



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT COVER SHEET

Title of Report:	Options for continuing outreach services to Rough Sleepers	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
Meeting of:	Corporate Management Team - 18 June 2019	X
	Leader and Deputy Leaders - 24 June 2019	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's/Independent Alliance Advisory Group - 3 & 4 July 2019	X
	Cabinet - 15 July 2019	
	Scrutiny Audit and Value for Money Council Services Committee [DATE] / Scrutiny Community Regeneration, Environment and Health and Well Being Committee [DATE]	



Is this an Executive Decision:	NO	Is this a Key Decision:	NO
Is this in the Forward Plan:	YES	Is the Report Confidential:	NO
If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:	[]		

Essential Signatories:

ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE

Monitoring Officer: **Angela Wakefield**

Date Signature

Chief Finance Officer: **Sal Khan**

Date Signature

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Cabinet

Date: 15th July 2019

REPORT TITLE: Options for continuing outreach services to Rough Sleepers

PORTFOLIO: Environment and Housing

HEAD OF SERVICE: Sal Khan

CONTACT OFFICER: Brett Atkinson Ext. No. x1123

WARD(S) AFFECTED: Multiple

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To set out a detailed business case for the continuation of a Rough Sleepers Outreach Service, utilising S106 commuted sums that have been collected to alleviate housing need. The Rough Sleepers Outreach Service will continue to work to minimise the amount of rough sleepers and reduce the associated harms by providing personal support.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Since 1 November 2016 the Council has directly funded a Rough Sleepers Outreach Service (RSOS) at a cost of £25k pa utilising S106 commuted sums. The current contract expires at the end of October 2019, and therefore a decision needs to be made about whether the service is to continue and on what basis.
- 2.2. The RSOS currently provides the following services:
- 2.2.1. Sweep for rough sleepers on a fortnightly basis, and respond proactively to reports of rough sleeping within 48 hours.
 - 2.2.2. Provide practical support to secure suitable accommodation.

- 2.2.3. Work towards a bespoke solution for complex and entrenched rough sleepers.
 - 2.2.4. Monitor the health of rough sleepers and intervene where necessary.
 - 2.2.5. Collaborate closely with local homelessness services.
 - 2.2.6. Act as a local source of intelligence on the scale and nature of rough sleeping locally.
 - 2.2.7. Facilitate and resource the annual rough sleeper count, which is coordinated by the Council and verified by Homeless Link on behalf of MHCLG.
- 2.3. The number of rough sleepers nationally has risen in recent years,¹ and the RSOS has been key to the Council's response in East Staffordshire. Overall the RSOS contract with the Burton YMCA has performed well, particularly with regard to response times and local intelligence. A more detailed overview is provided at section 5.
- 2.4. The Council has secured 12 months funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to augment the RSOS with a 'Navigator' service which will do more intense detailed work with rough sleepers who are resistant to change or are otherwise entrenched.² The Navigator service relies on the intelligence gathering and initial offers of assistance to identify and locate clients, thus providing an additional reason for continuing the RSOS on an 'as is' basis. Furthermore the augmentation provided by the Navigator service reduces the scope for an expansion of the service offered by the RSOS.
- 2.5. Therefore, the recommendation is to continue the RSOS for a further 3 years at the current level of provision.³ If the decision is made not to continue this service the current contract will end on 31 October 2019.

3. Background

- 3.1. A rough sleeper is someone who has 'bedded down' (or who is sitting or standing near their bedding) in the open air or in a structure not designed for residential occupation⁴. This will include people in derelict buildings or living in a tent (not on campsites or on organised protests). The MHCLG collect a snapshot of the number of people sleeping rough in local authority areas on a given night each year⁵.

¹ <https://www.homeless.org.uk/facts/homelessness-in-numbers/rough-sleeping/rough-sleeping-our-analysis>

² An entrenched rough sleeper is someone who has been rough sleeping for 6 months or more

³ Inflationary increase has taken the cost of provision over 3 years from £75k in 2016 to £80k in 2019.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluating-the-extent-of-rough-sleeping--2>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2018>

3.2. Figure 1: DCLG Rough Sleeping Figures for ESBC

18 Nov 14	12 Nov 2015	16 Nov 2016	16 Nov 2017	14 Nov 2018
3	7	6	16	11

- 3.3. A Winter Night Shelter was available from December through March in both 2017/18 and 2018/19, which provided a significant resource to the RSOS. The most recent Winter Night Shelter was consistently used by an average of 15⁶ people per night, increasing slightly to an average of 18 in January. The Shelter was mainly used by men, with only 2-4 women using the shelter each night. The age profile shows a peak of people in their 30s and 40s.
- 3.4. Local Authorities do not have a duty to secure accommodation for all homeless people,⁷ although there is a duty to provide advice and assistance in the form of a meaningful Personal Housing Plan (PHP) that is monitored and updated.⁸ The Rough Sleepers Outreach Service provides a useful mechanism for the delivery of PHP actions.
- 3.5. In the absence of an RSOS the response to reports of rough sleeping would need to be managed within existing resources by the Council's Housing Options Team. This would mean that attendance at rough sleeping sites would be 'patchy' with no dedicated resource, and the rough sleepers would need to attend the Customer Services Centre to receive assistance.
- 3.6. Nationally rough sleeping has been on the rise. There was a decrease of 2% from 2017 to 2018, however, since 2010 rough sleeping estimates show an increase of 165% (the number of people sleeping rough in England has increased by 31% in the last 3 years).⁹ The government published its rough sleeping strategy in August 2018,¹⁰ which sets out the government's vision for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027.

4. **Contribution to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1. Environment and Health & Wellbeing

5. **Overview of Performance under the Current Contract**

- 5.1. Since the Rough Sleepers Outreach service was implemented in November 2016, 30 to 60 people have been known by the service to need some level of help regarding rough sleeping in each month. This number is obtained when

⁶ Night Shelters will frequently accommodate the vulnerably housed rather than just rough sleepers, including those who are informally lodging or relying on the hospitality of others.

⁷ Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.188

⁸ Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

⁹ <https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Homeless%20Link%20-%20analysis%20of%20rough%20sleeping%20statistics%20for%20England%202018.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-rough-sleeping-strategy>

known rough sleepers use the YMCA's on-site facilities, which gives them access to a shower, washing, support, hot drinks and a warm TV lounge during the day.

- 5.2. The RSOS receives referrals of rough sleepers from a wide variety of sources, including the Freephone number¹¹ which enables members of the public or the rough sleepers themselves to make a referral for assistance, but also via the 'Streetlink'¹² smart phone application. Streetlink is government funded and provides a means for the public to alert the relevant Local Authority to people sleeping rough, whether or not they are aware of the local services in that area.
- 5.3. Outreach Team members have generally verified that 10-20 people have been separately referred to the service in any 3-monthly period from all referral sources. The service predominantly seeks to make contact within 24 hours (with a maximum limit of 2 working days), usually by visiting the reported rough sleeping sites. Where contact is not made, the service makes up to 4 repeat visits to the site.
- 5.4. The Outreach service has reported upwards of 10 people per quarter being supported into accommodation in the first 2-3 quarters of the contract with varying numbers over the following period. In more recent quarters this number has tended to average around 5. In many cases the YMCA itself provides this accommodation at the Reconnect Project.
- 5.5. It has been noticeable for the last two years that the provision of the Night Shelter in Burton has substantially impacted the number of rough sleepers,¹³ with only 1 or 2 people being identified on any morning through general surveillance and the fortnightly sweeps during the Shelter's period of operation. When the Night Shelter service closed in April 2018 the number of rough sleepers spotted by the surveillance operation of the team rose to 4.¹⁴
- 5.6. Generally over each quarter when the Night Shelter is not available the number of known, entrenched rough sleepers fluctuates only slightly between 6 and 10 people. This is in line with the Council's annual MHCLG returns on the number of rough sleepers in this area (details above at paragraph 3.3).

6. Service Specification

- 6.1. There are a number of aspects from the current service which work, and should be maintained by any future provider if the RSOS is to continue:

- 6.1.1. Referral routes, including freephone and email.

¹¹ <https://www.burtonymca.org/outreach/>

¹² <http://www.streetlink.org.uk/>

¹³ Guests at the Night Shelter do not meet the definition for rough sleeping, and therefore are no longer considered rough sleepers.

¹⁴ Guests at the Night Shelter are not required to reveal their whereabouts following departure, however in many cases we know that they were successfully moved on. In other cases contact has been lost.

- 6.1.2. Respond to all referrals within 2 working days by making direct contact with the rough sleeper through attending the location between 5am and 7:30am to find the person bedded down.
 - 6.1.3. Conduct a fortnightly sweep of sites known to attract rough sleepers in an effort to find individuals for whom a referral has not been received.
 - 6.1.4. Utilise a recognised assessment process to develop and implement personal action plans aimed at securing accommodation and connecting with relevant services.
 - 6.1.5. Closely monitor and assist the most entrenched rough sleepers to access health care and find a route off the streets.
 - 6.1.6. Provide some initial support to individuals moving from the street to independent housing to improve the prospects of tenancy sustainment.
 - 6.1.7. Maintain accurate records on the scale and nature of rough sleeping locally.
- 6.2. There are a small number of things which the Council could update and improve upon in the next commissioning cycle:
- 6.2.1. Collaborate specifically with the Council's Housing Outreach Officer; the provider of the Navigator project, alongside the wider set of homelessness services in the town.
 - 6.2.2. Deliver assertive outreach interventions at the rough sleeping site, and provide assistance to attend accommodation related appointments (including lifts as necessary).
 - 6.2.3. Maintain a network of contacts across a range of supported accommodation providers, such that vacancies can be quickly and effectively utilised.
- 6.3. It is proposed that the contract will commence on the 1 November 2019, to coincide with the ending of the current contract. Mobilisation will necessarily include a short period of hand over, which the Council's Housing Options Team will coordinate.

7. Procurement and Contract Monitoring

- 7.1. The Council's Procurement Strategy 2016 -19 sets out the principles of procurement and commissioning.
- 7.2. It is proposed that the contract is for 3 years. It is estimated that the contract value will be approximately £80k, and therefore we will invite between three and six candidates to tender, ensuring that at least one candidate is local to promote local economic growth.
- 7.3. It is anticipated that this contract will be of most interest to third sector organisations, and on this basis an upfront payment model for each year is likely to be necessary to enable staff recruitment etc. There are many examples of commissioning with the third sector by local government organisations, particularly in health and wellbeing related activities such as the service proposed here.

- 7.4. The market is relatively buoyant with providers who have distinct knowledge and experience in the homelessness field, so it is proposed that we opt for a 50/50 split on price and quality. Having recently commissioned this service we have good reason to believe the specification is robust.
- 7.5. In terms of contract monitoring, this service will be accountable to the Housing Options Team. It is likely that Housing Options Advisors will become involved with many of the service users and therefore can evaluate the quality of service regularly through their dealings with the provider.
- 7.6. The provider will be required to submit quarterly reports utilising a template which is reproduced at Appendix 1. This templates all the pertinent information to understand the number of referrals the service receives; response times from initial report to rough sleeper contact; number of rough sleepers verified and supported by the service; the number of rough sleepers supported into accommodation etc.

8. **Financial Considerations**

This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit: Anya Murray

- 8.1. The main financial issues arising from this Report are as follows:

Revenue	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£	£	£	£
Anticipated expenditure ¹	11,111	26,667	26,667	15,556
S106 Funds	(11,111)	(26,667)	(26,667)	(15,556)
Impact on MTFS	0	0	0	0

¹ Subject to results of procurement exercise

8.1.1. There is no impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy as all the programmes set out in the report are to be funded from relevant S106 balances received.

8.1.2. It is estimated that the service will cost in the region of £80k for the duration of the contract. For the purposes of the estimation above, this has been shown as commencing 1st November 2019 on cessation of the existing contract.

9. **Risk Assessment and Management**

- 9.1. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:

- 9.2. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):

9.2.1. Reduction in the likelihood of serious illness amongst the rough sleeper community.

9.2.2. Maintain a robust system of responding to reports of rough sleeping.

9.2.3. Continue to support commissioning from the third sector.

9.3. **Negative** (Threats):

9.3.1. Reduction in supported housing and other facilities reduce the prospect of successful resolution for individual rough sleepers.

9.3.2. Other support staff such as the Navigator and Housing Outreach Officer are not maintained for the life of the contract.

9.4. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

10. **Legal Considerations**

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team:
Angela Wakefield*

10.1. The main legal issues arising from this Report are as follows:

10.1.1. Relevant powers are the general power of competence in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, and the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002.

10.1.2. The ability to use S.106 monies in this way will depend on the precise wording of each S.106 agreement and whether any necessary deeds of variation can be secured.

10.1.3. The requirements attached to the existing pot of S106 funding do not prohibit the funds being used for this application.

11. **Equalities and Health**

11.1. **Equality impacts:** The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

11.2. **Health impacts:** The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

11.3. The main equality or health issues arising from this Report are as follows:

11.3.1. Personal support should improve equality of access for this marginalised group.

11.4. The equality and health impact assessment identified the following actions to be carried out:

11.4.1. Improved access to housing and health services should improve outcomes for this group.

12. Human Rights

12.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

13. Sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures)

13.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) N/A

13.2. Please detail any positive/negative aspects:

13.2.1. Positive (Opportunities/Benefits)

13.2.1.1. None

13.2.2. Negative (threats)

13.2.2.1. None

14. Recommendation(s)

14.1. To continue the RSOS for a further 3 years at the current level of provision.

15. Background Papers

15.1. The Homelessness Strategy 2018

15.2. The Procurement Strategy 2016

16. **Appendices**

16.1. Appendix 1: Rough Sleepers Outreach Service Quarterly Report Template

Rough Sleepers Outreach Service Quarter X of 20XX

Measure	Month	Month	Month
Referrals received by email / Streetlink			
Referrals received by telephone / In Person			
Average response time to a report of rough sleeping			
The number of rough sleepers verified and supported by the service			
The number of new rough sleepers receiving support			
The number of entrenched rough sleepers receiving support			
The number of rough sleepers supported into accommodation			

Feedback on progress in respect of entrenched rough sleepers:

The reasons / barriers where no accommodation is secured:

Submitted on behalf of (Provider) by:

Any other business: