

Subject:	Domestic Abuse Act Strategy and Funding Award Options		
Date of Meeting:	16 June 2022		
Report of:	Executive Director Housing Neighbourhoods and Communities		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1: PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (the Act) includes the new duty for Local Authorities to provide support to survivors of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation. This duty came into effect on 1 October 2021. DLUHC has allocated new burdens funding of £607,966 to BHCC for 2022 – 23 to deliver support in safe accommodation, which is an uplift of £1,966 from the allocation received in 2021- 22. The new burdens funding is additional to the existing budgets for the Council commissioned Domestic Abuse (DA) refuge and advice services agreed last year.

1.2. This paper seeks approval from the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee (TECC) to extend the funding term for the domestic abuse service provisions that were agreed at Committees in September and November 2021 where proposals for spending £606,288 were approved and March 2022 where proposals for the reprovision sum of £240,712 was agreed (see appendix A) for a further year and to consider the spending options for the remaining sum of £26,966.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That Committee agrees to allocate available funding as set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3 of this report.

3 CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1. The aim of Part 4 of the Act is to transform the response to domestic abuse, by ensuring all survivors of domestic abuse and their children are supported in safe accommodation.

3.2. The overarching objective of the new duty is to improve outcomes for all survivors of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation. In October 2021, DLUHC

published its *Statutory Guidance for Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse safe accommodation service* which clarified on what constitutes support in safe accommodation. Support includes:

- Support with day to day running of safe accommodation services
- Advocacy support
- Domestic Abuse prevention advice
- Specialist support for victims/survivors with protected characteristics
- Services specifically designed for victims/survivors with additional/complex need
- Children’s Support
- Housing Related Support
- Advice service
- Counseling and therapy

3.3 In March, Committee were notified that the new burdens funding allocation for 2022/23 of £607,966 is similar to the 2021/22 allocation and it was agreed that officers report back to Committee on recommended spend in line with the Pan Sussex Strategy for Domestic Abuse and Support 2021-2024 (the Strategy) as soon as practicable.

4 PROPOSALS FOR THE DOMESTIC ABUSE ACT FUNDING ALLOCATION 2022- 23

4.1. This document outlines the proposals for the New Burdens Funding Allocation 2022-23. It is proposed that the sum of £607,966 is used to fund the administrative function and service provision previously agreed by Committee on meetings in September and November 2021 and March 2022 for a further year as set out below.

4.2. The details of the administration and services agreed at previous committees are contained in Table 1 below. All existing contracts listed below for extension can be extended under the provisions of the contracts.

Table 1. Agreed Spend New Burdens DA Act Support in Safe Accommodation Administration and Services

Service Provision	Delivered by	Funding Allocated	Continue Funding	Additional Information
Housing Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)	RISE	£30,000	Yes	
Community Engagement Officer	East Sussex Council	£32,000	Yes	Pan Sussex role managed by East Sussex Council
Dispersed accommodation for LGBTQ	RISE	£99,962	Yes	Currently funded until September 2022.

clients experiencing domestic abuse.				
Interim Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence and VAWG Commissioner	BHCC	£25,000	No	Successful recruitment to permanent post. Budget now included in base
Sanctuary Scheme	RISE	£70,000	Yes	Funding staff salaries and £40,000 for hardware
Floating Support Service to include:	RISE	£60,000	Yes	Floating Support, move on and resettlement support to work with families and individuals as they move to independent accommodation
Increased access to interpreters and BSL	BHCC	£30,000	Yes	
Flexible Fund	BHCC	£18,326	Yes	
Safe Accommodation Children and Young People Domestic Abuse Pathway. (Community Programme / CYPDVA (Children and Young Person Domestic Abuse /VAWG Outreach/Caseworker/ Pilot Group work for young people using violence in personal relationships who are also at risk of losing their accommodation	Pending Invitation to Quote (ITQ) process	£110,712	Yes	
Safe Accommodation Pathway: Domestic Abuse. Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) Capacity Building Programme	To be determined by ITQ process	£60,000	Yes	

Safe Accommodation LGBTQ+ Domestic Abuse Caseworker.	To be determined by ITQ process	£40, 000	Yes	
Domestic Violence and Abuse Specialist Support Service (IDVA Service)	Main contract	£30,000	Yes	
Safe Accommodation Multiple Complex Needs Casework Provision (see para.4.3 below)	New Proposal to be procured via ITQ	£26,966	Yes	The Pan Sussex Strategy for Domestic Abuse Accommodation and Support 2021- 2024 identified a gap in provision for those with Multiple Complex Needs across all areas of Sussex
Total funds to allocate		£607,966		

4.3. There is a sum of £26,966 yet to be allocated due to minor increase in funding and the savings from recruitment of an interim Commissioner. It is proposed that this funding is used to increase casework support provision for those with **Multiple Complex Needs**. The Pan Sussex Strategy for Domestic Abuse Accommodation and Support 2021- 2024 identified a gap in provision for those with Multiple Complex Needs across all areas of Sussex and is one of the commitments of the Strategy. This resource can be procured via an Invitation to quote process.

5 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

5.1 An alternative option is for Brighton and Hove to wait for pan – Sussex proposals to develop but this might be a lengthy process which would mean interventions and support for some of the most vulnerable people in the community would be further delayed.

5.2 There is clear evidence of the need for funding for proposals in this report demonstrated by the findings of the needs assessment. A full commissioning process to determine spend options would inevitably cause gaps in the delivery of those services.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

6.1. The Pan Sussex Strategy for Domestic Abuse Accommodation and Support 2021- 2024 was widely consulted on with the public consultation running until December 2021. The needs assessment process engaged with a range of organisations. The needs assessment identified gaps in service provision and where the money should be spent to ensure that BHCC meets its duties under the new Act. The project team engaged with people with lived experience as part of the work to complete the needs assessment.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The Council has considered a wide range of options to meet the needs of victims and its duties under the terms of the Domestic Abuse Act. This report provides recommendations that the proposed spend meets the terms of the Act, strategic priorities of the Pan Sussex Strategy and local needs and is seeking a decision on how the award of the new burden funding allocation 2022- 23 and repurposed funds should be undertaken by officers.

8. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

8.1 DLUHC grant funding of £607,966 was received by BHCC on 8th April 2022. Local authorities are under a legal obligation to provide support within safe accommodation to meet the needs of survivors of domestic abuse in their areas, and report back to central government that they have met these obligations. The report recommends spending the grant funding as shown in Table 1 at section 4 and this is in line with the obligations.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michael Bentley

Date: 24/5/22

Legal Implications:

The funding must be spent in accordance with the Statutory Guidance and in particular will need to be spent on those in 'relevant' (i.e. safe) accommodation. Officers have satisfied themselves that the proposed services meet DLUHC's requirements.

Lawyer Consulted: Alice Rowland

Date: 07/06/22

Equalities Implications:

The proposals in this paper are likely to have positive impacts on a number of groups with protected characteristics. The work outlined here will focus on arrangements to facilitate improvements in accommodation and support all survivors of domestic abuse. By enhancing the service offer seeks to improve accessibility to services. Within both core services and any housing related offer equalities are actively considered to ensure services are available to all. It is recognised that Domestic Abuse disproportionately affects women and women with children. The findings of the needs assessment has informed the findings of Pan-Sussex Strategy for Domestic Abuse Accommodation and Support 2021-2024 which highlights equalities considerations for the region including those with other protected characteristics. A full equalities impact assessment was completed for BHCC prior to the publication of the final version of the strategy.

Sustainability Implications:

None

Appendix 1

A total spend of **£606,288** New Burdens Funding was allocated by DLUHC in 2021/22 to BHCC to support implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The spend for these funds agreed by Committee in 2021/22 is detailed in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2

DLUCH Support in Safe Accommodation Agreed Spend September 2021	
Reprovision of the refuge budget	£241,000
Housing Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) This will allow those presenting as victims of domestic abuse to the housing service to be helped to access services and given support at the earliest opportunity. The needs assessment found that often survivors of domestic abuse may move out of a local authority area to a place of safety and the Act requires that those survivors are provided with ongoing support which will be provided via the Housing IDVA.	£30,000
Funding to East Sussex County Council to recruit a Community Engagement Officer to work across the Pan Sussex partnership area to set up a survivor lived experience board. This for will provide training, support briefings and debriefings to representatives for the Pan Sussex partnership board. Officers will also appoint an independent chair for the Pan Sussex Partnership board. The board is a requirement of the Act.	£32,000
Money was also allocated to RISE to continue work providing dispersed accommodation for LGBTQ clients experiencing domestic abuse. This amounted to	£99,962 until September 2022.
Interim Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence and VAWG Commissioner	£25,000
Total	£427,962

Spend agreed by Committee in November 2021

Table 3

