

Cabinet

11th January 2022

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport – Councillor K Caan

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Chief Partnership Officer

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Approval of Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

The City Council has successfully bid for a grant of up to £640,361 to support rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping to engage with and access drug and alcohol treatment.

The Council's constitution requires formal Cabinet approval prior to agreeing to receive external grants in excess of £500,000. Where time does not allow this to happen approval can be sought by the relevant Director in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Chair with a requirement to then report retrospectively to Cabinet. As time was not available to report in advance of signature for this grant, approval was gained by the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing, in consultation with Councillor Caan (Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport), Councillor Welsh (Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness) and Councillor Clifford (Chair, Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board); with agreement for a retrospective report to Cabinet.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet is recommended to note the approval to receive the Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant.

**List of Appendices included:**

None

**Background papers:**

None

**Other useful documents**

None

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

## **Report title: Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant**

### **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 Coventry was identified by the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (now Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - DLUHC) and Public Health England (now the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities – OHID) as a priority area for additional funding to support drug and alcohol treatment services for rough sleeping and homeless populations in June 2021.
- 1.2 As such, the City Council was invited to submit proposals for the Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant (RSDATG) scheme to provide additional services for people currently, or at risk of, rough sleeping. The scheme allowed bids for activity up to March 2023 and uses funds secured by MHCLG and the Department of Health and Social Care.
- 1.3 The purpose of the grant is threefold:
  - to support people experiencing, or at risk of, rough sleeping to access and engage in drug and alcohol treatment
  - to ensure that the engagement that people have had with drug and alcohol treatment services whilst rough sleeping or in emergency or temporary accommodation is maintained as they move into longer term accommodation
  - to build resilience and capacity in local drug and alcohol treatment systems to continue to meet the needs of this population in future years
- 1.4 In June 2021 there were approximately 10 people known to be misusing substances and rough sleeping and a further 550 people misusing drugs or alcohol and in a form of temporary accommodation. Of this total approximately 250 were not engaged in substance misuse specialist treatment.
- 1.5 Following the invitation to submit proposals for the RSDATG scheme, Public Health and Housing teams identified the need to create a number of dedicated outreach roles to support this population to engage in treatment, including:
  - a specialist drug and alcohol outreach worker within the Council Rough Sleeper Outreach team to engage with people currently ‘bedding down’ into treatment services
  - a team of outreach workers within Change, Grow, Live (CGL Coventry - the Council’s commissioned drug and alcohol treatment service) to engage with people in temporary accommodation and at risk of rough sleeping
  - a team of allied specialist roles including a physical healthcare nurse, a Non-Medical Prescriber and an occupational therapist to support people to engage in treatment. These roles will predominantly deliver services at times and places which meet the specific needs of people rough sleeping in order to maximise engagement
- 1.6 In addition to the above roles, the bid includes provision for training for all CGL Coventry staff in trauma informed practice and other resources such as Naloxone (an opiate overdose reversal medicine) for people using opiates and not accessing treatment.
- 1.7 The bid was submitted in June and totalled spend of up to £640,361 over a 21-month period to March 2023.
- 1.8 On 29 October 2021, OHID announced Coventry’s bid had been approved. A formal grant award was subsequently received on 5 November 2021.

## **Drug and alcohol treatment services**

1.9 CGL Coventry is commissioned by the local authority to deliver a range of community-based services to support the recovery of adults misusing drugs and alcohol. The service aims to:

- reduce the harm caused by drugs and alcohol through interventions like needle exchange and harm reduction advice
- support people to gain and maintain abstinence or control of drug and alcohol misuse through medical and psychosocial interventions, and practical and peer support. The service has a significant number of volunteers – often people with lived experience – who provide a key role in engaging and supporting clients.
- improve the health of individuals in various ways including vaccination, diagnosis and supporting the treatment of blood-borne viruses like Hepatitis C. Recently the service has introduced micro spirometry at assessment to provide early identification of respiratory disease
- reduce drug and alcohol related deaths by reducing consumption and providing Naloxone (overdose reversal medication)
- provide support to parents and carers of adults misusing drugs and alcohol

1.10 In 2020/21, CGL Coventry supported 1,864 adults in structured treatment, an increase of 10% from the 1,685 adults supported in the previous year. A significant number of other individuals are supported by CGL Coventry through unstructured or short interventions. Approximately 50% of people using heroin and/or crack cocaine - and 14% of alcohol-dependent drinkers - engaged in treatment in the last year. The impact of COVID has been significant, with both more people accessing support and fewer service users being discharged.

1.11 During 2021/22 the City Council has been successful in receiving additional funding totalling £1,308,361 (some of which is to support clients in Warwickshire) to support individuals misusing drugs or alcohol. Service developments resulting from these new investments, with the exception of the RSDATG scheme, are summarised below.

## **Public Health Universal Grant**

1.12 A grant of £376,000 was received by the City Council from Public Health England as part of a £80m national uplift in investment in 2021/22, specifically to:

- Cut drug-related crime
- Reduce drug-related deaths

1.13 In Coventry, this was used to:

- create a criminal justice team within CGL Coventry, with workers partially co-locating with police and probation and providing in-reach into prison to support offenders' continuation of care at release into the community.
- employ a dedicated worker to CGL Coventry in-reach in the Caludon Centre
- expand provision of residential rehabilitation
- introduce the use of injectable opiate substitute therapy at CGL Coventry
- employ a residence worker within Positive Choices (Coventry's Early Intervention service) to support young people at risk of involvement in County Lines activity
- employ a dedicated role within the Council's Housing team to coordinate the Vulnerable Person's Forum
- increase provision of Naloxone to reduce the risk of fatalities from accidental opiate overdoses

1.14 Funding provided under the scheme is for activity up to July 2022.

### **Individual Placement and Support employment**

1.15 Coventry Public Health led a successful bid on behalf of the City and County Councils for funding to recruit a team of employment specialists as part of the national expansion of the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) scheme in drug and alcohol services across Coventry and Warwickshire. The scheme will provide up to £292,000 to employ 4 employment specialists to support clients accessing CGL into work.

1.16 Recruitment is currently underway for the new IPS team. The Senior Employment Specialist commenced in post on 9 November 2021.

1.17 The scheme is funded to March 2023.

1.18 The three additional funding streams are all relatively short term. The government has committed to publishing a new national drug strategy by the end of the calendar year in response to the Dame Carol Black review of drug treatment. The Dame Carol Black review advocated for a significant increase in funding for services, ring fenced funding arrangements and an increase in joint commissioning arrangements with a wide range of partners.

## **2 Options considered and recommended proposal**

2.1 The value of the Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant is such that the Constitution requires formal approval prior to acceptance.

2.2 As time did not allow Cabinet approval in advance of signing the grant agreement, the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing, in consultation with Councillor Caan (Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport), Councillor Welsh (Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness) and Councillor Clifford (Chair, Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board), gave approval as permitted within the constitution to sign the agreement, to be reported to Cabinet retrospectively..

## **3 Results of consultation undertaken**

3.1 Timescales for completion of the initial bid for the Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant meant there was limited opportunity to consult widely. However, outreach workers from the Council's Housing team conducted brief consultation with rough sleepers who supported the approach taken for the bid, including a focus on individual's physical healthcare needs.

3.2 Prior to submission, the bid received sign off from the Council's Chief Executive, Director of Adult Services and homelessness commissioner, from the CCG Director of Commissioning and from CGL at Director-level.

## **4 Timetable for implementing this decision**

4.1 The Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant Agreement was received and signed on 16 November 2021 and returned to OHID. Recruitment of posts commenced in advance to support rapid mobilisation. It is anticipated that staff will commence in post, following DBS checks, from January 2022.

## 5 Comments from Director of Finance and Director of Law and Governance

### 5.1 Financial implications

The Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant offer is valued at £640,361 for spend prior to March 2023.

A sum of up to £592,271 will be transferred to CGL under a contract variation agreed by Procurement Board on 24 September 2021. A sum of up to £48,090 will be used to employ an outreach worker within the Council's Rough Sleeper Outreach Team.

An additional grant will be provided to meet the treatment costs of people engaged through the RSDATG scheme based on a government agreed unit cost for people receiving community-based and residential treatment.

### 5.2 Legal implications

The Council will comply with the grant terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement.

## 6 Other implications

### 6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan ([www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/))?

The services support the One Coventry Corporate Plan's vision to help to make communities safer, improve the health and wellbeing of local residents and protect our most vulnerable people.

### 6.2 How is risk being managed?

Public Health and Housing commissioners will work closely to understand and mitigate risks in relation to the Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant. Key risks include:

- **Failure to appoint recruit posts.** Recruitment of posts started prior to the receipt of the formal grant award in order to offer applicants the longest possible term of employment. Broadly recruitment has progressed well but the response to some advertised posts has been limited and alternative solutions will be considered.
- **Limited capacity within current treatment service to meet the new demand.** The increase in number of clients accessing structured treatment with CGL Coventry through the additional engagement activity by the outreach team will place additional pressure on an already stretched service. The bid included an additional worker to provide capacity during the period of the scheme and some further funding is available from OHID to meet additional clinical costs such as prescribing for opiate substitute therapy; it is unclear at this stage if these costs will be met for any period beyond the end of the grant scheme. Public Health commissioners meet with CGL Coventry management regularly to understand service pressures.
- **Short term funding.** Funding is available for activity to March 2023 and it is unclear what, if any, further funding may be made available. Demand for outreach should reduce over time if, as intended, the provision supports a significant number of people into sustained episodes of treatment. Commissioners will work closely to ensure links between CGL Coventry and homelessness services are closely aligned.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The grant provides additional capacity with the Rough Sleeper Outreach team. Activity delivered under the grant may identify additional needs requiring further social care support.

### **6.4 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

The provision is targeted at supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. To deliver an enhanced positive impact to groups with protected characteristics and more excluded, dedicated roles will be created to support females at risk of rough sleeping including female sex workers, and foreign nationals.

### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

There are no implications.

### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

CGL Coventry is commissioned to deliver drug and alcohol services by the City Council and operates closely with a wide range of partners including primary and secondary healthcare providers, homelessness services and social care services.

CGL also delivers drug and alcohol services in Warwickshire, commissioned by the County Council. Warwickshire was not invited to bid for RSDATG monies.

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