

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Emergency accommodation and premises for use as winter accommodation provision for people Rough Sleeping for the period 1 st December 2023 to 30 th April 2024.
Date of decision:	26/10/23.
Decision maker:	Corporate Director Community Wellbeing
Authority for delegated decision:	CW-07 Housing and homelessness support and solutions. This decision also supports The Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2020-2025.
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	Consultation has taken place through Herefordshire Homeless Forum with a wide range of statutory agencies and Community Voluntary Faith Sector groups. In addition, the relevant Councillors have briefed and conversations held with Herefordshire Councils Planning Department.
Decision made:	<p>To use grant funding received from the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase up to 4 emergency accommodation “pods” • utilise an existing council asset as a winter night shelter • rent up to 8 emergency accommodation ‘pods’ to be sited in various locations within Herefordshire • to provide staffing and general management of the winter shelter including all pods. <p>The provision of pods and shelter style accommodation will provide an immediate solution for those people at immediate risk of or currently experiencing rough sleeping in the county.</p>
Reasons for decision:	<p>Funding has been secured from DLUHC to provide the following and must be utilised for its intended purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £60,000 – to prepare the shelter and overnight staffing of the premises. • £47,647 to purchase 4 pods • £40,000 for rental costs of up to 8 pods <p>It is Herefordshire Councils ambition that all people have access to safe, appropriate accommodation, which meets their immediate needs and provides a safe space. The provision of pods will form part of the council’s approach to preventing and relieving homelessness.</p> <p>The premises identified and pods purchased ensure there is an immediate and safe off the streets offer for people experiencing rough sleeping. The purchased pods will also provide a longer-term asset in the county for continued for those people experiencing rough sleeping to access a safe space with associated support</p>

	<p>There is an established demand for the provision of winter accommodation, as of October 2023 there are 18 people rough sleeping in the county. Demand data demonstrates up to 22 individuals will typically require this service.</p> <p>This proposal ensures we have sufficient accommodation to safely and appropriately accommodate males and females safely and meet the forecasted local demand.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>The financial risk is low as funding has been obtained from DLUHC to provide this model of accommodating and supporting people.</p> <p>The legal risk is low:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation has taken place with legal and commercial services colleagues and all procurement activity will be undertaken within the councils contract procedure rules. • Planning consent will be required for a change of use of premises. Advice of Herefordshire Council Planning Department has been taken and a planning application will be submitted, whilst this decision is determined, the premises can be used as set out. <p>Equality considerations. The premises are level access and a level access toilet. Separate accommodation can be provided on site for males and females. It will be staffed during opening times to ensure compliance with the conditions of admittance and acceptable behaviour.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Alternative options considered:</p> <p>Do nothing this was rejected for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding has been provided to the council to enable this provision to be in place. Should it not be used for its intended purpose it would need to be returned to DLUHC, this would be a lost opportunity for the council to provide winter provision for a very vulnerable cohort of people and could lead to reputational damage to the council. • The council has a duty provide emergency accommodation under the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) to protect people experiencing rough sleeping in the event of extreme weather, should there be no offer of a winter shelter this is likely to exceed the cost of this proposal leading to additional costs for the council. <p>Utilise funding to deliver on street winter survival packs. This option was rejected as this could lead to negative outcomes for people experiencing rough sleeping including serious injury or death.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>No Declarations of Interest made.</p>

Signed..... Date:

Please ensure that signatures are redacted before publishing.