

Report sponsor: Strategic Director of Corporate Resources
Report author: Head of Housing options and Homelessness

MHCLG Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) grant application 2021/22

Purpose

- 1.1 In March 2014 Derby City Council delegated the delivery and management of the housing options and homelessness service to Derby Homes. Later, In December 2016 Council Cabinet approved the TUPE transfer of Housing Options employees to Derby Homes. In addition, Cabinet approved Derby Homes as the Council's chosen vehicle for delivering a co-ordinated Homelessness Offer for Derby, responding to the aims and objectives of Derby City Council's Homelessness Strategy. On 11 February 2021, the Council and Derby Homes signed an "Agreement for the provision of Housing Options, Advice and Homelessness Services" – this includes the financial arrangements on how Derby Homes will recharge the Council for works on the Homelessness service.
- 1.2 Government published a Rough Sleeping Strategy (RSS) in August 2018, setting out their commitment to halve rough sleeping by 2022, and end it entirely by 2027. By 2027, Government want Councils to base their response to rough sleeping on a rapid rehousing approach and have included this within their rough sleeping initiative. This means if a person is at risk of rough sleeping they will:
 - have their needs assessed quickly
 - be offered appropriate support
 - helped rapidly into a home
 - provided appropriate support
- 1.3 Derby has been consistently highlighted as an area that is achieving positive outcomes with national recognition from the Ministry of Housing Communities' and Local Government. The numbers of Rough Sleepers recorded in our Rough Sleeping Estimate in November 2020 had reduced to 6, the lowest in a decade.
- 1.4 Derby was successful in obtaining an RSI award of £755,082 to cover the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.
- 1.5 On 28 January 2021 Government confirmed their commitment to continue funding all existing RSI programmes for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 without the need to bid for this period. The grant payment for this first three-month period of the new financial year will be the at the same level as 2020/21 to allow continuity of existing services up until 30 June.
- 1.6 On 28 January 2021 Government also announced the latest bidding round for the Rough Sleeper Initiative 2021/22 with a closing date for submission of 8th March 2021.

This bid opportunity is available to cover the delivery period 1 July 2021 to 31 March 2022.

- 1.7 On 26 February Government confirmed a one-off grant allocation of £100,000, payable in April 2021, to further support the costs associated with keeping everyone in during the Pandemic.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the submission of an RSI bid 2021/22 up to a maximum of £984,962, The delivery period for this bid, if successful, will be 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.
- 2.2 To delegate approval of the acceptance of the resultant MHCLG revenue RSI grant to the Strategic Director of Communities and Place, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Corporate Resources and Cabinet lead for Adults, Health and Housing, subject to acceptable grant conditions.

Reasons

- 3.1 This bid, if successful, will ensure we are able to continue to support some of our most vulnerable citizens. The bid enables the council to continue to be able to offer accommodation and support appropriate to the needs of rough sleepers, those at risk of rough sleeping and those recovering from rough sleeping. The last multi agency count / estimate of rough sleeping in Derby took place in November 2020, capturing 6 people who were on the streets. This was a reduction on the previous year which was 14.
- 3.2 The bid, if successful will also ensure that we are able to keep everyone in, during the pandemic, with appropriate accommodation and support for those who test positive for coronavirus.
- 3.3 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.

Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Derby Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2025 is appended to this report AP1.
- 4.2 The full RSI 2021/22 bid is appended to this report AP2.
- 4.3 During 2020/21 the Housing Options service has accommodated 231 individuals under the 'everyone in' call with 133 of these citizens either rough sleeping or having rough slept recently. The number of people that have been accommodated since the 1 December 2020 under the cold weather provision is 68, with 37 of these people having been successfully moved on into accommodation through our housing pathways including the safe space, hostel accommodation, supported housing and the Next Steps Accommodation programme as some of the examples.

- 4.4 We have been asked by MHCLG to create headroom within our Flexible Homeless Support Grant through re-aligning our rough sleeping grant requirements into our RSI bid for 2021/22. Currently we support a number of rough sleeping initiatives through the MHCLG Flexible Homeless Support Grant. In re-aligning our rough sleeping work into our RSI bid for 2021/22, this will enable greater support for families and those at risk of homelessness, through the Flexible Homeless Support Grant allocation in 2021/22.
- 4.5 The following interventions/Services are proposed within the RSI 2021/22 bid:
- 4.6 Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) system Management. This post has ensured the focus and effort of all resources within the RSI, as well as the local COVID-19 response for rough sleepers. The role has also developed greater multi agency working at both an operational and management level in order to achieve this goal. The work of this post includes identification of blockages and barriers outside of "housing" then negotiating and facilitating changes or new ways of working with partner organisations. The number of rough sleepers has reduced into single figures on any given night, from a high of nearly 40 three years ago. This bid will allow for the continuation of this service in 2021/22.
- 4.7 Travel and expenses. This funding enables the REST service – Outreach and In-reach to claim for out of pocket expenses for travel, parking and contributes towards telephone usage and mobile phone replacements where necessary along with hardware such as laptops where necessary. This bid will allow for the continuation of this service in 2021/22.
- 4.8 Safe Space Multi Agency Assessment & Support Hub (24/7). The grant funds a 40 % contribution of the overall costs associated with the facility. The remainder, (60%) is funded by Derby Homes and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. This bid will allow for the continuation of this service in 2021/22.
- 4.9 Personal budgets are used to provide positive activities that have enabled the rough sleeper cohort to try something new and to develop this interest for themselves. This includes the provision of counselling to assist with the transition off the streets. The continuation of this work will assist move on into accommodation enabling better access to funds for basic furnishings as an example. This bid will allow for the continuation of this service in 2021/22.
- 4.10 The street outreach and in-reach team provide initial engagement with any rough sleeper and support any of these customers into accommodation, helping rough sleepers adjust where necessary and sustain their accommodation. This resource is needed to focus on preventative work regarding training, education, employability and meaningful activities, pathway progression and developing use of co-existing non-housing service pathways to maximise access to specialised support and other services. Included within this team is a Move on and Placement role which will oversee progression throughout the rough sleeper pathway, monitoring capacity, demand and facilitating flow. This bid will allow for the continuation of this service in 2021/22.

- 4.11 The Homes For Me accommodation offer is designed for those with medium and high-level support needs, providing a more flexible accommodating offer for the rough sleeper cohort with five hours of support per week per individual. We currently fund 12 units through this grant and propose increasing this to 18 units as we know we need additional capacity within this medium to high need group. This bid will allow for the continuation of this service in 2021/22.
- 4.12 Prison Release pathway partnership with the National Prison and Probation Service that contributes to 12 single units of accommodation with medium support for individuals leaving prison without accommodation and with identified support needs. This element is re-aligned from our Flexible Homeless Support Grant and will enable continuation of this pathway in 2021/22.
- 4.13 The provision of 40 supported move on accommodation units, providing an enhanced level of support. Our understanding of demand around levels of support and accommodation preferences for those rough sleepers who struggle to engage and maintain engagement tells us that we need additional capacity in the system with those who have medium level support needs. This element is re-aligned from our Flexible Homeless Support Grant and will enable continuation of this pathway in 2021/22.
- 4.14 Housing Led supported housing pathway for those identified with high support needs and are medium to high risk of returning to rough sleeping. This provision provides increased support to meet the needs and complexities of customers, helping them to adapt and progress along an accommodation pathway. This element is re-aligned from our Flexible Homeless Support Grant and will enable continuation of this pathway in 2021/22.
- 4.15 The provision of 6 units of a Housing First model, with rent levels in line with the LHA rate. This provision is aimed at those with a high risk of failure in other housing pathways and provides support to meet medium and high levels of need. Up to 9.5 hours of support per person per week are available, provided by a as separate to provision of accommodation. Included within this element of our bid is some additional budget to cover bad debt, utilities and council tax issues as well as any damage caused to the property. This element is re-aligned from our Flexible Homeless Support Grant and will enable continuation of this pathway in 2021/22.
- 4.16 Match funding for a Prison Navigator who will work with rough sleepers in prison and engage with the Multi Agency Rough Sleeper Hub to arrange suitable accommodation upon release that best fits their level of need and wants. This will increase maintenance of accommodation and help to reduce re-offending in the city. The role will also be able to access other resettlement accommodation options. This bid is a new intervention that will be jointly funded by the probation service.
- 4.17 Maintain our SWEP Covid isolation house for full year to increase emergency capacity and an effective isolation response due to the Pandemic (Everyone in). This 3-bedroom property will enable rough sleepers to self-isolate in a safe environment. This element is re-aligned from our Cold Weather grant and will enable continuation of this pathway in 2021/22.

- 4.18 Provision of 20 units of Supported Housing pathway through the YMCA for those assessed with medium support needs and medium risk of rough sleeping. This offer includes a "Foyer site" for younger homeless people and wider supported provision for all age groups. This bid is a new intervention that hasn't previously been funded.
- 4.19 Shared assessment units x 4 where support needs and risk factors are unclear. This assessment centre would mean that individuals who appear ready for accommodation, where there are concerns around the individual's level of need and their ability to manage different accommodation options. This can avoid the cycle of failed accommodation, through a period of assessment with support, increasing the likelihood of accommodation placement success. This bid is a new intervention that hasn't previously been funded.
- 4.20 A data analyst function will release staff capacity and enable the RSI workforce to focus on responding to specialist analysis of data and shaping a service. The role would maintain and update our multi-system dashboard approach that gives a weekly "health check" and provides the evidence for addressing issues internally and with partners which are preventing rough sleeper progress. The role would also supplement the move on and placements function by predicting bottle necks and proactively managing flow so that those most at risk of return to rough sleeping have options aligned to their needs. This bid is a new intervention that hasn't previously been funded.
- 4.21 Over 80% of all our managed cohort are either open to safeguarding or have previous recent safeguarding concerns. The level of complexity of the individuals and limitation on options to develop an effective safeguarding plan is significant and requires a level of specialism and time commitment, both which is not readily available within existing resource. In addition, the social care needs relating to learning, mental and physical disability for many of our target priority group require access to a social worker and statutory funding streams, which have otherwise proven challenging to access in timely way. This bid is a new intervention that hasn't previously been funded.
- 4.22 Primary Care - non patient facing GP multi-disciplinary time. This will assist with improved outcomes for rough sleepers who have a history of poor engagement and failure to comply with treatment. This will improve the health outcomes for rough sleepers and increase the likelihood that they will sustain their accommodation. This component is being part funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group. This bid is a new intervention that hasn't previously been funded.
- 4.23 Covid Winter Pressures 2021/22 as planning for the next winter will not include the provision of a winter night shelter. Rough sleepers and those who present late in the day during winter months, as homeless tonight and/or are evicted or have abandoned accommodation at high risk of rough sleeping will be able to access B&B and daytime support and access to multi agency services out of the Safe Space MARSH Hub. This offer will keep them connected to housing and other services, and away from the street, and will maximise opportunities to establish the most appropriate accommodation options/route to housing. These SWEP beds are a winter extension to the Safe Space Hub offer.

Public/Stakeholder Engagement

- 5.1 The bid has been developed taking into consideration the views and opinions of representatives of the Strategic Homeless Board, Homeless Liaison forum members and lead advisors from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Other Options

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to submit a bid under the Rough Sleepers Initiative 2021-22 grant opportunity. This is not recommended and would threaten the ongoing viability of the Cities Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 6.2 The Council could choose to bid for alternate provision to support rough sleepers in the City. Derby Homes, as the delegated delivery agent of the Housing Options and Homelessness Services, and in conjunction with the lead MHCLG advisor for Rough Sleeping feel that the bid, as presented, provides the best opportunity to continue to reduce rough sleeping in Derby.

Financial and Value for Money Issues

- 7.1 The intention is to passport any grant award over to Derby Homes, who will be responsible to deliver the scheme in line with the grant conditions. Therefore, it is Derby Homes who are bearing the financial risk of incurring costs in excess of the grant award, repayments of any grant not spent, or repayment of any grant not spent in line with grant conditions

Legal Implications

- 8.1 None arising from this report

Other Significant Implications

- 9.1 None arising from this report

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	Olu Idowu, Head of Legal Services	
Finance	Amanda Fletcher, Head of Finance, Communities and Place	
Service Director(s)	Clare Mehrbani, Director of Housing (Derby Homes)	
Report sponsor	Rachel North, Strategic Director of Communities and Place	
Other(s)		

Background papers:	
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy Appendix 2 – RSI Bid 2021/22