

Decision Number: 37 (2019/21)

Portfolio Holder Executive Decision Statement

The Local Authority (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Subject: To agree a S106 affordable housing planning gains spending proposal towards the essential refurbishment of 7 units of supported accommodation located in Sevenoaks.

Details of Decision taken

To allocate £200,000 from the District Council's S106 affordable housing planning gains under HP2 - 'Initiatives to make better use of the existing stock' and HP3 - 'Managing future needs for affordable housing including homelessness prevention and benefit advisory services'.

This funding request is to enable the essential refurbishment of 7 units of supported housing in Sevenoaks which are no longer 'fit for purpose'. The total refurbishment cost of £338,000 will be jointly funded with West Kent Housing Association.

Reason for Decision

In the Sevenoaks District, there is a significant lack of affordable accommodation with on-site support for those with complex needs (including mental ill-health, addition issues and substance misuse). We have seen an increase in approaches to the Housing Advice service from individuals with complex needs who are homeless/at risk of homelessness - in particular from those who are rough sleeping.

Currently we have 25 rough sleepers in emergency accommodation, many of these individuals having been accommodated during the first lockdown in March 2020 through Government's 'Everyone In' initiative. In addition to a lack of supported accommodation in the District, there is limited access to such accommodation elsewhere in Kent - with most providers having a long waiting list. Many of the individuals currently in emergency accommodation have complex needs and it is therefore difficult to secure supported move-on accommodation for them. Not only does this have a negative impact on their ability to move on and to aid recovery, but it also has financial implications for the Council in terms of increasing emergency accommodation costs.

The Council has been working with partner organisations, including West Kent Housing Association, to identify wraparound support and accommodation for those who need it. An existing supported housing scheme located in Sevenoaks and owned by West Kent Housing Association recently had to close as the building was no longer 'fit for purpose'. The total cost of the required

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refurbishment works to bring the building up to the necessary standards is £338,000. WKHA will permit for the Council to have nomination rights to discharge our street homeless into this accommodation. This funding proposal therefore seeks to gain approval for the Council's contribution using S106 affordable housing planning gains.

All Documents considered:

Housing Strategy Action Plan
Core Strategy (Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document)
The Community Plan
West Kent Housing & Homelessness Strategy

Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the Member when making the Decision:

None.

Financial implications

Funding is requested from S106 affordable housing planning gains. There is currently sufficient unallocated funding to support this work. Without this funding, there will be an increased need to place people in emergency nightly paid accommodation, therefore increasing expenditure on Council budgets.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal implications.

This funding will contribute towards the provision of much needed supported accommodation in the District for people with complex needs facing homelessness. Without access to such accommodation, there is a high risk that we will not be able to find suitable accommodation for households in need.


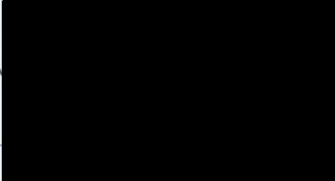
Equality Impacts (Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty)

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

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Local Member (s), other Portfolio Holders and/or Directors/Heads of Service Consulted Cllr Kevin Maskell - Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health Cllr Julia Thornton - Portfolio Holder for Development & Conservation Sarah Robson - Chief Officer, People and Places	
Details of any conflicts of interest a) declared by any executive member who is consulted by the Decision Taker b) and any details of dispensations granted by the Chief Executive in respect of any declared conflict	
Decision taken by:	Cllr Kevin Maskell - Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health Cllr Julia Thornton - Portfolio Holder for Development & Conservation
Signed by Portfolio Holder	 
Date of Decision	10/2/2021 10/2/2021
Record made by:	
Date of record:	16.2.21

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