

1. **Churches Together Winter 2020** (Pages 1 - 6)

CABINET MEMBERS DELEGATED DECISION

Open		Would any decisions proposed :		
Any especially affected Wards	Discretionary /	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide	YES	
	Operational	Need to be recommendations to Council	NO	
		Is it a Key Decision	NO	
Lead Member: Cllr Adrian Lawrence E-mail: cllr.adrian.lawrence@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted:		
		Other Members consulted:		
Lead Officer: Duncan Hall E-mail: Duncan.hall@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial:01553 616445		Other Officers consulted: Lorraine Gore		
Financial Implications YES	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications YES
If not for publication, the paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act considered to justify that is (are) paragraph(s)				
Date meeting advertised: 17 th September 2019		Date of meeting decision to be taken: 24 th September 2019		
Deadline for Call-In: 1 st October 2019				

NIGHT SHELTER PROVISION – NOVEMBER 2019 TO MARCH 2020

Summary

This decision deals with making a financial contribution towards the costs of running a night shelter provision in King's Lynn for the coming winter. The proposed initiative is led by the King's Lynn Night Shelter charity, and as last year will be based on opening seven nights a week - from November 2019 until March 2020.

Recommendation

That the Council supports the proposal by making a financial contribution of £30,000 from funds ring fenced for tackling homelessness activities. The proposed provision will ensure that partner organisations have planned for the worst. Additional staffing resources have been proposed for this year's operation and there are consequently additional costs. The majority of the funding is expected to come from grants from other organisations and public donations.

Reason for Decision

The Council wants to see an end to rough sleeping in line with central government objectives. This provision planned for 2019/20 will mean that if anyone is rough sleeping they will have somewhere safe to shelter from the cold and avoid the dangers associated with sleeping outside. Working in partnership with the King's Lynn Night Shelter will help the Council and its partners engage with people that often do not directly seek help.

Background

The Night Shelter operated 7 nights a week for the winter months of 2018/2019. This was the first time the project operated on this basis. The project opened at St Ann's Fort following some modifications and improvements to the building. Volunteers assisted individually or in teams, including teams from RAF Marham and Mars foods.

The project assisted 97 people over the course of the season (until the end of March 2018) with an average of 20 each night. Those using the project received a hot evening meal and a bed for the night. Many of the people who came were dealing with complex needs and multiple disadvantage. There were people with physical health problems and people with mental health problems. There were a variety of ages from 18 to people in their 70's. Some were fleeing domestic violence or other issues.

It is clear from an impact report subsequently prepared by the Night Shelter charity that people were assisted that otherwise would have spent the night outside. The Night Shelter provision meant that the Council did not need to provide additional emergency beds in hostel provision in the town as it had done in the previous winter 2017/18. These arrangements had proved particularly difficult to sustain over periods of prolonged cold.

The conditional contribution the Council made last year was matched by other sources including public donations. The success of the project was in part down to the commitment of volunteer staff and the generosity of the public donating food, toiletries and bedding.

The Night Shelter charity has requested the Council consider making a financial contribution for the winter season 2019/2020 of £30,000. The proposed arrangements are similar to last year; however some changes have been to the staffing arrangements, to provide additional staffing resources. Additional resources will increase the time available for other organisations (including the Council) to make contact with those using the project to help the process of finding suitable accommodation, and will also help improve security.

It is likely that based on current information, there will again this year be significant demand for the night shelter provision.

Proposal for winter 2019/2020

- A night shelter operational from 5.30pm to 10am the following day. The initiative to run from November until March covering 22 weeks.
- The provisions to be based at the Purfleet Trust's former premises at 5 St Ann's Fort, King's Lynn.

- The service to be provided by charity working closely with Genesis (particularly the new rough sleeper outreach service) The Purfleet Trust, and the Borough Council.
- The Night Shelter to operate with 7 employees, supported by a team of volunteers.
- The Shelter will provide some food and comfort to people using the service – from voluntary donations

Agreed principles and conditions

- Universal access – The charity have a clear commitment to ensure anyone can use the project, but will work with other partners to ensure that people have information to facilitate engagement with support providers or accommodation providers. In circumstances where people are from outside the area engagement may be with services that will help return people home where this is in their interest.
- The shelter will be in line with basic ‘rest centre’ provision and is not appropriate for extended periods of time.
- The shelter is designed to be a temporary solution to avoid rough sleeping or sleeping in a dangerous environment and is not accommodation.
- A Service Level Agreement will be prepared between the Council and the Charity detailing some conditions attached to the funding which will include information sharing, and arrangements for personal safety and fire risk assessment

Financial implications

The budgeted expenses have increased for 2019/2020 and stand at £112,349. The charity has requested a contribution from the Council of £30,000.

It is proposed that the Council makes a conditional commitment to fund the requested amount based on the service as described being delivered and the remaining funding being secured from other sources. The funding can be met from available resources under the Flexible Homelessness Support grant received from Ministry Housing Communities and Local Government.

Options Considered

An alternative option is to commission a new service. This is not favoured as it is unlikely that there are many organisations that would be interested in delivering such an initiative. The proposal also benefits from the commitment

of a number of volunteers who will assist employed staff. Furthermore, the group are committed to assisting people in these circumstances, and commissioning an alternative service would probably mean that a duplicate service would run which would not be appropriate.

Do nothing is not an option in the context of evidence over the last 2-3 years of increasing numbers of vulnerable people with complex needs rough sleeping.

Policy Implications

The provision of adequate severe weather shelter arrangements has been a priority in recent years in the advent of increasing numbers of rough sleeping. A commitment to tackling rough sleeping will be set out in the Council's emerging new strategy on homelessness and rough sleeping.

Personnel Implications

None

Statutory Considerations

Providing cold weather shelter arrangements go beyond a statutory duty, however, there is an expectation from government that housing authorities take a co-ordinating role in these matters.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(Pre screening report template attached)

Risk Management Implications

It is important that adequate and robust arrangements for severe weather shelter are made as there is a risk that people that the Council has identified as being without accommodation, could experience serious harm associated with living outside in cold weather.

Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

None

Background Papers

The Night Shelter's impact report can be viewed by following the link below:

<https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/8d333cb0/files/uploaded/KLWNS%20impact%20report%202018-19%20final.pdf>

.....
Signed
(Cabinet Member)

.....
Date

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Name of policy/service/function	Proposed night shelter –provision Winter 2019/ 2020				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	A contribution to the Night Shelter was made in 2018				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	Provision of a shelter operating 7 nights a week through the winter from November to March 22 weeks. This is not a statutory provision but will help stabilize those who are rough sleeping, and give an opportunity for appropriate organizations to engage and work on accommodation solutions.				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			√	
	Disability			√	
	Gender			√	
	Gender Re-assignment			√	
	Marriage/civil partnership			√	
	Pregnancy & maternity			√	
	Race			√	
	Religion or belief			√	
	Sexual orientation			√	
	Other (eg low income)			√	
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No				
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	Yes	The initiative is designed to address the disadvantage faced by homeless people with complex needs			
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	Yes / No	Actions: no action			
		Actions agreed by EWG member:			
Assessment completed by: Name Duncan Hall					
Job title Housing Services Manager	Date 20 August, 2019				

Please Note: If there are any positive or negative impacts identified in question 1, or there any 'yes' responses to questions 2 – 4 a full impact assessment will be required.