

To: City Executive Board

Date: 4th April 2012

Report of: Head of Service, Housing and Communities

**Title of Report: ALLOCATION OF PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS
GRANT AND OXFORD CITY GRANT FOR
HOMELESSNESS SERVICES**

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: Oxford City Council has been awarded £1,042,000 Preventing Homelessness Grant from Communities and Local Government's (CLG) Homelessness Directorate for inclusion in its budget allocation for 2012-2013. This is in addition to the Council's own homelessness grant budget of £442,279. This report outlines the allocation of both the Preventing Homelessness Grant funding and the Council's homelessness grant budget to a variety of voluntary sector agencies, with the purpose of meeting the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy.

Key decision: No

Executive lead member: Councillor Joe McManners

Policy Framework: Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013

Recommendation(s):

1. Recommend Council agree the allocation of the Preventing Homelessness Grant for 2012 – 2013 as follows:

a) Street Services and Reconnection Team (Broadway Homelessness and Support) - £235,000

b) Reconnection and Referral Co-ordinator (Under 25s) (In the process of assigning it to a provider) - £37,245

c) Reconnection Rent (O'Hanlon House) - £512

d) 6 Subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Simon House) - £4,243

e) 6 Subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Lucy Faithful House) - £4,179

f) Mental Health Practitioner at Luther Street – £25,000

g) 2 Education, Training and Employment Workers (Aspire) - £60,519

h) 1 Specialist Alcohol Worker (O'Hanlon House) - £8,555

i) 1 Multiple Needs Hostel worker (Elmore Community Services) - £40,757

j) Service Broker – Big Issue Foundation - £25,000

- k) Homelessness Liaison Police Officer (for two years with an operating budget of £5,000 for each year) - £90,000
- l) Elmore Team ASB Services - £8,690
- m) Additional Home Choice Gold Top-up - £20,000
- n) Continuation of Enhanced Options - £50,000
- o) Fraud Investigation - £80,000
- p) Supplementing Discretionary Housing Payments - £100,000
- q) Unallocated £252,300

2. Recommend the allocation of Oxford City Council's homelessness grant budget for 2012-2013 as follows:

- a) O'Hanlon House Day Centre – homeless hostel for 25+, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £133,432
- b) One Foot Forward – homeless hostel for 16-25 year olds, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £42,992
- c) Elmore Community Services – Complex Needs Floating Support Service for clients in Oxford City Council temporary and permanent stock - £40,757
- d) Elmore Community Services, Anti Social Behaviour Service – £11,310
- e) The Gatehouse – café for the homeless - £9,502
- f) Steppin' Stone – day centre providing emergency provision and meaningful activity - £55,000
- g) Simon House Hostel – provision of respite beds at an abstinence based hostel - £11,596
- h) Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store – recycling store attached to the Emmaus Community £25,000
- i) Aspire Oxfordshire – social enterprise providing work opportunities for homeless and ex-homeless people - £112,690
- k) Unallocated – nil

3. Recommend to Council to approve delegated authority to the Head of Service, Housing and Communities to allocate the balance of the Preventing Homelessness Grant (£252,300) and any amendments to the homelessness grants budget

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Risk Register

Background

Supporting People Review and No Second Night Out (NSNO)

1. On 20th of February 2012 the Specialist advisor from CLG confirmed our grant funding of £1,042,000. Oxford Council's figure is the same as last year. This is likely to be slightly different in years 2013/14 and 2014/15. However, it is worth noting that there is a possibility in 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 that a formula may be applied nationally to the funding which could impact adversely for Oxford City. The grant will be paid to the Authority as an Area Based Grant entitled "Homelessness Prevention".

2. This is part of the ongoing commitment from CLG to enable work in the field of rough sleeping and homelessness prevention to continue.
3. This additional funding will allow the Oxford City Council to explore certain gaps in the City's provision and further develop our work in the field of No Second Night Out (NSNO), Housing First / Clearing House, assertive outreach continue our sustained drive to reduce rough sleeping to as close to zero as possible by 2012.
4. Supporting People team started their strategic review in June 2011 and have since concluded parts of it which involved supported accommodation within the City boundaries. As a result of their review it has been highlighted that they need to make savings in excess of half a million pound over the next two years. This will leave gaps within services and a high possibility of reduction in beds. Due to this we feel that we need to hold some unallocated funds to assess how changes will impact rough sleeping within the City and commission services accordingly.
5. A further commissioning budget of £442,279 is also currently available from the City Council's own grant funds.
6. In order to deliver all this work, the City Council will explore the strategically relevant opportunities to jointly commission with our partners at Supporting People, the DAAT and the future GP consortia. We have been working with Supporting People over the last year with their strategic review of homelessness services; this ensured that we kept the City Council's interests high on the agenda.
7. In light of the cross-commissioning agenda and cross-strategy advantages, a multi-agency steering group is responsible for advising on and monitoring these budgets. The group comprises of representatives from Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council's Joint Housing Team, Primary Care Trust, Drug and Alcohol Action Team and Oxfordshire County Council's Supporting People Team.

Strategic Framework for Commissioning and Funding in 2012-2013

8. Significant consideration is given to the national rough sleeping strategy entitled "No One Left Out – Communities Ending Rough Sleeping" and "Vision to end rough sleeping: No Second Night Out Nationwide" which signalled a new energy and renewed focus to end rough sleeping by 2012. This document forms the framework for the Council's commissioning and is combined with specific local issues and need in Oxford.
9. Therefore, key objectives for the next 2 years are:-
10. Reduce and sustain the reduction in rough sleeping numbers
 - Assertive outreach

- Reconnection
 - Intensive, targeted and multi-disciplinary services
 - Personalisation and further modernisation of services
 - Focus on young people
 - Tackling rough sleeping amongst new migrants
 - Prevention
 - Enhanced Options
 - Access to the private rented sector for those with lower or no support needs
 - Implement the changes of the Supporting People strategic review and restructure supported accommodation into a Pathway model.
 - Development of a new Internet based database called CHAIN for rough sleepers, which will be accessible by the whole of the homelessness network.
11. Development of a NSNO / Assessment centre (four pledges)
- Identifying and helping rough sleepers off the streets before a second night out
 - The general public and students can alert services if they see anyone sleeping rough on a telephone hotline
 - Rough sleepers can go to a place of safety where their needs can be assessed
 - Rough sleepers can access services they need; rough sleepers from outside can be reconnected with their community and be near family and friends
12. Improving positive activities
- Positive activities that empower and motivate to give hope, build skills, increase confidence and self-esteem and strengthen positive relationships
 - Day centres should be places of engagement, inspiration and involvement drawing on:-
 - neighbourhood links
 - Partnerships with local learning providers
 - Theatre, football and sport
 - Improving skills such as soft skills
 - Managing time and working in teams
 - Information adult learning
 - Formal training and education
13. Tackling worklessness
- Raising expectations and supporting people to get a job
 - Promoting social enterprise
 - Jobs in homelessness services
 - Working hostels/accommodation
14. Improve access to health and social care
- Access to health and social care services
 - Tackling severe, complex and multiple health needs amongst the homeless population

- Joint working between outreach / mental health workers/nurses/addiction nurses
 - Reducing health inequalities and reaching out to excluded groups
 - Childhood trauma and complex needs
15. Service user involvement is an integral part of all services that we fund and commission.
16. Therefore, in terms of commissioning, the following priorities have been identified:-
- An assertive outreach service that incorporates reconnection (including Accession States Migrants (A10s)) and Personalisation
 - A development of No Second Night Out / Assessment centre
 - Further development of social enterprise, education, training and employment opportunities, positive activities and enhanced options
 - Prevention and advice services
 - Continued investment in move-on and the private rented sector.
 - Development of community participation through mentoring and befriending

Allocation of the Homelessness Prevention Grant 2012-2013

17. It is proposed that the following specialist services and posts be funded from the 1st April 2012 until 31st March 2013:
18. **Street Services and Reconnection Team (Broadway Homelessness and Support)**
One FTE Manager, 4 FTE Outreach Workers and 1 FTE Reconnection Worker - £235,000
 On 1st April 2012 a 3-year contract will be awarded Broadway Homelessness and Support. This contract ends on 31st March 2015 but has the option for an additional two years for 2015/16 - 2016/17. There is a break clause within the contract to say that if we fail to secure the Preventing Homelessness Grant than the council have the right to terminate the contract.
19. **One FTE Referral and Reconnection Worker for Under 25s (In the process of assigning it to a new provider)**
£37,245
 This post has been historically based within the Street Services Team but has not been effective recently. We have decided that this contract would be better suited within a Young person's hostel. The County council will further explore this option. This contract is coming to an end at the end of March 2013 after which we will review on going funding.
20. **Reconnection Rent (O'Hanlon House)**
£512
 To cover the rent of the Street Services Team's Reconnection Worker who is based at O'Hanlon House.

21. Two FTE Education, Training and Employment Workers (Aspire Oxfordshire)

£60,519

We are continuing to fund these two posts to further develop Aspire's social enterprises, work placements, employment opportunities and benefits' advice to Oxford's homeless network in order to develop progression pathways into sustainable independent living. Aspire were set a target of becoming self sustaining by the end of March 2013 when funding would be stopped. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.

22. One FTE Alcohol Specialist Worker (O'Hanlon House) for one quarter £8,555

Based at O'Hanlon House, this post is to assess the support and resettlement needs of street drinkers accessing the day centre and especially the wet room. The service specification for this post has been refreshed and looks to deliver low threshold work including motivational interviewing, preparation for treatment, identification of training needs, group work development and the identification of best practice in the field of alcohol. We are planning to fund this post for the first quarter of the year and after that O'Hanlon House will incorporate the future costs within their restructure.

23. One FTE Multiple Needs Worker Hostel Worker (Elmore Community Services)

£40,757

This post is to concentrate on in-reach work with clients placed in the City's hostels to help keep them in accommodation and prevent them from returning to rough sleeping. Elmore Community Services was successful in their bid for the Complex Needs Service, part of the Supported to Independent Living Mental Health Pathway and it is therefore recommended that this post continues with the Elmore. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.

24. Mental Health Practitioner (Luther Street Medical Centre)

£25,000

This post has continued to be a success and it is recommended that funding in partnership with the Primary Care Trust is continued for this post. We will, however, request that this post is based with the new Street Services Team for 2 days a week. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.

- 25. 6 subsidised beds for under 25s (Simon House)**
£4,243
 To cover the shortfall in service charge for 6 young people who are under 25 years old at Simon House. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.
- 26. 6 subsidised beds for under 25s (Lucy Faithful House)**
£4,179
 To cover the shortfall in service charge for 6 young people who are under 25 years old at Lucy Faithful House. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.
- 27. One FTE Service Broker (Big Issue Foundation)**
£25,000
 This post tackles the lack of engagement of Big Issue sellers with accommodation offers and to improve the partnership working with this organisation. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.
- 28. Specialist Homelessness Liaison Police Officer (Thames Valley Police) £90,000**
 The current post holder is resigning and we are in the process of recruiting another officer in conjunction with TVP. This post is crucial in reducing street numbers, liaising closely with the Street Services Team and other partners within the single homelessness and rough sleepers' network to identify and tackle problematic rough sleeper hot spots, to prevent rough sleeping and anti social behaviour. This post holder will play a major role in the new project No Second Night Out.
- 29. Elmore ASB services - £8,690**
 This project is funded from two different grants, both the Preventing Homelessness Grant and the Oxford City Council grant. This project works with offenders, sex workers and others who are likely to cause anit-social behaviour.
- 30. Development of Enhanced Options - £50,000**
 This will enhance the work that the Housing Options Team can provide and in particular be Debt and EET work & welfare reform impact mitigation
- 31. Fraud Investigation - £80,000**
 This sum is automatically deducted from our total to contribute towards the Fraud Investigation.
- 32. Discretionary Housing Payments - £100,000**
 This money has been allocated to ensure that we can mitigate for the welfare changes.

33. Additional Home Choice Gold top up - £20,000

This will provide additional money for the Home Choice scheme. This will allow for better move from within Supported accommodation. This will also allow families and individuals to take up an offer of accommodation without hitting the streets.

34. Additional Proposals being considered

Other proposals that are to be considered and further developed in 2012 -2013 are funding for:-

- NSNO / Assessment centre – we are aiming to open up an assessment centre which will double up as a NSNO hub. This will allow the SST to refer clients off the streets rapidly. This will also act as the gateway to access non-statutory supported accommodation.
- Scoping of further social enterprise schemes – we will be keen to explore ideas and schemes with both Aspire and other organisation. The schemes will need to prevent or help sustain tenancies but also allow individuals to learn new skills.

35. Given the uncertainty the changes of the SP review will bring about for supported accommodation projects it is recommended that we do not allocate the full Preventing Homelessness Grant. The remainder (£252,300) will allow the City to respond to these uncertainties. There is a projected savings target of £500k for Supporting People.

36. Where there is opportunity, the funding will be directed to the areas needing development which are referred to in paragraph 31.

Oxford City Council's Homelessness Grant

37. A grant allocation of £442,279 has been allocated for the commissioning of homelessness services in 2012-2013.

38. In line with the City Council's prospectus and strategic objective "safer communities/homelessness", OCC are committed to the provision of accommodation, day centre support, a full range of day centre activities and meaningful occupation as well as tenancy sustainment from this grant.

39. It is recommended that the grant allocation be made as follows for 2012 - 2013:-

Organisation and Purpose of Grant	Allocation for 12/13
Young Peoples' Project – One Foot Forward (Bournemouth Churches Housing Association) This grant jointly commissions the service with the County council. The hostel works with young people aged between 18 – 23 years old who are homeless or about to become homeless.	£42,992

<p>O'Hanlon House (Oxford Homeless Pathways) This grant jointly commissions the service with the Supporting People team in the County council. The money specifically commissions the day service that works with vulnerable adults who present with needs such as substance misuse, mental health and alcohol needs. The day service aims to provide a bridge between the services users and other meaningful services such as the GP, Social services, DAAT teams and mental health teams.</p>	<p>£133,432</p>
<p>Elmore Community Services This funds one post within the Elmore team; the post is called a Tenancy Sustainment officer. The officer works with residents of OCC who are finding it difficult to manage their tenancies.</p>	<p>£40,757</p>
<p>Elmore Anti-Social Behaviour Services This amount is in addition to the £8,690 from the Preventing Homelessness Grant. The joint amount provides half a post to work with offenders and sex workers in the community. It aims to reduce the offending level by directing them towards meaningful activities.</p>	<p>£11,310</p>
<p>The Gatehouse Café This provides some core funding to the Gatehouse daycentre. It allows them to open up six evening out of seven to engage with the hard to reach clients that traditionally do not use mainstream services.</p>	<p>£9,502</p>
<p>Steppin Stone Day Centre This provides core funding to the Steppin Stones daycentre. It allows them to work with vulnerable adults who are aiming to get back into training, education and employment. Steppin Stones also provide individuals with an opportunity to train in their social enterprises; their allotment, the daycentre kitchen or the pickle shop. The daycentre is based away from the city centre, which allows for individuals to move away from the street activities such as begging, drinking and other anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>£55,000</p>

<p>Simon House (Respite Beds) This money allows Simon House to run respite beds, which the County council use to pay for. It allows services users to acclimatise before moving into more settled beds within the hostel.</p>	£11,596
<p>Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store This money supports Emmaus to take in vulnerable individuals into accommodation but also gives them an opportunity to work in their social enterprise.</p>	£25,000
<p>Aspire Oxfordshire Aspire's social enterprises, work placements, employment opportunities and benefits' advice to Oxford's homeless network in order to develop progression pathways into sustainable independent living. Aspire were set a target of becoming self sustaining by the end of March 2013 when funding would be stopped or reduced.</p>	£112,690
	£442,279

Level of Risk

40. Please see attached matrix (Appendix 1)

Climate Change/environmental impact

41. There are no significant climate change or environmental impact issues related to this report.

Equalities Impact

42. All services in receipt of funding are subject to rigorous monitoring which includes equality and diversity.

Financial Implications

43. The funding allocation for both grants has to be spent by the end of the financial year 2012-2013.

44. This is budget neutral as the line in the budget for the grant will be equal to the allocated spend.

45. There are no other financial implications for the Council arising from this report.

Legal Implications

46. In distributing these grants the Council should ensure that the organisations are clear as to the outcomes that the Council expects to achieve.

Staffing Implications

47. All external staff are employed by external organisations for whom the Council has no liability.
48. There will be quarterly performance monitoring meetings with Oxford City Council's Preventing Homelessness Grant Steering Group to review and ensure the delivery of services, and that outcomes and targets are achieved
49. The Preventing Homelessness Grant funding programme and OCC's homelessness grant will be managed by the existing Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager in Housing and Communities.

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List of background papers: None

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