

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

19 JULY 2022

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

AWARD OF FUNDING FOR HOMELESSNESS PROJECTS VIA THE HOUSING SUPPORT GRANT

1. Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet to:-

- Award Welsh Government Housing Support Grant project funding to Wallich, in order to continue delivery of their Rough Sleepers Intervention Team and Solutions Centre/Worker
- Award Welsh Government Housing Support Grant project funding to Llamau, in order to continue delivery of their Bridgend Family Mediation project.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study, and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications, and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy, and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human, and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

3.1 The Welsh Government Housing Support Grant (HSG) came into being in April 2019, following the Welsh Government funding flexibilities pathfinder project. It brings together three former grants - Supporting People Programme, Homelessness Prevention Grant and Rent Smart Wales Enforcement Grant.

- 3.2 The HSG is an early intervention grant programme to support activity which prevents people from becoming homeless, stabilises their housing situation, or helps potentially homeless people to find and keep accommodation.
- 3.3. Historically the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) has been used by Welsh Government to directly support statutory and third sector organisations to deliver front line services to prevent homelessness. This funding has been separate to any Local Authority grant allocations, such as the HSG or Supporting People Programme.
- 3.4 The establishment of the HSG has prompted a reconsideration of the way HPG is administered and as such Welsh Government have decided that from 2022-23 elements of the HPG will transfer to Local Authorities, via the HSG.
- 3.5 Welsh Government have confirmed that as part of the transitional arrangements for transferring elements of the HPG to the HSG Local Authorities will be required to ring fence the funding for, and overseeing and monitoring, 'main programme' projects that operate in their local authority for a period of two years. This is to enable the continuation of existing projects and allow for these projects to be evaluated by Local Authorities before ongoing funding decisions are made. From a Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) governance perspective Cabinet approval is required to award funding to third party organisations.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 On 8th March 2022 Cabinet were updated as to BCBC's indicative HSG allocation from Welsh Government for 2022-23, a sum of £7,833,509.33. Cabinet endorsed a HSG Spend Plan for 2022-23, which was submitted following the indicative allocation from Welsh Government.
- 4.2 On 17th March BCBC received a final HSG allocation from Welsh Government for 2022-23. The allocation is £7,954,787.69, inclusive of a sum of £121,278.36 not included in the initial indicative award.
- 4.3 The additional allocation of £121,278.36 relates to the transfer from Welsh Government central HPG to BCBC's HSG. The award letter states that this funding is to be ring fenced to continue funding existing projects for a two year period. Historically these projects have been funded directly via Welsh Government following the submission of delivery plans from the support providers. From 2024-25 the funding will be redistributed to the HSG utilising the usual distribution formula.
- 4.4 The funding award states:

From 2022-23, local authorities will be responsible for administering ring-fenced funding for, and overseeing and monitoring, 'main programme' projects that operate in their local authority, over a two year transitional period.

*You should therefore **award funding to the organisations listed at the end of this section 1b. to deliver the project purpose(s) specified and for at least the amount specified in the main body of this grant award.** Each project is supported by an accompanying Delivery Plan, which includes performance indicators identified by the project provider.*

During the two year transition period, project funding will be ring-fenced.

- 4.5 The award letter states that for Bridgend there are two projects for which funding is being transferred. These are set out below:

Project Name	Bridgend Family Mediation
Project Provider	Llamau
Project Funding awarded	£29,515.00
Project Purpose summary	The purpose of this funding is to deliver family mediation in Bridgend, identifying, addressing and resolving issues that are causing a potential breakdown in family relationships and threatening a young person with homelessness.

Project Name	Rough Sleepers Intervention Team and Solutions Centre/Worker
Project Provider	The Wallich
Project Funding awarded	£91,763.36
Project Purpose summary	<p>The purpose of the funding is to provide outreach services to rough sleepers and vulnerably housed people and the provision of solution centre workers as set out within the application for grant funding.</p> <p>The project also prevents homelessness by providing a solution to issues that may result in, or perpetuate, homelessness and alleviate the situation of homeless people sleeping rough.</p> <p>The whole project covers Bridgend, Cardiff, Ceredigion, Newport, Torfaen and Swansea. However the funding amount specified above relates to Bridgend only.</p>

- 4.6 In line with the direction set out in the HSG funding award letter Cabinet are therefore requested to approve the award of funding to Llamau for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2024 at a sum of £29,515 per annum, to allow for the continuation of their Bridgend Family Mediation project.
- 4.7 Cabinet are also requested to approve the award of funding to Wallich for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2024 at a sum of £91,763.36 per annum to allow for the continuation of their Rough Sleepers Intervention Team and Solutions Centre/Worker project.
- 4.8 Both of the projects detailed above are already well established in Bridgend, having been funded directly via Welsh Government HPG for many years. The projects will continue to link with other statutory and non-statutory services to prevent and relieve homelessness in the county borough. The projects will form part of BCBC's

wider HSG monitoring processes. Monitoring and review will inform funding decisions from 2024-25, in line with the normal commissioning cycle. Any future contract will be issued in line with BCBC's Contract Procedure Rules.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no effect upon policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The report contributes to the following goals within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsive Wales

7.2 The five ways of working have been considered in the preparation of this report and are summarised below:

- Long term – HSG funded projects will support individuals to meet their short term support needs, with the aim of delivering long term positive outcomes, supporting individuals to achieve their goals and aspirations,
- Prevention – HSG projects are preventative in nature and are designed to reduce the burden on more costly interventions,
- Integration – HSG funded projects support economic, social and cultural outcomes, both at an individual level and in wider communities.
- Collaboration – BCBC effectively engages with a range of internal and external partners on a local and regional basis,
- Involvement – As part of ongoing strategic planning BCBC Housing engages with a diverse range of stakeholders including service users and those with lived experience.

7.3 It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial implications

8.1 The award of funding to Wallich and Llamau are detailed at 4.6 and 4.7. The projects will be funded via the HSG, in line with the conditions set out in the final HSG award letter.

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Approve the award Welsh Government Housing Support Grant project funding to Wallich, in order to continue delivery of their Rough Sleepers Intervention Team and Solutions Centre/Worker project.
- Approve the award Welsh Government Housing Support Grant project funding to Llamau, in order to continue delivery of their Bridgend Family Mediation project.

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Background documents:

None