

Supported Housing oversight pilot extension: April to September 2021

MHCLG intends to extend funding for the supported housing oversight pilots for an additional six months. Local authorities are required to submit short proposals detailing their proposed continued and additional activities for the extra six months.

This prospectus is an addendum to the document issued to local authorities in September 2020. Applicants should consider all requirements and guidance in the original prospectus as still valid, unless indicated otherwise below.

Objectives and required activities

Continued and additional pilot activity will be extended until end September 2021. Local authorities will be expected to continue to work closely with Kantar (the evaluator) until end November 2021 as they gather learnings and best practice from the pilots and develop the final report.

The pilots' original objectives were to:

- Drive up quality of accommodation;
- Drive up quality and appropriateness of support;
- Improve value for money and where relevant reduce overall spend on Housing Benefit;
- Establish whether existing LA enforcement powers are sufficient to address poor quality, and understanding barriers to enforcement;
- Test approaches to data collection and develop a local need and supply assessment;
- Gather insight into best practice in delivering activities across all the above objectives.

For the extension of the pilots, local authorities will be expected to:

- Continue current activity, working to original objectives, to test enforcement interventions and gather data on their impact (as set out in the original prospectus); and
- Undertake additional activity which builds on findings from the first phase to deliver more targeted learnings.

Based on findings and insight so far, in the second phase we will expand our objectives to:

- Develop full strategic plans for short-term supported housing;
- Test approaches to managing local supply based on local need; and
- Consolidate and agree best practice in specific activities (Housing Benefit scrutiny, mitigating for impacts on homelessness and rough sleeping, and managing local supply)

Additional activity should build on existing work to go further in meeting our objectives. This could include:

- Follow up inspections to track the impact of enforcement interventions over a longer time period
- Follow up reviews to track the impact on support over a longer time period
- Tracking individual outcomes
- Deeper investigation and assessment of providers
- Approaches to managing local supply
- Understanding pathways into short-term supported housing and developing an ideal pathway.

Strategic planning

In phase one of the pilots, LAs were required to complete a local need and supply assessment (see para 30-34 of September prospectus for specifications). By September, LAs will be expected to deliver a strategic plan setting out:

- An assessment of current need and supply locally
- Projected future demand
 - Using demographic data, data from children's services and probation services, waiting lists etc
- Projected future supply
 - Using data on recent growth in providers, planning applications, notification of intent on new schemes etc
- Any difference between future supply and demand
- Plan to meet any gap in need and supply
 - Identify different options (building stock, commissioning v relying on non-commissioned, reducing supply where there is over provision)
 - Identify how future need and supply fit within the larger pathway and any wider challenges – e.g. lack of affordable one-bed units
 - Costing of options
 - Identify limitations in the ability to meet future need

Working groups

The second phase of the pilots aims to capture learnings and insight from local authority leads and colleagues. LAs will be asked to contribute to working groups on a range of topics to share expertise and consolidate local knowledge. The working groups will meet 3-4 times over six months to discuss and agree best practice and proposed solutions across a range of topics.

Funding proposals should include costings for 12 hours of participation in working groups across the local authority.

Additional requirements of funding

Local authorities will be expected to continue their participation in all evaluation and governance activities, as set out in the original prospectus.

Process and how to respond

Process

Local authorities should submit proposals for use of the funding in the form at Annex A by 9 March 2021.

Once proposals have been received, an MHCLG assessment panel will review the proposals in the round. The supported housing team in MHCLG will provide a final decision, along with feedback.

Stage	Timings (date by)
Invite local authorities to participate in pilot extension	26 Feb
Local authorities to submit Annex A to MHCLG	9 March
MHCLG to review final proposals and recommend funding allocations	10 – 12 March
Formal approval to undertake work	w/c 15 March

Proposals should be based on provision of funding for the financial year 2021/22, to run activity until end September 2021. The evaluation of the pilots will run until end December 2021 and LAs will be expected to continue to support the evaluation through this period (e.g. through ‘wash up’ interviews and a final Steering Group meeting).

Costs and allocation of funding

MHCLG have a total of £3.2m to allocate through this process. Local authorities should keep this budget in mind when submitting proposals that are achievable and proportionate. Funding will be allocated to LAs subject to scale and severity of the issue and proposed interventions outlined in the proposal.

All proposed activities should demonstrate that they are not simply an extension of ongoing work and must represent additional value to the pilots. Work in phase two must build on the first to gather wider, deeper or new insight.

Proposals must include:

- The total amount of funding sought, including a high-level breakdown of costs
- A summary of activities to be continued from phase one (including demonstration of how these activities will build on learnings from the first phase)
- Any proposed additional activities or projects, and demonstration of how these will support the pilots’ objectives
- A summary, for each core work area, of activity undertaken so far and how this work has met the original objectives – or if not met, the reasons for this
- A project plan with key milestones and dates

Proposals should demonstrate that:

- Interventions are locally appropriate
- Interventions are proportionate to the local context
- Existing interventions will continue to deliver on the core objectives
- Proposed new activities deliver additional value to the project



- They represent good value for money

If you intend to bid for a higher amount than your previous allocation, please ensure you discuss this with the MHCLG team in advance.

MHCLG reserves the right not to allocate the full £3.2m budgeted.

Funding will be allocated based on criteria and process set out in the original prospectus.

How to respond

Applicants are asked to submit proposals (template at Annex A) no later than COP 9 March 2021 to SupportedHousingOversight@communities.gov.uk. If applicants foresee issues with meeting this deadline, please contact the team as soon as possible.

Annex A: Application template**Section 1: Commitment to the pilots**

This individual will be responsible for communicating with MHCLG, for providing the monitoring data as approved by the Section 151 officer, and ensuring information is submitted to the central steering group, as required.

Name	Guy Chaundy
Email address	Guy.Chaundy@birmingham.gov.uk
Phone number	07766924420

Declaration

	Guy Chaundy Senior Service Manager Housing Strategy
Signature	Print name and title

By submitting this proposal you are confirming:

- the information provided is accurate to the best of your knowledge
- agreement to fully participate in the evaluation activities
- agreement to share relevant information with MHCLG
- all necessary internal support has been secured.

Section 2: Summary.

Please briefly summarise your proposal, including your proposed activities and their outputs and outcomes. This should include an explanation of which activities are continued (from your previous bid), and which are additional. The summary should also demonstrate that the proposed activities are appropriate and proportionate to the local context, as set out in your original bid.

As a result of the Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions due to Covid we have been unable to deliver the inspection activity in phase 1 to the degree originally intended. This was a significant and fundamental element of our approach and as such the continued activities will mainly include this element. To support the inspection work, (which will identify issues relating to Environmental Health Officers, Benefit scrutiny, safeguarding and support/care planning and community safety/ASB issues), we have included the relevant continuation of resources in these areas as per the original bid submission.

Also there will be carry over of original funding to complete other areas of activity relating to the development and roll out of Charter of Rights and Quality Standards.

We have a current carry over of phase 1 funding due to holding back on recruitment which has been taken into account for these areas when calculating the resource requirement for phase 2.

From our learning in the work done to date we are focusing our additional requirements in the following areas:

- Greater focus on training providers and referring agencies which will provide longer term impacts on quality. Training for providers will focus on HB regulations and requirements, safeguarding, Care Act, support planning and delivery, quality standards and charter of rights. Training for referral agencies will centre upon awareness of what supported accommodation is, what they should expect for citizens placed in the accommodation, duty of care and how to check and report concerns. It is expected this approach which will include development of toolkits will be used by agencies to reduce inappropriate out of area referrals.
- Speeding up the accreditation of providers against the Quality standard, this has become even more important to act as mitigation as we are seeing some fall out from some providers as we intensify our scrutiny and the RSH targeting the larger providers.
- Develop a robust decommissioning strategy/policy setting out how we will work with providers in the city when managing instances where they fall out of the sector – this for commissioned and non-commissioned providers.
- Undertake wider engagement activity with tenants living in supported housing.
- Action planning and governance of the new supported housing strategy to ensure successful implementation.
- Data analytical activity to track outcomes etc across all elements of the bid
- Undertaking detailed analysis of supply and demand data to undertake predictive analysis of future need and options and ensuring robust linkages and alignment to other key strategies such as the Housing Strategy, Homelessness Prevention Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Mapping out of the pathways into and out of exempt accommodation with focus on pathways from prison release and hospital discharge.
- Understanding the growth of supported exempt accommodation linked to government funding, where providers feel they will be able secure additional tenants. A recent example of this has been increases in approaches to support victims of domestic abuse.

Phase 1 progress

Although we are still currently working on the first phase of the pilot and formal evaluation is still to take place there has been good progress in some areas including over 130 responsive inspections despite Covid, a Complex Case review team investigating links to organised crime, undertaking Benefit reviews for over 30 providers, support in raising standards,. A partnership 'Operational Tasking Group' is meeting 3 times a week to review key cases on a multi-disciplinary level, focussing on key providers and key wards and work has begun on a Strategic Needs Assessment and the Quality Standards and Charter of Rights has now been formally launched.

Section 3: Costings*Continued activities*

Activity	Cost of continued activity	Detail/comments
Inspections, Housing Benefit scrutiny and other proposed actions to improve quality	£131k	Post Covid restrictions, recruitment of the remaining inspection resource and Environmental Health Officers to undertake targeted proactive inspections. This will result in x10 inspection officer resource capacity. The rate for EHOs has increased due to lack of availability. Increase training for non EHO staff to undertake informal intervention for Cat 1 and 2 hazards. This will enable delivery of the original 550 inspections with an additional 240 with associated follow up.
	£82k	Enhanced provider and tenants engagement plan and delivery and support re Charter of rights roll out – carry over.
	£70k	Housing benefit continuation of support review officers x 5 to support follow up work from inspection findings to check benefit entitlement, compliance and ensure value for money. Ongoing activity relating to Serious organised crime and seconded Police Officer and 3x



		serious case officers aimed at identifying and tackling links to serious organised crime, human trafficking and other associated criminal activity .
Care and support review and assessment	£74k	Continuation of Social Work resource to support care assessments, ensure that support is adequate and relevant for citizens and to respond and ensure safeguarding concerns are addressed.
Strategic planning		It is envisaged the original bid activity on the needs assessment and strategy will be delivered as per the original bid. However additional work planned on the implementation of the strategy is detailed below in the proposed additional activities.
Monitoring and evaluation		
Other		
Total	£357k.	


Proposed new (additional) activities

Activity	Cost of new activity	Description
Inspections, Housing Benefit scrutiny and other proposed actions to improve quality	Personnel: £53K	The introduction of the tenancy transition officer has provided learning on homeless presentations both from and into supported exempt accommodation. Further work to understand the homelessness pathway linked to supported exempt accommodation will be undertaken through a resource of 3x transition officers. As well as helping map out the pathway, including impact upon potential rough sleeping, the officers will provide targeted support to track individuals accessing and egressing from exempt accommodation to understand patterns, barriers and challenges.
	£30k	Learning from phase 1 has included the close linkages with planning, building on this provide a dedicated resource within the planning function to focus purely on RP and Exempt accommodation enforcement activity. Clearly the potential impact to improve overall property standards utilising planning enforcement powers could be significant.
	£36K	Learning from provider fall out and those providers with their grading under review we will work alongside the Homelessness Partnership Board develop/ write a decommissioning strategy/approach for providers falling out of the sector to include evidence gathering on resulting issues/consequence of provider fall out. i.e. prospect. 1x



		<p>officer resource Officer resource to support.</p> <p>The current pilot has identified inconsistent skill levels amongst providers in assessing and undertaking care and support and producing quality support plans. We are seeking to deliver targeted training for providers covering a Quality Standards HB regulations and requirements, Charter of rights, Care Act, Support planning and safeguarding.</p> <p>There will also be a module for referring agencies covering duty of care and monitoring and reporting of concerns. The training and development and delivery will be procured.</p> <p>Learning has identified an inadequate response/approach by some providers in dealing with ASB whereby they simply resort to just moving tenants. This additionality will focus on Improving providers approach and response to low level ASB – 3 x ASB officers managing a caseload and working with providers on quality ASB policies, training needs, toolkits etc.</p> <p>Additional Benefit resource to would enable the service to conduct additional reviews focussing on levels of care support and supervision where full support evidence was not available at the start of the claim for additional services coming on board to existing exempt</p>
	£60k	
	£48k	
	£26	



		delivery and develop a comprehensive dashboard to pull relevant data sources on provision, track trends, growth and mapping etc. that can be used in various settings and partnership audiences.
Other		
Total	£399k	

Section 3: Delivery plan

Please attach a delivery plan with details of:

- Anticipated timings of inspections or other enforcement activities, including recruitment where needed
- Anticipated timings for the strategic plan, including recruitment.
- Planned monitoring and engagement activities, factoring in monthly monitoring to MHCLG and bimonthly reporting on impact.

[Please insert here or attach as separate document with your application.]