

REPORT TO:		Cabinet	
DATE:		05 August 2026	
PORTFOLIO:		Councillor Melissa Fisher - Deputy Leader of the Council (Housing and Communities)	
REPORT AUTHOR:		Wayne Forrest, Housing Strategy & Policy Manager	
TITLE OF REPORT:		Renewal of Grant Awards to Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Ltd and HARV Outreach Team for the period 2026-29.	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	No	Not applicable	
KEY DECISION:	Yes	If yes, date of publication:	28 th July 2026

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report outlines the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant funding that the Council has been awarded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
- 1.2 This report identifies how the Council proposes to utilise this funding and seeks approval to enter into grant agreements with Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Projects and HARV Outreach Team to support their activities and services in the relief and prevention of rough sleeping.

2. **Recommendations**

I recommend:

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the grants detailed in Table 2, from the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant award for 2026-2029 to continue to enhance support for people who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping.
- 2.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Regeneration and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services) to draw up,

finalise and execute agreements to Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Projects and HARV Outreach Team to continue the support and activities they are currently providing.

3. **Reasons for Recommendations and Background**

In December 2025, the Government launched [A National Plan to End Homelessness](#). In aiming to put prevention at the heart of public services:

- Setting a **new national target** to prevent homelessness for more households and to help more people into stable homes quickly, this parliament.
- Investing **£3.5 billion in homelessness and rough sleeping services** over the next three years, supporting over 300,000 households each year via new, more flexible multi-year funding arrangements that enable councils to invest more in prevention.
- Placing new legal duties on public services to **identify, act and collaborate** to prevent and address homelessness.
- Outlining the ambition that **no one should leave a public institution into homelessness**
- **Ending the perceived need to sleep rough before getting help** by building on the work of the Mayor of London and other councils to support all areas to develop plans that move away from verification towards assessment based on need.

Immediate action on temporary accommodation, particularly B&B use:

- Setting a new target to **eliminate the use of B&Bs for families**, other than very short-term use in emergencies, by the end of this parliament.
- **Increasing the supply of good-quality temporary accommodation.**
- **Improving experience for people living in temporary accommodation**, including action on standards, schooling, healthcare and out-of-area placements.
- **Supporting local models** via updated guidance, toolkits and expanded £30 million Emergency Accommodation Reduction Programme.

In order to support local authorities, a new Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant has been awarded to all council's, which consolidates multiple 2025/26 funding streams into a single, ringfenced grant. It brings together:

- The Prevention, Relief & Staffing element of the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG)
- The Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant (RSPARG)
- The Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP)
- The Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant (DASA)

The Grant also includes funding for the Renters' Rights Act homelessness new burdens and targeted funding for supported housing support services. By integrating these grants, the aim is to provide local authorities with greater flexibility to deliver joined-up services according to local need, that prevent homelessness, reduce rough sleeping, and ensure support in safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse and their children.

The purpose of this Grant is to support local authorities to:-

- Discharge their duties under the Housing Act 1996, as set out in the Homelessness Code of Guidance for local authorities, and provide support for rough sleeping.
- Deliver against local homelessness strategies and the homelessness metrics in the Local Outcomes Framework.
- Focus on early intervention and maximising prevention activities.
- Fulfil their statutory duties under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, relating to the provision of support within safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse and their children.

3.1 MHCLG have confirmed that the Council will receive an annual Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant over the period 2026 – 2029. Specifically:-

Table 1 - Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant funding

year	Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant total	Of which, Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation	Of which, Renters Rights Act 2025, new burdens
2026/27	£722,099	£33,894	£40,584
2027/28	£729,774	£34,584	£19,109
2028/29	£734,664	£35,283	£0

Confirmation of awards can be found at [Allocations tables for all consolidated grants from 2026-2027 to 2028-29: final - GOV.UK](#)

- 3.2 The recommended grant awards will help support interventions which help prevent and / or relieve homelessness and as such will contribute towards the aims of the forthcoming Hyndburn Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026 - 2031.
- 3.3 Background and reasons for the recommendation are outlined in **Table 2**. It is proposed that both Maundy Relief and Stepping Stone received an uplift of 3.5% over the proposed grant period in recognition that:-
- Payments for the schemes provided have not been raised for many years, although staffing costs may have risen during this period
 - It is anticipated that costs will continue to rise over the proposed grant period
 - The Council has received confirmation of three years funding which includes an uplift.

The proposed uplift for HARV Outreach Team reflects funding attributed by MHCLG for Domestic Abuse Grant (**Table 1**) which has seen an uplift over previous years and will continue to do so over the period of the proposed Grant Agreement.

Table 2 – Reasons for Grant and Proposed Award

		Proposed Award (inc 3.5% uplift pa)		
Agency	Reason for Grant Award	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Maundy Relief	<i>Provision of night shelter</i> - emergency overnight accommodation for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The grant is used to facilitate and successfully deliver the scheme.	£15,525.00	£16,068.37	£16,630.76
Maundy Relief	<i>Rough Sleeper Navigator Service</i> – an existing outreach scheme intended to support rough sleepers with a view to providing immediate emergency support along with helping rough sleepers access accommodation. The grant is used to facilitate and successfully deliver the scheme.	£32,085.00	£32,207.97	£34,370.25
Stepping Stone	<i>ABEN (A Bed Every Night)</i> – an existing scheme which offers short-term, supported temporary accommodation to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The scheme comprises five dispersed accommodation units and residents are supported to move on into longer-term accommodation. The grant is used to facilitate and successfully deliver the scheme.	£20,700.00	£21,424.50	£22,174.35
Stepping Stone	<i>Step Forward Hyndburn</i> – An existing scheme comprising 12 units of accommodation for single males who are homeless. The grant will continue to fund 24/7 on-site management, security and support to ensure success of the scheme.	£29,576.16	£30,611.33	£31,682.73
Stepping Stone	<i>RSAP (Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme)</i> – An existing scheme which offers ten units of supported accommodation for up to two years to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The grant is used to facilitate and successfully deliver the scheme.	£77,625.00	£80,341.88	£83,153.85
HARV Outreach Team	<i>Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation</i> – An existing scheme which provides a holistic domestic abuse service across the district. The grant is used to support HARV to	£33,894.00	£34,584.00	£35,283.00

	provide additional staffing capacity, accommodation and specific domestic abuse interventions.			
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- 3.4 As MHCLG have confirmed that the Council will receive Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant over the period 2026 – 2029 (**Table 1**), this allows the Council to plan ahead beyond 2026-27. With this in mind, it is proposed that authority is delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services) to enter into grant agreements with Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Ltd and HARV for the period 2027 – 2029, which may help in providing greater assurance to Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Ltd and HARV Outreach Team regarding future funding and perhaps confirmation of funding at an earlier stage in the financial year.

4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 *To agree not to renew grant awards to Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Ltd and HARV Outreach Team*

4.2 To fund and deliver these housing and support activities directly by the Council.

It is not recommended for the Council to deliver these services directly due to significant operational and financial challenges including:

- **Accommodation Sourcing:** The Council would need to source suitable accommodation directly. This option could prove cost prohibitive, particularly if properties require outright purchase and extensive renovation to meet required standards.
- **Staffing and Resource Constraints:** The Council would need to allocate sufficient staffing resources to manage the accommodation and provide direct support to service users. The Council currently lacks the specialised skill sets within its existing workforce to deliver these services, necessitating an external recruitment process.

4.3 To deliver these activities directly through alternative Council-managed models.

Transitioning away from a grant-funded model to direct Council delivery would cause severe short-term disruption from vulnerable, homeless individuals. Furthermore, this approach would be substantially more expensive than the current, highly efficient models delivered by the voluntary sector and funded through existing grant agreements.

4.4 To award grant funding to alternative external providers.

The Council could have sought alternative organisations to receive this grant funding; however, this approach presents several critical factors:

- **Lack of alternative specialist providers:** There are very few alternative voluntary or community sector agencies operating locally with the capacity to utilise this funding

immediately. Diverting grants to a new provider would cause major, immediate disruption to existing support frameworks and vulnerable individuals.

- **Increased Delivery Costs:** Allocating grants to alternative organisations – particularly those without an established operational base within the borough – would likely result in higher setup and mobilisation costs, reducing the value-for-money of the grant funding.
- **Loss of Local Expertise:** The current grant recipients maintain an excellent working relationship with the Council. Their extensive local knowledge, leverage of volunteer resources, and specialised experience in this field is vital to effectively supporting vulnerable local residents.

- 4.5 All organisations possess an established and successful track record of working to prevent and relieve rough sleeping and supporting vulnerable residents. This targeted grant funding will sustain these organisations, enabling them to strategically extend and enhance the high-quality activities they already deliver successfully within the Borough.

5. **Consultations**

- 5.1 The Council is presently in process of updating its Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy over the period 2026 – 2031. The proposed strategy will heavily take into account the requirements of [A National Plan to End Homelessness](#). The activities currently provided by Stepping Stone Projects, Maundy Relief, and HARV Outreach Team to tackle and reduce the levels of rough sleeping in the Borough will support agreed actions within the Council’s Homelessness Strategy.
- 5.2 The Council continues to engage and consult with a range of stakeholders via the Hyndburn in Homeless Forum.

6. **Implications**

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	There is no direct revenue implication for the Council. The cost of the grants to Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Projects and HARV Outreach Team is met through the Council’s 2026 – 2029 Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant awarded by MHCLG. The Council will not have to repay this grant funding so long as it is used in accordance with grant conditions and there is no underspend.
Legal and human rights implications	The funding has been awarded to the Council via a grant determination letter (dated 6th May 2026) and at the following link:- Allocations

	<i>tables for all consolidated grants from 2026-2027 to 2028-29: final - GOV.UK</i> The Council's Legal Services Department will draw up grant agreements with Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Projects and HARV Outreach Team to give effect to Cabinet's decision. The award of grants may be a subsidy for the purposes of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. To constitute a subsidy, the granting of financial assistance must be given to an enterprise which is engaging in economic activity that confers an economic advantage. Charities can be deemed as an 'enterprise' if they are undertaking commercial activities. For the purposes of the Subsidy Control regime, an economic activity entails the offering of goods and services on the market. However, in this instance, the definition of a subsidy is not met as Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Projects, and HARV are not considered to be engaging in economic activities. This grant funding will enable Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Projects, and HARV to extend their existing activities to provide specialist support and assistance to prevent and relieve rough sleeping. In the circumstances, the activities being funded can be considered non-economic and, by virtue of section 7(2) Subsidy Control Act 2022, Maundy Relief, Stepping Stone Projects, and HARV, would not be acting as enterprises in connection with their activities, so no subsidy would arise.
Assessment of risk	The Council's biggest risk is ensuring compliance with the grant requirements. This will be actively managed through the grant agreements, which will specify how the grant is spend, provide for grant clawback in the event of non-compliance or non-delivery, and set out how the Council will monitor the use of the funding.

Equality and diversity implications <i>A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i>	The Council is subject to the public sector equality duty introduced by the Equality Act 2010. When making a decision in respect of the recommendations in this report, Cabinet must have regard to the need to: • eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and • advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't; and • foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't. For these purposes, the relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Customer First Analysis completed (Appendix 1) does not suggest any equality and diversity implications that go against the proposed recommendations.
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7. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:** **List of Background Papers**

7.1 Appendix 1 – Customer First Analysis

7.2 The Council is in process of updating its Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026 – 2031 to reflect the new requirements outlined in A National Plan to End Homelessness. It is anticipated that this new strategy will be provided at Cabinet in Autumn 2026.

8. **Freedom of Information**

8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.