

**Report of:** Head of Community Housing and Development

**To:** Executive Board

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2008

**Item No:**

**Title of Report :** Allocation of Communities and Local Government, HHSD Funding and Oxford City Council's Homelessness Grant.



### Summary and Recommendations



#### **Purpose of report:**



Oxford City Council has been awarded £640,000 Revenue Funding from Communities and Local Government (CLG) Homelessness and Housing Strategy Directorate (HHSD). This report outlines the division of both the HHSD allocation and Oxford City Council's homelessness grant (£442,279) to a variety of voluntary sector agencies, with the purpose of meeting the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy.

**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)

Suzan Smart (Finance)



Patrick Murray (Portfolio Holder)

Graham Stratford (Head of Service)



#### **Policy Framework:**



Homelessness Strategy

#### **Recommendation(s):**

1. Approve the drawing down of the HHSD government allocation for the financial year April 08 – March 09.

2. Approve the following financial grants from the HHSD budget for 2008-2009



External agencies: -



Rough Sleepers Street Services and Reconnection Team (CRI) - £238,218  
1 Substance Misuse worker, Simon House (CRI) - £44,610  
2 Resettlement Workers, ECHG - £ 63,881  
1 Specialist Alcohol Worker, Night Shelter - £34,066  
1 Tenancy Sustainment Worker, Night Shelter - £34,066  
1 Prevention and Resettlement Worker, The Gap Oxford - £37,917  
1 Multiple Needs worker, Elmore Community Team - £38,712  
1 Life Skills Worker, Simon House - £38,072  
1 Move-on Co-ordinator, Simon House £11,091  
Severe Weather Beds - £3,588  
Subsidised Service Charge for 8 x Young People at Simon House £5,116  
Joint funding of the Joint Housing Team and Supported Lodgings Scheme, in partnership with Oxfordshire Council - £30,000  
Home Choice Rent Deposit Scheme (Community Housing) - £2,392

3. Approve the following allocations of Oxford City Council's homelessness grant:-

O'Hanlon House Day Centre - £133,432  
The Bridge Oxford - £42,992  
Elmore Community Services - £42,230  
The Gap - £95,938  
The Gatehouse - £9,502  
Steppin Stone - £51,250  
Simon House - £12,121  
Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store - £28,505

4. Approve the recommendation that the day centre at O'Hanlon House and The Bridge Project be jointly commissioned with Supporting People.

5. Approve the recommendation that the service currently provided by Elmore Community Services be jointly commissioned with Supporting People and the Primary Care Trust.

6. Approve the recommendation that the Furniture Store be transferred from OCVA to Emmaus Oxford.

7. Approve the recommendation that savings are made by cutting the funding to Cranstoun, Life Housing, Connection Floating Support and the Drugs Recovery Project (decommissioned)

8. Approve delegated authority to the Head of Community Housing and Development to allocate the balance of the HHSD budget (£58,271) and the homelessness grants budget (£26,309)

### **Background**

1. Oxford City Council has been successful in the award of £640,000 Revenue Funding from Communities and Local Government (CLG) Homelessness and Housing Strategy Directorate (HHSD). This is a £40,000 increase on the 2008/09 allocation with £30,000 ring fenced for spend on the prevention of youth homelessness.

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 the wider aims of Oxford City Council's Homelessness Strategy which is currently under review.

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

- Assertive outreach and reconnection.
- Modern and effective hostels and day centres with specialist workers.
- Good move-on into both the social and private sectors.
- Successful and sustainable tenancy sustainment.
- Better access to education, training and employment

### **Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate Grant**

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 2008 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009

#### **CRI**

#### **Rough Sleepers Street Services and Reconnection Team**

**One Manager , 4 Full Time Outreach Workers and 1 specialist**

**Reconnection Worker**

**£238,218**

This service was re-tendered in line with the EU procurement regime and a new contract awarded in December 2007 to CRI. The new contract will start on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 and will run for 3 years. The service carries out assertive outreach and reconnection work with the city's rough sleepers. 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)**

**£44,610**

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 (6 month contract initially)**

**£63,881 (per annum)**

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)**



**£34,066**

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)**

**£34,066**

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.

**Simon House**

**Life Skills Worker (extension of funding)**

**£38,072**

This post co-ordinates the group programmes and meaningful occupation activities in the hostel, providing clear pathways to education, qualifications, volunteering opportunities and employment, enabling individuals to gain the skills needed for independent living.

**Move-on Co-ordinator (extension of funding)**

**£11,091 (£22,183 is carried over from 07/08's contract)**

To create focus for services users on the range of move-on options that are currently available during key stages of their journey through Simon House and to liaise with organisation both statutory and non-statutory to maximise the number of options that are available.

**Young people's services at Simon House (extension of funding)**

**£5116**

To cover the shortfall in service charge for 8 young people who are under 25 years old at Simon House. This service has been expanded to 8 beds (from 4 beds) to due the lack of provision of under 25 year olds in the City.

**The Gap Oxford**

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

**£37,917**

Based at the Gap Day Centre, working with 16-25 year olds to assess their housing and support needs with a view of finding them accommodation and preventing them from being evicted once they have accessed. This post also provides the reconnection service to clients who are under 25 years old.

**Elmore Community Support Team**

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

**£38,712**

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 (extension of funding)**

**£3,588**

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

### **Oxford City Council**

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

**£2,392 (+ £27,608 carried over from 07/08)**

To provide £30,000 of 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 and second stage accommodation.

### **Youth Homelessness**

Funding for the Joint Housing Team and Supported Lodgings Scheme, in partnership with Oxfordshire Council, working towards the reduction of youth homelessness. This allocation is ring fenced by CLG and is monitored directly by government.

5. The following proposals are also pending and will be considered for funding through this grant:

- Complex Needs therapist to work with adults facing chronic exclusion
- Support worker with Aspire Oxford, helping homeless and ex-homeless people access employment and volunteering opportunities.

6. Executive Board is asked to approve delegated authority to the Head of Community Housing and Development to allocate the balance of this budget which is currently £58,271.

### **Oxford City Council's Homelessness Grant**

7. In January 08, EB approved an allocation of £537,279 less £95,000 for LMDGS for homelessness services, leaving an allocation of **£442,279** for the commissioning of services.

8. In line with the City Council's prospectus and strategic objective "safer communities/homelessness" we 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.

9. Savings of £22,849 have been made on last year's grant in accordance with corporate targets.

10. It is recommended that the grant allocation be made as follows for 08/09

<b>Organisation and Purpose of Grant</b>	<b>Allocation for 08/09 (including 2.5% inflation for 08/09)</b>
O'Hanlon House Day Centre	£133,432
The Bridge (Core Funding)	£42,992

Elmore Community Services (Core Funding)	£42,230
The Gap (Core Funding)	£95,938
The Gatehouse (Core Funding)	£9,502
Steppin Stone (Core Funding)	£51,250
Simon House (Respite Beds)	£12,121
Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store (Core Funding)	£28,505
	<b>£415,970</b>
	Savings
Cranstoun	£5,000
Life Housing	£8,837
Connection Floating Support	£20,468
ECHG Drugs Recovery Project	£25,000
	<b>£59,305</b>
	Unallocated
	<b>£26,309</b>

### **Joint Commissioning**

11. The day centre service at **O'Hanlon House, Oxford Night Shelter** and **The Bridge Project** will be jointly commissioned with Supporting People over the coming year. The intention is that this will ensure that services commissioned by Supporting People and Oxford City Council are increasingly compatible, have clear objectives and are competitive in terms of value for money and service delivery. In turn we hope that this will also make monitoring procedures more efficient and streamlined. This process has already started with a projected start date for new services and contracts of the beginning of November 08. New contracts will be for 3 years.

12. It is also recommended that the service for adults with complex and multiple needs, currently run by the Elmore Team, is re-commissioned jointly with Supporting People and the Primary Care Trust. This process has started and is led by the PCT with a view of having a new 3-year contract in place by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009. A contract will be awarded to the current provider until the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2008.

### **Day Centres**

13. A review of all day centre provision was carried out in January 08 to look at the range of services that OCC grant funds and how they fit within our strategic priorities. The services included in this review were the day centres at O'Hanlon House, The Gap, The Gatehouse and Steppin' Stone. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the services commissioned were increasingly compatible, have clear objectives and are competitive in terms of value for money and service delivery. However, it has not been possible to evaluate all the evidence in this report so it is recommended that each day centre is given a year's extension, with 2.5% inflation, to allow for further

discussions and also to await the results of bids submitted to the "Places of Change" pot which could significantly change this area of work.

### **Oxford Furniture and Recycling Store.**

14. OCVA, the current provider, no longer wish to run this service. In February 08, Emmaus Oxford secured all the necessary funding through the Housing Corporation and CLG to build their 24-bed community in Temple Cowley. A recycling and furniture store is integral to the running of the community, encouraging residents to work, volunteer and learn new skills. Strategically, the building of the Emmaus Community will provide the City will much needed move-on accommodation and therefore it is recommended that the provision of the furniture store be transferred to Emmaus Oxford.

### **Simon House respite beds**

15. This grant assists with the running of two respite beds which provides 28 days of respite for clients who are struggling with their permanent tenancies due to substance misuse issues.

### **Savings**

16. It is recommended that the funding for Cranstoun, Life Housing and Connection Floating Support be withdrawn, as these services are the funding responsibility of Supporting People and the DAAT, (Drugs & Alcohol Action Team). The Drugs Recovery Project service has been decommissioned.

17. Executive Board is asked to approve delegated authority to the Head of Community Housing and Development to allocate the balance of this budget which is currently £26,309

### **STAFFING CONSEQUENCES**

18. All external staff are employed by external organisations for whom the Council has no liability.

19. 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

20. The HHSD funding programme and OCC's homelessness grant will be managed by the existing Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager in the Community Housing Business Unit.

### **Financial Implications**

21. The funding allocation has to be spent by the end of the financial year 2008/09

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

### **Recommendations to Executive Board**

23. Approve the drawing down of the HHSD government allocation for the financial year April 08 – March 09.

24. Approve the following financial grants from the HHSD budget for 2008-2009 to external agencies: -

Rough Sleepers Street Services and Reconnection Team (CRI) - £238,218  
1 Substance Misuse worker, Simon House (CRI) - £44,610  
2 Resettlement Workers, ECHG - £ 63,881  
1 Specialist Alcohol Worker, Night Shelter - £34,066  
1 Tenancy Sustainment Worker, Night Shelter - £34,066  
1 Prevention and Resettlement Worker, The Gap Oxford - £37,917  
1 Multiple Needs worker, Elmore Community Team - £38,712  
1 Life Skills Worker, Simon House - £38,072  
1 Move-on Co-ordinator, Simon House £11,091  
Severe Weather Beds - £3,588  
Subsidised Service Charge for 8 x Young People at Simon House £5,116  
Joint funding of the Joint Housing Team and Supported Lodgings Scheme, in partnership with Oxfordshire Council - £30,000  
Home Choice Rent Deposit Scheme (Community Housing) - £2,392

25. Approve the following allocations of Oxford City Council's homelessness grant:-

O'Hanlon House Day Centre - £133,432  
The Bridge Oxford - £42,992  
Elmore Community Services - £42,230  
The Gap - £95,938  
The Gatehouse - £9,502  
Steppin Stone - £51,250  
Simon House - £12,121  
Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store - £28,505

26. Approve the recommendation that the day centre at O'Hanlon House and The Bridge Project be jointly commissioned with Supporting People.

27. Approve the recommendation that the service currently provided by Elmore Community Services be jointly commissioned with Supporting People and the Primary Care Trust.

28. Approve the recommendation that the Furniture Store be transferred from OCVA to Emmaus Oxford.

29. Approve the recommendation that savings are made by cutting the funding to Cranstoun, Life Housing, Connection Floating Support and the Drugs Recovery Project (decommissioned)

30. Approve delegated authority to the Head of Community Housing and Development to allocate the balance of the HHSD budget (£58,271) and the homelessness grants budget (£26,309)

**Name and contact details of author:** Nerys Parry, Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager



Email: [nparry@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:nparry@oxford.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01865 252825

**Background papers:**  
None

