

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE DECISION MAKING MEETING
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM I
Subject	GRANT REQUEST FROM CIRENCESTER HOUSING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
Wards affected	Watermoor
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Every, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: Mike.Every@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Jenny Poole, Deputy Chief Executive Email: Jenny.Poole@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	Cirencester Housing for Young People (CHYP) has approached the Council with a request for grant funding to enable the charity to make adjustments to its property at Querns Lane which are necessary to comply with Housing in Multiple Occupation Regulations. The report asks the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to consider the grant request.
Annexes	Annex A – Background documents for the funding request Annex B – Accommodation figures from CHYP for last 5 years
Recommendation/s	Please write recommendations using letters and italics as below. <i>a) That the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance approves the award of a one-off grant of £3,360 to Cirencester Housing for Young People to enable the Charity to make alterations to its property at Querns Road to comply with the accommodation standards for Housing in Multiple Occupation.</i>
Corporate priorities	Helping residents and communities access the support they need for good health and wellbeing.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness, Leisure and Communities. Ward Member – Cllr Gary Selwyn

## **I. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. Cirencester Housing for Young People (CHYP) is a successful local charity which supports young homeless people. Officers in the Housing Service consider the services provided by CHYP to be a valuable resource and acknowledge that some of the referrals to CHYP would have been referrals to the Council if not accommodated by CHYP. Details of the number of young people supported by CHYP over the last 5 years is set out at Annex B.
- 1.2. In January 2022, the Council approved an application for a House in Multiple Occupation licence to CHYP Ltd for the property at 29-31 Querns Lane in Cirencester. One of the conditions of the licence is that the floor area of any room in the HMO used as sleeping accommodation by one person aged over 10 years is not less than 6.51 square metres. Two of the bedrooms in the Querns Lane property are 6.31 square metres. CHYP has 18 months, from January 2022, to satisfy this condition.
- 1.3. CHYP are proposing to increase the size of the two rooms by building an open alcove in the corner of each room. The estimate for the work is £1,400 plus VAT per room, totalling £3,360. CHYP have approached the Council to ask if grant funding is available to finance the alterations. Documentation supporting this request is attached at Annex A.
- 1.4. The Council's Building Control team have been consulted on the proposed building alterations and there do not appear to be any reasons why the alterations would not achieve Building Regulation approval.
- 1.5. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness and the Ward Member both support the request for grant funding.

## **2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1. This grant payment is in addition to the revenue budget available for Community Welfare and other grants. The Council Priorities Fund has sufficient funding available to finance this grant payment.
- 2.2. The properties at 29 and 31 Querns Lane, Cirencester are managed by Cirencester Housing for Young People Limited. Up to 10 August 2021, the company operated under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Society Act 2014 as a Community Benefit Society. CHYP also operated a charity for fund raising purposes with the charity transferring its surpluses to the Community Benefit Society. On 10 August 2021, CHYP closed the charitable arm as part of the conversion of the two separate entities into one charitable incorporated organisation.
- 2.3. The audited accounts for the period to 30 September 2021 for both the Community Benefit Society and the charity have been provided. During the year to 30 September 2021, the charity raised net income of £177,048. All of this income was transferred to the Community Benefit Society and the charity held no assets or liabilities. The Community Benefit Society accounts show income of £20,500 from the charity Restricted Funds and £156,548 from the charity General Fund.
- 2.4. Overall, the Community Benefit Society made a loss of £14,655 in the year to 30 September 2021. The General Reserve of the Society at 30 September 2021 was £393,157 and the Society held cash of £88,888. However, the General Reserve, reflects the value of the Querns Lane property of £432,062 and is not necessarily available to fund operational activity.

- 2.5. The accounts indicate that while CHYP overall is in a financially sound position, it is reasonable for the Council to support the entity with a grant of £3,360 to enable the two rooms to be altered to comply with Regulations.

### **3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. A Grant Agreement will be put in place between the Council and CHYP to prescribe the use of the funds and require CHYP to provide evidence to the Council of the works carried out to comply with the Housing in Multiple Occupation accommodation standards.
- 3.2. Save from the above there are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

### **4. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1. It is possible that CHYP does not use the funding provided through this grant to make the necessary alternations to the Querns Lane property. A Grant Agreement, as set out above, will be put in place between the Council and CHYP specifying the use of the funds and requiring CHYP to provide evidence that the works have been carried out.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 5.1. There is no direct impact upon equalities as a result of this decision.

### **6. ECOLOGICAL AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. There are no ecological or climate emergency implications as a result of this decision.

### **7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1. If the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance decides not to award the grant to CHYP, the charity will need to find alternative sources of funding or will not be able to use two rooms to provide accommodation for young people.

### **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1. None

(END)