

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET MEMBER MEETING – HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES**

**7 January 2021**

**Report of the Director of Public Health**

**FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE ‘NO SECOND NIGHT’ SCHEME IN  
DERBYSHIRE**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

This report aims to:

- i. Update the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities on the partnership approach to operate a COVID Safe ‘No Second Night Out’ scheme to support the homelessness population of Derbyshire throughout the winter.
- ii. Seek approval of grant funding of £82,500 towards the initiative, by providing funding for the support worker element of the project.

**2. Information and Analysis**

Launched in 2011, the No Second Night Out is a national initiative calling on all Councils to tackle rough sleeping. In 2018 the government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy committed to ending rough sleeping by 2027. This strategy recommended a collaborative and joined up approach, working innovatively with business, communities, faith and voluntary groups and the general public.

In response to this Derbyshire Homeless Officers Group (DHOG) have been working in partnership with Derby City Mission to provide a No Second Night Out approach, utilising church rooms for communal sleeping in Chesterfield and Derby. Derby City Mission have a proven track record in fast mobilisation of the winter night shelters and safe space. Last winter saw:

- 128 people accessed Chesterfield winter shelter
- 50 people from the night shelter stayed 5 nights or more
- 40 people directed to Derby City shelters from Amber Valley in the same year
- 20 people placed in hotels

There are currently 37 rough sleepers in the Derbyshire area.

However, due to the coronavirus pandemic, usual operational arrangements are not currently a viable option. DHOG have been looking into alternative

options, [in line with national guidance](#), building on the experience they gained in the first national lockdown under 'Everyone In' directive. In that scenario accommodation was provided for Derbyshire residents at Twin Oaks Hotel in Chesterfield, and although successful, was a costly option that could be improved on. DHOG have a detailed checklist based on learning from the Twin Oaks scheme they are applying to this project.

The COVID safe approach being developed by DHOG utilises the not-for-profit privately-operated Mount Cook Outdoor Centre in Wirksworth to operate a scheme from 1 December 2020 until 28 February 2021. District and borough councils will work in partnership with the YMCA to provide 36 single room beds, with an option to increase this to 46 if demand requires, utilising the pod accommodation on the Mount Cook site. The extra capacity on site will allow for out of hours emergency homelessness provision where there have been 439 calls so far this year alone.

This site location and scheme layout enables social distancing/ self-isolation to be maintained, which would not be possible in the normal communal sleeping environment that normally operates utilising church halls. Referrals will be made direct to out of hours homelessness service with 24-hour access to accommodation.

DHOG have confirmed that they will co-ordinate the overall project, which is a broad collaboration between local authorities, police, fire, probation, private and voluntary sector providers. The project is being championed at the county level by the Police and Crime Commissioner as homelessness lead.

District and boroughs will cover rent payments via existing Housing Benefit budgets, triggered when a tenancy is taken up. YMCA will act as the landlord and undertake the tenancy management role. Mount Cook will provide additional, cooking, cleaning and laundry services. P3 charity, housing options teams, drug and alcohol services and Pathways of Chesterfield are actively engaged alongside housing options teams to provide comprehensive wrap around support.

DHOG have approached Public Health to provide additional funding for the provision of on-site support workers, as the volunteers who normally support the scheme are unable to this year due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Onsite support worker presence builds on learning from the Twin Oaks experience earlier in the year where it was identified as critical to have 24 hour 7-day-a-week support cover on site. Employing a team of support workers to ensure onsite presence of two members of staff with a 24/7 presence, employed by Derby City Mission, will cost £27,500 per month and this is not recoverable under Housing Benefit.

Providing funding to cover the cost of the support workers offers a unique opportunity to link residents with appropriate support services e.g. appropriate healthcare, drugs and alcohol support, mental health support services to

improve the health and wellbeing of the residents and support them to transition into more stable accommodation options.

### **3. Risks**

DHOG have completed a detailed risk assessment, but there are several risks to be aware of:

- There are no alternative winter night shelters in operation this year if this scheme does not go ahead. Alternative hotel provision is closing, which is limiting capacity to support the homeless population.
- Adverse weather plans are in place as the site is in a rural location.
- YMCA acting as landlord will provide maintenance personnel to address safety issues including SHARPS removal if required
- DHOG budgets cover additional transport costs to enable individuals to travel to support services outside of the Wirksworth area.
- The project is reliant on funding streams from several partners to make it viable. Therefore, if DCC Public Health does not contribute the support worker element the overall project may be at risk.
- Void payments are a risk if the scheme is underutilised as housing benefit will not be triggered until a tenancy is agreed. DHOG have agreed an approach to share void costs.
- One local authority has decided not to participate in the scheme due to travel time to Mount Cook from their area.
- YMCA/ Derby Mission will have sole use of the Mount Cook site and no private guests will be staying on site which should minimise risks in terms of contact tracing/ self-isolation should an outbreak of COVID-19 occur and any wider safeguarding issues.
- An SLA arrangement between DCC and DHOG will be developed to confirm DCC Public Health's involvement is in relation to the support worker element only and responsibility for the overall operation of the scheme lies with DHOG.
- Further meetings are due to take place to finalise support from a primary care, pharmacy provision and drug and alcohol support services.

### **3. Financial Considerations**

This report seeks £82,500 to cover the costs of a 24/7 support worker presence comprising of two workers to engage with individuals accessing accommodation through this programme. DCC Public Health funding will be paid to Derbyshire Dales District Council who will hold the money on behalf of all of the authorities operating the scheme.

### **4. Human Resources Considerations**

The funding will enable local providers to deliver projects and services. Derbyshire County Council accepts no employment or future redundancy liability, with all employment and related matters to be managed by the providers.

## **5. Legal Considerations**

The Council's Financial Regulations allow grants of up to £0.100m to organisations to be approved by Cabinet Member. The Council's Constitution allows for Cabinet Members to delegate authority to officers to undertake the powers afforded to them by the Constitution. The Council's standard grant agreement shall be used to set out the terms and conditions for which the grants are made, which provides for clawback of funding in certain circumstances and shall also provide that the Council is not liable for any employment liabilities.

## **6. Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: equality of opportunity, health, environmental, transport, property and crime and disorder considerations.

## **7. Background Papers**

None

## **8. Key Decision**

Yes

## **9. Is it required that the Call-in period be waived in respect of the decisions being proposed within this report?**

No

## **10. Officers Recommendation**

The Cabinet Member is asked to:

- i. Note the partnership approach to operate a COVID Safe 'No Second Night Out' scheme to support the homelessness population to operate from 1 December 2020 until 28 February 2021.
- ii. Approve a grant of £82,500 towards the initiative, by providing funding for the support worker element of the project.
- iii. Note that the funding will be released following confirmation from DHOG that appropriate primary care and pharmacy support services are in place to ensure the successful operation of the scheme.

**Dean Wallace**  
**Director of Public Health**