

CABINET MEETING – 8 FEBRUARY 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Grant Funding for Specialist Domestic Abuse Provision

Author(s):

Report of the Executive Director Neighbourhoods

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval to the award of grant funding for specialist domestic abuse provision.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is requested to:

- (i) approve the award of grant funding for specialist domestic abuse provision for a period of 2 years; and
- (ii) authorise the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and Healthy City Portfolio Holder to subsequently award grant funding to the local delivery partners.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

The grant funding ensures continued provision of and access to specialist accommodation and support for domestic violence and abuse victims with complex needs across the six Northumbria local authority areas and is in line with the statutory requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

Do not provide grant funding – this option is rejected as the grant funding contributes to a regional Consortium and if funding is not provided Sunderland services would cease to be provided, which would impact on the regional approach.

Impacts analysed;

Equality Privacy Sustainability Crime and Disorder

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's Co-Operative Values? Yes

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? Yes

Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions? Yes

CABINET – 8 FEBRUARY 2022

GRANT FUNDING FOR SPECIALIST DOMESTIC ABUSE PROVISION

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to award grant funding for specialist domestic abuse provision.

2. DESCRIPTION OF DECISION (RECOMMENDATIONS)

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- (i) approve the award of grant funding for specialist domestic abuse provision for a period of 2 years; and
- (ii) authorise the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Service and the Healthy City Portfolio Holder to subsequently award grant funding to the local delivery partners.

3. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2016, the Northumbria Wide Domestic Abuse Consortium was successful in securing grant support from the former Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Fund for Domestic Abuse Services, including Refuge, to help local areas meet the priorities for Domestic Abuse Services. As part of the original grant application, the Consortium were required to identify the named delivery partners who would work with the Consortium to deliver services utilising the grant funding. These partners, who are Third Sector organisations, were identified due to the specialist nature of the support services they provide as part of their core business.
- 3.2 The Tyne & Wear and Northumberland Consortium is made up of:
- 6 local authorities – Sunderland, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Gateshead and Northumberland
 - 9 specialist domestic abuse services and refuge providers
 - Health partners: Northumberland Tyne and Wear Foundation Trust (mental health trust); Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), South Tyneside CCG; and Newcastle Gateshead CCG
 - 4 Registered Social Landlords: Gentoo; Your Homes Newcastle; South Tyneside Homes; Gateshead Housing Company
 - Treatment providers and those providing wrap-around support services:
 - Northumbria Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
 - Rape Crisis Tyneside and Northumberland

- 3.3 The aim of the grant funding was to enhance and strengthen provision of and access to specialist accommodation and support for domestic violence and abuse victims with complex needs across the six Northumbria local authority areas, ensuring no one is turned away from help they needed.
- 3.4 The grant funding enabled delivery partners to provide specialist support to a cohort of victims who are not high risk but have high complexity (often as a result of historic and prolonged trauma) who place high demand on services. Continued cross-boundary working ensured that the services and dispersed accommodation was available to victims from across all of the local authority areas, as well as those seeking support from further afield.
- 3.5 Furthermore, it enabled the provision of support to domestic abuse victims whose needs are not traditionally well met such as black minority ethnic and refugee women, employed women who are ineligible for housing benefit and for whom dispersed options are a more affordable choice than refuge, women with teenage sons who cannot access refuge accommodation, families with pets, older women, LGBT men and women, victims from rural areas, and men who typically have limited access to refuge accommodation but could benefit from being able to access safe, dispersed accommodation.
- 3.6 Specifically, the grant funding enabled the specialist local delivery partners to provide the following services, which enhanced and added to the services they were already providing as part of their core business:
- Outreach Support
 - Crash Pad Provision
 - Sanctum Scheme
 - Appropriate move-on/dispersed accommodation to victims with complex needs in Sunderland.
- 3.7 These arrangements have been in place since 2016, however grant funding from the former MHCLG ended with the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 with Local Authorities provided with Additional Burdens funding instead to meet the requirements of the Act.
- 3.8 Despite the cessation of the MHCLG funding, the Consortium collectively agreed to continue to provide grant funding to the delivery partners to provide the services that continued to support the original aims of the grant funding.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Following implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, all Local Authorities involved in the Northumbria Wide Domestic Abuse Consortium agreed to continue to make these grant payments available to the delivery partners that were named in the original MHCLG grant bid. This funding would be met from the Additional Burdens allocation each Local Authority has received to implement the requirements of the Act.

- 4.2 To date, in line with the original grant funding allocation from the MHCLG in 2016, the Consortium partners have retained the arrangements that were put in place with the delivery partners, who are the specialist providers of domestic abuse support services in the region and the services have continued to be provided as outlined in section 3.6 above.
- 4.3 Grant funding is made available to the delivery partners subject to the funding only being used for the purpose of which it is provided, as referred to in section 3.6 and is based on the original grant conditions. Grant payments are made to each of the delivery partners on a quarterly in arrears basis via invoice and quarterly grant monitoring takes place to ensure that services are being provided in line with the grant arrangements. These monitoring arrangements will continue throughout the course of the funding period.
- 4.4 The total value of the grant funding for the specialist domestic abuse provision will be £142,998 in Year 2021- 2022 and £142,998 in Year 2022 – 2023. The total grant funding will be £285,996 for the 2-year term.

5. Reasons for the Decision

- 5.1 The grant funding ensures continued provision of and access to specialist accommodation and support for domestic violence and abuse victims with complex needs across the six Northumbria local authority areas and is in line with the statutory requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 Do not provide grant funding – this option is rejected as the grant funding contributes to a regional Consortium and if funding is not provided Sunderland services would cease to be provided, which would impact on the regional approach.

7. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

- (i) **Co-operative Values:** Sunderland City Council is a co-operative Council and will act ethically in all its actions whilst adhering to and actively promoting its co-operative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. These values underpin our decision making and actions.
- (ii) **Financial Implications:** Provision exists within the Council's revenue budget for Domestic Abuse from the Additional Burdens Allocation. The grant allocation costs will be met from this provision.
- (iii) **Legal Implications:** In accordance with Part 4, Section 7 of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules (FPR16 Payment of Grants and Benefits) approval of Cabinet must be sought before Chief Officers provide assistance to any third party by way of loan, grant or guarantee of over £50,000 to any one body in any one financial year.

