

REPORT TITLE: PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS GRANT SPENDING PLAN
23/24

21 MARCH 2023

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Paula Ferguson, Cabinet Member for
Community and Housing

Contact Officer: Karen Thorburn Tel No: 01962 848 076 Email:
kthorburn@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

'Homes for all' and 'Living Well' are key priorities identified within the Council Plan.

The council is committed to prevent and relieve homelessness, ensuring that everyone within the district receives housing advice and support to those who are at risk of homelessness.

It is recognised that the council cannot prevent homelessness alone and works in close partnership with the statutory, voluntary and charitable organisations to achieve its outcomes. The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) allocates the council an annual Homeless Prevention Grant (HPG). The grant enables local authorities to further control and the flexibility in managing homelessness pressures.

The HPG for 2023/24 is £319,496. This report sets out the grant allocation and seeks approval of the proposed spending plan.

The spending plan outlined in this paper (for the 2023/24 grant allocation) recommends;

- £ 90,000 spend on Accommodation services
- £136,380 spend on staffing resources-existing & new
- £ 78,200 spend on prevention activities

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Approve the award of homelessness prevention grants to statutory, voluntary and community organisations for 2023-2024 as set out in report at paragraph 12.13
2. Approve the Homeless Prevention Grant Spending Plan 2023-24 as set out in the report in paragraph 12.13 to support all detailed homeless prevention activities.
3. Approve that £216,466 of the Homeless Prevention Grant reserve which has resulted from underspends in previous financial years, as outlined in cabinet report CAB3340, is allocated to support the services effected by Hampshire County Council's (HCC) social inclusion cuts and to fund the Strategic Core Grants to Trinity Winchester and The Beacon.
4. Approve the same grant allocation of the Homeless Prevention Grant spend for 2024/25, and delegate authority to the Strategic Director in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community and Housing to make minor changes to year 2 of the spending plan.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

1.1 The proposed Homeless Prevention Grant Spending Plan supports the Council Plan 2020 – 2025 in respect of the four key priorities of Homes for all, Living well, Vibrant local economy and Your services, Your voice. It also supports the implementation of the 'Preventing Homeless and Rough Sleepers' strategy 2019-2024.

1.2 Homes for all

1.3 Provision of good quality affordable housing options meet the needs of our most vulnerable and socially excluded residents, maximising opportunities to support people out of homelessness and prevent repeat homelessness.

1.4 Vibrant Local Economy

1.5 Provision of good quality affordable housing contributes to the local economy and with greater employment opportunities provides a pathway out of poverty and homelessness.

1.6 Living Well

1.7 The provision of good quality housing is linked to and has direct impact on wellbeing and health inequalities often faced by those vulnerably housed or homeless. To ensure that the council supports homeless households to integrate into our communities and to ensure all available support services are accessible.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 All housing authorities have in recent years been allocated an additional HPG to assist with managing homelessness pressures and supporting those who are at risk of homelessness.

2.2 The grant for 2023/2025 is £654,010. A detailed spending plan sets out how Year 1 will be committed in the financial year 2023-24, this is set out in section 12.13 of this report. It should be noted that there is no guarantee the council will be awarded this level of funding for future years.

2.3 In June 2022 in the Cabinet report CAB3340 it outlined that previous HPG's had not been fully committed and the reasons why. The reserve as of 2 February 2023 is £636,000. The report also stated that the reserve had been earmarked to support 4 future project areas, one being to prepare for significant funding reductions following HCC balancing the budget consultation and the cuts to the allocation of the social inclusion grant from April 2023. These cuts have now been agreed through HCC's governance programme and are in the public domain.

- 2.4 The first impact for the district of Winchester of HCC's social inclusion cuts is the funding that The Beacon receives directly from HCC will reduce significantly from £64,733 to £24,500 per annum. The Beacon assists the council's homeless prevention agenda. In 21/22 the Beacon received 70 referrals from the council, 35 of those referrals were offered a bed space and 22 took up the offer of accommodation. Of those 22, 10 were deemed to be rough sleeping at the point of being referred to The Beacon or by the time they moved in. In addition to this 230 sessions of 1-1 counselling and psychotherapy were delivered to 30 residents.
- 2.5 The council commissioned an independent strategic review of the council's housing options service. One recommendation in the review was that the council should consider using the HPG to meet the funding grant gap outlined above. The report stated that the provision for off the street accommodation is an essential component of any local authority's response to tackling homelessness and ending rough sleeping. The council is committed to ending rough sleeping within the Winchester district. The Beacon is a key provider of good quality off the street accommodation, and is an essential part of any individual's pathway out of rough sleeping and homelessness.
- 2.6 Should The Beacon funding gap not be met there is a very real risk that the accommodation at The Beacon will no longer be available. The council's only option will be to provide emergency accommodation to this client group in the form of Bed and Breakfast. The council has not had to rely on the costly and unsuitable use of Bed and Breakfast provision (save in an emergency) since 2012.
- 2.7 It is recommended that the council provides £80,466 to The Beacon to cover the period April 2023-March 2025 to meet the shortfall. This funding will be drawn from the reserve. A service level agreement and monitoring and performance arrangements will be set up by council officers to ensure value for money.
- 2.8 The independent strategic review of the housing options service also analysed the council's homeless data and compared the current number of approaches over the past 4 years. Based on this analysis the council is anticipating a 32% increase in homelessness assessments in 2022/23 compared with the previous years. All available information indicates that further increases are very likely; particularly in relation to the impact of the cost of living crisis, the pressure around providing accommodation for refugees and changes to the private rented housing sector. If the service continues to see such increases additional staff resources will be needed to meet demand. Therefore it is recommended that an additional post within the Housing Options team is funded, specifically that £76,268 is allocated from the HPG reserve is used to fund a Housing Option Officer post for 18 Months.
- 2.9 The council has two core housing partners (Trinity Winchester and The Beacon) and provides core grants to these partners totalling £68k annually. (£53k for Trinity Winchester and £13k for The Beacon). In previous years

these core grants have been funded through the council's general fund. Given that these grants relate specifically to preventing homelessness, it is recommended that this support should be met from the HPG reserve. A total of £136,000 for 23/24 and 24/25. This will have no effect on approved grant levels for either Trinity Winchester or The Beacon though it should be noted that the HPG is only guaranteed until March 2025 and will be subject to government approval.

- 2.10 This leaves £343,266 remaining within the HPG reserve which the council may need to draw on to assist in the proposed increase in homelessness due to the cost of living crisis, which may also necessitate the procurement of additional temporary accommodation.
- 2.11 In the HPG spending plan for 22/23, £50,000 was allocated for a mental health step out pathway worker. Officers are still working with the NHS and partners to facilitate this and therefore there is a committed spend from the current financial year that will need to be carried forward into 23/24.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The principal statutory provisions relating to homelessness are set out in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended). The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 also sets out duties with the aim of preventing homelessness and came into force in 2018.
- 3.2 The legislation sets out the duties and powers that apply to a local housing authority in relation to people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, having access to help provided they are eligible for assistance. The 2017 Act introduced a new duty on local housing authorities to take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness. The intention behind this duty is to try and prevent applicants becoming homeless, for example, by enabling them to stay in their current accommodation or finding somewhere new to live before actual homelessness occurs. The recommendations in this report are intended to meet the council's statutory duties.
- 3.3 The proposals outlined in the report for expenditure of this grant funding are all either compliant with the Public Regulations 2015 (PCR2015) (contracts) or are permitted under the subsidy control regime (grants). Ongoing legal and procurement support will be provided as required, in relation to the expenditure of this grant.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 To be resourced within existing staff structure, the additional posts being requested and through the partnership working opportunities with voluntary sector and statutory partners by sharing staffing resources and grant funding through the governments preventing homelessness grant.
- 4.2 Delivering the programme as set out in this report relies on additional staff resources. It is proposed that the 2 existing posts which end in June 2022 are

extended, this is the full time Senior Housing Options Officer and a front line Housing Options Officer. It is also proposed that 3 additional posts are funded, and a further front line Housing Options Officer as stated in paragraph 2.8, an outreach worker as referenced in paragraph 12.23 and a full time Strategic Housing Support Officer as referenced in paragraph 12.22. These posts will all be funded from the HPG reserve and the 2023/24 HPG allocation.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Recommendations within this report have no immediate impact on council property or assets.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Consultation with local voluntary and housing partners took place on the proposed Preventing Homelessness Grant spending plan through the homelessness pathway group.
- 6.2 The front line Housing Options officers and the wider Housing Options team inclusive of Allocations, Homes for Ukraine and Temporary Accommodation officers were consulted and provided input regarding service delivery gaps and identified future spending needs.
- 6.3 Consultation through two spending review workshops were held with the Corporate Head of Housing, Strategic Housing Service Lead and Housing Options Manager. A second review meeting included the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community and Housing.
- 6.4 A focus group with all the members of the housing options service was facilitated by Laura Patterson, a consultant commissioned by the council to carry a strategic overview of the housing options service.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Improved city centre environment through reduced street homelessness and associated street activity by offering sustainable housing provision, support and quality housing options. The homelessness outreach supports those out of rough sleeping and reduces the anti-social behaviour of those attached to city centre street activity.

8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 Under s149 (1) of the Equality Act the council must have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, (and Cabinet must, as the decision maker in respect of the proposed decision, have due regard) to the need to;
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.
- Foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to assess the impact of this decision. The Impact assessment can be found at appendix 1 which concluded that discrimination against homeless people is an act of treating people or perceived people to be homeless unfavourably. The assessment considered those with 'protected equality characteristics' and concluded that the Homeless Prevention Grant Spending Plan 2023/24 will not negatively impact on any of those groups.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 Any subsequent change to council service delivery and policy will undergo a data protection impact assessment with service privacy statements reviewed.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
Financial Exposure Risk of not committing resources in line with the spending plan. Risk of central government not continuing HPG funding past March 2025.	Some of the core duties are met from the general fund budget, the grant is used to enhance and improve service provision. All the proposals (apart from out of hours which is a statutory service) are 'one-off' or fixed term and create no significant long-term liability on the General Fund. Budget Monitoring and reviews. SLA with partner agencies.	Increasing and promoting earlier intervention and homelessness prevention services. Exploring alternative and discretionary housing options. An opportunity to offer enhanced and wider community support to the most excluded and vulnerable residents.
Exposure to challenge	Compliance with the council's Preventing Homelessness duties is a legislative statutory duty	

<p>Innovation</p> <p>Opportunities for the council to work in partnership with statutory and voluntary partners on joint prevention homelessness initiatives above its statutory duties.</p>		<p>Opportunity to positively enhance the council's reputation through discretionary and joint preventing homelessness initiatives and projects through utilising the reserve and funded through the HPG spending plan.</p>
<p>Reputation</p> <p>Risk of failing to deliver the council's statutory preventing homeless duties.</p>	<p>Prevent and relief homelessness duties implemented at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<p>Opportunity to positively enhance the council's reputation by reducing homelessness and increasing alternative housing options. Good news stories, publicity opportunities.</p>
<p>Achievement of outcome</p> <p>Meeting homelessness statutory duties. Making best use of the government's Homeless Prevention Grant. Demonstrating best practice service delivery through partnership working and discretionary funding.</p>	<p>Government statistical returns Budget monitoring and reviews SLA with partner agencies.</p>	<p>Opportunity to positively enhance the council's reputation through discretionary and joint preventing homelessness initiatives and projects funded through the HPG reserve and spending plan.</p>

12 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

12.1 Background

12.2 The 2023/24 Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) of £319,496 as awarded by the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is to enable local authorities to have control and flexibility in managing homelessness pressures and support those who are risk of homelessness.

12.3 It is recognised that the council cannot prevent or solve homelessness alone. As such the homelessness spending plan sets out areas of spend that best support partnership working opportunities whilst underpinning the council's statutory housing responsibilities to ensure preventative initiatives are central to service delivery.

- 12.4 The HPG is the primary central government funding stream to assist in the council and wider community in delivering their homeless services. The grant is ring fenced to ensure local authorities are fully resourced to take action to prevent homelessness and to continue to embed the changes required through implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017).
- 12.5 The purpose of the HPG is to;
- Support the council to continue to meet its legislative duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017)
 - To prevent and end rough sleeping by increasing activities to prevent single household homelessness.
 - Reduce the number of families living in temporary accommodation by maximising family homeless prevention opportunities.
 - To reduce the use of bed and breakfast and emergency accommodation for families providing more stable interim housing opportunities.
- 12.6 The government has significantly increased homelessness grant funding over the past 3 years to enable local authorities to respond to the changing nature of homelessness with focus on ending rough sleeping, to help meet the challenges and positive changes in practice identified during the pandemic and the cost of living crisis.
- 12.7 Whilst the HPG is the primary source of central government funding to meet the objectives set out in paragraph 12.5 and supports staffing, projects and initiatives, the council does receive other funding streams to support wider service provision to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 12.8 The council has been successful in bidding for Rough Sleepers Initiative Funding (RSI) for 2022/25 which funds a complex needs navigator, personalised budget for those who have been or at risk of sleeping rough and going forward will fund the council implementing a housing first model.
- 12.9 The council was also awarded £84,187 of DWP household support fund from HCC in 2022/23 to support household's exceptional housing costs. As of 03.02.2023 £62,541 had been allocated supporting 44 households.
- 12.10 In December 2022 the council was also awarded an additional £48,000 of HPG to assist with winter pressures.
- 12.11 In June 2022 Cabinet (cabinet report CAB3340) approved the spending plan for the HPG for 2022/23. Outlined below are some of the outcomes achieved from the initiatives funded in 2022/23.
- Social inclusion grant supported 29 bed spaces in Stage 1 accommodation and 13 bed spaces in Stage 2 accommodation

- The flexible prevention fund prevented 38 households from becoming homeless.
- Supported 16 residents to access accommodation due to severe weather.
- Supported 2 emergency beds for young people.
- Provided a robust out of hour's homeless service.
- Invested in frontline staff resources.

12.12 Evaluating the outcomes of this year's spending plan has assisted in determining what projects and resources the spending plan for 2023/24 will focus on.

12.13 Proposed Spending Plan for 2023/24

Homeless Prevention Activity 23/24	Proposed spend
Social Inclusion Grant to HCC	£50,000
Flexible Prevention and Rent Deposit Fund	£60,000
SWEP and Cold Weather Payments	£10,000
Young Persons Emergency beds	£10,000
Homelessness Out of Hours provision	£13,000
Staffing Resource	£97,262
Outreach Worker -18 month contract, 12 months to be paid from 23-24 spending plan	£ 39,118(12 months cost)
IT costs for Civica x 1 years homeless module	£ 5,200
Emergency accommodation costs (Non SWEP)	£20,000
Total	£304,580
<u>Total Remaining</u>	£14,916

12.14 The council's HPG spending plan for 2023/24 focuses on change and building on positive housing sector initiatives, practices and partnership working. The spending plan also supports service recovery plans and meets the objectives of the preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy 2019-24. It also delivers on a number of the recommendations in the strategic overview of the housing options service.

12.15 The introduction of the HRA 2017 which was enacted in April 2018 significantly changed the council's homeless statutory duties and administrative burdens. The council now has a statutory duty to prevent

homelessness which is blind to priority need and local connection. The Government acknowledged that these new duties were unlikely to be delivered from existing funding sources and as such the allocation of the HPG to the council was significantly increased. If the HPG is not spent on initiatives to prevent homelessness, funds would have to be found from an alternative source or the council would be at risk of not being able to fulfil its statutory duties.

- 12.16 **Social Inclusion Grant to HCC-** The council currently co-commission with Hampshire County Council (HCC) accommodation and support for the most complex single homeless households. A contribution of £50,000 secured from the HPG will help support the provision of 29 units of accommodation at West View House and 13 units of accommodation at Sussex Street. HCC's contract has been extended to March 2026 and the joint commission of services ensures that suitable accommodation is available to prevent people from rough sleeping by targeting support to the most excluded and in need. **Proposed spending budget of £50,000.**
- 12.17 **Flexible prevention and Rent Deposit Fund-** A flexible prevention and rent deposit fund of £60,000 to allow front line Housing Options Officers to prevent and relieve homelessness through spend to save initiatives. Including securing accommodation in the private rented sector to cover rent in advance, deposits and security bonds. The fund offers financial help to prevent homelessness through eviction, assisting with court costs to secure a stay of eviction and help to clear current or historic rent arrears or other debts, acting as a barrier to securing and sustaining accommodation. The fund is critical to prevent vulnerable households seeking high interest loans from loan sharks placing them further into poverty and homelessness. This has been increased from £40,000 to reflect in the uplift in expected approaches. **Proposed spending budget £60,000.**
- 12.18 **Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) and Emergency Cold Weather Payments.** The council has a responsibility to deliver SWEP to ensure safe emergency accommodation is available to anyone sleeping rough during periods of extreme cold or hot weather. The COVID-19 government advice to local authorities is that shared accommodation spaces are no longer suitable as SWEP and expect councils to provide self-contained emergency accommodation. The council works in partnership with Trinity Winchester, The Beacon and Two Saints who offer emergency placements and support within their housing provision to assist the council to meet its SWEP duties. The council offers financial assistance to meet the costs incurred by the accommodation providers, should demand increase the council may also need to make use of hotel or other accommodation to meet its housing duties. A budget of £10,000 is suggested to cover SWEP costs. **Proposed spending budget of £10,000.**
- 12.19 **Young Persons Emergency Beds.** To continue to fund 2 emergency beds with high level support for local homeless young persons aged 16-21 years

that are accommodated at A2 Dominion supported housing project commissioned by HCC. **Proposed spending budget of £10,000.**

- 12.20 **Homelessness Out of Hours Provision:** The council has a statutory duty to provide a comprehensive homeless service that requires members of the team providing a homelessness duty service on evenings, weekends and bank holidays throughout the year. The associated cost for the out of hour's service standby rates is £11,000 per annum. **Proposed spending budget of £13,000.**
- 12.21 **Staffing Resources.** To continue to employ, on fixed term contracts, a front line Housing Options Officer and the uplift for a Senior Housing Options Officer paid through the homelessness grant to manage the increased burdens and the council's responsibilities under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Cost of Living Crisis and the increase in private sector evictions following the pandemic. This resource will assist to sustain the staffing resilience to meet the council's statutory preventative homelessness duties. **Proposed spending budget of £58,144.**
- 12.22 **Additional Staffing resources.** To employ a Strategic Housing Officer to support the Housing Options, Allocations and Temporary Accommodation teams with the increased administration burdens of the HRA (2017), and increase of managing the various new government funding streams. It will assist with the administration associated with debt recovery and the increase in housing register applications... This post will also provide administrative support to the Housing Options Manager and the Strategic Housing Service Lead. This paper is recommending that the council recruits a Strategic Housing Officer for 18 months. **Proposed Spending Budget of £39,118**
- 12.23 **Outreach Worker.** A further impact of the HCC's social inclusion cuts is that the community support post attached to stage 1 and stage 2 accommodation will cease from 31.03.2023. This post is crucial to the council and the wider community as it provides early intervention to link up with statutory and voluntary partners, it reaches the 'harder to engage' residents and it is effective in resolving rough sleeping at an earlier stage which reduces street attachment and activity .This paper is recommending that the council recruits an outreach worker for 18 months. **Proposed Spending Budget £39,118**
- 12.24 **IT costs for Housing Options Module-** In order to fulfil the statutory data returns through H-Clic, a purposed built Homeless Module is required. This module is part of our wider Civica System. **Proposed Spending Budget £5,200.00.**
- 12.25 **Emergency Accommodation Costs-** The council has a statutory responsibility to provide emergency accommodation for some households who are homelessness and no other alternative accommodation has been sourced. There may be times when officers have to access accommodation in the form of hostels, hotels and similar on an interim basis until more reasonable and suitable temporary accommodation can be found or a

decision has been made regarding the council's housing duty towards them.
Proposed Spending Budget £20,000.

13 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 13.1 The option of not committing the grant for the whole year is rejected as it would significantly reduce early intervention and preventative homelessness work due to a short term commitment of funding. With a potential to increase the council's costly statutory duties to accommodate homeless households to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place.
- 13.2 The option of retaining the HPG grant to balance the general fund or to underpin the core homelessness service is rejected as not sustainable as the government grant is not guaranteed and is awarded on a yearly basis.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

<https://democracy.winchester.gov.uk/documents/s21912/CAB3340%20The%20Homelessness%20Prevention%20Grant%20Spending%20Plan%2022-23.pdf>

[BHP004, PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN 18 JUNE 2019](#)

[BHP019 HRA WELFARE FUND AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTING GRANT SPENDING PLANS 22 June 2021](#)

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1- Equality Impact assessment

Appendix 1

Winchester City Council
Equality Impact Assessment
Section 1 - Data Checklist

When undertaking your Equality Impact Assessment for your policy or project, it is important that you take into consideration everything which is associated with the policy or project that is being assessed.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?	No	We haven't received any complaints regarding how the council has spent the grant previously
2	Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented?	Yes	Yes, officers were consulted at the Housing Options Officer's weekly team meeting and the wider Housing Options team meeting. The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Corporate Head of Housing contributed to the content of the report. Partners involved in delivering the interventions were consulted at the regular partner pathway meetings
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	No	No, this spending review is inclusive to anyone threatened with homelessness, who is currently homeless or has a history of rough sleeping. The projects outlined in the paper are more inclusive than previous years carrying over some of the good practice projects from the previous year.
4	Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project? <i>(ie. Have you completed a self assessment and action plan for the implementation of your policy or project?)</i>	No	Action Plan included in the paper, paragraph 12.13
5	Does any accessible data	No	It will support anyone who is

	regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of concern or potential problems which may impact on your policy or project?		homeless, threatened with homelessness or rough sleeping regardless of their protective characteristics
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from an equality impact point of view?	Yes	This is a yearly spending plan & review on how the local authority will spend of the annual Homeless Prevention Grant, which is allocated from the government. The service has years of experience working with government grants and has received various new grant allocations in the financial year 2022/23. Service Lead has experience at both district and county level.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	No	

Section 2 - Your Equality Impact Assessment form

Directorate:	Your Service Area:	Team:	Officer responsible for this assessment:	Date of assessment:
---------------------	---------------------------	--------------	---	----------------------------

	Question	Please provide details
1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	Homeless Prevention Grant Spending Plan 2023/24 and permissions to allocate a proportion of the Homeless Prevention Grant reserve.
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	No, this is an annual spending plan
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	<p>The 2023/24 Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) of £319,496 as awarded by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is to enable local authorities to have control and flexibility in managing homelessness pressures and to support those who are at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>It is recognised that the council cannot prevent or solve homelessness alone. As such the homelessness prevention spending plans sets out areas of spend that best support partnership working</p>

		<p>opportunities whilst underpinning the council's statutory housing responsibilities to ensure preventative initiatives are central to service delivery.</p> <p>The HPG is the primary central government funding stream to assist the council and wider community in delivering their homeless services. The grant is ring fenced to ensure local authorities are fully resourced to take action to prevent homelessness and to continue to embed the changes required through implementation of the Homelessness.</p> <p>The HPG reserve was outlined in a previous Cabinet report CB3340 and this report indicated how the council would spend part of the reserve. The council is now in a position to allocate part of the reserve to projects outlined in the report.</p>
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	<p>Support the council to continue to meet its legislative duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.</p> <p>To prevent and end rough sleeping by increasing activities to prevent single household homelessness.</p> <p>Reduce the number of families living in temporary accommodation by maximising family homeless prevention opportunities.</p> <p>To reduce the use of bed and breakfast and emergency accommodation for families providing more stable interim housing opportunities.</p> <p>To deliver the core strategic grants to Trinity Winchester and The Beacon.</p> <p>To support The Beacon following Hampshire County Council cuts to</p>

		Social Inclusion funding.
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	All residents of the Winchester District who are threatened with homelessness, homeless, history of or are rough sleeping or seeking general housing advice.
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	To prevent homelessness, reduce the risk of homelessness and eradicate rough sleeping for residents of Winchester.
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	External factors outside the control of the council could affect the outcome and delivery of the plan due to having to respond to factor such as economic factors, the cost of living, consequences of the lifting of evictions after the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, full asylum dispersal or the possibility of the closure of one of the partnering organisations that are delivering an intervention.
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	Strategic Housing Service, Winchester City Council Landlord Services, Hampshire County Council, NHS England, Mental Health Services, Registered Providers, Private Landlords, The Beacon, Trinity, A2Dominion, Two Saints and other organisations in the voluntary sector.
9	Who implements the policy or project and who or what is responsible for it?	Strategic Housing Service, Winchester City Council.

		Please select your answer in bold . Please provide detail here.	
10a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently in a negative way?	Y	N No-each intervention is available of any resident of WCC who is threatened with or homeless, accessible at free of point of delivery.
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	WCC Census (2011) 91.8% residents are White British, in 2022, 85.9% of Housing options customers were White British compared to 90% in 2021 , so other race groups would have been higher represented ensuring these ethnic groups	

		are not negatively affected by the service.	
		The council has participated in the Syrian, Afghanistan and Ukrainian resettlement scheme, delivering a bespoke service in addition to our statutory and prevention services provided to all residents	
11a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sex differently in a negative way?	Y	N No-each intervention is available of any resident of WCC who is threatened with or homeless, accessible at free of point of delivery
11b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	The latest data from our Homeless system show; 29% male (single or with children) 42% female (single or with children) 29% couples with children	
12a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of disability differently in a negative way?</p> <p><i>(you may wish to consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical access</i> • <i>Format of information</i> • <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i> • <i>Personal assistance</i> • <i>Interpreter</i> • <i>Induction loop system</i> • <i>Independent living equipment</i> • <i>Content of interview)</i> 	Y	N Trinity/Beacon/Westview have disabled access to accommodation, they are key partners in delivering the interventions outlined in the spending plan. Our partnering agencies have their own equality polices All staff have access to translation services, such as Big Word/Language Line Induction loop System is available Literature can be translated into different languages, larger type, Braille. The City Council's provide a homeless out of hours service available 24/7, 365 days of the year
12b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<p>2011 Census – 15.5% registered with a disability.</p> <p>Housing Options data in 2022 recorded 32.4% applicants registered with a physical disability (not including other disabilities) compared to 22% in 2021. Those with disabilities therefore are likely to have greater access to interventions</p>	

		through this budget.		
13a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation differently in a negative way?	Y	N	No-each intervention is available of any resident of WCC who is threatened with or homeless, accessible at free of point of delivery.
13b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	81.7% Heterosexual 2.8% Homosexual 5.6% Other (This compares to 2% in 2021) 9.9% Prefer not to say No comparator		
14a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of age differently in a negative way?	Y	N	No, the service will support anyone of any age. WCC and HCC have a joint working protocol for 16-17 year olds who are at risk homelessness or who are homeless. This plan supports an intervention that funds 2 young person beds in partnership with the County and A2 Dominion.
14b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Funding two young person beds		
15a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief differently in a negative way?	Y	N	No-each intervention is available of any resident of WCC who is threatened with or homeless, accessible at free of point of delivery.
15b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Census 2011 63% Christian, 10% Other Not recorded on HCLIC		
16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment differently in a negative way?	Y	N	No
16b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Not currently recorded.		
17a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on	Y	N	Interventions are in accordance with legislation, statute, the

	the basis of marriage and civil partnership differently in a negative way?			Council's Housing Strategy, Council's rough sleepers and homeless prevention strategy. The council also works within other legislation such as the as Matrimonial Act 1973, 1996 Family Law Act
17b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	No data on marriage		
18a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity differently in a negative way?	Y	N	Intervention available to all Extra protection in homeless legislation for pregnancy if facing homelessness or threatened with homelessness.
18b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			

19	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	Y	N	No
20	Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic.	Y	N	Race: Sex: Disability: Sexual orientation: Age: Gender reassignment: Pregnancy and maternity: Marriage and civil partnership: Religious belief:
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?	Not applicable		
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	N	No

Signed by completing officer	Charlotte Quinn, Housing Options Manager 07/02/2023
Signed by lead officer	Karen Thorburn, Service Lead- Strategic Housing 07/02/2023

--	--