

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: REGULATORY

1. DECISION TAKEN

- 1.1 The re-allocation of £83k of homelessness grant funding received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to an organisation called Emerging Futures, providing additional capacity for the district's existing rough sleeper outreach and resettlement service. This will enable grant requirements and timescales to be met.

2. DECISION TAKER

- 2.1 Ian Fullstone, Service Director – Regulatory

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

- 3.1 28 July 2021

4. REASON FOR DECISION

- 4.1 The Council has received a funding award of £172k from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) following a successful bid to the Rough Sleeping Initiative 2021-22.
- 4.2 This funding was awarded for a number of services (identified within the bid) to supplement the district's existing rough sleeper outreach and resettlement service. Haven First were to deliver all of these services, however due to the time critical nature of some of the additional services, both they and the MHCLG have agreed the Council should re-allocate the appropriate amount of funding to an alternative provider in order to speed up delivery of these elements.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Funding could be returned to the MHCLG without the required services being provided; however, MHCLG has agreed that an alternative provider should be approached to provide the services for which funding has been awarded as the need for the remaining service still exists.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

- 6.1 The Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health, Cllr Gary Grindal and the Deputy Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health, Cllr Sean Prendergast, have been consulted and are both supportive of this decision.

7. FORWARD PLAN

- 7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Council submitted a bid to the latest Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) round, for funding in 2021/22, and was awarded £172k to fund additional support for the existing Haven First rough sleeper service. Specifically, and as set out in the Council's accepted bid, funding was to be passported to Haven First for:
- a 12-month extension to the lease of the Templars hotel in Baldock, to maintain the existing capacity of emergency accommodation (specifically self-contained accommodation) in the face of continued and prolonged demand resulting from the pandemic (£89k);
 - a 12-month procurement of six 3 bed HMOs (Houses of Multiple Occupation) for use as move-on units from the Haven First hostel, which will enable new clients to be admitted into the service (£18k); and
 - two floating support staff to help clients sustain tenancies in the HMO move-on accommodation (e.g. limit potential impact on neighbours) and ensure successful transition to independent living, thereby reducing the risk of returning to rough sleeping (£65k).
- 8.2 A delegated decision made on 18 May 2021 approved the use of the RSI funding received as set out above and in the Council's bid. Since then however, Haven First have agreed that due to their existing commitments to the Council that another provider should be engaged in order to speed up delivery of the HMOs and associated support (£83k).
- 8.3 The MHCLG has also agreed that funding associated with the provision of the HMO accommodation and floating support (£83k) should be re-allocated to another service provider, in order to ensure that the provision is delivered in line with grant conditions and timescales.
- 8.4 The delivery of the HMO provision is now time critical. We have liaised with Herts CC to discuss the capacity and availability of local providers who are currently commissioned by them; as a result of the advice received from Herts CC it is proposed to re-allocate £83k of grant funding to Emerging Futures who have indicated that they will be able to procure the 18 units of HMO accommodation and the associated floating support without delay.
- 8.5 Emerging Futures provide accommodation and structured therapeutic support for those who are homeless, sleeping rough or with complex support needs including addiction issues. The organisation works across the country and has a number of existing projects in Hertfordshire.
- 8.6 Emerging Futures will work closely with the Council and Haven First in order to ensure that the housing 'pathway' works seamlessly and that clients are placed in the most appropriate accommodation, facilitating move on towards independent living and enabling new clients to enter the Haven First hostel.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Local authorities' homelessness duties are contained within the Housing Act 1996 Part VII, as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which placed significant new duties on English local housing authorities.
- 9.2 When agreeing the Adoption of a new Housing Strategy (2019-2024) in March 2019, the Cabinet also resolved the following:

In the event the MHCLG provides homelessness funding beyond the financial year 2019/20, the Cabinet authorises the Service Director – Regulatory, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health, to decide on the specific allocation of the funds in order to meet homelessness priorities, for the duration of the Strategy.

9.3 MHCLG are content with the proposal to re-allocate £83k of the RSI funding to Emerging Futures in order to ensure that grant conditions and timings are met.

9.4 The appointment of emerging futures will be made in accordance with and subject to the Council's Contract Procurement Rules.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1. The RSI funding of £172k has been provided as ring-fenced funding, for use as detailed in the Council's bid to the MHCLG of 4 March 2021, summarised in paragraph 8.1 above. The first tranche of payment has already been made to the Council with payment of the second tranche dependent on confirmation of total spend to date.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Specialist services including the rough sleeper outreach and resettlement service form a key element of the Council's work to prevent and manage homelessness in the district and to reduce rough sleeping. Without these services, people at risk of homelessness, or those who are homeless, may not receive the appropriate level of assistance. Many of this cohort are vulnerable and often have complex needs which require specialist assistance.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

12.2 There are no equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to this decision.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

15.1 There are no human resource implications.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 Emerging Futures website: <https://www.emergingfutures.org.uk/>

17. APPENDICES

17.1 None.

NOTIFICATION DATE:

Signature of Executive Member Consulted: Cllr Gary Grindal and the Deputy Cllr Sean Prendergast both provided support via email on 27 July 2021 and 24 July 2021 respectively

Date: 28 July 2021

Signature of Decision Taker:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liam Fullstone".

Service Director - Regulatory

Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS