

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

7 June 2022



Subject: Rough Sleepers Initiative 2022-2025
Report of: Managing Director – City Housing
Relevant Cabinet Member: Councillor Sharon Thompson, Cabinet Member Homes and Neighbourhoods
Relevant O & S Chair(s): Councillor Mohammed Idrees, Housing and Neighbourhoods, Overview and Scrutiny Committee
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Are specific wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Is this a key decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference: 009965/2022		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential :		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report seeks retrospective approval for a bid to DLUHC for the Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) funding for 2022-25 and subsequent commissioning, contracting and awards in line with bid and outcome of bid. The programme target is to reduce and prevent rough sleeping in Birmingham.
- 1.2 Retrospective approval is sought as the funding programme was announced at the end of November 2021, initially with a bid deadline of 4th Feb 2022, later extended to 25th February 2022. The application was released in January 2022. A requirement

of the application process was for a comprehensive review of existing services and coproducing a new bid with stakeholders. The bid was finalised and sent out to relevant parties for feedback and approval in February 2022. Due to time constraints it was not possible to seek full Cabinet approval for the bid at the time, however, approval was sought for the submission of the bid from the Cabinet Member and Director at DMT in February 2022.

- 1.3 Birmingham's proposed submission is set out in Appendix A, with total values of £1,630,000 for year 1, £1,767,400 for year 2 and £2,066,908 for year 3. Birmingham's proposed bid is made up of ongoing, modified and new interventions consisting of a mix of accommodation, support and wellbeing services.
- 1.4 The proposed funding will enable continued delivery and development of interventions for the prevention and relief of rough sleeping and recovery from rough sleeping where this occurs. Additional interventions are picked up in years 2 and 3 where current funding for services is projected to come to an end, to ensure continuity.

2 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Retrospectively approves the bid submission by the Managing Director of Housing to the Department of Levelling Up, Communities & Housing ("DLUHC") for funding £1,630,000 for the period 2022-23, £1,767,400 for 2023-24 and £2,066,908 ("RSI Grant Funding") and acceptance of RSI Grant Funding as awarded by DLUHC.
- 2.2 Approves commissioning, contracting and awarding the grant funding in line with the DLUHC grant funding conditions and the Council's Constitution.
- 2.3 Notes that delivery will be via a mixture of arrangements with voluntary sector providers, public sector and Birmingham City Council directly. Delivery will therefore include the procurement of services, use of Conditions of Grant Aid (COGAs), contracts awarded from the Rough Sleepers Navigator Framework, services provided directly by Birmingham City Council and services covered by existing contracts.
- 2.4 Delegates authority to the Managing Director - City Housing in consultation with Cabinet Member Homes and Neighbourhoods, Director of Council Management (or their delegate) and Acting City Solicitor (or their delegate) to spend these funds, and apply for and accept any future related funding, via the approval of the procurement strategy and contract award; if a procurement is the preferred commissioning route.
- 2.5 Authorises the Acting City Solicitor (or their delegate) to execute and complete all necessary legal documents to give effect to above.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Rough Sleepers Initiative has been a rolling annual grant funded programme through the then MHCLG since 2018. The objective behind the fund is to reduce,

relieve and prevent rough sleeping with the overall aim of ending rough sleeping completely.

- 3.2 For RSI year 4, Birmingham was invited to participate in an extended route for bidding which assured funding at a baseline not less than previous years for Quarter 1 of 2021-22 and allowed for services to continue operating while bids were being assessed. Total funding received was £1,558,282. This included £1,238,782 for interventions outlined in Birmingham's bid for the period 1st July 2021 to 31st March 2022, £197,000 continuation fund to cover the period 1st April 2021 to 30th June 2021 and a one-off uplift payment of £200,000 to cover emergency accommodation, support and move on costs as a result of COVID 19. The total amount also took into account RSI year 3 underspend of £77,500.
- 3.3 Following the last round of funding (RSI year 4, 2021-22) DLUHC announced a 3-year funding programme covering the period April 2022 to end of March 2025. This has allowed for a comprehensive review of services and better planning of future provision than previous short term funding. The application for RSI 2022-25 includes a self-assessment of current homelessness provision and a summary of Birmingham's response to rough sleeping for the next 3 years.
- 3.4 RSI funded interventions have been successful in reducing rough sleeping in Birmingham since 2018, with progress being reflected through official rough sleeper counts, with a figure of 31 in 2021 down from 91 in 2018. Current snapshots and evidence-based estimates show between 19-25 individuals rough sleeping on any given night in Birmingham. This continues to be a reduction of numbers seen pre pandemic.

4 Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 4.1 Not to bid for the funding. This would have a substantial and negative impact upon service provision and relationships with partners. DLUHC have viewed previous interventions as being effective and have indicated a commitment to fund interventions for the next 3 years.
- 4.2 It is recommended that retrospective approval is given to the bid submitted for RSI funding for 2022-25 as outlined in Appendix A. This approach is in line with the Council's priorities regarding tackling homelessness in Birmingham (see paragraph 7 below).

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Consultation with partners and providers took place throughout December 2021 and January 2022. The opportunity to review current provision, propose interventions and provide feedback for this round of funding has been shared with the Birmingham Homelessness Partnership Board, Birmingham Homelessness Forum, Rough Sleepers Action Group, West Midlands Combined Authority Homelessness Taskforce and Birmingham City Council Commissioning Managers.

- 5.2 DLUHC require the bid to be developed through co-production. This has been done through individual consultations with existing service providers and Commissioning Managers as well as the designated DLUHC specialist advisor.

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 This is the fifth year of RSI funding. Birmingham City Council has been awarded funding since year 1 and as such are aware of the funding conditions and outcome monitoring requirements. Processes are in place to manage these.
- 6.2 At this stage the risks are related to compliance. These risks are managed within the governance arrangements and compliance issues in Section 7.

7 Compliance Issues:

7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

- 7.1.1 The bid supports the Homeless Prevention Strategy 2017+ and the supplementary Rough Sleeping Addendum that was formally adopted by Full Council on 12 January 2021.
- 7.1.2 The bid supports the Ending Rough Sleeping Plan which is managed by the Rough Sleeper Action Group.
- 7.1.3 The service delivery element of the bid complements the Vulnerable Adults Housing and Wellbeing Pathway investment as set out in the Cabinet Report 16 April 2019.
- 7.1.4 Elements of the bid will support young people who are homeless and therefore supports the Council's Corporate Parenting Responsibilities.
- 7.1.5 Elements of the bid will support the work of the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership.

7.2 Legal Implications

- 7.2.1 Section 179 Housing Act 1996 provides that a local housing authority must provide or secure the provision of a service, available free of charge to any person in the authority's district, providing information and advice on, preventing homelessness, securing accommodation when homeless, the rights of persons who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and the duties of the authority.
- 7.2.2 The Council may also exercise powers under the Care Act 2014 together with associated regulations and statutory guidance relating to the provision of services to meet the need for care and support as well as prevention and services to promote wellbeing.
- 7.2.3 Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Secretary of State power to award grants to local authorities for expenditure incurred by them in the provision of welfare services determined by the Secretary of State.

7.2.4 The Council's obligations for this service under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will be met by commissioned arrangements.

7.3 Financial Implications

7.3.1 The value of the bid is £1,630,000 for year 1, £1,767,400 for year 2 and £2,066,908 for year 3.

7.3.2 The funding will be a Section 31 grant from DLUHC accompanied by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

7.3.3 There are no specific implications arising from the submission of the bid or subsequent contract awards. Funding allocations will be passed on to providers in line with the services procured. The revenue implications in relation to receipt of the proposed bid and contract awards will be contained within the bid with no additional cost to the Council.

7.3.4 The financial management of RSI has sat with Adult Social Care Commissioners, this will now pass to City Housing, Housing Solutions and Support, but commissioning support will continue through Adult Social Care Commissioners.

7.3.5 Value for money is considered by DLUHC as part of any award and delivery is benchmarked against other Local Authorities. Birmingham City Council is participating in a DLUHC/Centre for Homelessness Impact pilot on measures of success in ending rough sleeping. Opportunities are sought for programme delivery to make the most of established services.

7.4 Procurement Implications (if required)

7.4.1 Navigator services, i.e. those services employing support workers who will directly work with individuals, will be awarded via Birmingham City Council's Rough Sleepers Navigator Framework, to which providers were invited to Tender in February 2022.

7.4.2 Delivery will consist of services provided directly by Birmingham City Council where appropriate or via public sector bodies (e.g. NHS), voluntary organisations and use of the Rough Sleepers Navigator Framework. Commissioning arrangements will be made in accordance with the Council's constitution, procurement legislation (where applicable) and any relevant DLUHC grant funding condition.

7.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)

7.5.1 The majority of job roles will sit within the voluntary sector, with contracts awarded through the Rough Sleeper Navigator Framework. Roles within the statutory sector are primarily a continuation of existing jobs and work. The Business Support role is a new post for Housing Solutions and Support reflective of the handing over of contract management from Adult Social Care to Housing Solutions and Support.

7.5.2 The commissioning of Navigators will be undertaken by staff within the Adult Social Care Directorate, other commissioning by City Housing.

7.6 Public Sector Equality Duty

7.6.1 An Initial Impact Assessment has been carried out (Appendix C) and no adverse impacts have been identified. A Full Impact Assessment is not recommended at this stage.

8 Background Documents

8.1 RSI 2022-25 Self-Assessment; RSI 2022-25 Project Plan.

List of appendices accompanying this report:

Appendix A - Proposed Bid

Appendix B - RSI Guidance for Local Authorities

Appendix C - Equality Impact Assessment