



Policy and Resources Committee – 12 September 2011

Homelessness Grant 2011/12

Purpose of report

This report seeks member approval for the release of funds from the Homelessness Grant 2011/12 following receipt of an application for a specific project.

Attachment(s)

Appendix 1: Homelessness Grant 2011/12 Criteria

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Homelessness Grant is a grant paid to the council annually by Communities and Local Government (CLG) for use in the prevention and reduction of homelessness. The grant for East Northamptonshire for 2011/12 is £50,000.
- 1.2 At its meeting on the 3 February 2011, the Finance Working Party recommended the allocation of the Homelessness Grant 2011/12 to the Homelessness Budget. This was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 17 January 2011 (minute 388).
- 1.3 At the meeting on the 4 July 2011, the Policy and Resources Committee agreed (minute 81) that £15,000 of the funding should be allocated as external grants, in line with the criteria attached at appendix 1.
- 1.4 An application for funding has been received which members are invited to consider.

2.0 Application for Funding

- 2.1 An application for funding has been received from East Northamptonshire Community Services (ENCS) (Full Gospel Church), for £5,000. The full application form is available to view on request from the Housing Strategy Manager. It has not been appended to this report as it contains potentially sensitive financial information.
- 2.2 Funding is sought towards the continued operation of the Rushden Night Shelter and associated services, incorporating:
 - A 4 bed direct access night shelter
 - A 5 unit 'move-on' accommodation project
 - A drop-in advisory service
 - Individual housing related support
- 2.3 The night shelter continues to be the only direct access rough sleeper accommodation in the district, and is invaluable in providing shelter to those who are unable to access more formal statutory services.
- 2.4 ENCA estimates that between 30 and 35 people accessed the night shelter and its associated support services from June 2010 to May 2011.
- 2.5 For the last two winters the night shelter has also offered accommodation to rough sleepers during periods of severe weather for whom the council would have otherwise owed a duty. This would have resulted in significant additional costs for the council, should we have had to place these clients into bed and breakfast accommodation.

- 2.6 The 5 unit 'move-on' project is a relatively new venture which seeks to provide accommodation for those moving on from the night shelter into more permanent accommodation. ENCS has secured 5 private rented tenancies by way of a lease agreement with a private landlord, which are then offered to individuals living in the night shelter who are ready to take the next step. The move-on units provide a supported short-term tenancy until they are ready to move fully into independent living.
- 2.7 The drop-in advisory service, known as the 'Cornerfield Café', offers advice and support on a wide range of issues including homelessness, housing, debt, family issues, and health. ENCS estimates that around 100 people access this service per week.
- 2.8 Whilst there are other services offering housing related support in the district, they do not typically have links with the more 'chaotic' service users such as rough sleepers. Therefore officers are in agreement with ENCS that support can be better provided at the same time as accommodation – ie at the night shelter.
- 2.9 ENCS received funding of between £5,000 and £5,500 towards the Night Shelter in 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2010/11, from the homelessness grant. ENCS submitted a request for funding in 2009/10 for the same purpose, however there were insufficient funds remaining in the budget at that time and so the request was unsuccessful.
- 2.10 An additional request for funding was received during 2010/11 which was not successful as members felt that the activities for which funding was sought did not directly contribute to reducing homelessness.
- 2.11 Officers have assessed the application and are of the view that it fully meets the grant criteria as set out in appendix 1 attached.

5.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 There are no equality and diversity implications as the services seeking funding are open to all.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations below.

7.0 Risk Management

- 7.1 There are no risks associated with the recommendation below.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are sufficient funds available in the homelessness budget for 2011/12. No further applications for funding have been received at this time.

9.0 Corporate Outcomes

- 9.1 Allocation of the Homelessness Grant 2011/12 contributes to the following corporate outcomes:

- A Good Quality of Life – Healthy
- Good Value for Money
- Effective Partnership Working

10.0 Resource Requirements

- 10.1 There are no additional resource requirements associated with the recommendation

below.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1 The committee is recommended to approve the release of funds from the Homelessness Grant 2011/12 for the project set out at section 2 above.

(Reason: to enable officers to respond to the application for funding and administer the Homelessness Grant 2011/12.)

Legal	Power: Homelessness Act 2002				
	Other considerations: Housing Act 1996				
Background Papers:					
Person Originating Report: Cat Hartley, Housing Strategy Manager chartley@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk 01832 742078					
Date: 24 August 2011					
CFO		MO		CX	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)

East Northamptonshire Council Homelessness Grant 2011/12

Application Criteria

Homelessness Grant

The Council will receive a grant during 2011/12 from the Government; which should be spent on projects and activities which seek to prevent homelessness in East Northamptonshire. A proportion of this money will be allocated as small grants to external organisations, to support their work in this area.

This funding is only available until the end of March 2012, and applications will be accepted up until the end of February 2012. The maximum amount for any one application has been set at £5000.

Assessment Criteria

Projects / activities must:

- Benefit the residents of East Northamptonshire
- Come from a properly constituted group
- Directly contribute towards the prevention or reduction of homelessness

Funding will not be approved for projects / activities which have already been completed.

Applications will be assessed by the Council's Housing Strategy Manager; and a recommendation made to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee who will make the final decision.

Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions apply:

- Grants will be paid retrospectively
- The award of a grant is subject to the applicant meeting all statutory obligations; such as building consent and regulations, fire safety regulations, preservation orders and licensing. This includes obtaining Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks for all volunteers and workers dealing with vulnerable individuals and also complying with child protection procedures. A grant award does not give permission to proceed with any work without the correct statutory authorisation.
- Applications must be for a non profit making purpose.