

TITLE OF REPORT: **Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Funding 2022-2025**

REPORT OF: **Colin Huntington, Strategic Director, Housing,
Environment and Healthy Communities**

Purpose of the Report

1. To note a decision taken under delegated powers, to submit the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding bid, for period 2022-2025, on the grounds of urgency, due to bid submission timescales.

Background

2. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced a 3-year spending initiative (2022-2025) to end rough sleeping and asked local authorities to consider how the funding could be used to support their plans.
3. Gateshead are currently part of a partnership led by Sunderland City Council, which also includes South Tyneside Council and Oasis Community Housing as the delivery partner in Gateshead. This funding has enabled the delivery of essential services to support rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping through the provision of a direct access assessment centre, resettlement and outreach support, including 7 'housing first' units.
4. Sunderland City Council confirmed they would be submitting a bid as a single authority for this round of RSI funding. Given the link between the services with South Tyneside Council, a joint bid with Gateshead Council acting as the lead authority was developed.
5. The bid submission process involved the completion of a self-assessment, project plan and bid application. Co-production meetings were also held with DLUHC to develop the plans. The submission deadline was 25 February 2022.

Proposal

6. The bid proposes to maintain (and in some cases increase) provision of the interventions for rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping, including addressing current gaps in female rough sleeping provision.
7. The table below provides a breakdown of the RSI 2022-2025 funding applied for:

	Total
2022/23	£559,241.98
2023/24	£716,721.64
2024/25	£627,675.78
Total	£1,903,639.40

8. As part of the bid process, we were asked to identify what funding is required each year with an expectation that this will be tapered and how this will be phased over the three-year period. As outlined in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy approved by Cabinet in January 2022, the bid submission takes account of the remodelling and recommissioning of homelessness accommodation and support services, due to commence in Autumn 2022.
9. DLUHC have provided an assurance to assist with service planning and minimise any gaps in service provision that they will confirm a minimum of 75% of our current RSI funding costs for the first three months of RSI 2022-25. This will be paid pro-rated between 1 April and 30 June 2022 and is calculated based on the 9-month RSI for 2021/22.
10. The bid has been submitted and DLUHC have confirmed that announcements regarding funding are likely to be made in April/May 2022.

Recommendations

11. It is recommended that Cabinet notes that a bid has been submitted as described in the report and agreed by the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital and Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities under an urgent delegated decision in accordance with Schedule 5, Part 2 General Delegations to Managers, Paragraph (4)(e) of the Council's Constitution.

For the following reason:

To maximise the funding opportunities to support the delivery of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. The proposals support the overall vision for Gateshead as set out in Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives and directly relate to the following pledges:
 - Put people and families at the heart of everything we do
 - Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance
 - Support our communities to help themselves and each other
 - Work together and fight for a better future for Gateshead
2. The Housing Strategy 2019-2030 identifies a vision for housing in Gateshead, centred on three strategic themes - supply, standards, and support. The Rough Sleeping Initiative directly links to the support theme and its main objectives to tackle homelessness and its root causes and promote tenancy sustainment and wellbeing.
3. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy sets out a clear vision to prevent and end homelessness in all forms in Gateshead over the next five years. The interventions which will be supported by the Rough Sleeping bid are key to the strategic aims set out in the strategy, in particular the aim for no-one to be sleeping rough or in unsuitable accommodation.
4. Further, improving access to accommodation and support for Rough Sleepers underpins many of the aims set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, most notably:
 - Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
 - Ensure a healthy standard of living for all, in accordance with international law on economic and social rights
 - Create and develop sustainable communities
 - Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention.

Background

5. As part of the spending review the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced multi-year funding (2022-2025) of £2 Billion to end rough sleeping and asked local authorities to consider how the funding could be used to support their plans. Previous rounds of RSI funding have been for 12-month periods only.
6. The funding is designed to support local authorities to build on the successes already established through RSI, continuing the work to reduce the number of people sleeping rough and enhance services for them and those at risk of sleeping rough. A key aim of RSI 2022-2025 is to give local authorities the funding certainty to think longer-term about responses to rough sleeping and interventions needed to end it.

7. DLUHC are looking for local authorities to consider their responses across four objectives: Prevention, Intervention, Recovery and Systems Support.
8. The bid submission process involved the completion of a self-assessment, project plan and bid application. Co-production meetings were also held with DLUHC to develop the plans.
9. The bid proposes to maintain (and in some cases increase) provision of the following interventions for rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping, including addressing current gaps in female rough sleeping provision:
 - **Assessment Centre and Resettlement service** – 4 direct access 24/7 bedspaces (male only), outreach service to engage with clients on the street and offer a personalised holistic approach in relation to both accommodation and support.
 - **Supported Accommodation - Housing first principles** – Council owned accommodation leased to a provider to manage and support very complex high-risk individuals with a history of rough sleeping. Provision increased from 7 properties in 2021-2022 to 10 in 2022-2023 to address gap identified for more direct access accommodation for females. Provision will be tapered to 8 properties in 2024-2025 following the remodelling and recommissioning of supported accommodation due to commence Autumn 2022.
 - **Personalisation funding pot** - Flexible fund to support clients based on their individual needs rather than a prescribed outcome defined by the service. Additional funding requested to support those with no recourse to public funds.

As the assessment centre is a shared resource between Gateshead and South Tyneside, if the bid is successful a partnership agreement will be established with South Tyneside Council to ensure appropriate governance is in place.

10. The following table provides a breakdown of the RSI 2022-2025 funding applied for:

	Total
2022/23	£559,241.98
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2024/25	£627,675.78
Total	£1,903,639.40

11. Whilst there are some parts of the bid specific to Gateshead or South Tyneside the shared nature of the Assessment Centre, Resettlement Service and Supported Accommodation mean that to split the bid values between Gateshead and South Tyneside would be arbitrary.

Consultation

12. The Cabinet Member for Housing has been consulted in the submission of the bid. Key stakeholders and delivery partners were consulted in the development of the self-assessment.

Alternative Options

13. An alternative option would have been to not submit a bid or submit a single entity bid but this would not maximise the funding opportunities to the Council or be the preferred model.

Implications of Recommended Option

14. Resources:

a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that the financial implications are as detailed in the report.

b) **Human Resources Implications** – None

c) **Property Implications** - None

15. Risk Management Implication

Risk to service delivery if bid unsuccessful/partially funded.

16. Equality and Diversity Implications

Extension of service provision to female rough sleepers as outlined in the bid ensures equality of access to accommodation and support for all.

17. Crime and Disorder Implications – None

18. Health Implications

Supporting this client group will have a positive impact on health and wellbeing by enabling access to suitable accommodation and support services including health-based services.

19. Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications - None

20. Human Rights Implications - None

21. Ward Implications - None