

Decision by Portfolio Holder



Report reference: HCS-005-2020/21
Date of report: 03 September 2020

**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing and Community Services – Councillor H Whitbread
Author: Jennifer Gould (01992 564073) Democratic Services: J Leither
Subject: Delegated Authority to Issue Leases with CHES
Decision:

(1) That the Housing Portfolio Holder notes that;

(a) CHES, local charity providing services to rough sleepers and commissioned by Essex County Council in partnership with EFDC for the provision of services as part of our work tackling rough sleeping funded via MHCLG's Rough Sleeper Initiative Grant.

(2) That delegated authority be granted to the Service Manager Housing Needs and Older People's Services to agree a lease on up to 2 properties to CHES for a term of up to a maximum of 5 years provided there is a need to accommodate single homeless applicants who are or are at risk of rough sleeping.

(3) That delegated authority be granted to the Service Manager Housing Needs and Older People to accept the surrender of the lease of either of the 12 properties and grant a new lease on a different property under certain circumstances.

ADVISORY NOTICE:

*A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest.
A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.*

I have read and approve/~~do not approve~~ (delete as appropriate) the above decision:

Comments/further action required: None

Signed: Cllr H Whitbread

Date: 10th September 2020

Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/ conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member:

None

Dispensation granted by Standards Committee:
Yes/No or n/a

N/A

Office use only:

Call-in period begins: 10th September 2020

Expiry of Call-in period: 17th September 2020

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Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY**

Initialled as original copy by
Portfolio Holder:

Reason for decision:

In order to authorise the Service Manager Housing Needs and Older People's Services to agree the leases between the Council and CHESS on up to 2 properties for a term of up to a maximum of 5 years; and to renew the leases in the future on expiry in the same way provided there is a need to accommodate single homeless applicants who are or are at risk of rough sleeping.

Options considered and rejected:

Not to authorise the Service Manager Housing Needs and Older People's Services to agree and renew the leases between the Council and CHESS which would limit the ability of the housing needs teams to prevent the return to the streets of those rough sleepers accommodated temporarily through the pandemic as part of the Government's 'Everyone In' initiative as well as the ongoing ability to prevent new rough sleeping.

Background Report:

1. EFDC secured rough sleeper initiative (RSI) grant from MHCLG as part of a consortium with 4 other local authorities led by ECC.
2. CHESS have been commissioned as part of that consortium arrangement to provide a number of support services to rough sleepers in the Epping Forest District which include outreach.
3. Following the 'Everyone In' initiative the consortium has requested CHESS change the focus of their activity which previously centered on getting clients off the streets to now ensure those accommodated temporarily during the pandemic do not return to the streets.
4. As well as sourcing accommodation in the private rented sector for rough sleepers to move-on into, EFDC is proposing to lease at least 1 x 3 bed unit to CHESS for use as an HMO where those rough sleepers with the most complex needs can be accommodated and supported to ensure that future, more independent living, can be sustained successfully. This will prevent a return to the streets for those with multiple and complex needs.

Resource Implications:

Leasing of up to 2 council properties to CHESS in order to accommodate single homeless applicants who are or are at risk of rough sleeping.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Housing Act 1985; Homelessness Act 1996 as amended. Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

This initiative contributes to the safer communities' agenda by maximizing housing opportunities to single homeless residents who may otherwise find themselves rough sleeping.

Consultation Undertaken:

Discussion with Portfolio Holder.

Background Papers:

None.

Risk Management:

If the properties are not used to accommodate single homeless applicants rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping, it could result in the need to provide costly bed and breakfast accommodation.

Equality Analysis

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading. The equality information is provided in Appendix 2 to the report.

Key Decision Reference (Y/N):

No