

Wiltshire Council

Health Select Committee

15th September 2022

Subject: Allocations of grant funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to support victims and their families experiencing domestic abuse in Wiltshire

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to:

1. To share with the Health Select Committee that Wiltshire have been awarded an external grant allocation of £832,348 (2022-23) for the provision of support for victims and their families experiencing domestic abuse and in safe accommodation, in accordance with the Local Authority duties detailed in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Background









1. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was enacted in April 2021; Under part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 it places a duty on tier 1 local authorities in England, to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation.
2. The Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has determined under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 that a grant of £125 million should be paid to the local authorities.
3. As such, Wiltshire were awarded £830,051 in 2021-22 and more recently have been allocated £832,348 2022-23. This payment has been awarded to enable Council's to fulfil the functions of the new statutory duty on Tier 1 Local Authorities for year 2 relating **to the provision of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children residing in safe accommodation**. This is new funding and is in addition to the funding already being committed by the Local Authority and the OPCC to commission existing specialist support services for domestic agenda.
4. DLUHC have outlined criteria for how this funding should be allocated. The full criteria can be located in [Domestic abuse support within safe accommodation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/111111/Domestic_abuse_support_within_safe_accommodation_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

5. In summary it can be used for the:
 - **Provision of support in ‘relevant accommodation’** which includes refuges, specialist safe accommodation e.g. BAME, LGBTQ+, disabled victims, single gendered and/or complex needs, dispersed accommodation, sanctuary schemes, move-on / second stage accommodation.
 - **Provision of support can include** management of services within the ‘relevant accommodation’, day-to-day running, advocacy support, DA prevention advice, Prevent re-victimisation, specialist support for victims designed to recognise victims with relevant protected characteristics and/or complex needs, children’s support. Housing-related support, advice services including counselling and therapy

6. Decision making for the allocation of the yr 1 funding were founded on the evidence-base following the independent gap analysis and needs assessment undertaken by The Institute for Public Care (IPC) at Oxford Brookes. This included service user experience to assist with understanding the local need better.

7. Whilst the proposals provided opportunity for some innovation within the confines of the above criteria for the conditions of how we use the funding; there was still a need to be realistic about how the money can be reasonably spent. Where possible we looked to enhance offers for support within existing relationships that as a local authority already have established, to enable rapid mobilisation and delivery, which could help maximise the benefits for those in need of support.

8. The table below shows how the yr 1 allocation was awarded and the projects/roles stood up.

Provider	Amount	Provision
	£398,651	Male and Complex Needs Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA), Military IDVA, Engagement Worker, Groupwork Facilitator, Children’s therapeutic workers, Management, workforce training
	£152,000	Domestic Abuse Early Help Advisor, Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC) Support Role, Domestic Abuse Family Keyworker
	£96,000	Community Connectors, Team Leader
	£64,000	Refurbished 4 bed unit for single female victims, Housing Manager, Domestic Abuse Caseworker
	£44,400	DA Project Officer
	£38,000	Specialist DA Housing Advisor
	£32,000	Assistant Psychologist (DA, substance misuse and mental health)
	£5,000	Enhanced safety and security of victims home

9. Wiltshire have established a multi-agency work group for this fund, which meet quarterly and has a quality assurance role, asking providers to provide data and feedback on the implementation of their projects, as well as review barriers and/or challenges. Overall initial feedback from across the providers are reporting positive outcomes from those engaged in the support offers being implemented under this fund. Examples include:
- Good take-up of support by service users; with most new posts working to their expected capacity working with caseloads of approx. 25 cases per worker.
 - Full occupancy of the additional accommodation offer – having additional provision for female single victims has freed up some capacity within the existing core service accommodation offer for larger families and or those service users with wider complex needs.
 - Over 100 staff due to be trained to be able to support inequality needs
 - An additional 70 homes secured and made safe to enable victims (and their families) to either stay at home or return home.
10. A further year's funding has been awarded to Wiltshire for 2022-23 of £832,348. Government have not been able to commit future funding amounts beyond the in-year. Unfortunately, this doesn't allow for larger commissioning processes to be enacted as we are having to deal with the funding as 'discreet allocations and as such be used on short-term interventions, ensuring we comply with the duties outlined in the DA Act 2021.
11. In light of the early positive outcomes from the yr 1 projects, Wiltshire propose to extend the investment to allow these to continue and ensure there are no gaps in service delivery, which could place vulnerable service users at risk.
12. Additionally, we would like to use some funding to address some emerging gaps in service provision that have been highlighted over the past 12mths; this includes move-on support for victims and families (in-particular large families), as well as an increase in referrals from male victims seeking accommodation.

Next Steps

13. A cabinet paper is being prepared to be heard at the meeting in October for their endorsement of the final proposals. Following this, work will commence to ensure the service offers continue and if new projects are mobilised.
14. We anticipate that at least one more year's funding will be allocated to support this work; although we are unclear of how much may be included in the financial offer.

Report Author:

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