

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Housing Select Committee

4th February 2016

TITLE:	Homelessness Prevention Expenditure Update
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor McCabe – Executive Councillor
CONTACT OFFICER:	Roger Burnett- Interim Head of Customer Services
WARDS INVOLVED:	All

1. Reason for the Report

The report seeks approval from the Executive on the expenditure of the Homelessness Budget 2016/17 and proposed Second Homes Council Tax allocation for 2016/17

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Executive be recommended to approve the Homelessness Budget distribution for 2016/17 outlined in table 4 subject to the approval of the Second Homes Council Tax bid;
- 2.2 That the Executive be recommended to note the 2016/17 Second Homes Council Tax bid to Derbyshire County Council outlined in table 3;
- 2.3 That the Executive be recommend to approve the use of second homes council tax funding following Derbyshire County Council approval.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The Council received a non ring-fenced Homelessness Grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). CLG's stated intention is that the grants are used to support homeless prevention initiatives. However, the Council can decide how the money is spent.
- 3.2 The Council also received funding from the Second Homes Council Tax initiative which is an agreement with Derbyshire County Council to use 75 per cent of council tax income raised from second homes to support local vulnerable people find a home.

3.3 The Council has funded the projects outlined in tables 3 and 4 for a number of years. The proposed 2016/17 expenditure is merely a continuation of these existing projects. The preparation of the report has been delayed as Derbyshire County Council have not yet approved our proposal for the Second Homes Council Tax funding. A detailed proposal has been submitted to Derbyshire County Council for their consideration, a date for this to be considered at Cabinet has not yet been confirmed.

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 This report relates to the corporate priority of providing fit for purpose housing stock that meets the needs of tenants.

5. **Options and Analysis**

5.1 Option 1 - Proceed with the recommendation and approve the use of the Homelessness Prevention Grant and Second Homes Council to provide priority services for vulnerable homeless people in High Peak and services to deliver more affordable homes.

Approve the proposed 2016/17 Second Homes Council Tax bid to Derbyshire County Council to enable the authority to successfully claim the entitlement.

5.2 Option 2 - Reject the Recommendation – Members can decide not to progress with the proposals outlined in this report meaning that essential services to vulnerable members of the community and those in housing need will be unable to continue.

6. **Implications**

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)
None

6.2 Workforce
None

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment
This report has been prepared in accordance with the Councils Diversity and Equality Policies

6.4 Financial Considerations
Summary of funding outlined in this report:
£115,000 Second Homes Council Tax allocation 2015/16
£55,470 Base Budget
£133,070 Carry forward from CLG Homelessness Prevention Grant and Second Homes Council Tax

6.5 Legal
None

6.6 Sustainability
None

6.7 Internal and External Consultation
None

6.8 Risk Assessment
None

Dai Larner
Executive Director

Web Links and Background Papers **Location** **Contact details**

7. Background and Detail

7.1 The homelessness budget of £303,540 is made up from funding carried forward from previous grant allocations, additional Government funding, second homes Council tax, and a contribution from the Council's general fund.

7.2 The budget is spent on services commissioned from other agencies and is aimed at preventing or reducing the occurrence of homelessness and supporting vulnerable households. The projects funded through the second homes funding must demonstrate links to Derbyshire County Council's Health and Adult Care priorities. These priorities focus on vulnerable adults and include domestic violence, learning disability, mental health, older people and those with substance misuse.

7.3 Derbyshire County Council's Cabinet report of the 24th March 2015 outlines the proposed expenditure for the Second Homes Council Tax 2015/16 for the four councils in Derbyshire with the highest proportion of second homes. Although the report for the 2016/17 has not yet been prepared by Derbyshire County Council at present it is anticipated that the allocations will remain roughly the same.

Table 1 County Council second homes investment programme for 2015/16

District and Borough Councils	Allocation 2015/16
Amber Valley	£80,000
Derbyshire Dales	£309,000
High Peak	£115,000
South Derbyshire	£62,000
Total	£566,000

7.4 The outcomes listed below have been achieved by partner agencies delivering services funded by homelessness budget

- 97 rent bond guarantees were given in 2014/15 and so far this year April 15- Dec 15 a total of 50 rent bonds have been issued

- The Harmony Project provided supported accommodation to 17 young women facing domestic violence or abuse in 2014/15. During 2015/16 to date 16 women have been given support to escape domestic abuse, issued ranged from forced marriage, sexual violence to domestic abuse within the family.
- In 2014/15 30 tenants were referred to the Citizens Advice Bureau for specialist debt advice.
- 2 new homes were specially adapted for families with disabled children on a new development in Chapel en Le Frith
- In 2014/15 10 families were financially assisted to down size due to the impacts of the spare room subsidy. Since April 2015 another 12 families have received this support which has enabled them to move to more suitable accommodation or reduce their rent arrears. Of the 12 clients who received support 2 had substance misuse issues, 5 had mental health issues, 2 were vulnerable older people, 1 had multiple needs and 2 clients were disabled.

7.5

Table 2- Homelessness Prevention Outcomes for since 2009/10 – 2015/16

	Year End 2009/ 10	Year End 2010/11	Year End 2011/12	Year End 2012/13	Year End 2013/14	Year End 2014/15	Year to date 2015/16
Number in Temporary Accommodation	22	14	6	11	6	6	6
Prevented Homeless Cases	227	213	187	166	159	152	139
Rent Bonds Issued	182	140	132	129	129	97	50
Homeless Presentations	74	61	49	93	32	113	92
Number of Homeless households to whom a duty is accepted	30	29	19	41	26	26	29
Number of households receiving housing advice & assistance	647	609	537	529	515	420	257
Total households seen	721	670	587	622	573	559	349

7.6 Over the last few years there has been a steady decline in the number of households seeking advice from the council and that demonstrates the homeless prevention toolkit we have in place is working well and providing positive outcomes for local residents

8 Funded Projects

8.1 In order to be funded each project must meet one or more of the priorities of the Council's Homelessness Strategy;

- Preventing homelessness and sustaining tenancies
- Mitigating any potential impacts of the welfare reforms and Localism Act
- Increasing the availability of affordable homes

Table 3 – Proposed Second Homes Council Tax Allocation 2016/17

Project name	Service Description	(£)
Meeting the accommodation needs of people with disabilities including Disabled Facility Grants	Grants to achieve the Lifetime Homes standard in new build affordable homes or adaptations through additional Disabled Facility Grants	£50,000
Support for Families in Crisis Project	Good News Family Care provides access to suitable accommodation for vulnerable women and families who are homeless or have support needs	£20,000
Domestic Abuse Project	This project enables Crossroads Derbyshire to provide a specialist service to younger women (13-25) to address issues of domestic abuse in their relationships	£20,000
Rural Housing Enablement Project	A partnership with the Peak District National Park Authority to work with communities to carry out parish needs surveys and build affordable housing in rural areas	£15,000
Vulnerable adults affected by the welfare reforms	Practical support in the form of financial assistance for vulnerable households affected by the welfare reforms with the associated costs of downsizing to avoid future arrears, assistance with removal costs or rent arrears	£5,000
Abor Project	Supported accommodation for high risk offenders. This project was previously funded through Derbyshire County Council but funding was reduced	£3,000
Total		£113,000

Table 4 - Homelessness Prevention Budget 2016/17

Project name	Service Description	(£)
Access to the private Rented Sector Project	<p>Provides a combination of services to vulnerable households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent bond and tenancy support. Gives households access to a rent bond and initial tenancy support • Pre tenancy training course for vulnerable people with chaotic lifestyles who need additional skills to successfully maintain a tenancy 	£55,700- service will be re-procured so cost may be subject to change
Rent bond top up	Financial top up to the rent bond fund which is administered as part of the Access to the Private Rented Sector	£10,000
Court Desk and Debt Advice	Citizens Advice Bureau provides specialist debt advice to vulnerable households at risk of eviction from rent or mortgage arrears. Advice for applicants affected by the new Universal Credit system is also available	£25,000
Move-on Officer	A Derbyshire wide project help vulnerable people leaving supported accommodation	£2,000
Hometrack	A web based data system	£2,100
Homelessness Prevention Grant	Enables the Housing Advice Team to give grants to prevent homelessness	£5,000
Total		£99,800