

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 6 DECEMBER 2021

PART I - DELEGATED

RENT ARREARS FINANCIAL SUPPORT SCHEME FOR 2021-22 (DCES)

1 Summary

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with the proposed Rent Arrears Financial Support Scheme for 2021/22. This details how the Council will assist renters using the funding granted to the Council from the Government. The full policy can be found in Appendix One.

2 Details

- 2.1 On 23 October 2021 the Government announced that it would be granting additional funding to Councils to assist vulnerable renters that are struggling as a result of the pandemic.
- 2.2 The Council has been awarded grant of £59,137. The purpose of this exceptional one-off payment is to support low-income renters with COVID-19 related rent arrears to avoid eviction or find a new home where necessary in order to prevent homelessness, with the Council being able to target funding to those who need it most and help them get back on their feet.
- 2.3 As the grant is a one-off payment, the policy will only apply for 2021/22, the full grant amount must be paid out within this financial year.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree the proposed Rent Arrears Financial Support Scheme to ensure that the Council supports vulnerable renters as a result of the pandemic using the grant money allocated by Government.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1 The purpose of this proposed policy is to prevent and relieve homelessness caused by COVID-19 rent arrears over the winter of 2021/22. At the end of the financial year, it is anticipated that the policy will have achieved this by using the Government grant of £59,137.
- 4.2 The proposed policy will impact on the following performance indicators:
- 4.2.1 HN01- Maximum number of households living in temporary accommodation on the last day of the quarter (snapshot)
- 4.2.2 HN02- Maximum number of families in Bed & Breakfast for more than six weeks
- 4.2.3 HN03- Maximum number of households in temporary accommodation throughout the year
- 4.2.4 HN10- Number of households prevented from becoming homeless

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for the Council as only the grant of £59,137 will be used.

6 Legal, Equal Opportunities, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

6.1 None specific.

7 Recommendation

7.1 That the Policy and Resources Committee adopt the Rent Arrears Support Scheme for 2021/22, subject to any comments from the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee.

7.2 That the Policy and Resources Committee delegate any amendments within the policy to the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee .

Report prepared by: Kimberley Grout, Head of Housing Services

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix One – Rent Arrears Support Scheme for winter 2021/22