



Executive Director/Director Non-Key Executive Decision Report

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Jonathan South,
Service Manager - Accommodation and Support
Service

Tel: 0114 2930883

Report to: *Janet Sharpe*

Date of Decision:

Subject: *Agree to delivery of the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders Scheme (AFO)*

Which Cabinet Member Portfolio does this relate to? Executive Member for Housing, Roads and Waste Management

Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? Safer and Stronger Communities

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? Yes No

If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? *(Insert reference number)*

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-

"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."

Purpose of Report:

To outline the Accommodation for Ex-Offender Scheme and its planned delivery.

To seek approval to receive the funding from the MHCLG and progress to the deliver stage of the scheme.

Recommendations:

- i. Approve the acceptance of the MHCLG grant offer of £187,041.
- ii. Approve the recruitment of such staff and the delivery of the scheme as detailed in this report within City Wide Housing Services.

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: <i>Sonya Oates</i>
	Legal: <i>Henry Watmough-Cownie</i>
	Equalities: <i>Louise Nunn</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	Lead Officer Name: <i>Jonathan South</i>
	Job Title: <i>Service Manager – Accommodation and Support Service</i>
Date: <i>26th July 2021</i>	

Background Papers:**Appendix A** – Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**Appendix B** Equality Impact Statement

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 We know that 53% of those who have slept rough in the last year had been in prison. We also know there are particular challenges for some prisoner leavers accessing private rented sector tenancies. In an attempt to improve access to accommodation for ex-offenders the MHCLG requested bids to a fund to enable the introduction of new schemes specifically focused on supporting ex-offenders, increasing their access and sustainment of private rented sector tenancies.
- 1.2 The funding was developed to complement the MoJ's own recently announced Community Accommodation Service (CAS). The aim is to build a pathway from prison, through the MoJ's CAS provision, before moving onto their own PRS tenancy through local schemes.
- 1.3 Sheffield submitted a bid for funding which was successful and has received an award of £187,041 to provide up to 30 self contained private tenancies to ex-offenders along with support to manage the tenancy with the aim to reduce the risk of re-offending.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

- 2.1 The decision to deliver this scheme will provide additional accommodation and build further links between partner organisations delivering support and accommodation to ex-offenders. Rough sleeping can be an outcome for ex-offenders who struggle to secure and maintain a tenancy. There is often a cycle of repeat offending and rough sleeping within this group. By providing up to 30 homes and support in those tenancies the customers supported will be enabled to succeed with a reduced risk of re-offending and future homelessness.
- 2.2 Three new posts will be created within City Wide Housing Services to support the project, two in the Housing Solutions Service and one in Private Rented Solutions Team within the Accommodation and Support Service. A project steering group will be set up within City Wide Housing to monitor progress and delivery, gather intelligence on the pathways into housing of ex-offenders and barriers faced as well as strengthening links with other providers.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 The Council is not required to carry out a consultation process in respect of this proposal. A formal consultation process has not been carried out.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications

- 4.1.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached. The main impacts identified are that a new scheme will have a positive equality impact primarily on ex

offenders successfully accessing accommodation with specific support to help them succeed in their new tenancy and new communities with a reduced risk of re-offending.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 Total funding of £187,041 will be paid directly to Sheffield City Council by MHCLG, via a Section 31 Grant Determination. Funding for 2021 will be paid in August (£80,431.50) and November (£80,431.50) 2021. Funding of £26,178 for 2022 will be paid in the early part of 2022-2023
- 4.2.2 This funding covers the interventions as listed below:
- Accommodation for up to 30 service users
 - Funding towards 1 housing solutions officer – 12 months
 - Funding towards 1 support worker (Housing First style role) – 12 months
 - Funding towards 1 navigator in the Housing Solutions team – 12 months
 - Financial tenancy support package including rent top up package and landlords insurance package.
- 4.2.3 Staff costs will be paid regardless of delivery performance, subject to successful recruitment of staff. However, any future payments for all other costs, including financial incentives and tenancy support packages, will be dependent on delivering the Government's outcomes of ending rough sleeping and reducing re-offending. This will be measured by the number of ex-offenders that have been supported into accommodation against the agreed target.
- 4.2.4 This funding is for the purpose of delivering services in Sheffield City Council. It is Sheffield City Council responsibility to provide assurance to their MHCLG account manager that funding is accounted for and is only applied to activity agreed in the delivery plan.
- 4.2.5 At the end of the programme in 2022 both the funding and the activity will cease. There will be no ongoing commitment on the Council to continue any of the work prescribed in the MoU
- 4.2.6 The MoU is not legally binding; however there is an expectation that the roles and responsibilities and the monitoring arrangements are honoured.
- 4.2.7 All public sector procurement is governed by UK National Law. In addition, all procurement in Sheffield City Council must comply with its own Procurement Policy, and internal regulations known as 'Contracts Standing Orders' (CSOs).
- Contracts Standing Orders requirements will apply in full to the procurement of services, goods or works utilising grants. All grant monies must be treated in the same way as any other Council monies and any requirement to purchase/acquire services, goods or works must go via a competitive process.
- 4.2.8 The Project Manager will need to read, understand and comply with all of the grant terms and conditions and the [Code of Conduct for Grant Recipients](#).

4.3 Legal Implications

There are no significant legal issues arising from this decision. Any agreement or MOU provided from MHCLG has not been reviewed by legal, so this Authority needs to be satisfied that it can meet any proposed conditions and reporting requirements contained in any such agreement.

Advice should be sought from HR with regard to the recruitment and funding of any new posts.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 No alternative options were considered.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Permission is sought for final approval to progress with recruitment, advertising of the scheme, sourcing accommodation and the provision of a steering group to monitor delivery.

6.2 Approval for the receipt and management of grant income is also requested.