



Cabinet

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REPORT

Councillor Cole-Morgan : Cabinet Member for Community & Housing

Salisbury Homeless Drop-in centre - Request for revenue grant funding

1. Purpose

Members are asked to consider the request to support a grant of £10,000 for the current financial year towards the operating costs of the Salisbury Homeless Drop-in centre.

2. Background

Since November 2000 Alabare Christian Care has provided a drop-in centre for the homeless. Initially supported by the South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance, the Council approved, for the year 2002/03, to a one-off grant £10,000.

Due to error and misunderstanding of the Council's original decision this was also paid to Alabare in 2003/04. Alabare were advised of this mistake and that the grant funding was only a one off. However, given the importance of the centre it was agreed not to recover the grant but to meet from within existing resources with the Strategic Housing Services budget.

3. Objectives of the Drop-in centre

To maintain the basic health and well-being of those people continuing to live on the streets or in comparable situations.

To provide a point of contact between homeless people and services that exists to assist them.

To alleviate the isolation experienced by many homeless people, particularly those undergoing the process of resettlement.

To develop the self-confidence and capabilities of homeless people such that it facilitates their participation in and contribution to the wider community.

4. 2004/05 request

In March 2004 a request was made to Strategic Housing for £10,000 grant funding for the drop-in centre. Alabare were again advised that the original grant was a one-off and that for 2003/04 a mistake had been made. Consequently there was no financial provision to meet this grant.

Alabare were informed of other routes that they could apply for grant but for the current year all resources through Community Grants had been allocated.

5. Current request

Alabare met with the Portfolio Holder for Community & Housing and Officers to discuss this matter. It was agreed that they should submit a formal proposal for consideration by Cabinet.

Alabare's submission is appended to this report. They have requested a grant of £10,000.

They support this request as they claim:

- The grant of £10,000 meets some 20% of the operating costs
- That our support attracts other grant funding
- That it supports the Council's Homelessness Strategy
- That it meets the needs of very disadvantaged groups.

6. Concerns

The Council recognises the benefits of having such a facility to help disadvantaged homeless people. However there are concerns around the following areas:

- There is no steering group that oversees the development and monitoring of the drop-in centre.
- Alabare have only provided management data when asked, never on a regular monthly basis as has been requested.
- The Council has no referral arrangements.
- There appears to be little involvement from other agencies, only the Alcohol and Drug Advisory service comes in.

7. Options

There are 3 options to consider:

- a) To refuse to support this request as it is outside of the budget and grants process.
- b) To support a grant of £10,000 for the current financial year with no conditions. This could be financed from the £35,000 set aside for homelessness initiatives.
- c) The Council could support a grant of £10,000 or a lesser amount for the current financial year with the following conditions:
 - That Alabare establish a small stakeholder steering group for the drop-in centre, agreement on the terms and conditions to be delegated to the Head of Strategic Housing Services;
 - That monthly monitoring reports are provided to the council;
 - That if appropriate the council secures referral rights to the service for clients who may be seen by its Housing Advice Team but who may need other assistance.
 - This is one-off grant and that future requests be made through the Community Grants process.

Recommendation

Members are asked to approve one of the options detailed in paragraph 7.

Background papers

None

Implications

Financial : As detailed in paragraph 7

Legal : Homelessness Act 2002

Human Rights : None in this report

Personnel : None at this stage

Community Safety : None.

Environmental : None at this stage.

Council's Core Values: It is likely that this proposal will meet a number of SDC core values.