

Key Decision Required:	No	In the Forward Plan:	No
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CORPORATE DIRECTOR (OPERATIONS AND DELIVERY)

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT)

A.1 FUNDING FOR DEREK CROSSFIELD HOUSE SUPPORTED HOUSING SCHEME 2025/26

(Report prepared by Emma Norton)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To recommend that the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery) agrees to provide funding for the Derek Crossfield House supported housing scheme in Clacton for a further period of six months pending revised arrangements via an associated specification and procurement process, with the new arrangements commencing on 1 October 2025.

1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Derek Crossfield House is a supported housing scheme for young people aged 16-25 (single people and couples) who either have care of a baby or are expecting a child. There are 8 self-contained flats plus communal facilities on site including a garden, playroom, kitchen and laundry. All the flats are supplied with a cooker, fridge freezer and carpets

The Council has been providing funding for Derek Crossfield House since 2017. Prior to this, the support elements of the scheme were funded via Essex County Council as part of a wider contract for supported housing services for young persons. However, when this contract was retendered on a reduced scale in 2017, this scheme was no longer able to be supported and the Council has agreed funding on a yearly basis since this date.

Peabody has advised that funding that of £52,233.79 would be required for 2025/26 to continue the level of support that is provided at the scheme which means that the funding required for a six month period would be £26,116.90

Given the type of service offered and the level of ongoing demand, it is the view of officers that funding should be provided for a further year using a proportion of the Homelessness Prevention Grant.

It is likely that the Council would have a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation for the current and future users of this scheme and that the cost of providing this accommodation would exceed the cost of supporting this facility,

In line with the high-level external funding framework agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 September 2024 and in demonstrating value for money that reflects the Council's wider best value responsibilities, a procurement process is proposed to be undertaken for the future provision of this supported housing service.

In terms of the procurement process, it is important that the Council sets out a clear specification of what it wishes to procure, which includes understanding the 'market' and what similar services are already available to local residents. This approach ensures a

joined-up approach across the various sectors within the area with the underlying aim of maximising the use of the Council's resources.

1.3 RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery) agrees to fund the scheme for a further period of six months using funds from the Homelessness Prevention Grant allocation for 2025/ 2026 and pending revised arrangements being put in place.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

2.1 DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The continued funding for Derek Crossfield House has the potential to contribute to the following priorities in the Council's emerging Corporate Plan for 2024 – 28:

- Pride in our area and services to residents
- Working with partners to improve quality of life

2.2 FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Peabody has advised that funding that of £26,116.90 is required to continue the level of support that is provided at the scheme for a further period of six months and this is based on the following costs provided for a twelve month period:

Cost Breakdown	Cost per Annum
Staff Costs	£43,107.08
Senior Management	£2,821
Additional Costs	£455.90
Central Costs	£5,850
TOTAL COST	£52,233.79

It is proposed that this is funded from the Homelessness Prevention Grant allocation for 2025 to 2026.

The Council is the statutory homelessness service for the district and the Homelessness Prevention Grant allocation for Tendring in 2025/26 is £1,456,782.00

The Homelessness Prevention Grant is an annual grant given by the Government to all local authorities to run their homelessness service. The grant is ring-fenced for activity relating to the prevention and relief of homelessness, targeting those in need and to ensure that local authorities are resourced to meet their responsibilities under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

There has been an 87% increase in the number of people approaching the Council for housing advice over the last 6 years, with homelessness applications increasing by 26% from 2018/19 to 2023/24. The loss of 8 self-contained units at this scheme would further contribute to this rise.

If each household in the scheme became homeless, the Council would have to provide

them with accommodation, this would be for a minimum period of 6 weeks with a potential cost in the region of £22,000.00. This figure is based on the average nightly charge for the hotels where the Council currently has block bookings for the households currently in Derek Crossfield House.

Supporting the scheme is considered a cost-effective way of reducing temporary accommodation costs and, more importantly, assists in the prevention of homelessness.

No other resources are required other than the staffing resources needed to draw up the grant agreement and to monitor performance of the scheme throughout the first six months of the year.

Risk

The scheme is thought to be unique in the type of service that it provides to young parents who might otherwise be unable to sustain a tenancy putting them at risk of homelessness. This would then place a pressure on the Housing Solutions team and other and other public sector services.

Officers have not identified any significant risk associated with the proposals and, providing the scheme continues to operate in the manner it has done up to now, this scheme continues to be a valuable housing resource for a vulnerable group.

Committing to the funding for a further six months does not commit the Council to the long term and provides the opportunity to explore other opportunities and procurement options.

As referred to in the Executive Summary, a procurement process is proposed to be undertaken for the future provision of this supported housing service to maximise the use of the Council's resources.

2.3 LEGAL

A grant agreement will be put in place between the Council as funder and Peabody Trust.

The use of the Homelessness Prevention Grant for this purpose is in accordance with the grant determination.

An assessment has been carried out in accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and it is considered that this arrangement would fall under the Minimal Financial Assistance threshold. Under Section 36 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022, Minimal Financial Assistance can be awarded up to value of £315,000 over the last 3 years.

2.4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Consultation

No significant issues have been identified.

Ward

St Pauls

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 BACKGROUND

Derek Crossfield House is a supported housing scheme for young people aged 16-25 (single

people and couples) who either have care of a baby or are expecting a child. There are 8 self-contained flats plus communal facilities on site including a garden, playroom, kitchen and laundry. All the flats are supplied with a cooker, fridge freezer and carpets

The Council has been providing funding for Derek Crossfield House since 2017. Prior to this, the support elements of the scheme were funded via Essex County Council as part of a wider contract for supported housing services for young persons. However, when this contract was retendered on a reduced scale in 2017, this scheme was no longer able to be supported and the Council.

Applicants are referred by a variety of agencies and are assessed by Tendring District Council as being homeless and both needing and wanting the kind of support that is offered

Peabody liaises with the Council and other agencies via an Allocations Panel to prioritise applications and ensure that they can be offered the support they need.

The scheme aims to offer temporary housing and support to young people whilst they gain confidence as parents and learn the skills to live independently and manage a permanent tenancy. The length of stay will depend upon an individual's needs as will the level and type of support offered.

Residents are encouraged to get involved in a wide range of activities that will develop their confidence and help gain the skills needed for the future as well as building on the skills that they already have.

All the properties are let on Assured Shorthold Tenancies which means that an initial tenancy will be granted for a period of 6 months but this can be extended to 2 years, if required.

Once a tenancy has been granted, residents will be allocated a Key Worker who will work with them to create a Support Plan detailing their support needs and how these will be met whilst they are living in the scheme. This plan will then be reviewed every 3 months.

The support provided is a condition of their Tenancy Agreement and residents must be willing to work with Peabody to make sure that the support is delivered. If they do not, their tenancy may be terminated and the accommodation offered to someone else who wants and will benefit from the type of support available.

On the basis of this and the financial information provided above, officers believe there is a clear and continuing need for the scheme in helping to discharge our duties as a local housing authority.

If the scheme were to close there would be no other supported housing of this type available. Without the support offered by the scheme the tenants might be unable to sustain a tenancy elsewhere which adds pressure to the Housing Solutions service which may end up helping them several times over in the course of a few years, both financially through rent deposits and with advice.

3.2 BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR DECISION

None

3.3 APPENDICES

None
