

REPORT TO: HOUSING COMMITTEE – 16 FEBRUARY 2004

REPORT ON: USE OF HOMELESSNESS FUNDING ALLOCATIONS 2003-04

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

REPORT NO: 102-2004

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To seek Housing Committee approval to spend specific grant allocations for 2003/04, to meet the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Housing Committee approve the following expenditure for 2003/04 to maximise the use of allocations for homelessness purposes:
- i. That £50,000 be committed prior to 31 March 2004 to provide additional office accommodation at Lily Walker Centre for Homeless Services Unit staff.
 - ii. That £261,000 is committed to the acquisition and development of available premises, prior to 31 March 2004, to provide additional supported temporary accommodation linked to education and training for employment.
 - iii. That £40,000 is committed, prior to 31 March 2004 to develop additional supported temporary accommodation.
 - iv. That necessary staff costs be claimed prior to 31 March 2004 to cover salaries and costs for the Homelessness Strategy Team 2003/04.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. All costs will be met from specific grant awarded by the Scottish Executive. There are no implications for the Housing Revenue Account or Council Tax.

4. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The proposed reflects a number of key Dundee 21 Themes, including access to good food, water, shelter and fuel at a reasonable cost, health is protected, access to the skills, knowledge and information needed to enable everyone to play a full part in society.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Implementation of the new homelessness duties fulfils the Council's commitment to assist those in need by ensuring that needs are assessed and a range of accommodation is available for local people. Utilising the available funding in this way complements the activities of the Anti-Poverty Strategy and improves the housing outcomes for vulnerable people in Dundee.

6. BACKGROUND

- 6.1. The Department has been allocated £470,000 funding from Scottish Executive for 2003/04, for implementation of Homelessness Strategy and to tackle homelessness. After necessary revenue deductions, for continuation of the Homelessness Strategy Team, £351,200 is available prior to 31 March 2004. There is scope for the Department to claim and carry forward resources to 2004/05 as necessary, if we can demonstrate that funding is committed in 2003/04.
- 6.2. This report sets out how to meet increased demand for temporary accommodation as a result of the Council's extended duties, and utilise available resources.
- 6.3. The recent legislation increases the Authority's homelessness duties to provide advice, information, and temporary accommodation. In November 2003, Personnel Committee approved the recruitment of three additional staff for Homeless Services Unit, to enable the Housing Department to fulfil statutory duties. Funding has been identified for an extension to Lily Walker Centre to provide necessary office accommodation.
- 6.4. Additional temporary accommodation for homeless people is being developed close to the City Centre in partnership with Hillcrest Housing Association. Communities Scotland will invest in this project, and funding has been designated to contribute to refurbishment of premises, to provide 20 self contained units of supported temporary accommodation at a housing support centre. This centre will combine education and training facilities for employment.
- 6.5. To meet the high demand for additional supported temporary accommodation, funding has been identified to pay for professional fees incurred in the refurbishment and integrated works at 29 Honeygreen Road.
- 6.6. The remaining funding covers salaries and operating costs for Homelessness Strategy Team during 2003-04.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1. Comments have been sought from relevant Departments and these have been incorporated into this report.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1. The availability of funding is an opportunity for the Department to continue the development of additional homeless accommodation and carry out essential work, which will result in improvements to homeless service delivery, and assist the authority to meet new statutory duties.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1. Report on Use of Homelessness Allocation 2002/03, approved by Housing Committee 17 March 2003.
- 9.2. Report on Dundee's Homelessness Strategy 2003-06, approved by Housing Committee 9 June 2003.

- 9.3. Report on Additional Homeless Service Staffing To Comply With The Requirements Of The Housing (Scotland) Act, approved by Personnel Committee October 2003.
- 9.4. Note on Lily Walker Centre – Extension to Office (Partnering) approved by Housing Committee January 2004.
- 9.5. Note on Extension of Fixed Term Posts (Homelessness Strategy Team), approved by Personnel & Management Services Committee March 2003.
- 9.6. Report on Use of Funding to Assist Implementation of Homelessness Sections – Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, approved by Housing Committee 17 December 2001 and Personnel Committee 14 January 2002.

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FEBRUARY, 2004