



Policy and Resources Committee – 11 March 2013

Homelessness Grant – Request for Release of Funds

Purpose of report

This report seeks member approval for the release of funds from the Homelessness Grant 2012/13, following receipt of a grant application.

Attachment(s)

Appendix 1: Grant Criteria

1.0 Introduction

- 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 2012/13 is £50,000.
- 1.2 At the meeting on 2 April 2012, Policy and Resources Committee agreed (minute 459) that £15,000 of the funding should be allocated as external grants with the remainder for contingency / specific projects. It was also agreed that any funds not allocated at the end of the year should be transferred to the Disabled Facilities Grant budget.
- 1.3 During 2012/13 the funding has been allocated, via this Committee, to the following projects:

Project	External Grant	Specific Projects
Rushden Sanctuary (night shelter)	5,000	
North Northants Housing Co-ordinator	6,000	
Rent Advance Scheme		5,000
Private Sector Leasing Funding		1,867
Severe Weather Protocol		2,000
Sanctuary Project		5,000
Disabled Facilities Grant		10,000
Total	11,000	23,867
Remaining	4,000	11,133

- 1.4 Officers have already transferred £10,000 from the remaining 'contingency element' of the grant to the Disabled Facilities Grant budget, in recognition of Members' wishes, as it was recognised that there would be an underspend against the budget.
- 1.5 A request for funding from the 'external grants' element has been received which Members are invited to consider.

2.0 Applications for Funding - ENCS

- 2.1 Two applications for funding have been received from East Northamptonshire Community Services (ENCS) (Full Gospel Church), for £5,000 and £4,975, which are detailed below. The full application forms are available to view on request from the officer detailed at the bottom of this report. They have not been appended to this report as they contain potentially sensitive financial information.

- 2.2 It should be noted that the council has already provided funding of £5,000 to ENCS in 2012/13. This is brought to Members' attention for information purposes, and nothing in the Grant Criteria (attached at Appendix 1) prevents an organisation from applying multiple times.
- 2.3 ENCS currently provides a wide range of services for vulnerable and homeless individuals and families, including:
- A 4 bed direct access night shelter
 - A 5 unit 'move-on' accommodation project
 - A drop-in advisory service
 - Individual housing related support
 - Food Bank
 - Clothes and furniture recycling
 - Life skills training
- 2.4 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.

3.0 Application 1 – Support and Training

- 3.1 The first application seeks £5,000 to provide a number of support and training programmes to vulnerable and homeless people.
- 3.2 Funding is sought for the following:
- To provide a professional counselling service to clients' requirements; in-depth support beyond the 'normal' support requirements.
 - To continue the 'Celebrate Recovery Programme', a 12 step programme for people struggling with addictions.
 - To continue with money management courses.
- 3.3 These support programmes were introduced in 2012 following donations and grants which enabled them to take place. Further funding is now required for them to continue.
- 3.4 The estimated costs look reasonable, and in the current economic climate there is increasing demand for such services.
- 3.5 Officers are of the view that this application does meet the grant criteria. Support services such as those set out above assist the beneficiaries in obtaining and maintaining tenancies, and enabling independent living.

4.0 Application 2 – Equipment and Maintenance

- 4.1 The second application seeks £4,975 to purchase some additional equipment, and to fund some maintenance work for the night shelter.
- 4.2 Funding is sought for the following:
- To provide a bedding and clothes washing/drying facility – purchase of an industrial washer and dryer.
 - For renovation/plastering and upkeep work on the kitchen and shower facilities.
 - Replacement of leaking toilet base.
 - Installation of a 4th security camera to cover the back entrance.
- 4.3 The estimated costs submitted look reasonable, with the exception of the commercial washer. Following research, officers are of the view that this can be purchased for approximately £500 less than the estimate. ENCS have indicated in their application that they would be prepared to accept a lower amount than the £4,975 applied for.

4.4 Officers are of the view that this application does indirectly meet the grant criteria. Whilst the additional equipment and maintenance will not directly prevent homelessness, they will enable ENCS to provide a better service to their clients.

5.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 There are no equality and diversity implications associated with the recommendation below, as the service seeking funding is fully accessible to all.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications associated with the recommendation 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 Grant 2012/13. Of the £15,000 agreed for external projects, there is £4,000 remaining. In addition there is a further £11,133 available in the overall Homelessness Budget.

9.0 Corporate Outcomes

9.1 Allocation of the Homelessness Grant 2012/13 contributes to the following corporate outcomes:

- Good Value for Money
- Effective Partnership Working
- Strong Community Leadership

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 consider the two applications for funding detailed in section 2 above.

(Reason: to enable officers to respond to an application for funding, and administer the Homelessness Grant 2012/13.)

Legal	Power: Homelessness Act 2002				
	Other considerations: Housing Act 1996				
Background Papers:					
Person Originating Report: Cat Hartley Housing Strategy Manager 01832 742078, chartley@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk					
Date: 18 February 2013					
CFO		MO		CX	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)

East Northamptonshire Council Homelessness Grant 2012/13

Application Criteria

Homelessness Grant

The Council will receive a grant during 2012/13 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 2013, and applications will be accepted up until the end of February 2013. 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.