

REPORT OF: HOUSING, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES MANAGER

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATES: 18th SEPTEMBER, 2018

Contact Details: Paul Lloyd Environmental Health Manager

Tel. No: 01282 661029

E-mail: paul.lloyd@pendle.gov.uk

MOSSCARE ST. VINCENT'S HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY FUNDING

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To review the Councils continued funding of Mosscore St Vincent's Home Improvement Agency.

RECOMMENDATION

That the funding for Moscare St Vincent's Home Improvement Agency is discontinued from December 2018.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

The benefit of the service is not sufficient to justify the cost to the Council.

ISSUE

Mosscore St Vincent's (MSV) Housing Association have been providing a home improvement agency service in Pendle for 25 years through their Homecare & Repair Service.

Their service operates across Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale and helps vulnerable people stay in their homes by accessing services such as:-

- Repairs and improvements to your home through a selected contractor
- Small repairs through our Handyperson service
- Free help and information to either point you to the right people, or assist with accessing charitable grants
- Technical advice on major home improvements, such as an extension

To qualify for the Homecare & Repair programme, residents must meet the following criteria:-

- Be an owner occupier or private tenant
- The household must include either someone aged 60+ or someone who is registered disabled

They also provide minor aids and adaptations funded by Lancashire County Council.

Pendle Council currently provides funding of £32,000 to MSV to support these services. MSV have provided a breakdown of the services that they provide for this funding these include the handyperson service, Core Service on two tiers, basic service and full service.

Basic Service:

- Smaller Jobs
- Contractor selected from approved contractors
- Client provided with quote
- Supervision of the works

Full Service:

- Larger Jobs
- Caseworker appointed to source charitable funding
- Technical officers offer advice and produce specification for the work
- Quotes obtained on behalf of the client
- Supervision of the works on site

In addition to the Core services MSV have also worked closely with Pendle Borough Council (PBC) for over 10 years to deliver energy efficiency measures to residents of the borough with funding from the Council's budget and more latterly from the Council Affordable Warmth funding that we receive from Lancashire County Council. In addition to the monies received from PBC, Mosscares St Vincent's have been successful in some cases of matching our funding with charitable funding from various sources.

The majority of energy efficiency work is now completed through the Cosy Homes in Lancashire Scheme as they are able to attract Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding which maximizes the small affordable warmth grant we receive from Lancashire County Council. This enables us to assist more clients.

The handyperson service is not a free service and a fee of £12 per hour plus the costs of materials was charged until the 1st April 2018 when it rose to £24 per hour plus materials.

MSV until 2012 were also processing disabled facilities grant applications for stairlifts as part of the work that was covered by the Council funding. This was taken back in house as it was considered more cost effective to provide it this way. We have been in discussion with MSV about them resuming this work on a fee per grant approval basis to mitigate the loss of this revenue funding but MSV have so far only asked if they can pilot 1 case.

In 2017 we entered in to a service level agreement with MSV to formalize our arrangement. The agreement set the level of service at 1200 residents of Pendle assisted through the above services and that they secure at least £20,000 of match funding from charities and other organisations.

Between April 2017 to March 2018 Mosscares St Vincent's (MSV) received 1175 enquiries from the residents of the Borough. They have provided figures for the year that showed that this resulted in 405 interventions. Which is made up from 289 handyperson jobs, 53 basic service jobs, 42 basic service advice visits and 21 full service jobs including the energy efficiency work.

These interventions were paid for by the clients and charitable funding. In the last financial year MSV attracted £19,365 charitable funding and £14,175 was from the Council's affordable warmth grant. The £32,000 provided by the Council is used to provide the support workers and technical officers to supervise the work and provide advice to their clients.

It is clear from the figures that MSV are providing a service to the older residents in the Borough, in some cases at no cost to them. They have indicated that if the funding is removed it will have a significant effect on the level of service that they provide in the Borough. However, as they have doubled the cost of the handyperson service they will be getting additional income from that. It should be noted that Burnley do not contribute to the service but it is still delivered in their Borough.

Whilst it has been of significant benefit to the Council and the residents in the past with the current level of financial resources available, the increased charges being imposed by MSV and the changes in our working partnerships it is no longer value for money for the Council to continue to fund Mosscares St Vincent's Home improvement agency.

The Council has provided the funding for the service until the 30th September and it is proposed that they be given 3 month's notice and it is discontinued from December 2018.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: None arising from this report

Financial: The funding is currently coming from the Disabled Facilities Grant budget which is insufficient to keep up with the demand for grant assistance.

Legal: The current Service Level Agreement expired on the 31st March 2018.

Risk Management: Nothing arising from this report

Health and Safety: Nothing arising from this report

Climate Change: Nothing arising from this report

Community Safety: Nothing arising from this report

Equality and Diversity: The removal of this funding may impact on the elderly residents of the borough.

APPENDICES

None

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None