

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker	Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health
Date:	22 July 2022
Title:	Grants to Tier 2 Authorities utilising New Burdens Funding from the Department for Levelling up Housing and Communities (DLUHC)
Report From:	Director of Public Health

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to request approval for a proposed grant scheme to Tier 2 Authorities in Hampshire to support Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation. This grant scheme would start in 2022/23 and would aim for accreditation of all Tier 2 Authorities within 5 years. This would ensure the maintained competency of housing partners to fulfil our obligations as detailed under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, in line with additional funding anticipated from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health approves the grant scheme offer to Tier 2 Authorities to support them to become DAHA accredited with up to a total value of £226,470 for 2022/23.
3. That the Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health delegates authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Executive Member, to approve the grant awards to individual Tier 2 authorities for 2022/23.
4. That the Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health delegates authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Executive Member, to approve continuation of the scheme and funding of grant awards for years 2023/24 and 2024/25, or ceasing of the scheme, taking into account funding received from DLUHC as outlined in this report.

Executive Summary

5. This report sets out the background to DAHA accreditation, in line with new obligations on the County Council as under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
6. Part 4 of the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a duty on Hampshire County Council to provide accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation and to improve the types of safe accommodation accessible to adults and children experiencing domestic abuse.
7. In April 2021, the DLUHC allocated £2,300,222 to The County Council and circa £30,000 to Tier 2 Authorities in Hampshire, to deliver the new local authority statutory duty. A further £2,306,590 has been allocated to The County Council for 2022/23.
8. The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation (DAHA) improves the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction and adoption of an established set of standards and an accreditation process.
9. DAHA Accreditation is an intrinsic element of the Whole Housing Approach (WHA) which is part of The County Council's Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy (2021-2023). So far, four Tier 2 Authorities have expressed an interest in becoming DAHA accredited but discussions are ongoing with all Tier 2 Authorities across Hampshire.

Contextual information

10. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 seeks to raise awareness and understanding about the devastating impact of domestic abuse on victims and their families; further improve the effectiveness of the justice system in providing protection for victims of domestic abuse and bringing perpetrators to justice; along with strengthening the support for victims of abuse by statutory agencies.
11. Part 4 of the new Domestic Abuse Act places a duty on Hampshire County Council to provide accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.
12. The County Council has a duty under the Act to assess the need and demand for safe accommodation and accommodation-based support and to subsequently develop and publish strategies, giving effect to these strategies by making commissioning decisions.
13. In April 2021, the DLUHC allocated £2,300,222 to The County Council and circa £30,000 to Tier 2 Authorities in Hampshire to deliver the new local authority

statutory duty. A further £2,306,590 has been allocated to The County Council for 2022/23.

14. According to the DLUHC, in the spirit of the New Burdens Doctrine, the new duty will be funded in future years. The amount of funding from April 2023 will be a matter for the next Spending Review.
15. The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) improves the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction and adoption of an established set of standards and an accreditation process. Obtaining accreditation enhances how housing providers interact with victim/survivors and strengthens the local area's coordinated community response to domestic abuse.
16. DAHA Accreditation is an intrinsic element of the Whole Housing Approach (WHA) which is part of The County Council's Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy (2021-2023). Four Tier 2 Authorities so far have expressed an interest in becoming DAHA accredited.
17. The process of acquiring DAHA accreditation for the first time can take up to two years. The accreditation mark is valid for three years and the housing provider can then undergo reaccreditation (involving the same assessment process). A smooth re-accreditation process occurs when domestic abuse becomes part of housing provider's core business with continuous developments and improvements made throughout the years. The diagram in Appendix 1 shows the process of accreditation.
18. By providing this grant scheme, The County Council will be contributing to the funding available to the Tier 2 authorities within the Domestic Abuse fund. Thereby enabling them to achieve DAHA accreditation, when it might not otherwise be possible.

Finance

19. The proposed grant scheme is solely dependent on available funding from DLUHC. The intention is to support all Tier 2 authorities to become DAHA accredited, over a period of 3 years in accordance with the profile below:

Year	DAHA grant scheme total budget (£)	Maximum number of Tier 2 authorities
1: 2022/23	226,470	6
2: 2023/24*	103,965	3
3: 2024/2025*	103,965	3

Total	434,400	
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*Dependent on future funding confirmation from DLUHC.

20. Although the plan above is limiting expenditure to 3 years, there will be the requirement to facilitate slippage in this scheme where Tier 2 authorities may not be able to fit within our planned timeframe. Therefore, we intend for the funding outlined above to potentially be utilised over 5 years if required. However please note, all the above is subject to ongoing funding being confirmed from DLUHC in future years.
21. The grant scheme proposed is intended to cover annual DAHA Accreditation Membership fees, DAHA project support, and assessment fees.
22. The amount each Tier 2 Authority can apply for will be proportionate to the number of homes (stock) owned and/or managed (housing provider or local authority) as well as the geographical spread of properties. The total available grant for Hampshire County is proposed to be up to £226,470 for 2022/23.
23. The DLUHC allocation for Domestic Abuse to Hampshire County Council that is funding the proposal in this report has a total value of £2,306,590 in 2022/23. In addition to this report's proposals there is a further report on this agenda which also utilises this grant. Together these proposals support the improvement of Domestic Abuse services in line with the intentions of the DLUHC grant. Please note there is further spend, which uses this grant money, including the core Domestic Abuse contract, posts within The County Council to deliver on this work and the establishment of a Survivor Voice Forum for Hampshire.

Performance

24. The changes that housing providers can expect to see as they begin to implement the accreditation standards are:
- Helping to identify victim/survivors earlier as indicated by an increase in cases supported every year.
 - Improving information sharing practices and joined up working with other local services involved in the coordinated community response to domestic abuse. This includes local specialist domestic abuse services as well as those signed up to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC).
 - Improving customer satisfaction.
 - Increasing staff confidence to ask about and respond to domestic abuse, resulting in higher staff job satisfaction.
 - Staff experiencing domestic abuse reporting they feel better supported.
 - Money savings relating to a reduction in domestic abuse related repairs, arrears, and evictions.

Consultation and Equalities

25. The proposed increase in capacity and capability to the Tier 2 Authorities will result in support being more accessible to victims with diverse backgrounds and including those groups identified as currently underserved by services, for example, males (with/without children); LGBTQ+; those with a disability; multiple disadvantages, families with older adolescents; those from diverse ethnic backgrounds; older adults, and people who have limited access to support services due to rurality.

26. Consultation has involved working with the County's Tier 2 Authorities, with the Regional DAHA lead, and with other Local Authorities and Registered Housing Providers which have already started or embedded DAHA accreditation.

Conclusions

27. It is recommended that the Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health approves the proposed grant scheme offer to Tier 2 Authorities to support them to become DAHA accredited, with the total offer of up to £226,470 for 2022/23. It is recommended that authority to approve the individual grant awards is delegated to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Executive Member.

28. It is recommended that the Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health delegates authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Executive Member, to approve continuation of the scheme and funding of grant awards for 2023/24 and 2024/25, or ceasing of the scheme, taking into account anticipated funding received from DLUHC as outlined in this report.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Domestic Abuse act Part 4 (Safe Accommodation)	2021

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The proposed increase in capacity and capability of Tier 2 authorities through Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation improves housing providers' response to groups identified in the County's 2021 Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment as vulnerable and as where there are gaps in service: males (with/without children); LGBTQ+; those with a disability; multiple disadvantages, families with older adolescents; those from diverse ethnic backgrounds; older adults, and people who have limited access to support services due to rurality.

Appendix 1

1. Sign-up

- Contact Daha to register your commitment
- Identify a DAHA lead within your organisation to support the accreditation process
- DAHA sends you guidance on getting started



2. Getting started

- A senior member notifies staff that the organisation is acquiring DAHA accreditation
- Your DAHA lead begins setting up a steering group
- Your DAHA lead reviews how well you are already performing against DAHA standards



3. In progress

- Steering group is in action
- You are making use of free DAHA workshops and online toolkit
- At approximately the third steering group meeting, you set a date for assessment



4. Assessment

- DAHA assessment includes a desktop review of resources and a site visit to meet the steering group, interview staff and perform case audits
- DAHA assessor writes the report and informs of outcome within a month of the site visit. Extensions may be issues if further evidence is required



5. Renewal

- DAHA will contact you six months prior to your 3-year accreditation expiry and set a date for renewal assessment
- You may want to convene a steering group to review performance and update your assessment evidence to capture continuous improvement