

Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

9 January 2018

Rough Sleeper Outreach Worker

1. Contacts

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2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Cabinet approves the creation of a Rough Sleeper Outreach Worker post at a cost of £40,000 per annum funded from the base budget, subject to the annual budget process.**

3. Background

- 3.1. Since 2010 the number of rough sleepers in Chichester District has ranged from 14 to 26. There are currently 18 known individuals sleeping rough in the district. These include a handful of entrenched rough sleepers, some who intermittently engage with homeless services and transient rough sleepers who stay in the district for a period of time before moving on.
- 3.2. Although there has not been an overall increase in the number of rough sleepers, the visibility of rough sleeping, particularly in the city centre, has increased over the past five years. Reported incidences of violence against and perpetrated by rough sleepers has also increased.
- 3.3. In October 2016 the government launched a Rough Sleeping Grant Funding Programme. The East and West Sussex bid was successful and as a result one full time equivalent (FTE) Homeless Outreach Worker was employed to work across the districts of Arun and Chichester on a one-year fixed term contract at a cost of £40,000 per annum including on costs plus £5,000 operational costs. The post began on 12 July 2017, however the current post holder is leaving at the end of December. Arun have committed additional funds from their Safer Community Partnership so that the post can be advertised and extended for 12 months to cover Arun District.
- 3.4. The Outreach Worker obtains referrals through the Council's Rough Sleeper Panel and works with a select number of rough sleepers addressing key areas of concern by working proactively with the individuals and all partners involved to enable and achieve sustained positive behavioural change.

- 3.5. The current Outreach Worker will be leaving the post this month and although Arun District Council has secured additional funds to extend the post a further year, it is generally difficult to recruit to temporary short term posts. Furthermore, in order to build the trust and relationships with individuals to encourage them to engage it is essential to provide a consistent service. Over the last five years the service has been fragmented and delivered through a number of different projects, organisations and outreach workers.
- 3.6. The prevalence of rough sleeping across Arun and Chichester demonstrates a need for more than one FTE to cover the geographical area.

4. Outcomes to be Achieved

- 4.1. Continuity of support for behavioural change for the most entrenched local rough sleepers and/or homeless people in Chichester leading to reduced demand on public services. The outcome for the individual is hoped to be improved life chances and where possible a move to settled accommodation.
- 4.2. Reduces visibility of rough sleeping and proactive discouragement of new rough sleepers.

5. Proposal

- 5.1. The proposal is to create a new post within the Housing Interventions team which is specifically focused on providing outreach support to rough sleepers in the Chichester District.
- 5.2. The outreach worker will obtain referrals through the Council's Rough Sleeper Panel and will work with a select number of rough sleepers addressing key areas of concern by proactive, persistent and assertive outreach engagement. This high level of engagement over a longer term will allow the outreach worker the time to build trust and confidence and accurately assess individual needs enabling the formulation of personalised action plans and tailored support with the agencies involved to help move clients into settled accommodation.
- 5.3. The type of action required is very practical, ranging from taking individuals to appointments, acting as an advocate to help express their needs, ensuring that they have equitable access to public services, and supporting clients during difficult times whilst challenging them when their behaviour and actions are considered problematic with the aim of encouraging clients to make changes to their lives.
- 5.4. The rationale for identification and targeting of these individuals is based on their high risk factors in respect of anti-social behaviour, criminal activity, homelessness, high dependency on drugs and alcohol, poor physical and mental health.
- 5.5. The outreach worker role will act as a focal point for bringing agencies together, agreeing actions and building positive working relationships which enable service provision to be tailored on a case by case basis.

5.6. The role will directly contribute and is expected to meet the following performance outcomes over a one-year period with clients:

- Support clients to access and sustain appropriate housing involving other specialist partners and provision to help eliminate rough sleeping
- Support positive tenancy compliance in order to sustain and prevent intentional homelessness and rough sleeping
- Secure positive and sustained engagement with services to enable effective treatment where need is identified including:
 - GP services
 - Drug and Alcohol services
 - Adult mental health services
- Where identified, reduce involvement in reported anti-social behaviour

6. Alternatives Considered

6.1. To continue to provide a piecemeal service which relies on government funding initiatives. The demand for this service is not expected to decrease and issues identified in section 5 would not be addressed. Longer term provision is recommended.

7. Resource and Legal Implications

7.1. The proposed post as outlined above is considered essential to ensure the Council provides an effective service that meets the needs of both the community and rough sleepers, whilst helping to safeguard the environment and economy of Chichester District. The intention is that the additional resources recommended in the report will be funded from base budget.

8. Consultation

8.1. Informal consultation has been undertaken with partners who were supportive of the proposals.

9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

9.1. The impact of the proposal will benefit the residents of the district. Additional resources will enable us to provide both effective support to help entrenched rough sleepers move to settled accommodation and early intervention in the case of new and transient rough sleepers. It will also help reduce anti-social behaviour, and criminal activity associated with rough sleepers.

10. Other Implications

	Yes	No
Crime and Disorder	X	
Climate Change		X
Human Rights and Equality Impact	X	
Safeguarding and Early Help	X	
Other (please specify): eg biodiversity		X

11. Appendices

None

12. Background Papers

None