

For use by Business Managers only

DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE AUTHORITY

(Item 28 of the delegated powers given to Business Managers)

Officer's name: Graham Stratford	Direct Line: 252447 Fax: E-mail: gstratford@oxford.gov.uk	Key Decision: (delete yes or no as applicable) No
To be sent to: Portfolio Holder for consent Opposition Representatives for noting		Name: Councillor Ed Turner Councillor Rundle Councillor Benjamin

<p>What decision needs to be taken?</p> <p>To agree a 12 month extension of the current Supporting People contracts whilst negotiations towards new contracts are concluded.</p>
<p>What are the reasons for the decision?</p> <p>The Supporting People programme is the means by which government funding for support services for council tenants and others needing support is delivered. The interim contracts through which the support services supplied by Oxford City Council were funded under this programme expired on 2nd April 2006. The Supporting People team at Oxfordshire County Council were expected to deliver new contracts to replace the existing ones before the end of April 2006, but have been unable to do so, and have therefore generated supplemental agreements extending the present contracts for a further 12 months. Permission is therefore sought to enter into an agreement for block subsidy payments relating to provision of support provided by the Council in sheltered accommodation. The expected level of funding is in the region of £70K, but precise value is dependent on levels of occupation.</p>
<p>Why is it in the best interests of the Authority?</p> <p>Failure to enter into these agreements will result in the cessation of payments of this funding until new contracts can be drawn up, to the detriment of the authority and our most vulnerable customers.</p>

What alternative courses of action have been considered and why were they not taken?

The alternatives are to cease providing the support that is funded via Supporting People, or to fund that support from the General Fund. The former would be detrimental to our clients, and the latter would have an adverse effect on the financial stability of the authority.

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TO:**

by:

Officers should fill in all sections and send a completed form not only to the members of Council involved but also to the Committee Section.

Signed by Business Manager

Date:

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Officer's name: Val Johnson	Direct Line: Fax: E-mail:	Key Decision No
To be sent to: Portfolio Holder for consent Opposition Representatives for noting		Name: Cllr Turner Cllrs Rundle and Sareva

What decision needs to be taken?

In Executive Board on the 13th March the decision was made to grant fund the Lord Mayor's Deposit Scheme £95,000 over the forthcoming financial year, in arrears subject to targets being met. It was also agreed that Housing Scrutiny should consider conducting a review concerning value for money and alternatives regarding rent deposit schemes before the next funding round.

This decision needs amending so that the scheme is paid £95,000 over the next 6 months in 3 equal payments: one in April, one in June and the final payment in August. During this period a high level, cross-Business Unit review will be undertaken to:

-look at the finances of the Lord mayor's Deposit Scheme and assess current value for money and long term viability

-to look good practice and determine what service should be required

-to look at future options for providing a service to assist people on low incomes to access private sector tenancies, through assistance with rent deposits-including likely cost, future funding arrangements and monitoring/targets.

What are the reasons for the decision?

The scheme is believed to be no longer financially viable if £95,000 funding is provided over a 12 month period, partly due to the loss of other funding sources and over reliance on City Council funding.

Why is it in the best interests of the Authority?

If the Lord Mayor's Deposit Scheme is funded over a 12 month period in arrears as opposed to 6 months, it may lead to result in the collapse of the scheme without an alternative in place. In view of this, the planned review needs to take place before the end of May to enable a planned approach to funding and ensure best value for money is achieved when funding similar services in future.

What alternative courses of action have been considered and why were they not taken?

Alternatives considered were:

- To stop funding the LMDS. This would not have allowed options to have been explored and consultation undertaken.
- To continue funding the service with inflation. This option was not perceived as acceptable as the LMDS's monitoring returns indicate that it is not currently providing good value for money.
- To fund at the same level subject to meeting performance targets with a review led by Housing Scrutiny. This may lead to the collapse of the LMDS due to inadequate funding whilst the review is being undertaken, with no alternative in place to assist people on low incomes access the private rented sector. This could potentially lead to an increase in rough sleeping, one of the City Council's key performance indicators.

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