
Report to CABINET

Approval of Grant Funding Agreement with Greater Manchester Combined Authority – Part A

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

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Ext. 6583

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Reason for Decision

The report seeks approval to enter into a grant agreement with Greater Manchester Combined Authority. Under the proposed grant agreement, Oldham have been allocated grants funding that will enable the expansion and continued delivery of three services dedicated to supporting residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness between 2022-25.

Executive Summary

The Council are currently delivering three specific services that are intrinsically linked by virtue of the support they provide to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The three respective service are:

- A Bed Every Night (ABEN)
- Community Accommodation Support Tier 3 (CAS-3)
- Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI)

For the Council to secure the funding needed to continue delivering these vital services locally and to formalise monitoring and reporting arrangements, it must enter into a grant

agreement with Greater Manchester Combined Authority. The services have been operational for a number of years, save for CAS-3 which is entering its second year of delivery following a successful pilot year (2021-22).

The identified services that GMCA seeks to provide ongoing funding between 2022-25 are very much embedded in Oldham and are seen as vital services support the ongoing delivery of its Homelessness Prevention and Reduction Strategy and Central Government's Ending Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet;

- Authorises Oldham Council to agree and enter into grant agreement with Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Approve the continued delivery of the three services captured in the grant agreement namely, ABEN, CAS-3 and RSI

Approval of Grant Funding Agreement with Greater Manchester Combined Authority**1 Background**

- 1.1 The Council has been working in partnership with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) on various projects that support residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness via three existing services:
- A Bed Every Night (ABEN)
 - Community Accommodation Service – Tier 3 (CAS-3)
 - Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI)
- 1.2 The projects in question have all been running concurrently in Oldham for multiple years, further details about each service are set out below.
- 1.3 A Bed Every Night
- 1.4 The Oldham ABEN has been in operation since October 2018, with the service evolving from a communal night shelter model to a 24-hour self-contained accommodation scheme in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, also increasing in bed spaces in response to demand.
- 1.5 ABEN is funded via grant from GMCA which is made up of contributions from a range of sources including Public Health, Probation and the Mayor's Fund. Local authorities are also asked to contribute to the scheme locally; in Oldham the Council funds the accommodation leases and most utility costs at the ABEN buildings, less any rebate recouped through Housing Benefit and service charges.
- 1.6 Oldham's ABEN provision within the GMCA grant agreement consists of 23no (including one emergency bed) main ABEN bedspaces and 6no bedspaces for people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). These are based across three buildings held on private sector leases (PSLs) by the Council. The service accommodates between 60-90 people each year, with numbers primarily influenced by the availability of move on accommodation.
- 1.7 The Council took the decision to tender the delivery of ABEN support and day-to-day building management, resulting in a contract being awarded to DePaul for an initial term of 9 months +1 year +1 year until 31st March 2025. The contract award was approved by Cabinet on 17th June 2022.
- 1.8 The ABEN contract between Oldham Council and DePaul supports the delivery of key performance indicators (KPIs) which the Council report back to GMCA. In order to formalise the ongoing arrangement, it is therefore recommended that Oldham Council enters into the grant agreement with GMCA to enable the continued delivery of ABEN.
- 1.9 Community Accommodation Service – Tier 3
- 1.10 The CAS-3 model is a relatively new model and was created by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) as a third tier to their existing accommodation structure. The purpose of CAS-3 is to provide temporary accommodation to people leaving custody who would otherwise be homeless and have nowhere safe to stay upon release. CAS-3 placements are time limited to 84 nights, with the aim of managing a consistent throughput and to motivate move on activities.
- Tier 1 – Approved Premises (AP)

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- Tier 2 – Bail Accommodation and Support Services (BASS)
 - Tier 3 – Community Accommodation Service (CAS)
- 1.11 The original Justice Devolution Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), agreed with the MoJ in July 2019 demonstrated a progressive ambition and strong partnership. The has been enhanced further through a new MoU with the His Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) that allowed for a different approach to be taken with GM that, at the time, diverged from national or standard policy guidance and direction.
- 1.12 The MoJ via HMPPS and GMCA made funding available for Oldham and the nine other districts to develop CAS-3, the objective was to give GM Authorities autonomy to deliver suitable accommodation and support based on local knowledge and partnerships.
- 1.13 During the pilot year which commenced on 30th July 2021 – 30th June 2022, Oldham received funding to provide 10 bed spaces. Oldham delivered the required 10 bedspaces across three sites within the borough. The Council’s CAS-3 service was exemplary delivering remarkable outcomes that embodied the overarching purpose of CAS-3.
- 1.14 Building on the success of the pilot, the proposed grant agreement with the GMCA would make sufficient funding available for Oldham to continue delivering CAS-3 accommodation. This will contribute positively to Oldham’s efforts to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough.
- 1.15 Rough Sleepers Initiative
- 1.16 The Oldham RSI programme is the Council’s outreach service, which provides advice and support to rough sleepers. As part of the wider outreach offer for rough sleepers in Oldham, the GMCA grant specifically funds a Navigator role with an attached personalisation budget. Oldham Council have commissioned Sanctuary Trust to deliver an RSI Navigator contract since its inception in October 2019.
- 1.17 The Navigator also provides support to the wider RSI Team not funded by GMCA grant:
- A Project Officer tasked with coordinating referrals, intelligence and support within the team
 - A Discharge Pathway Officer who carries out homelessness prevention and assessment duties with people leaving institutions such as hospitals and prisons, forming a vital link to CAS-3 accommodation
 - A Move On Support Officer whose role is to help residents within ABEN and related accommodation source alternative, settled housing options
 - Two Outreach Workers supported by the added value of volunteers and social work students from Sanctuary Trust
- 1.18 The proposed grant agreement between GMCA and the Council would enable continued delivery of all three services locally in Oldham.

2 **Current Position**

- 2.1 The grant agreement consolidates three services that were previously documented under separate grant agreements; however, given the related activities, GMCA took the decision to amalgamate the three services into the same funding agreement.

3 **Options/Alternatives**

- 3.1 The two available options are:

3.2 Option 1 – Do not enter into grant agreement with GMCA. Proceeding with this option would result in the Council being unable to deliver the 3 projects detailed in this report and increased numbers of rough sleepers in Oldham during a period of significant homelessness and pressure, which is further exacerbated by the cost of living crisis.

3.3 Options 2 – Enter into agreement with GMCA to continue delivering ABEN, CAS-3 and RSI programmes. Taking this approach would enable the Council to continue funding provision that prevents rough sleeping in the borough. The grant available will fund ongoing temporary accommodation placements for rough sleepers and individuals open to HMPPS, not owed a statutory accommodation duty by the LA. The funds will also make resources available that would stimulate move on into alternative, settled accommodation.

4 **Preferred Option**

4.1 Option 2 is the preferred option. Proceeding on this basis would formalise ongoing activities and arrangements. Additionally, it would provide the Council with sufficient resources to continue the delivery of vital services in the borough.

5 **Consultation**

5.1 All relevant stakeholders have been consulted with regards to the proposals set out in this report, this includes, elected members and the Senior Leadership Team.

6 **Financial Implications**

6.1 Acceptance of this grant will allow the Council to be able to continue to fund provision that prevents rough sleeping in the Borough. The grant available will fund ongoing temporary accommodation placements for rough sleepers and individuals open to HMPPS not owed a statutory accommodation duty by the LA. The funds will also make resources available that would stimulate move on into alternative, settled accommodation.

6.2 Failure to accept the grant and its conditions will not dismiss the issue of rough sleeping in the Borough, resulting in an additional unfunded financial pressure to the Council.

(John Hoskins)

7 **Legal Services Comments**

7.1 A grant funding agreement itself is not subject to the Contract Procedure Rules. Therefore, provided the terms of the grant agreement are agreed between the Council and GMCA, taking into account legal advice, and provided the Council commissions any services to be delivered by external providers using grant funding in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules, there are no known legal implications in respect of the recommendations.

(Sarah Orrell- Commercial & Procurement Solicitor)

8. **Co-operative Agenda**

8.1 Acceptance of this grant will allow the Council to continue funding support that prevents rough sleeping in the Borough, which is a key priority in Oldham's Corporate Plan and aligns to our current cost-of-living response.

(Jonathan Downs – Corporate Policy Lead)

9 **Human Resources Comments**

9.1 None.

10 **Risk Assessments**

- 10.1 The report sets out a proposal to accept three years of grant funding giving more long-term certainty on future funding than previous GMCA awards to support this type of expenditure which has been awarded on a yearly basis. As such the proposed grant reduces the risk of the Council committing to long term expenditure currently financed from a source of funding which is then either withdrawn or reduced

(Mark Stenson)

11 **IT Implications**

- 11.1 None.

12 **Property Implications**

- 12.1 None.

13 **Procurement Implications**

- 13.1 There are no procurement implications in entering a grant agreement with GMCA, but both ABEN and RSI do and both have been tendered in line with the Public Contract Procedure Rules 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

(Emily Molden)

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

- 14.1 None.

15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

- 15.1 None.

16 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

- 16.1 Yes. The recommendations outlined in the report seek to enhance existing services available to Oldham residents.

17 **Key Decision**

- 17.1 Yes

18 **Key Decision Reference**

- 18.1 ESR-03-23

19 **Background Papers**

- 19.1 Please see relevant background paper below.

File Ref: HSG-5-22

Name of File: ABEN Phase 5 Contract Procurement

Records held in: Constitutional Service, Civic Centre, Oldham Council

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20 **Appendices**

20.1 Appendix 1 – GMCA Grant Agreement (contained in Part B of the report).

20.2 Appendix 2 – EIA (contained in Part B of the report).