

(For Democratic Services use)

Decision Number: 11 - 2022/23

Portfolio Holder Executive Decision Statement

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

Subject:

Use of S106 affordable housing pot monies to fund a programme of cash incentive grants under the Changing Spaces Scheme

Details of Decision taken:

To approve the use of up to £55,000 S106 affordable housing pot monies to fund a programme of cash incentive grants under the Changing Spaces Scheme.

Any monies remaining unspent at the end of the period in which the Scheme is in operation, will be returned to the S106 affordable housing pots.

Reason for Decision:

The Housing Strategy 2022/2027 contains 4 key themes, including *Theme 2: Promoting quality and optimising range and suitability of new and existing homes*. The Theme includes an action to make better use of the existing social housing stock. In 12/2022, Cabinet approved the introduction of a new under-occupation incentive scheme (now known as the Changing Spaces Scheme). The Scheme will operate for an initial two year period, anticipated as April 2023 to March 2025.

Three Registered Provider partners - WKHA, Moat and Places for People, have confirmed their intention to participate in the Scheme and a Service Level Agreement is currently being finalised.

The Scheme will assist tenants who are under-occupying family sized social housing to downsize to more suitable housing. It will also assist tenants to move from adapted housing where those adaptations are no longer required by the household. The Scheme will provide a full

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hand-holding service for interested tenants and a cash incentive grant to those who complete a move.

The cash incentive grant for those downsizing will be:

- £500 for each bedroom given up, plus £1,000;
- for any tenant moving to one bedroom designated older persons' housing, an additional £500 will be paid;

For those who are moving from an adapted home:

- a one off payment of £1,000;
- if any bedrooms are also given up within the move, the level of grant will be the same as that applying to those downsizing.

Where tenants of WKHA or Moat move under the Scheme, it has been agreed the cash incentive grant will be joint funded and paid for on a 50:50 basis between the District Council and the landlord Registered Provider. In the case of Places for People, the District Council has agreed to pay 100% of the cash incentive grant. Due to their limited stock numbers, this is considered to be an acceptable and financially safe position for the District Council to take. However should the Scheme be extended for a further period of operation, this position would be reviewed.

Based on the previous under-occupation scheme ("Small is Beautiful" with WKHA), it is considered a contribution of up to £55,000 by the District Council to the cash incentive grants programme, should be adequate in order to keep pace with demand.

Should any of the District Council's contribution remain unspent at the end of the period in which the Scheme is in operation, it will be returned to the S106 affordable housing pots.

Planning Policy have confirmed the use of S106 affordable housing monies in the way described in this report, falls within the permitted uses set out in the Affordable Housing SPD 2011, i.e. Housing Pot 2 - *initiatives to make better use of the existing housing stock.*

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All Documents considered:

Housing Strategy 2022/2027
Affordable Housing SPD 2011
Report to Cabinet 12/2022 "Making best use of the social housing stock - under occupation initiative"

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

None

Financial implications:

The proposal can be fully funded through the use of S106 affordable housing monies.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement:

None

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.


Local Member (s), other Portfolio Holders and Chief Officer/Head of Service Consulted:

None

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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:	Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health
Signed by Portfolio Holder	
Date of Decision	26/01/2023
Record made by:	Phil Magee
Date of record:	26/01/2023

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