

Time started	1.00pm
Time ended	2.05pm

Urgent Leader of the Council Cabinet Member Meeting 18 August 2020

Present: Councillor Poulter (Chair)

In Attendance Councillors Webb, Shanker, Repton, P Pegg
Matt Palmer, Head of Housing Options and Homelessness
Phil Taylor, Operations Manager for Derby Rough Sleeper Service

01/20 Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

02/20 Identification of Urgent Items to which Call-in will not apply

There were no items.

03/20 Declarations of interest

There were none.

04/20 Minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2020 were agreed.

Urgent Contract and Financial Procedure Matter

05/20 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Next Steps Accommodation Programme Grant application 2020/21

The Leader of the Council considered an urgent report of the Director of Communities and Place which sought permission to submit a Next Stage Accommodation Programme (NSAP) bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), for revenue funding up to a maximum of £279,725 (20/21) plus £420,000 in the following three years (£140,000 a year) and capital funding up to a maximum of £1.2 million. The detailed proposals for use of the grant are shown in a table at 7.3 of the report.

The Officer reported that the NSAP programme was launched on 18 July 2020 and makes available financial resources to support local authorities and their partners in their work to prevent people from the “Everyone In” initiative from returning to the streets and to work to bring in those people who are still on the streets. The “Everyone In” initiative took place during the COVID 19 Pandemic and was where people who were sleeping rough or were at risk of sleeping rough were placed in emergency accommodation to prevent infection.

Derby City Council, together with MHCLG, have put together a bid for further funding from the NSAP programme in a very tight timescale; the bid had to be submitted on 20 August

2020 and the next Cabinet meeting was not until 9 September 2020. This meant the report was unable to progress to Cabinet via the usual route and was why approval to submit a bid was being sought via an Urgent Leader Meeting.

The challenge of buying 20 properties within the timescale detailed in the report was discussed. It was agreed that a progress report should be provided to Cabinet towards the end of the period to gauge whether the target of 20 properties could be met. The Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Housing would also review the situation monthly and highlight any issues to the Leader.

The management of tenancies was also discussed. It was explained that the bid guidance required that properties should be subject to reviewable tenancies, such as flexible tenancies or non-secure interim tenancies which could be renewed. It was proposed in the report that Derby City Council use non secure-interim tenancies to comply with the bid.

The match funding scenario was based on a 50% contribution from the MHCLG (£1.2m) and a 50% contribution from the Local Authority (£1.2m), which would be funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme. The officer was asked if this was a sustainable position and if it would leave HRA resources depleted. The officer confirmed that there was enough HRA funding available to achieve the objective.

The officer also explained that the grant award stipulated that the properties must be used only for people recovering from rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping for a period of 30 years. Tenants of the properties would receive wraparound support to help them keep up with the tenancy and with any problems, such as addiction or mental health issues. The tenants would, in time, move on from these non-secure interim tenancies through existing housing pathways into longer term accommodation.

The recommendations in the report at 2.1 to 2.5 were agreed. The Officers and their team were congratulated for their work. Derby City had already been recognised for its work with the homeless during COVID 19 and this initiative would provide an ideal model/exemplar of how to tackle these issues.

Options considered

1. The Council could choose not to submit a bid under the Next Stage Accommodation Programme 2020-21. This was not recommended and would threaten the ongoing viability of the Cities Rough Sleeping Strategy and risk an increase in rough sleepers, with the additional risks associated with the coronavirus and those rough sleeping.
2. The Council could choose to bid for alternate provision to support rough sleepers in the City. We felt that that the bid, as presented, provides the best opportunity to continue to manage rough sleeping in Derby during this coronavirus pandemic.

Decision

1. To approve submission of a Next Stage Accommodation Programme (NSAP) bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), for revenue funding up to a maximum of £279,725 (20/21) plus £420,000 in the following three years (£140,000 a year) and capital funding up to a maximum of £1.2 million.

2. If Derby City Council is successful in the bidding process:

- To delegate approval of any resultant NSAP grant award to the Strategic Director of Communities & Place and the Director of Financial Services (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Housing).
 - To approve the transfer of the revenue aspect of the resultant grant award to Derby Homes, in line with the 2014 cabinet delegation of the delivery and management of the housing options and homelessness service to Derby Homes, and Teckal principles.
 - Subject to successful award, to add £2,400,000 to the capital programme for 2020/21, with £1.2m grant funding and £1.2m as match funding for the grant application funded from Housing Revenue Account reserves.
3. To authorise Derby Homes to identify and process all necessary grant payments to third parties in relation to the project, in line with existing agreed processes and subject to the approval of the Strategic Director of Communities and Place.
 4. To approve the use of non-secure tenancies for the purpose of allocating to the newly acquired properties, in line with the requirements of the bid.
 5. To delegate the acquisition of up to 20 properties to the Strategic Director for Communities and Place in order to meet the timescales required for this project.

Reasons

1. The submission of a bid will enable the Local Authority to continue to support the 'Everyone In' cohort for the remainder of this financial year.
2. The bid also seeks to increase the availability of accommodation for rough sleepers, and those at risk of rough sleeping.
3. The bid will provide the necessary resources to ensure appropriate levels of support for those with complex needs and challenging behaviours and will offer enhanced pathways for those currently unwilling or unable to access existing pathways.
4. In line with the Council's finance procedures rules, cabinet approval is required prior to submitting a bid for external funding and for accepting a bid for external funding.
5. The bid requires the use of non-secure or flexible tenancies wherever capital is provided by MHCLG under the NSAP programme. At present the tenancy strategy does not support the use of flexible tenancies, although this will be revisited as part of the next review of the tenancy strategy. The use of non-secure tenancies is currently permitted within the existing tenancy strategy.

MINUTES END