



Policy and Resources Committee - 13 September 2010

Homelessness Grant 2010/11 - Requests for Funding

Summary

This report seeks Member consideration of three requests for funding from the Homelessness Grant 2010.

Attachment(s)

Homelessness Grant 2010/11 Criteria

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 5 July 2010, Members determined the administrative arrangements for expenditure from the Homelessness Grant 2010/11. The following was resolved (minute 90 refers):

- (1) That expenditure from the 2010/11 Homelessness Grant on the two projects identified in the first bullet point above be approved.
- (2) That the proposed split between expenditure from the remaining 2010/11 Homelessness Grant on (a) grants and (b) the contingency element; as set out in the second bullet point above, be approved.
- (3) That the draft criteria for external grants from the 2010/11 Homelessness Budget be approved.

1.2 Following the meeting, three requests for grant funding have been received; and officers have assessed these against the agreed criteria (attached at appendix 1).

1.3 Members are invited to consider the requests, and decide whether or not to grant funding; taking into account the information and officer observations below. They are presented in no particular order. The total amount of grant funding for allocation is £17,000. If all three projects are allocated their requested amount, there will be £2,000 remaining.

1.4 The application forms have not been attached to the report, for two reasons. Firstly they contain bank details and potentially sensitive budget information; and secondly this would result in a very large attachment. However, copies of the applications are available to view by Members upon request, and the majority of the information contained within them is summarised below.

2.0 Application for Grant – East Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Forum

2.1 The council's Housing Services Officer has submitted an application for funding on behalf of the East Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Forum. The application seeks the maximum grant of £5000 to continue the 'Sanctuary Project'.

2.2 The Sanctuary Project enables victims of domestic abuse to remain in their own homes; through the fitting of additional security equipment. This assists in preventing perpetrators to gain access to properties whilst the Police are on their way.

2.3 If necessary, this can also involve the creation of a 'panic room' – a safe and secure area within a property that can be used in case of an emergency; again whilst awaiting

the arrival of the Police.

- 2.4 The Sanctuary Project enables adaptations to be tailored to the specific needs of the victim – what may be the right measure for one person may not be appropriate for another.
- 2.5 The project directly contributes towards preventing homelessness, as it means that victims do not have to leave their homes.
- 2.6 In 2009/10, 28 high risk victims received additional security measures at a total cost of £5893.66. This equates to an average of £210 per victim. In addition one full panic room was created, at a cost of £3,034.59.
- 2.7 Funding has been provided to the Sanctuary Project from the Homelessness Grant in 2007/08, 2008/09, and 2009/10 of £5,000 per year.
- 2.8 The project currently only has funds remaining in the account of £138.46, which is not enough to carry out any security work. No further requests for assistance are therefore currently being accepted. If funding is not granted then the project will not continue.
- 2.9 Based on the previous years experience, it is anticipated that with £5,000 we could help 22 people with adaptations during 2010/11 (excluding full panic rooms). A smaller grant award could be considered, although this would reduce the amount of victims that could be helped.

3.0 Application for Grant – East Northamptonshire Community Services

- 3.1 East Northamptonshire Community Services is the collective name for the range of services provided by the Rushden Full Gospel Church. These include:
 - The Sanctuary – a 4 bed night shelter / hostel
 - The Stepping Stones – a move on housing scheme
 - The Cornerfield Café – a community drop-in service
 - The Food Supply – a food distribution service for those in need
 - The Recycling Service – recycling of unwanted furniture
 - The Daytime Volunteering Project – developing life skills through volunteering
- 3.2 An application has been received for the maximum grant of £5,000 to help towards the cost of running The Sanctuary. To avoid confusion with the previous grant request, this project will be referred to as the Night Shelter in this report.
- 3.3 The project is specifically looking to:
 - Set up a contact point to quantify the numbers of homeless people; to assess their needs; offer support and advice; and signpost to other services.
 - Continue provision of the 4 bed emergency night shelter.
 - Highlight the needs and problems of the homeless community in our area.
 - Compile data on the scale and of homelessness within Northamptonshire.
 - Obtain the cooperation and support of all potential partner agencies; to finalise a joint action plan to help deliver support.
- 3.4 Since it opened in 2008, the night shelter has been instrumental in helping to provide shelter for homeless people who for various reasons cannot find accommodation elsewhere. Between January 2008 and March 2010, 56 clients have been housed in the night shelter. Of these 44 have been successfully moved on into other accommodation.
- 3.5 It should however be noted, that a considerable number of those provided with accommodation at the night shelter have not come from within East

Northamptonshire; and so this could be viewed as more of a county wide project.

3.6 A shortfall within the budget for the service has been identified of £11,050. Similar requests for funding have also been submitted to a number of other individuals and organisations; and as yet no decision has been made on these.

3.7 Funding was granted to the project from the Homelessness Grant in 2007/08 and 2008/09 of £5,000 and £5,500 respectively. An application was received in 2009/10, but this was rejected by officers as there were insufficient funds left in the budget.

3.8 Since the opening of the night shelter, subsidy has also been provided in the form of housing benefit. Full housing benefit is claimed for each of the 4 bed spaces when they are occupied, but only a proportion of this can be claimed back by the council from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The total subsidy in each year is:

- 2008/09 £11,873
- 2009/10 £ 9,375

3.9 It has been indicated that if the full £5,000 was not granted a smaller amount would be acceptable.

4.0 Application for Grant – Nene Valley Citizens Advice Bureau

4.1 The Nene Valley Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) have submitted an application for funding for the maximum grant of £5000 to provide advice specifically aimed at preventing homelessness.

4.2 This will add a dedicated homelessness prevention service to compliment the other advice currently available from the CAB in Rushden.

4.3 The money is sought to meet the costs of staff time; in the form of weekly session for 6 months. No further information has been provided on the length and timings of these sessions.

4.4 Members' attention is drawn to the fact that the council already provides a housing options team in the same building; specifically to provide homelessness advice and take applications. Members are reminded that Nene Valley CAB receives a voluntary sector grant from this council to support its services in East Northamptonshire. The Management of this grant is through a Service Level Agreement, which cover all aspects of its services and the value for 2010/11 is £60,822.

4.5 In 2009/10 the CAB were awarded £10,000 from the Homelessness Grant to provide specific 'money advice' sessions for households at risk of having their homes repossessed. This funding was considered important to help us to effectively deliver the Mortgage Rescue Scheme. This current application appears to be seeking funding for more general homelessness advice and seems to replicate services that already exist.

4.6 It has been indicated that if the full £5,000 was not granted; a smaller amount would be acceptable.

5.0 Assessment Against Criteria

5.1 Officers are of the view that all of the projects above meet the agreed criteria (attached at appendix 1).

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 Members are recommended to:-

- 1) Consider the requests for funding from the East Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Forum; East Northamptonshire Community Services; and the Nene Valley Citizens Advice Bureau.

Implications:					
Corporate Outcomes or Other Policy/Priority/Strategy					
Good Quality of Life	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good Reputation	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Good Value for Money	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High Quality Service Delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Effective Partnership Working	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strong Community Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Effective Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of our Customers and Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Employees and Members with the Right Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours			<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other:					
Decision(s) would be outside the budget or policy framework and require full Council approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Financial	There are no financial implications at this stage				<input type="checkbox"/>
	There will be financial implications – see paragraph 2.1, 3.2, & 4.1				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There is provision within existing budget CDD003/4758				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure at a later date				<input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may have potential for income generation				<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Management	An assessment has been carried out and there are no material risks				<input type="checkbox"/>
	Material risks exist and these are recorded at Risk Register Reference - 230 inherent risk score - residual risk score -				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff	There are no additional staffing implications				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Additional staff will be required – see paragraph				<input type="checkbox"/>
Equalities and Human Rights	There will be no impact on equality (race, age, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation) or human rights implications				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There will be an impact on equality (see categories above) or human rights implications – see paragraph				<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal	Power: Homelessness Act 2002				
	Other considerations:				
Background Papers: Grant applications.					
Person Originating Report: Cat Hartley, Housing Strategy Manager chartley@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk 01832 742078					
Date: 12 August 2010					
CFO		MO		CX	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 21)

East Northamptonshire Council Homelessness Grant 2010/11

Application Criteria

Homelessness Grant

The Council will receive a grant during 2010/11 from the Government; which should be spent on projects and activities which seek to prevent homelessness in East Northamptonshire. The majority 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 2011, and applications will be accepted up until the end of February 2011. 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.