

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 05 September 2022

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Housing
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Fundraising and personalised employment support and private rented sector tenancies for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
<b>Corporate Priorities:</b>	Providing Housing Choices

#### **Purpose:**

To seek Executive approval to allocate funds from the Homelessness Prevention Grant to enter into a 12-month pilot with Beam, an on-line fundraising platform and social enterprise, to help homeless people and those at risk of homelessness find employment and/or accommodation.

#### **Executive summary:**

Beam is a social enterprise that supports individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness into employment and accommodation in the private rented sector. Beam partners with local authorities to provide long-term, sustained support by removing the financial barriers that prevent service users from starting work and finding a home. These barriers include access to training, laptops, travel, childcare and rental deposits. Beam's flexible fundraising model removes these financial barriers quickly; on average it takes less than a month to fund an average fundraising total of £2,534.

Beam does not only offer financial help as it also facilitates engagement from the those it supports by empowering individuals to tell their personal story through their webpage and show an itemised budget breakdown of how much they need to raise. Members of the public can then donate as little as £1 and leave messages of support.

#### **Recommendation/Recommended Option:**

It is recommended that the Executive approves a 12-month pilot with Beam to benefit 10 council tenants, rough sleepers and those living in temporary accommodation referred to them by the Council's Housing Options Team.

**Reason:**

To commence fundraising and personalised employment support and private rented sector tenancies for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Fareham.

**Cost of proposals:**

- £20,000 payment at start for 10 people joining Beam, and.
- £7,650 based on housing outcomes forecast

**Appendices:**                    **A:** Confidential outcomes forecast and cost-benefit analysis

**Background papers:** None

**Reference papers:**        Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-25

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### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	05 September 2022
<b>Subject:</b>	Fundraising and personalised employment support and private rented sector tenancies for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
<b>Briefing by:</b>	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Housing

#### INTRODUCTION

1. As demonstrated in the independent review of homelessness in Fareham carried out in 2021, the number of people approaching the Council for housing assistance has steadily increased over recent years. Whilst this is predominately due to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which imposed new duties on local authorities, the ongoing impact of the pandemic and cost of living crisis has seen numbers soar in recent months.
2. Finding work and/or private rented tenancies can be a solution to many people's housing problems however we have identified two key barriers faced by our customers:
  - I. Financial: the cost of getting into work or the rental sector are often prohibitively high, e.g., finding and using a laptop, rental deposits, travel to interviews or place of work, childcare costs.
  - II. Support: our customers often have support needs and require more personalised support than most employability services are equipped to provide.
3. The Council's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-25 outlines key strategic priorities to reduce current and future levels of homelessness by increasing prevention and early intervention activities.

#### BEAM OVERVIEW

4. Beam is an online fundraising platform and social enterprise, helping homeless people or those at risk of homelessness to find work and/or accommodation. Through Beam's platform ([www.beam.org/campaigns](http://www.beam.org/campaigns)), individuals referred by the local authority can fundraise for the cost of items that can be a financial obstacle to starting work or moving into a new home, such as job training, childcare, a laptop, travel costs, clothes or rent deposits, tenancy training, home furnishings and moving costs.

5. A Beam caseworker is assigned to each individual who will support them on their journey into work and/or accommodation. In conjunction with the individual, the caseworker will determine a fundraising target which will remove the financial barriers being faced. All costs are covered, including the cost of training courses and rent deposits, as well as other requirements including equipment, travel, moving costs and childcare, and listed transparently on the website. The average fundraising campaign is £2,534. As well as financial support, messages of support from members of the public also have an important motivational effect on Beam's service users.
6. Once the funds have been raised, Beam pays for the budget items listed on the website (no cash is given to the individual). Beam then supports them to attend training and/or work preparation groups, find work and/or private rented sector tenancies. This one-to-one support is tailored to the individual and includes CV writing, interview preparation, connections to prospective employers together with property searches, home safety and budgeting advice and tips for viewings.
7. Beam launched in 2017 and has worked with c.1100 individuals nationally, raising over £3m via their fundraising platform. 81% of individuals supported by Beam have started work, with 83% of those sustaining work for more than 3 months. 73% have moved into stable accommodation and 100% have sustained that accommodation for more than 6 months.
8. The initial funding (which launched Beam) came from the Greater London Authority and the charity Nesta. Beam currently works with 24 councils, including Westminster, Wandsworth, Bromley, Havering, Hammersmith & Fulham, Leicester, Lambeth and Camden. At the time of writing, Gosport Borough Council and New Forest District Council are also looking to partner with Beam.
9. The benefits of Beam's approach are:
  - People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness get into skilled, secure, and well-paid work and/or private rented tenancies
  - Local authorities reduce their financial outlay on homelessness administration, temporary accommodation, rent deposit schemes and tenancy support
  - High levels of investment are made in disadvantaged people that would otherwise be unaffordable
  - Members of the public are engaged in helping people in their community
10. Beam has an established network of employers who operate in Fareham, including the NHS, DPD, Lidl, Waitrose, Royal Mail and Ocado.

### **PROPOSED FBC/BEAM PARTNERSHIP PILOT**

11. The Council is proposing a pilot in which Beam will work with 10 individuals, referred by the Housing Options Team, over a 12-month period. By providing this additional layer of support, they will be helped into skilled, secure, and well-paid work and/or private rented sector tenancies. This will improve outcomes for our customers and reduce the financial burden of homelessness on the Council's resources.
12. The pilot's key performance indicators will be:
  - Number of those working with Beam who commence paid work

- Number of those working with Beam who sustain paid work
  - Number of those working with Beam who leave temporary accommodation or whose homelessness is prevented
  - Number of those working with Beam who move into the private rented sector
  - The amount of money raised through Beam's fundraising platform
13. Based on Beam's work to date with other local authorities, we will expect to see the outcomes as shown in confidential Appendix A.
  14. The pilot will be monitored using Beam's data collection and shared with the Council through a dashboard that will display the impact of Beam's interventions on our customers. This will be supported by regular meetings between Beam and the Council's Housing Options Team. The operational arrangements will be co-designed and confirmed in a service level agreement.
  15. The pilot will be reviewed towards the end of the 12-months to determine its success and whether there is funding available to allow it to continue.

## **COSTS**

16. The cost of the 12-month pilot will be £20,000. The provision of a caseworker by Beam will ensure that each individual is provided with tailored support and advice to find well-paid and sustainable employment. This will include budgeting advice, CV and job applications, interview preparation and access to employer partners. Beam will manage the fundraising platform and pay for the items detailed, such as laptops, mobile phones, Wi-Fi, clothes and travel, childcare costs, rent deposits and 1<sup>st</sup> months' rent in advance, basic home furnishings and moving van costs.
17. For each private rented sector tenancy secured, an additional £900 is charged. The caseworker will provide budgeting and affordability sessions, tenancy training, tenancy search support, landlord introductions and tenancy management for 12 months. Based on Beam's estimated forecast, we expect the cost of this element to be £7,650.
18. Due to the Council's prudent financial planning, the Homelessness reserves (comprising ring-fenced central government grants) and the annual Homelessness Prevention Grant allocation are sufficient to meet this cost.

## **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Caroline Newman (Ext 4645)