

**Report of:** Head of Oxford City Homes  
**To:** City Executive Board  
**Date:** 11 June 2008 **Item No:**  
**Title of Report:** Proposal to utilise the Community Payback Scheme

### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To seek approval of the proposal to utilise the services provided by the Community Payback Scheme to carry out environmental work on all housing estates managed by Oxford City Homes.

**Key decision:** Yes

**Board Member:** Councillor Ed Turner

**Report Approved by:**  
**Board Member:** Councillor Ed Turner  
**Director:** Tim Sadler  
**Legal:** Jeremy Thomas  
**Finance:** David Higgins

**Policy Framework:** More housing, better housing for all.

**Recommendation(s):** That the Authority participate in the Community Payback Scheme and that the Head of Oxford Homes be authorised to determine which projects are carried out.

## Background

1. Community Payback, formerly known as Community Service, provides the opportunity for local people to have their say on how men and women, who have committed crimes, should make amends for the harm they have caused.
2. The Community Payback requirement is a community-based sentence, where an offender is ordered to work in the community, either as part of a supervised group, or as a supervised individual, for between 40 & 300 hours. It is seen as a viable alternative to a custodial sentence as it includes punishment within the community, as well as rehabilitation.
3. The City Council has previously used the service for a number of schemes including: -
  - Clearance of garden areas at Riverside Court (2000-2002)
  - Landscaping area in Abingdon, which was previously used for fly-tipping (2000-2002)
  - Landscaping at sheltered blocks in Blackbird Leys (2002)
  - Litter picking of areas in Blackbird Leys (2002)
4. Oxford City Council's Parks Service is currently using the Community Payback Scheme for an ongoing project at Cutteslowe Park.
5. Community Payback scheme risk assess all projects. This is a formal, written risk assessment carried out by the Placement Manager. The assessment will be retained by both the Community Payback Scheme and Oxford City Homes and used to ensure that the Health and Safety requirements of the offender, beneficiary and local community are being met.
6. The assessment will specify any equipment and materials to be used as well as a description of the work to be undertaken and how the work will be done.
7. At all times a trained Community Payback Scheme Supervisor who can manage a team of up to ten individuals supervises the project. The supervisor also ensures that the following rules are enforced: -
  - No mobile phones
  - No alcohol or drugs
  - To attend on time
  - To stay on site for the whole duration of the agreed working hours
  - To observe the dress code
  - To behave in an acceptable way

## **Proposed Projects**

8. There are a number of potential projects and illustrative projects are set out in Appendix 1.

## **How to Access the Scheme**

9. It is proposed that all enquiries and proposed schemes from Tenants, Leaseholders and Councillors are directed through the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team email address; [tpteam@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:tpteam@oxford.gov.uk). The email should contain details of the proposal, the area, a contact name and number.
10. For the Tenancy Services Team and other areas within Oxford City Homes it is proposed that a pro-forma is completed by the individual (for example, after a walkabout on a patch there may be several suggestions) and submitted to the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team for consideration.

## **Financial Implications**

11. Some of the proposals detailed in "Proposed Projects" are zero cost to Oxford City Homes.
12. Where materials are required i.e. painting trip rails, it is proposed that Oxford City Homes will provide these from existing budgets.
13. For other costs, paint, materials etc, it is estimated that these will cost £15,000 for which an Invest to Save bid will be made. The scope of the bid may be expanded however as it is clear that the scheme has the potential to be expanded and greater use made of it
14. The value of labour input required for this type of work is around 85% of the total cost, so for an investment of £15,000 approximately £100,000 of work could be undertaken, representing very good value for money.
15. The work involved is not included in any existing programme that Oxford City Homes or external contractors are currently paid for, so other than vandalism, they would not be carried out. It will also not affect leaseholder or tenant service charges.
16. Although the work is in 'HRA' areas the wider Community will also benefit. There aren't any areas in the City where there aren't ex-Council properties bought under right to buy, including leaseholders within Tower Blocks.

## **Legal Implications**

17. The Community Payback scheme has adequate insurance cover and carry out all the risk assessments for the schemes. Surveyors from the

Major Projects Team at Oxford City Homes will ensure that the specifications and quality of work meet the Council's standards.

### **Environmental Implications**

18. All residents living in and around these communities should benefit from an improved environment. There could also be other benefits. A general improvement to an area will hopefully lead to more pride in the area and hopefully less vandalism, with the offenders showing more respect for their community.

### **Recommendations**

19. That the Authority participate in the Community Payback Scheme and that the Head of Oxford Homes be authorised to determine which projects are carried out.

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**Background papers:** None

## **Appendix 1 - Illustrative projects**

### **Blackbird Leys**

Community Payback Officers have accompanied Officers from Oxford City Homes to look at possible projects on the Blackbird Leys estate. Examples of which are detailed below. If this initial project is successful, and future funding is forthcoming, it is proposed that projects from other areas are submitted.

#### Windrush Tower

- Outside the block – paint all trip rails and fencing
- Remove graffiti from demolished garage blocks and other areas.
- Clear rubbish from demolished
- Treat benches in garden area

#### Moorbank

- Paint all low-level trip rails
- Remove litter from planters
- Paint fencing to block containing numbers 50-58
- Paint shed doors (write to all tenants / leaseholders for consultation)

#### Blay Close

- Paint all fences and shed doors to block containing numbers 21-29 (write to all tenants / leaseholders for consultation)

#### Warburg Crescent

- Paint all railings up the stairs
- Paint all lattice fencing and gates (write to all tenants / leaseholders for consultation)

#### Druce Way

- Paint all railings up the stairs
- Paint lattice fencing and gates (write to all tenants / leaseholders for consultation)
- Clear ivy from walls in car-park area
- Paint all trip rails

#### Sandy Lane

- Outside number 140 onwards litter pick all planters and paint trip rails
- Paint bollards

Estate Managers have also been asked to provide projects around the city and these are listed below.

### **Rose Hill**

#### General area

- Clean out bin stores in various locations e.g. Oxford Road flats, Williamson Way

- Trim back areas where properties have been demolished e.g. Lambourn Road

#### Ashhurst Way

- Erect bollards to prevent parking on the grass verges

#### Asquith Road

- Clearing dumped rubbish from the bank behind odd number properties (ones that back onto the Southern bypass)

### **East Oxford**

#### Southfield Park

- Litter picking around the communal areas
- Tidy and gardening of the communal areas
- Pruning of plant beds
- Jet washing and painting the external walls to the flats
- Jet wash all bin stores
- Renew floor tiles in communal areas
- Paint walls inside the communal stairwells
- Renew low level trip rails

#### Flats at George Moore Close / Boundary Brook Road / Donnington Bridge / Townsend Square

- Renew floor tiles to communal areas
- Jet wash all communal areas
- Paint communal stairwells
- Jet wash all bin stores

#### Boundary Brook Road

- Litter picking
- Cutting back of overgrowth in communal areas

#### Cowley Road

- Removal of graffiti tags
- Litter picking around the back of block 151a Cowley Road

### **Cowley Airfield**

#### Barns Road, Kersington Crescent and Amory Close

- Paint floors of the blocks of flats as they are concrete and hard to keep clean
- Grounds work at Barns Road to include stripping of ivy and Virginia creeper

### **Wood Farm / Town Furze**

#### Leiden Road

- Weatherproofing of fencing around the bungalows

Pauling Road, Chillingworth Crescent, Crauford Road and Normandy Crescent

- Clearing of undergrowth in communal areas of flats
- Cleaning communal areas of flats (also at Pickett Avenue and Long Close)

### **Grandpont**

Riverside Court

- Weeding around the courtyard
- Trim and tidy of the parking area
- Tidy up of the front and back of Riverside Court

### **Headington**

Colemans Hill

- Painting and tidying of communal areas

### **General areas of the city**

- To jet clean the bin shed areas in the blocks of flats
- Jet washing, painting and tidying of communal areas of blocks of flats
- Put numbers on garage doors
- Tidying and litter picking around garage areas