

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**COUNCIL****4 JULY 2012****REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HOUSING****HOMELESSNESS FUNDING 2012-13****1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek supplementary estimates as recommended by Cabinet, for further homelessness prevention initiatives following the receipt of additional Government grants for 2012-13.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the following supplementary estimates are approved following the receipt of additional Government grants for 2012-13:-

(a)	Homelessness Prevention Initiatives	-	£42,000
(b)	Preventing Repossessions Fund	-	£89,210
(c)	Homelessness Prevention Work in Schools	-	£6,680

3. Summary (inc. brief overview of relevant background history)

- 3.1 The Council has received three specific grant allocations from the Government for homelessness prevention measures in 2012-13. These allocations are:-

(a)	Homelessness Prevention Grant	-	£74,000
(b)	Preventing Repossessions Fund Grant	-	£89,210
(c)	Homelessness Prevention Work in Schools	-	£6,680

- 3.2 Whilst the amount of Homelessness Prevention Grant (£74,000) is the same amount as for 2011-12, it was uncertain in view of the Government's spending restrictions that this level of funding would be received again, for 2012-13. As a result, only £32,000 was included in the agreed General Fund budget for 2012-13.

- 3.3 The Government have also allocated the Council a further £89,210 of grant in relation to the operation of its "Preventing Repossessions Fund" and £6,680 for homelessness prevention in schools. These latter grant allocations were unexpected and as a result no expenditure provision has been included in the agreed General Fund budget for 2012-13.

- 3.4 This report therefore seeks supplementary estimates, as recommended by Cabinet, in order that the additional resources are included in the 2012-13 General Fund budget.

4. Key Issues and Implications

- 4.1 The use of the three homelessness prevention grant allocations was considered by Cabinet on 21 June 2012. Cabinet agreed a number of homelessness prevention measures subject to Council approving supplementary estimates in respect of the additional expenditure.
- 4.2 Details of the homelessness prevention measures are detailed in the Cabinet report dated 21 June 2012 and are also summarised in Annex 1.

5. Conclusion(s) and Reason(s) for the Recommendation(s)

- 5.1 The Council received three specific grant allocations from the Government for homelessness prevention measures in 2012-13.
- 5.2 These allocations were either higher than estimated or unexpected and as a result the full required expenditure provision has not been included in the agreed General Fund budget for 2012-13.
- 5.3 The use of these homelessness prevention grant allocations was considered by Cabinet on 21 June 2012. Cabinet agreed a number of homelessness prevention measures subject to Council approving supplementary estimates in respect of the additional expenditure.
- 5.4 It is therefore recommended that Council approves supplementary estimates for the additional expenditure which will be entirely funded from additional Government grants.

6. Other Options Considered

- 6.1 Homelessness Prevention Grant is not ring-fenced and as a result the additional £42,000 of additional resources could be used for another purpose. However, if the grant were used for another purpose, it could reduce the amount of resources allocated in future years.

7. Report Author Details

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SCHEDULE OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Section 1

Contribution to Council Priorities

Homelessness prevention grants contribute to the service aim “to support people to live independently in their own homes” which forms part of the agreed 2012-13 People Priority Delivery Plan.

Section 2

Contribution to Promoting Community Engagement

Distribution of homelessness prevention funds to enable partner agencies to assist in the prevention of homelessness helps to promote community engagement.

Section 3

Financial Implications

The Council has received three specific grant allocations from the Government for homelessness prevention measures in 2012-13. As these allocations were either higher than estimated or unexpected the full expenditure provision has not been included in the agreed General Fund budget for 2012-13.

This report therefore seeks Council approval for three supplementary estimates as set out below:-

(a)	Homelessness Prevention Initiatives	-	£42,000
(b)	Preventing Repossessions Fund	-	£89,210
(c)	Homelessness Prevention Work in Schools	-	£6,680

The additional expenditure will be met entirely from additional Government grant.

Section 4

Legal Implications

The legal implications are set out in the report.

Section 5

Human Resource Implications

The human resource implications in respect of one of the homelessness prevention measures was addressed in the report to Cabinet on 21 June 2012.

Section 6

Section 17 (Crime Prevention) Implications

The provision of grants for victims of domestic violence under the sale of houses scheme has positive benefits for crime prevention.

Section 7

Human Rights Act Implications

Article 8 provides that:-

1. Everyone has the right to respect for this private and family life, his home and his correspondence.
2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

In considering the use of Homelessness Prevention Grant resources and the criteria for loans and grants to households from the Preventing Repossessions Fund, the Council is complying with legislation which empowers it to do so, and at the same time is considering the needs of the residents of the district.

For the above reasons the Councils actions are considered to be compatible with the Human Rights Act.

Section 8

Data Protection Act Implications

There are no Data Protection Act implications arising from this report.

Section 9

Risk Management Implications

The uncertain economic climate and changes to Housing Benefit under the Local Housing Allowance arrangements could increase the number of people seeking advice and assistance from support services.

If the full amount of Government grants are not allocated to homelessness prevention initiatives the number of people being accepted as homeless could rise.

Section 10

Equality and Diversity Implications

Distribution of the Communities and Local Government grants to homelessness prevention initiatives contributes to meeting the needs of specific groups who are vulnerable and therefore contributes positively to equality and diversity.

Section 11

List of Background Papers

Homelessness Review 2009/10

Homelessness Strategy 2011-2016

a-Homelessness Funding 2012-13-v1 Rpt Council 040712

Section 12

Report History

Homelessness Funding 2012-13

Cabinet

21 June 2012

Annexes

Annex 1: Homeless Prevention Initiatives 2012-13

HOMELESS PREVENTION INITIATIVES 2012-131. Homeless Prevention Grant (£85,700 comprising £74,000 of grant for 2012-13 together with £11,700 carried forward from 2011-12)(a) Agreed under Delegated Authority (£43,700)

* Safe As Houses * ¹	-	£24,200
* Citizens Advice Bureau * ²	-	£12,500
* Additional Homelessness Prevention Advice for owner-occupiers	-	£7,000
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		£43,700
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(b) Agreed by Cabinet 21 June 2012 (£42,000)

* Contribution to a Domestic Violence Outreach Worker employed by Stafford Women's Aid	-	£5,000
* Cannock Chase Churches Housing Coalition	-	£5,000
* Safe As Houses * ¹	-	£20,000
* Contribution to works to 2A Festival Court, West Chadsmoor for use as temporary accommodation for homeless households	-	£3,000
* Development of a Landlords Support Scheme	-	£8,000
* Day to day repairs of 3 flats on the Moss Road Estate that will provide temporary shared emergency accommodation for single people	-	£1,000
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		£42,000
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2. "Preventing Repossessions Fund Grant" (£126,557 comprising £89,210 of grant for 2012-13 together with £37,347 carried forward from 2011-12)

- * The provision of small loans to reduce mortgage arrears or rent arrears in the private sector. *³
- * The provision of grants to households to reduce mortgage or rent arrears in the private sector whose financial circumstances would make repayment unrealistic. *³

- * Contribution of £5,000 to the Discretionary Housing Payment fund administered by Housing Benefit.
- * Funding of £12,500 to the Citizens Advice Bureau to continue their fast track money advice service. *2

3. Homelessness Prevention Work in Schools (£6,680)

- * A programme of homelessness prevention work in schools facilitated by an outside service provider.

Notes

- *1 The Safe As Houses scheme provides victims of domestic violence with security measures to enable them to remain in their home. The total 2012-13 allocation is £44,200.
- *2 The total 2012-13 allocation for the CAB money advice service is £25,000.
- *3 Revised criteria for these loans and grants were agreed by Cabinet on 21 June 2012.