



Policy and Resources Committee – 14 March 2011

Homelessness Grant 2010/11 - Requests for Funding

Purpose of report

This report seeks Member consideration of two requests for funding from the Homelessness Grant 2010/11.

Attachment(s)

Appendix 1 - Homelessness Grant 2010/11 Criteria

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 5 July 2010 (minute 90 refers), Members determined the administrative arrangements for expenditure from the Homelessness Grant 2010/11. This included the approval of the criteria for consideration of external grants from the 2010/11 Homelessness Budget (attached at appendix 1).
- 1.2 Since that meeting Members have approved the allocation of £10,000 of funding for two grants: the Rushden night shelter (East Northants Community Services), and the Sanctuary Project (security improvements for victims of domestic violence).
- 1.3 Two further applications for grant funding were received in February 2011 and officers have assessed these against the agreed criteria.
- 1.5 Members are invited to consider the applications and decide whether or not to grant funding, taking into account the information and officer observations below. They are presented in no particular order.
- 1.4 The applications request £3,900 and £2,334.88, totalling £6,234.88. There is £7,000 of the Homelessness Grant remaining and available to allocate.
- 1.5 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 - Bromford Carinthia Housing Association

- 2.1 Bromford has submitted an application for £3,900 to provide a drop-in service for people living in the district who require housing related support.
- 2.2 Housing related support is support provided to people, usually within their own homes, primarily to enable them to maintain their tenancies or home ownership. It can range from budgeting and debt advice, to help with completing forms and help with independent living.
- 2.3 Bromford currently operates a support service, funded by Northamptonshire County Council, delivering free support to people at home. However, it has found that there is a very high demand for the service, which has led to a long waiting list. In the meantime the situations of those households waiting could be deteriorating, which can

lead to them becoming homeless.

- 2.4 Bromford would like to extend its service to provide a twice weekly drop-in facility in Rushden, which would enable households on their waiting list or those just looking for some short term advice to access a service. Appointments would also be available.
- 2.5 There are currently 45 households/people on the waiting list to receive housing related support in the district, and this service would help to 'fill the gap' whilst they are waiting.
- 2.6 The service is currently planned to be delivered from the High Street South supported accommodation, which can offer a room at no charge to Bromford.
- 2.7 There would be two one and a half hour sessions per week for 6 months. The funding sought is to cover the cost of staff time.
- 2.8 Registered Providers (housing associations) do currently provide some very basic support for their tenants. However, this would be much more specialised and focussed on those who need it.
- 2.9 Officers have assessed the application against the grant criteria attached at appendix 1 and feel that it fully meets the criteria. The service would directly prevent homelessness by helping people to maintain their tenancies and mortgages. Officers are also of the view that this application presents very good value for money, as it will provide a new service for six months for less than £4,000.

3.0 Application for Grant - East Northants Community Services

- 3.1 East Northants Community Services (ENCS), formerly known as the Rushden Night Shelter, has submitted an application for £2,334.88 for a number of initiatives. These are:
 - Employer contribution towards NVQ / Apprenticeship in 'Information Advice and Guidance'.
 - Food Parcel Collection Scheme
 - Organisation uniform
 - Enhanced security alarms
- 3.2 ENCS currently provide four bed-spaces for rough sleepers at a night shelter attached to the Full Gospel Church in Rushden. It also provides a number of other community services, such as a food and furniture recycling scheme and a support and advice service.
- 3.3 For the last 3 years (including this year), the council has provided grant funding towards this service of approximately £5,000 per year. This application seeks additional funding to enhance existing activities as outlined below.
- 3.4 The NVQ / Apprenticeship opportunity would be provided to two members of staff who are primary support workers for service users of the night shelter. The qualification would enhance the support that they could offer. The funding sought for this is £750.00.
- 3.5 ENCS currently distributes approximately 25 food parcels a week to the homeless and vulnerable in the district. It would like to extend this to provide a collections scheme, which would require service users to register for the parcels and provide details of their situations so that they could access support along with food. The funding sought for this is £138.38 for office supplies.
- 3.6 ENCS would like to make some security improvements to the entrance gate. The funding sought for this is £420.00.

- 3.7 ENCS would also like to introduce staff uniforms, consisting of a polo shirt and fleece for 24 regular staff/team members, with 8 spares. This would enable volunteers to feel part of the organisation. The funding sought for this is £1,026.50.
- 3.8 ENCS has indicated that if the full amount requested could not be granted, it would be happy to accept a smaller amount. Officers are of the view that if Members were minded to look at a smaller amount, that it would make sense to consider the merits of the individual initiatives outlined above.
- 3.9 Officers have assessed the application against the grant criteria attached at appendix 1. Whilst none of the initiatives outlined above directly prevent or reduce homelessness, they do seek to enhance the service provided by ENCS.

4.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

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

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications associated with the recommendation below.

6.0 Risk Management

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

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There is provision of £7,000 remaining in the Homelessness Grant 2010/11, which would cover both of these applications.
- 7.2 Given that it is so close to the end of the financial year, officers are not expecting to receive any additional grant applications.

8.0 Corporate Outcomes

- 8.1 Allocating the Homelessness Grant to the projects outlined above would contribute towards the delivery of the following Corporate Outcomes:
- Good Quality of Life
 - Good Value for Money
 - Effective Partnership Working
 - Good Reputation
 - Strong Community Leadership

9.0 Resources

- 9.1 There are no resource requirements associated with the recommendation below.

10.0 Recommendation

- 10.1 The committee is recommended to consider the requests for funding from Bromford Carinthia Housing Association and East Northants Community Services.

(Reason - this will enable officers to respond to the applications with a decision).

Legal	Power: Homelessness Act 2002
	Other considerations:

Background Papers:					
Person Originating Report: Cat Hartley, Housing Strategy Manager chartley@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk , 01832 742078					
Date: 14/02/2011					
CFO		MO		CX	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)

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.