95,000	March 23
Protect & Vaccinate	£127,294	March 22

1.6.1 In a report to the Residential & Well Being Committee on the 3 June 2021, Members were updated on our Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Funding running from July 2021 to March 2022. Work is progressing well and verified rough sleeper numbers have reduced from 18 in November when our annual street count took place, to 1 at the end of January, partly due to the Protect and Vaccinate programme but mainly due to the work being carried out with our partners at Stonepillow and Turning Tides to prevent rough sleeping where possible and to ensure that an off the street offer is readily available to those who need it.

1.6.2 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities released details of funding bids for 2022-25 for RSI Services which need to be submitted by 25 February. Announcements about the level of grant funding awarded will be made in April 2022. The bid has been co-produced with the Council's DLUHC Rough

Sleeper Advisor and our partners, Stonepillow and Turning Tides.		
1.6.3 All funding is ring fenced.		
2.0 PROPOSAL(S):		
2.1 To note and approve grant related expenditure in respect of homelessness prevention, rough sleeping and mitigating COVID-19 impacts.		
3.0 OPTIONS:		
3.1 To approve expenditure as outlined above.		
3.2 Not to approve the expenditure. However, this is not considered to be a viable option as will adversely impact on our ability to prevent and relief homelessness and tackle rough sleeping.		
4.0 CONSULTATION:		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓
5.0 ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial		✓
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓
6.0 IMPLICATIONS:		
6.1 There are multiple funding streams supporting the work of the Housing Options Team, which would otherwise impact on the Council's general fund. Some of these funding streams are subject to bids and some are allocations. Often in year opportunities arise at short notice and require officers to put together funding bids and expenditure programmes at short notice.		

6.2 All allocations and successful funding bids are ring fenced specifically for the purpose of preventing homelessness and rough sleeping.

7.0 REASON FOR THE DECISION:

7.1 For Committee to note the position in respect of grant funded homelessness expenditure in respect of tackling and preventing homelessness and rough sleeping.

8.0 EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE DECISION:

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

N/A