

REPORT AUDIT TRAIL

CONSULTATION

*This is important as it shows that consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of the report and provides a quick reference point for specific comments, whilst the report will not be publishable if these areas have not been completed by the named persons below. **You must liaise with and receive sign off from the relevant Cabinet Member(s).***

Name/Position	Portfolio/Ward/ Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in para:
Councillor Linda Beresford	Cabinet Member for Housing	12/11/25	12/11/25	
<i>Ian Spicer</i>	Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	Click here to enter a date.	Click here to enter a date.	
<i>Gioia Morrison,</i> Finance	Finance and Customer Services	11/11/25	17/11/25	
<i>Stuart Fletcher,</i> Legal Services	Legal Services	03/11/25	10/11/25	
<i>Jenny Roodt,</i> Human Resources	Assistant Chief Executive's Office	11/11/25	12/11/25	
<i>Karen Middlebrook,</i> Procurement	Finance and Customer Services	11/03/25	21/11/25	
Equalities	Assistant Chief Executive's Office	19/11/25	04/04/25	
<i>Other officers below</i>		Click here to enter a date.	Click here to enter a date.	

<u>REPORT APPROVAL TRACKING</u>			
Equalities	Initial Screening completed and included with report	YES	
	Full Assessment completed and included with report	NO	N/A
Carbon Impact Assessments	Carbon Impact Assessment completed and included with report.	YES	
Background information	Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023 – 26. Housing Strategy 2025-2030 (awaiting publication)		
Appendices	Appendix 1 Equalities Assessment Screening – Part A Appendix 2 Presentation outlining the Homelessness Prevention Grant Appendix 3 Climate Impact Assessment		
Cabinet Member Approval	YES	12/11/25	
Report Authorised by Strategic Director	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)	Click here to enter a date.	
Report Authorised for publication by Chief Executive	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)	Click here to enter a date.	

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 09 December 2025

Report Title

Officer Decision for the Council's allocation of the Homelessness Prevention Grant

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)

Sandra Tolley, Head of Housing Options

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report outlines the decision to allocate the Council's Homelessness Prevention Grant.

Recommendations

1. That the Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health approves the annual allocation of the increase to the Council's Homelessness Prevention Grant in line with the three proposals outlined in this report, to a total maximum annual value of £324,000.

List of Appendices Included

1. Part A – Equality Screening Assessment
2. Presentation outlining the Homeless Prevention Grant
3. Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Housing Strategy 2025-2030

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023 – 2026 (under review)

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Officer Decision for the Contract Variation of the Single Person Accommodation with Support

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council received an increase in the annual Homelessness Prevention Grant for 2025/26 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, with a view to further grant funding being allocated to the Authority for the financial period 2026/27, and for a three-year period. This grant funding is restricted to Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper activity.
- 1.2 In March 2025 the Strategic Director approved use of the funding to a value of £107,000 from April 2025 – March 2026 to increase provision for Supported Accommodation for Single People (owed a homeless duty) by an additional 28 units, administered through a contract variation with Target Housing. There is an option to extend this contract variation for a further 12 months (until March 2027).
- 1.3 The funding was also used to implement smaller projects identified as ‘quick wins’ for example implementing initiatives to prevent homelessness through loss of a private rented home, and low-cost initiatives to encourage the Private Rented Sector to re-house homeless people and dissuade from evictions. This could significantly reduce the need for temporary accommodation, and the length of time people are placed in temporary or emergency accommodation.
- 1.4 Through the internal governance structure of the Council's Homelessness Operational Board, the Council has explored further options for the funding to best meet the objectives of preventing and alleviating homelessness.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 In September 2024 the Council's Homelessness team put into place a revised structure for its operating model. The benefit is that the new service helped the homelessness team to focus on statutory case work and prevention with cases in the prevention stage doubling and a reduction in hotel usage. For example, one of the Council's Year Ahead targets is to prevent or relieve 85% of all homelessness cases, and on 31 March 2025 85.2% was achieved. This has further improved to 91.8% in September 2025. In addition, the use of hotels has reduced from 88 rooms booked in May 2024 to 15 rooms booked on 30 September 2025, and no families were placed into hotels.
- 2.2 The new operating model involved moving 3 teams to be line managed by the Furnished Homes and Temporary Accommodation Manager. These were the Placement team, the Rough Sleeper team, and the Move on Support team. Since that point, the temporary accommodation provision increased by 46 units, and there have been over 1000 new furnished homes orders placed. The increased workload for the Furnished Homes and Temporary Accommodation Manager subsequently became unsustainable and has

caused some delays in void turnaround of Temporary Accommodation. In April 2025, an interim role of Placement, Move on and Resettlement Support Manager (PMRS) was created to oversee the Rough Sleeper team, the Placement team and the Move-on Support Team. The benefits of this have been assessed and have found that there is now a clear split of roles in the Temporary Accommodation Team, defined as property maintenance, warehouse management and compliance and the service supporting people.

2.3 The role of the PMRS Manager gives leadership to the:

Placement team. This team matches households to accommodation and monitors moves into Council owned Temporary Accommodation (TA), moves within TA and exits from TA. Assessing the suitability of a TA placement is a legal requirement that is set by legislation and caselaw. It involves consideration of affordability, the impact of the accommodation location on schools, employment and services received that are considered essential for a household's well-being. The assessment also includes a complex evaluation of the impact where the applicant meets one of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Placements into accommodation now generate the most Section 202 review requests (review process as set out in the Housing Act 1996) and, subsequent legal challenges if the suitability of the placement is upheld at review. This is therefore an area that must be sufficiently resourced.

The Move on team. This team play a crucial role in helping households access the support they need while assisting those in TA to find alternative housing. The team also conducts regular visits and manages properties, reducing risks such as abandonment, damage, and other potential issues.

The Rough Sleeper team. There has been an increase in reports of rough sleeping throughout Rotherham which is seen nationally. There needs to be strong line management of the team to support their work with rough sleepers, and a recognition of the risk that people rough sleeping face.

Therefore, it is recommended that the PMRS Manager post is funded as a permanent position.

- 2.4 Since April 2025 there have been 220 verified Rough Sleepers in Rotherham. This is an increase from the previous 12-month period during 2023/24 of 149 verified rough sleepers. If a rough sleeper is verified in Rotherham, the Council provides temporary accommodation, often having to use high-cost emergency hotel or bed and breakfast accommodation.
- 2.5 The Council commissions a Rough Sleeper Accommodation Hub, which provides 8 units of accommodation, with a further 2 overnight 'cool-off' rooms (increased this year from 1). The hub provides onsite support delivered by the commissioned provider (Target Housing Ltd) alongside Rough Sleeper Initiative Officers, with a concierge covering safety monitoring during evenings and weekends.

The hub offers placements for up to 6 weeks, however, due to lack of move on options, support can often last longer. This means there are often places unavailable for newly identified Rough Sleepers.

- 2.6 The Homelessness Operational Board, chaired by the Assistant Director for Housing, has identified a need for this provision to be bolstered/increased and therefore recommends working with the market to identify opportunities to develop service provision. The board has identified a potential annual allocation of £208,000 from the Homelessness Prevention Grant for this project, based on calculations of the cost of the current Rough Sleeper Hub, with an appropriate uplift included. A key focus of this project is to map local needs and identifying the most effective commissioning and procurement options, to achieve value for money and positive outcomes for people experiencing homelessness in Rotherham, while aligning to the Rough Sleeper pathway and protocol development.
- 2.7 The Homelessness Operational Board has identified the Strategic Commissioning team, within Adult Care, Housing and Public Health to undertake the above project. It is therefore recommended that a Commissioning Support Officer is appointed, as a permanent position to assist in the delivery of this project and ongoing contract, performance management and review of this provision, as detailed in appendix 2.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Option 1 (recommended)

To allocate funding from the Council's Homelessness Prevention Grant to establish a permanent post of Placement, Move on and Resettlement Support Manager (£63,000 pa). This will ensure the continued success of the temporary post and further improve the performance of the homelessness team.

To allocate funding from the Council's Homelessness Prevention Grant to assess options for an accommodation service to fit into the Rough Sleeper Pathway (£208,000 pa), alleviating pressures on the Rough Sleeper accommodation hub and hotel usage. The options and recommendations from this will follow the Council's governance processes.

To allocate funding from the Council's Homelessness Prevention Grant to establish a permanent post of Commissioning Support Officer post within the Strategic Commissioning Team (£52,000 pa) to support the delivery of the above project.

3.2 Option 2, Do nothing (not recommended)

The Homelessness Prevention Grant covers staff costs and temporary accommodation costs currently within the team and this could continue without the above measures being put in place. However, there is remaining capacity in the grant following an increase. This option is not recommended

as it would not achieve any improved outcomes for rough sleepers in Rotherham or people requiring temporary accommodation and support.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 This proposal has been produced by the Homelessness Operational Board, chaired by the Assistant Director for Housing.
- 4.2 Councillor Beresford, Cabinet Member for Adult for Housing has been consulted on this proposal.
- 4.3 This Officer Decision Report has been presented to DLT (Adult Care, Housing and Public Health) in December 2025.
- 4.4 As part of the development of the service, the Strategic Commissioning team will consult with the Provider market and people who use homelessness services. Commissioning and procurement options will be presented to DLT (Adult Care, Housing and Public Health) with recommendations following the appropriate decision-making process in line with the Council's constitution.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Following approval of this Officer Decision, the recruitment of the two new posts will commence. A proposal for the commissioning project, including a full options appraisal, will be presented to the Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and will adopt the appropriate governance process for approval in line with the Council's constitution.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The additional Homeless Prevention Grant funding allocation for 2025-26 is £454,734 representing an increase in income generated within the general fund. Out of this additional funding in March 2025, £82,000 has been allocated as an increase in provision of service for the Target project (£25,000 was already committed from the base funding allocation), and £48,000 was approved to be allocated for private rent initiatives.
- 6.2 The options included within this report have been costed and provision included within the current year forecast of £77,000 for activity that is to be complete within the year. This includes the interim Placement, Rough Sleeper and Move-on Manager since April 2025 and £12,000 for the appointment of a Commissioning Officer.
- 6.3 The full year costs of the activities/expenditure within this report are:
 - Placement, Rough Sleeper and Move-on Manager: £65,000
 - Commissioning Officer: £52,000
 - Accommodation Service to fit into the Rough Sleeper Pathway: £208,000.

- 6.4 The total additional income of £454,734 has been forecast for this year, with a one-off in-year saving of £284,000 resulting from delayed activity in some areas.
- 6.5 It is anticipated that this increased level of funding will be achieved in coming years, which enables ongoing funding of the initiatives that have been approved.
- 6.6 There are no procurement implications arising from the continuation of the funding for the Placement, Move on and Resettlement Support Manager and the recruitment for the Commissioning Support Officer post.
- 6.7 Following the review of options if a procurement is identified for the supply of a Rough Sleeper Accommodation Service (3) this will be undertaken in compliance with the Councils Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and either Public Contract Regulations or the Procurement Act 2023 subject to the route to market identified.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 Under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) the Council has duties in relation to prevention of homelessness, relief from homelessness and the provision of temporary accommodation to eligible applicants. The use of the grant funding as set out in the body of the report will assist the Council in fulfilling those duties.
- 7.2 The receipt and allocation of funding in this way is delegated to the Strategic Director in the Responsibility for Functions document within the Council's Constitution.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 The creation of a permanent PRMS position is supported to meet statutory obligations and business need. This post has already been evaluated and can be recruited to once approved.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The Service forms part of the Housing Related Support Pathway and will be accessible to those that are homeless and have a vulnerability and support need. Therefore, reducing inequalities across the borough and addressing any specific needs, risks or vulnerabilities identified. The provision will be for adults (18+).

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 An Equality Screening has been undertaken, with advice from the Equalities team; this can be found at Appendix 1.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no implications for CO2 emissions or climate change identified.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 These proposals support the work of the homeless service by continuing and increasing an existing provision.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 There are no high-level risks identified, recruitment will be conducted in compliance with the Council's Recruitment Policy.

14. Accountable Officers

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director, Adult Care Housing and Public Health

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	Click here to enter a date.

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).