

# **Tamworth Borough Council Homelessness Prevention Policy Statement**

## **Introduction**

For a number of years Tamworth Borough Council has received Homelessness Prevention Grant funding from the department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) to assist the authority in designing schemes that are appropriate to the needs of the local community. TBC has set up a number of specific schemes where there is a financial benefit, either directly or via the provision of goods and services to the recipient each of which has its own policy and procedure. The purpose of this policy is to reinforce the prevention approach adopted by the Authority following approval by Cabinet in May 2008 which is in line with the Homelessness Act 2002 and supported by the CLG grant allocation for those schemes where there is no financial benefit to the recipient.

## **Indirectly funded services**

CLG grant has been utilised to enable the following services to be offered to households at risk of homelessness:

- Specialist money advice provided by Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
- The Court Desk provided by CAB
- Mediation for those at risk of homelessness as a result of family breakdown provided by appropriately trained TBC staff
- Mortgage Rescue Scheme funded by central government and administered in part by TBC staff.

In addition to this the Housing advice team operates on the basis of using every available intervention within the 'toolkit' of measures funded via CLG grant to prevent homelessness in the first instance. Where it is evident that the applicant will have to move from their current home, those schemes designed to allow access to private rented accommodation (Bond Scheme & prevention (spend to save) fund) will be utilised before an application for statutory homelessness assistance will be considered as the best solution for the applicant.

## **Risks and Mitigations**

The Money advice and Court desk schemes are funded by CLG Grant allocation and funded via a fixed term contract in order for TBC to best manage costs and ensure best use of the grant allocation.

Mediation and MRS are offered as a result of training funded from CLG grant and can only continue to be offered whilst the training is current or funding is available for any necessary update training to be undertaken.

The prevention approach is in keeping with the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002 and whilst there have been cases heard in various Courts with regard to 'gate keeping' this approach is now well embedded in authorities throughout the Country and TBC has procedures in place to protect against such an accusation.

**Policy Date:** September 2011

**Review Date :** September 2013

**Approved by:** Cabinet