



EXECUTIVE

18th January 2024

Report Title	Specialist Drug and Alcohol Treatment for Rough Sleepers, or at Risk of Rough Sleeping
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Lead Member	Cllr Jason Smithers – Leader of the Council

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed model of the new Drug and Alcohol Service in North Northamptonshire

Appendix B – Rough sleeping data for North Northamptonshire

Appendix C – Northamptonshire Combatting Drugs Partnership High Level Draft Action Plan 2023/24

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To agree the use of North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) Public Health Reserves to fund activities up to £600,000 for specialist drug and alcohol treatment services for people rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping until 31st March 2026.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 In December 2020 extra help was made available for individuals sleeping rough with drug and alcohol dependency by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID). The Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant (RSDATG) was made available to local areas to implement evidence-based drug and alcohol treatment and wrap around support for people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough, including those with co-occurring mental health needs.
- 2.2 In the absence of the RSDATG in North Northamptonshire Council, the Director of Public Health has proposed to fund similar activity through the Council's Public Health Reserves up to £600,000 to underpin evidence-based drug and alcohol treatment for people sleeping rough including wrap around specialist outreach support.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Executive approve the use of the Council's Public Health Reserves in the absence of a Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant (RSDATG), to fund activities and new roles up to £600,000 to underpin Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment services.
- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendations: Approval will allow the Public Health Team and Housing Team to develop an evidence-based support service for individuals rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping with drug and alcohol dependency in North Northamptonshire. The funding will prevent significant harm and risk of death amongst people sleeping rough and the findings will be used to establish the new service model for 2026 when the drug and alcohol service will be recommissioned.
- 3.3 Alternative Option Considered: Decline the use of Public Health Reserves to provide evidence-based drug and alcohol treatment and specialist wrap around support for people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough, including those with co-occurring mental health needs.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 The purpose of RSDATG grant is to support local areas to implement evidence-based drug and alcohol treatment and wrap around support for people, including those with mental health and/or past traumas to be addressed by the service to achieve an improved impact of the service delivery.
- 4.2 The RSDATG was designed to enable specialist roles, interventions, and pathways to be developed in conjunction with Rough Sleeping Teams by supporting individuals sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough to engage in

drug and alcohol treatment and maintain this support and as result achieve better outcomes for vulnerable individuals.

- 4.3 Currently the Council does not have dedicated specialist treatment support for individuals sleeping rough with drug and alcohol dependency in North Northamptonshire. The Director of Public Health has proposed to fund activity through Public Health Reserves up to £600,000 to underpin new additional support activity to address this gap in the rough sleeping pathway.
- 4.4 The new service will also enable the Council to gather an evidence base on the needs of the rough sleeping population locally and prepare and use the findings to fund the new service model for 2026 when the drug and alcohol service will be recommissioned.
- 4.5 The development of the proposed service model in **Appendix A** and budget management associated with this will be led by the Council Housing Team with professional advice and support from the Public Health Team. The model has been designed taking on learning from the services established in other areas and will complement existing activities funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) through the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) in North Northamptonshire.
- 4.6 The service will be underpinned by effective multi-agency partnership working with partners learning from each other and sharing challenges when they arise. Along with working towards the same goal of delivering an inclusive service for those who are in the highest need locally. All the new funded roles will be additional capacity dedicated to this cohort and it is proposed the roles remain within the lead partner organisation for the specialist support to retain professional supervision and appropriate access to services.
- 4.7 The new outreach service aims to deliver robust and crucial wraparound support for vulnerable groups out in the community, which will help get individuals into treatment faster and build clear and stronger links between existing services. The new service will work directly with the Council's well-established Rough Sleeping Team who conduct assertive outreach day and night and provide in reach support to individuals affected by rough sleeping who are being supported in accommodation.
- 4.8 The rough sleeping baseline data provided in **Appendix B** evidences the need for these additional specialist roles to help reduce the current barriers faced and gaps in the pathway. A significant number of individuals experiencing rough sleeping have complex support needs so through a new holistic service designed to increase engagement and support this will aim to achieve better outcomes for vulnerable individuals in North Northamptonshire.
- 4.9 The data highlights the local need with 52% of the individuals engaged and supported by the Council's Rough Sleeping Team during the whole of 2022/23 had drug / alcohol support needs, and 35% suffered with their mental health. This high level of support needs of individuals being supported continues to be seen throughout 2023/24.

- 4.10 In addition the Council are required by DLUHC to monitor a Target Priority Group (TPG) who are individuals that have been sleeping rough in two or more years out of the last three, or in two or more months out of the last twelve. Since April 2023, the Rough Sleeping Team have identified 33 individuals that meet these criteria. All of which are not working with services to meet their support needs or infrequently engaging and therefore highlighting the need to take the services out in to the community to make a significant difference to service delivery.
- 4.11 The service will be targeted, and person centred, placing the individual at the forefront of the service and will promote equality of access for those who have often not received an effective service in the past due to their circumstances and level of engagement. The prevention and early intervention will help to improve the quality of life for individuals affected by rough sleeping and help to move them away from a life on the streets.
- 4.12 Once the new service is embedded and making a difference to lives of individuals on the streets or people at risk of rough sleeping, the service will focus on upstream prevention and look at how the service can support people before they get to crisis point to try and make rough sleeping rare, brief, and non-recurring across North Northamptonshire.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 Use of Reserve funding in this way meets the conditions for the Public Health Grant.
- 5.2 This cohort of people is one of the most vulnerable in society and providing additional support and intervention may prevent significant harm and risk of death. It will also help to impact other areas including reducing crime, stopping the revolving door, and reducing the number of people being supported in crisis and will also achieve savings and reduce pressures within other areas of the system including local Health Services.
- 5.3 The proposed project is in line with the National Drug and Alcohol Strategy: From Harm to Hope (2021) which is a ten-year plan to cut crime and save lives by delivering high quality treatment and recovery systems to break the cycle of addiction.
- 5.4 The proposed project also aligns to the Northamptonshire Combating Drug Partnership high level strategy 2023/24 and the high-level action can be found at **Appendix C**.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. The Public Health Team and Housing Team will set up a multi-agency project steering group. This will be established to develop an evidence-based service model utilising existing sector learning, guidance, and best practice and to monitor service delivery and outcomes.

- 6.2. The Public Health Team will work with the Housing Team to ensure that the necessary evaluation process is established, and learning is embedded in the future service model and contract.
- 6.3. Regular steering group meetings will be held with all organisations supporting the model to monitor service delivery and ensure any issues or barriers experienced can be addressed together when needed.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. Public Health reserves will be used to fund this project of £300,000 in 2024/25 and £300,000 during 2025/26. These funds are available within the overall public health grant reserves and will not impact on the Council's baseline budget.
- 7.1.2. The project is to cover roles in North Northamptonshire area only and will be funded as per the following table:

Funding	2023/24	2024/25	2025/2026
NNC Public Health Reserves	N/A	£300,000	£300,000
DLUHC Rough Sleeping Initiative	£41,200	£42,400	N/A
TOTAL	£41,200	£342,400	£300,000

- 7.1.3. Additional funding has been secured through the Rough Sleeping Initiative Government grant funding to cover mental health roles initially and these will aim to be introduced in the last quarter of 2023/24 with the remainder of the roles to begin in April 2024.
- 7.1.4. The Public Health and Housing Team will work to ensure that there is a sufficient exit strategy in place for this model and that the new roles will be embedded within the re-commissioning process. Also work will be undertaken to identify future opportunities for joint commissioning where appropriate along with identifying other mainstream funding to support the continuation of this service past the proposed funding timeline identified in the table.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. There are no legal implications arising from the proposals. The Public Health and Housing Team will enter into a Service Level Agreement to take this project forward and agree appropriate key performance indicators to monitor service delivery.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1. This use of Public Health Reserves supports the North Northamptonshire vision to help make communities safer, improve the health and wellbeing of residents, reduce health inequalities, and protect our most vulnerable people.

7.4. Risk

- 7.4.1. The Public Health Team and Housing Team will work closely together to ensure the use of Public Health Reserves is appropriate and in line with the use of the Public Health grant conditions. The Service Level Agreement will ensure appropriate use of funding.

7.5. Consultation

- 7.5.1. The project steering group will be multi-agency to ensure a wide range of stakeholder views are considered to help shape the service including those with lived experience. This project will link into the Combating Drug Partnership Subgroup responsible for delivering a world class treatment and recovery system.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

- 7.6.1. This proposal was discussed at the Active Communities Executive Advisory Panel on 28th April 2023 as part of a wider conversation on drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services. The proposal was welcomed by panel members.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

- 7.7.1. This paper will be considered at Health Scrutiny on 9th January 2024 as requested by the Corporate Leadership Team following presentation of the report at their meeting.

7.8. Equality Implications

- 7.8.1. A comprehensive Health Needs Assessment has been completed to inform the development of the local Combating Drug Partnership Strategy for Northamptonshire. This includes future commissioning of drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services to support people at significant risk of harm or death from untreated drug and alcohol dependencies.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1. There are no specific climate or environment impacts relating to the recommendations in this report.

7.10. Community Impact

7.10.1. The community will benefit significantly by focusing on the most vulnerable, and those affected by substance misuse. The proposed project supports the Council's Public Health agenda to increase health and wellbeing within the community, as well as corporate priorities and will also help to reduce homelessness and levels of rough sleeping locally.

7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1. The proposed project encourages more people to enter treatment and to improve continuity and quality of care in order that more people remain in treatment and successfully complete treatment with good outcomes. As well as an improvement in health outcomes and reduction in deaths, it also seeks to reduce crime, harm, and lower cost to the criminal justice system.

8. Background Papers

8.1 From Harm to Hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives>