

**Report of: Community Housing Business Manager**

**To: Executive Board**

**Date: 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2007**

**Item No:**

**Title of Report : Communities and Local Government, Homelessness and Housing Strategy Directorate Funding Allocation**



### Summary and Recommendations



**Purpose of report:**

Oxford City Council has been successful in an award of £600 Revenue Funding from Communities and Local Government (CLG, formally ODPM) Homelessness and Housing Strategy Directorate (HHSD). This report outlines the division of the allocation to a variety of voluntary sector agencies, with the purpose of meeting the objective and target of 8 rough sleepers in the City.

**Key decision:** Yes



**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Patrick Murray

**Scrutiny Responsibility:** Housing Scrutiny

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report Approved by:**

Emily Thomas (Legal and Democratic Services)

Councillor Patrick Murray (Portfolio Holder)

Sham Stratford (Business Manager)

Dave Higgins (Financial and Asset Management)



**Policy Framework:**

Homelessness Strategy



**Recommendation(s):**

1. Approve the drawing down of the government allocation for the financial year April 07 – March 08.

2. Approve the following financial grants for 2007-2008 to external agencies: -

10 posts at the Street Services Team (Crime Reduction Initiatives) - £195,420

1 Reconnection Worker (Crime Reduction Initiatives)- £43,274



1 Substance Misuse worker, Simon House (6 month contract) - £43,882  
2 Resettlement Workers, ECHG - £59,415  
1 Specialist Alcohol Worker, Night Shelter - £33,236  
1 Tenancy Sustainment Worker, Night Shelter - £33,236  
1 Prevention and Resettlement Worker, The Bridge Oxford - £31,165  
1 Multiple Needs worker, Elmore Community Team - £37,768  
1 Life Skills Worker, Simon House - £37,144  
Severe Weather Beds - £3,500  
Subsidised Service Charge for 4 x Young People at Simon House £2,486  
Activate – pre-detox course at ECHG - £6,000

3. Approve the following Oxford City Council posts/schemes for 2007-2008: -  
Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Officer (Community Housing) -  
£14,000

Home Choice Rent Deposit Scheme (Community Housing) - £15,000

4. Approve delegated authority to the Community Housing Business Unit Manager to allocate the balance of £44,474.

### **Background**

1. Oxford City Council has been successful in the award of £600,000 Revenue Funding from Communities and Local Government (CLG) Homelessness and Housing Strategy Directorate (HHSD). This is a £30,000 increase on the 2006/07 allocation. The £600,000 is already in the 2007/08 base revenue budget.

2. The aim is to commission services with the purpose of keeping levels of rough sleeping as close to zero as possible, working to a CLG target of 8, and in line with Oxford City Council's Homelessness Strategy.

3. The following priorities have been identified and used as a framework to allocate the funding: -

- Assertive outreach and reconnection.
- Modern and effective hostels with specialist workers.
- Good move-on into both the social and private sectors.
- Successful and sustainable tenancy sustainment.

4. It is proposed that, in agreement with the CLG's Homelessness and Housing Strategy Directorate, that the following specialist posts be funded from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008

### **Crime Reduction Initiative**

#### **Street Services Team**

**One Manager and 4 Full Time Outreach Workers (extension of funding)  
£195,420**

To carry out assertive outreach work with rough sleepers. The team are contracted to keep the number of rough sleepers found on any one count to 8 or below, working to a count of as close to zero as possible. This is the team that is primarily responsible for ensuring that Oxford City Council's target is

met and plays an important part in reducing anti-social behaviour within the City.

**One full-time Substance Misuse worker (extension of funding, 6 month contract)**

**£43,882 (per annum)**

Based at Simon House, providing 1:2:1 and group work to residents at the hostel who have substance misuse issues, with an overall aim of reducing eviction and negative abandonment rates.

**English Churches Housing Group (Lucy Faithful House)**

**Two full-time resettlement workers (extension of funding)**

**£59,415**

Based at the hostel, these workers support residents to move on to alternative, independent accommodation. The work is split between working with clients in the hostel, preparing them for resettlement and supporting those who have moved out to sustain their tenancies. These posts are essential to maintain a flow through the hostel and prevent bed blocking.

**Oxford Nightshelter (O'Hanlon House)**

**One, full-time Alcohol Specialist Worker (extension of funding)**

**£33,236**

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 post also has a strategic remit, holding a broad overview of the City's needs in terms of alcohol provision and to support the City Council's Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager in identifying these gaps and finding innovative ways of solving them.

**One, full-time Tenancy Sustainment Worker (extension of funding)**

**£33,236**

Providing floating support to clients who have moved on from the Night Shelter into supported accommodation, the Council's move-on accommodation or the private rented sector.

**The Bridge Oxford**

**One, full-time Resettlement and Prevention worker (extension of funding)**

**£31,165**

Based at the Gap Day Centre, working primarily with 16-25 year olds who may access The Bridge to assess their housing and support needs with a view of keeping them in accommodation and preventing them from falling out once accessing. Provision of the reconnection service to clients who are under 25 years old.

**Elmore Community Support Team**

**One, full-time complex needs worker (extension of funding)**

**£37,768**

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.

**Severe Weather Beds**

**£3,500**

Extra provision (maximum of 12 places) based at the Night Shelter at times of extreme weather.

**Activate**

**£6,000**

A motivational programme for substance misusers at Lucy Faithful House.

**Young people's Services at Simon House**

**£2,486**

To cover the shortfall in service charge for four young people who are under 25 years old at Simon House

**Oxford City Council**

**Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Officer (Community Housing) (extension of funding)**

**£14,000**

To provide support to the Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager, facilitate partnership working across the homeless network and run the database which tracks and collates statistics on rough sleeping and non-statutory single homelessness.

**Home Choice Rent Deposit Scheme (Community Housing)**

**£15,000**

To provide rent deposits for non-statutory singles moving on from hostel accommodation into the private rented sector. This is part of a drive to ensure effective move through the City's hostels.

5. The following proposals were also submitted by the voluntary sector which have not yet been allocated with funding due to insufficient information and evidence:-

- 0.6 Prevention and Resettlement Worker at the Bridge to focus on Reconnection
- Trade Workshop Co-ordinator at Simon House
- Activities worker at O'Hanlon House, Nightshelter (National Lottery application pending)

6. Executive Board is asked to approve delegated authority to the Community Housing Business Manager to allocate the balance of the budget which is currently £44,474.

7. The assertive outreach service, currently carried out by Street Services Team, Crime Reduction Initiative will be tendered during this financial year.

## **STAFFING CONSEQUENCES**

8. All external staff are employed by external organisations for whom the Council has no liability.
9. There will be quarterly performance monitoring meetings with Oxford City Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy Directorate Steering Group to review and ensure the delivery of services and that outcomes and targets are achieved
10. Should the HHSD grant currently allocated to the Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Officer cease, the post would be subject to a budget bid by the Community Housing Business Unit Manager.
11. The HHSD funding programme will be managed by the existing Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager in the Community Housing Business Unit.

## **Financial Implications**

12. The funding allocation has to be spent by the end of the financial year 2008
13. There are no financial implications for the Council arising from this report apart from those potential implications addressed in paragraph 10 above.

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**Background papers:**  
Homelessness Strategy

