Agenda

Housing Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)

Date:	**Thursday 7 November 2019**
Time:	**6.00 pm**
Place:	**Plowman Room - Oxford Town Hall**

For any further information please contact:

Tom Hudson, Scrutiny Officer

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If you intend to record the meeting, it would be helpful if you speak to the Committee Services Officer before the start of the meeting.

Housing Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)

Membership

Chair   Councillor Nadine Bely-Summers

Vice Chair

Councillor Michael Gotch

Councillor Richard Howlett

Councillor Sian Taylor

Councillor Elizabeth Wade

Councillor Dick Wolff

Tony Buchanan

The quorum for this Committee is three, substitutes are not permitted.

AGENDA

		Pages
1	**APOLOGIES**	
	Substitutes are not allowed.	
2	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**	
3	**HOUSING PANEL WORK PLAN**	7 - 8
	For the Panel to note and agree its work plan, which can be adjusted to reflect the wishes of the Panel.	
4	**NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**	9 - 18
	For the Panel to approve the record of the meetings held on 27 June 2019 and 03 October.	
5	**COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS**	
	To consider the report to 13 November Cabinet on Community Land Trusts and the means by which they might help the Council deliver its Local Plan. . Report to follow and will be published as a supplement.	
	Councillor Mike Rowley, Dave Scholes (Housing and Strategy Needs Manager) and Charlie Fisher (Transition by Design) will be available to present the report and answer any questions.	
6	**HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY MID-POINT UPDATE**	19 - 40
	To consider the mid-point review of the current Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018 -21.	
	Councillor Mike Rowley and Nerys Parry (Housing Strategy and Needs Manager) will be available to present the report and answer any questions.	
7	**NO LOCAL CONNECTION REVIEW**	
	To consider the report of the No Local Connection Review Group. Report to follow as a supplement.	
	Councillor Linda Smith, Rachel Lawrence (Rough Sleeping & Single Homelessness Manager) and Polly McKinlay (Senior Commissioning Officer, Rough Sleeping & Single Homelessness) will be available to present the report and answer any questions.	

8   OUTCOME OF THE HOMELESSNESS TRAILBLAZER AND EARLY INTERVENTION ANALYSIS   41 - 50

To consider a report on the outcomes and lessons learnt from the Homelessness Trailblazer Project and the cost-benefit analysis of early homelessness intervention to the Council and wider public services.

Councillor Linda Smith and Paul Wilding (System Change Manager, Homelessness Prevention) will be available to present the report and answer any questions.

9   DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Meetings are scheduled as follows:

- 5th March 2020
- 8th April 2020

All meetings begin at 6.00pm.

DECLARING INTERESTS

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licences for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". What this means is that the matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those of the member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

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HOUSING PANEL WORK PLAN
November 2019 - May 2020

Published on: 30/10/19

HOUSING PANEL

NO MEETING ALLOCATED

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Building Control - outcomes of the Hackitt Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety	Yes	To consider the outcomes of the Hackitt Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety.	Planning and Sustainable Transport	Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety, Paul Smith, Building Control Team Leader

7 NOVEMBER 2019 - REPORTS

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Housing and Homelessness Strategy mid-point update	Yes	To consider a mid-point review of the current Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21.	Affordable Housing	Nerys Parry, Housing Strategy & Needs Manager
Outcome of the Homelessness Trailblazer and early intervention analysis	Yes	To review the outcome and lessons learnt from the Homelessness Trailblazer Project, which ends in 2019. Further, to consider a cost benefit analysis of early homelessness intervention to the Council and wider public services and systems.	Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Leisure and Housing	Paul Wilding, System Change Manager - Homelessness Prevention
No local connection review	Yes	To consider the report of the No Local Connection Review Group.	Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Leisure and Housing	Nerys Parry, Housing Strategy & Needs Manager

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Community Land Trusts	Yes	To consider the benefits of community land trusts, and how they might help the Council deliver its Local Plan.	Affordable Housing, Planning and Sustainable Transport	Dave Scholes, Housing Strategy & Needs Manager (Affordable Housing Supply Lead)

5 MARCH 2020 - PROVISIONAL REPORTS

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Housing Performance - 2019/20 Quarter 3	Yes	For the Panel to consider performance against a set of housing measures.	Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Leisure and Housing, Affordable Housing	Stephen Clarke, Head of Housing Services / Director Housing Companies
Private rented sector housing	Yes	To be scoped: consideration of housing issues in the private rented sector and the Council's response. Could include regulatory changes concerning no fault and revenge evictions and engagement with the tenants' union.	Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Leisure and Housing	Head of Regulatory Services & Community Safety

8

8 APRIL 2020 - PROVISIONAL REPORTS

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Tenancy Management Standards	Yes	To consider performance and good practice in tenancy management standards with representatives from housing associations	Affordable Housing	Stephen Clarke, Head of Housing Services / Director Housing Companies

HOUSING PANEL (PANEL OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE)

Thursday 27 June 2019

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Wolff, Bely-Summers (Chair), Wade, Howlett and Taylor.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Andrew Brown (Committee and Member Services Manager), Stephen Clarke (Head of Housing Services), Rachel Lawrence (Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager) and Anita Bradley (Head of Law and Governance)

194. APOLOGIES

The Panel noted apologies for lateness from Cllr Bely-Summers and elected Cllr Taylor to chair the meeting in her absence.

Apologies were also noted from Cllr Gotch, Cllr Rowley (Cabinet Member for Housing) and for item 6 from Nerys Parry (Housing Strategy and Needs Manager).

195. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

196. HOUSING PANEL WORK PLAN

The Panel reviewed the list of items referred from the Scrutiny Committee and took advice from officers. In respect of these items the Panel agreed that:

Item 1 – could be removed as kitchen and bathrooms were only replaced with the tenant's agreement.

Items 2 & 8 – the Committee and Member Services Manager would speak to the Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety and report back on possible areas of focus. This item could involve engagement with the new tenancy union.

Items 3 & 4 – were premature and would not be taken forwards at this time.

Item 5 – would be scheduled for the November meeting.

Item 6 – would be delayed to next year as the methodology for conducting tenant surveys was being reviewed in response to a Housing Green Paper but tenant satisfaction should remain as a standing item on the annual work plan.

Item 7 – would be scheduled for November.

Item 9 – would not be taken forwards due to a lack of available data about tenants' health

The Panel also agreed to add the following items to its work plan which had not been referred by the Scrutiny Committee:

- Housing and Homelessness Strategy mid-point review (October)
- Review of the balance of spend in the Housing Revenue Account (October)
- No Local Connection Review – 12 month update (November)
- Hackitt Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety (TBC)
- Housing Associations' tenancy management standards (TBC)

Councillor Bely-Summers arrived during this item.

197. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllr Bely-Summers took the chair at the start of this item.

The Panel agreed the notes of the meeting held on 8 April 2019 with two minor changes to reflect the status of the tenant co-optee and the attendance of officers.

The Panel noted that the four recommendations from the previous meeting had been presented to Cabinet and had all been agreed.

198. QUARTER 4 HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT

In discussion about the performance report the Panel noted that:

- The delivery of new homes at Barton Park was behind schedule, as were some other schemes that were not Council-driven.
- Affordable homes at Barton Park were always going to be subject to management charges for the maintenance of parks and communal areas and the Council would only allocate the properties to people who could afford them.
- The Council's affordable housing policy would be delivered or exceeded on Council-owned sites including the Temple Cowley Pools and Blackbird Leys redevelopment projects.

199. NO LOCAL CONNECTION REVIEW GROUP: PROGRESS ON AGREED RECOMMENDATIONS

The Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager introduced the report, noting that lots had happened over the last six months, in which time the Council had secured nearly £2m of external funding. Progress had been made in implementing almost all of the Review Group's recommendations that were agreed by Cabinet although this had been more challenging in respect of joint-commissioning. Council officers had embraced the spirit and thinking of the Review Group's work and the Floyds Row project would transform the front end approach to supporting people experiencing homelessness.

The Panel welcomed the excellent progress that had been made including on the plans for the new assessment hub at Floyds Row. In discussion the Panel noted that:

- The winter provision at Floyds Row was expected to be operational by the end of October while the Somewhere Safe to Stay element would follow by the end of the calendar year. This was a very complex project that was being delivered within a very challenging timeframe.
- Service user participation had informed the design principles of the Floyds Row building and services.
- Contracts with service providers would set clear expectations about ongoing engagement with service users. Feedback on strategic issues would be escalated to the Council as the commissioner of services.
- The Council was committed to building up a reference group of people with lived experience of homelessness.
- The government would be seeking evidence of delivery where it had provided grant funding for homelessness interventions.
- The opening of the new assessment centre at Floyds Row was expected to alleviate issues at O'Hanlon House arising from the mix of non-hostel based services currently delivered at that location, some of which would be relocated to Floyd's Row.
- There would be a fundamental review of the homelessness pathway county-wide with a view to taking a greater focus on preventative action. In the meantime the pooled funding arrangements were being rolled forwards for 2 years.

The Panel resolved to note progress made against the recommendations and agreed to visit Floyds Row when opened.

200. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Panel noted the date of the next meeting being 3 October 2019.

The meeting started at 6.10 pm and ended at 7.45 pm

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Minutes of a meeting of the HOUSING PANEL (PANEL OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE) on Thursday 3 October 2019

Committee members:

Councillor Bely-Summers (Chair)   Councillor Gotch

Councillor Howlett   Councillor Taylor

Councillor Wade   Councillor Wolff

Officers:

Stephen Clarke, Head of Housing Services / Director Housing Companies
Tom Hudson, Scrutiny Officer

Also present:

Tony Buchanan, Housing Panel (tenant co-optee)
Wendy Hind, Tenant Involvement Officer
Six members of the public

200. Apologies

Invited Cabinet members Councillors Linda Smith and Mike Rowley tendered apologies due to a meeting conflict.

201. Declarations of interest

None

The Panel agreed with the Chair's proposal to re-order the agenda for the benefit of the Panel's guests.

202. Housing performance 2019/20 Quarter 1

Stephen Clarke, Head of Housing Services, presented a report on the Council's Housing Performance 2019/20 Q1 to the Panel.

The Panel was informed that some performance data was missing from the report presented to it due to an IT glitch. As such, a table containing the missing information was tabled and is included as an appendix to the minutes.

In considering BV063 – Average SAP rating of local authority owned dwellings - the Panel was informed that whilst the measure was reported on annually, due to the recent declaration of a Climate Emergency a significant amount of work had been undertaken to model efficiency improvements in the Council's housing stock for proposals to be made to the budget. The Panel sought to understand the size of the task of carbon reduction for houses. For new builds developed by the Council's

Housing Company, 70% carbon reductions could be achieved whilst maintaining a 50% affordable homes levels on new developments. However, the task for the Council's existing stock was huge; due to the age of the stock 50% of the Council's homes would never be able to become carbon neutral without being completely knocked down and rebuilt.

Under HC003 and HC004 – Homelessness Acceptances and Homelessness Cases Prevented - the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act was highlighted to the Panel. Due to the increased duties placed on Councils the Council's target for homelessness acceptances had been increased from 74 last year to 110. The Council had had its implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act audited by MHCLG and Crisis and had received praise for its implementation, which was showing in the way the Council was exceeding both targets despite the greater range of duties.

Regarding HC016 – Number of affordable homes for rent delivered, the red target was explained to be a timing issue, and that a significant number of homes had been delivered shortly after the end of the quarter.

The Panel discussed at length the current situation of HP003 – the number of people estimated to be sleeping rough - despite the measure being an annual one. Although an annual count was required for MHCLG figures, monthly counts and quarterly estimates were taking place. The figure of 45 people sleeping rough showed a reduction from the 2017 high of 61. However, it was impressed upon the Panel that 20 new homeless people were estimated to arrive in Oxford as homeless each month, showing the importance of preventative work, not all of which was within the Council's control.

The red-rated indicator HP004 – the number of successful interventions with rough sleepers – was discussed in relation to plans for Floyds Row. The vital of importance of having a space off the streets to contemplate and implement interventions with rough sleepers was recognised and the facilities proposed were welcomed by the Panel.

The total number of affordable homes completed in the year, red-rated indicator HP006 was explained to be a timetabling issue, and that handovers had been scheduled for after the quarter end. Further, a number of the homes did not lie within the Council's control, and some Housing Association programmes, such as those at Gibbs Crescent and Williams Close, had slipped which further weighed on the numbers.

The Panel expressed particular interest in the quality of accommodation referenced in NI156 – limitation of the Council's use of temporary accommodation to 2015 levels. It was made clear that bed and breakfast accommodation was not used, but that the Council had been proactive in investing £15m in property to use as temporary accommodation since 2016 which ensured more suitable accommodation for those needing the service.

The Panel welcomed the news that the Council's performance on HP009 – Total standard re-let time - was within the top quartile of councils nationally and had achieved a significant turnaround within the past two years.

The Panel expressed encouragement for the work done and made no recommendations.

203. Appointment of Housing Panel Co-optee

A member of the public, Thomas Britton, had requested to address the Panel in regards to this item on behalf of the Oxford Influencers Group and was invited to address the Panel. Oxford Influencers were introduced as a voluntary group whose members had used either the Oxford Citizens Advice Bureau or another advice centre in Oxford. The group's goal was explained to be influencing progressive change through the promotion of co-production in regards to the design and delivery of services. Mr Britton and the Oxford Influencers group recognised the steps taken towards co-production through the co-option of a Council tenant co-optee, and discussion of further widening participation to those representing housing associations and the private rented sector. It was suggested to the Panel that it might consider co-opting a member of Oxford Influencers as housing association representatives.

Tom Hudson, Scrutiny Officer, presented a report which recommended the Panel i) thank the outgoing tenant co-optee, Geno Humphrey, for his contribution, ii) appoint Tony Buchanan as tenant co-optee until the end of the civic year and iii) agree how suggestions from alternative stakeholders to the Panel might be managed.

It was agreed that the Scrutiny Officer would draft a letter of thanks to Geno Humphrey from the Chair, Councillor Bely-Summers, to thank him for his work on behalf of the Panel. Following an introduction of Tony Buchanan's background, it was also agreed that Mr Buchanan be co-opted as a member of the Panel until the end of the civic year.

The Panel held significant discussion around how best to approach increasing representation from non-Council stakeholder groups. There was strong agreement across members that the Panel should seek to involve additional stakeholders. Issues it considered in relation to this included the challenge of the Panel retaining its identity of a Panel to scrutinise the Council's housing activities rather than a general housing forum. The further challenge of choosing a representative from the multiplicity of possible alternatives without excluding anybody was also discussed.

In regards to extending involvement the Panel agreed the following, that the Scrutiny Officer would:

i) Contact Oxford Influencers, Oxford Tenants Union, and the Lived Experience Forum to raise awareness of the Housing Panel's existence, its current work plan, and its desire to seek the views and perspectives of external groups on relevant items
ii) On items of particular interest to a specific group, to highlight beforehand that the meeting would be taking place and inviting the organisation to nominate somebody who would be able to contribute meaningfully to the item under discussion
iii) Invite suggestions of topics from the nominated groups for consideration by the Panel for future inclusion in the Panel's work plan.

204. Notes of previous meeting

The notes of the previous meeting were not included on the agenda pack nor tabled at the meeting. It was agreed to consider them at the next meeting of the Housing Panel.

205. Housing Panel Work Plan

The Scrutiny Officer provided an update on the current work plan and the following was agreed by the Panel:

- To consider the Housing and Homelessness Strategy mid-point review in November
- To devote the entire April meeting to Tenancy Management Standards
- To remove Tenant Satisfaction from this year's work plan in light of the delays caused by changing the approach to data collection and baselining of the data
- To consider Private Rented Sector Housing in March 2020
- To consider the report originally due in October on the Housing Revenue Account as part of the Housing element of the Budget Review Group meetings on 08 January.

Further, it was discussed whether to request a report on the success of the Council in securing 50% affordable housing on developments within the city. It was felt that it would be worth considering whether to pursue this after the headline figures were presented to the Scrutiny Committee in December.

206. Date of next meeting

The Panel noted the dates of the next meetings.

It was requested that a member briefing be organised to consider the relationship between the Council and Housing Associations (both tenants and landlords) and the Council and the private rented sector, with a particular view to the opportunities for the Council to improve standards.

The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 7.38 pm

Chair …………………………..   **Date: Thursday 7 November 2019**

Information Tabled Regarding Item 202 – Housing Performance Q1

The following data were submitted to provide figures for the Year End Targets 2019/20 which had not been included within the original report.

BV063: Average SAP rating of L.A. owned dwellings	67.9
BV064: Empty homes returned to use	18
HC003: Homeless Acceptances	110
HC004: Homelessness cases prevented	1100
HC016: Number of affordable homes for rent delivered	102
HC020: Percentage of properties failing to meet Decent Homes standard	1.1
HP003: The number of people estimated to be sleeping rough	45
HP004: The number of successful interventions with rough sleepers	350
Total number of affordable homes completed in year	138
HP009: Total standard re-let time (HouseMark definition)	21
NI 156: Limit our use of temporary accommodation at 2015 levels	110

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To:	**Housing Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)**
Date:	**7th November 2019**
Report of:	**Head of Housing Services**
Title of Report:	**Mid-point review of the Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	For the Housing Panel to consider the progress and achievements of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21; note the updated Action Plan; note the Rough Sleeping Action Plan
Key decision:	No
Executive Board Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Leisure and Housing; Councillor Mike Rowley, Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing
Corporate Priority:	Meeting Housing Need
Policy Framework:	Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-2021
Recommendation(s):That the Scrutiny Committee resolves to:	
1. Note and comment on the report	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Updated Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 Action Plan
Appendix 2	Rough Sleeping Action Plan – addendum to Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

Introduction and background

1. The Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 was approved by Cabinet and adopted by Oxford City Council in January 2018.

2. The strategy agreed five principal objectives:
   - Increasing housing supply and improving access to affordable housing

- Preventing homelessness and meeting the needs of vulnerable people
- Making best use of Private Sector accommodation
- Investing to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy
- Being an effective landlord and delivering quality services

3. Oxford continues to face huge challenges in relation to housing and homelessness. Tackling these challenges is an absolute priority for the Council, and as such has included in its corporate priorities to increase housing supply and address all forms of homelessness in the city.

4. The high demand for housing and the limited supply of new accommodation – primarily caused by constrained development opportunities – drives up housing costs and creates significant affordability issues. This impacts on our residents, who increasingly face financial hardship and increased risk of homelessness, as well as local businesses and services. Combined, this causes a real threat to the local economy and our communities.

5. The report that went to Cabinet in January 2018 seeking approval of the strategy commits to a mid-point review of the strategy. The mid-point review was carried out as a desk-top review during June to August 2019.

6. This report updates on key achievements identified in the review, and updates the Action Plan associated with the strategy.

Achievements

7. The Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 Action Plan consisted of 5 priorities, with a total of 51 objectives and good progress has been made to deliver against these.

8. To increase supply of housing, the Council has worked with partners to secure funding through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, for the Housing and Growth Deal to the value of £60 million for affordable housing. This will support the ambition to build 100,000 new homes across Oxfordshire.

9. The Council's own company – Oxford City Housing Limited (OCHL) – is now established and will develop in the region of 500 housing units over the next few years. A minimum of 50% affordable housing will be delivered in all OCHL developments. The Barton Park development has progressed and to date delivered 34 affordable homes allocated to households on the Council's housing waiting list. When finished, Barton Park will consist of 885 homes. 354 of these will be owned by OCHL and allocated to households on Council's housing waiting list.

10. 102 affordable homes were completed or acquired in the City in 2018/19. 20 empty dwellings were brought back into use in 2018/19 through the Council's Empty Property work. The Council has also developed and submitted the Local Plan 2036, which contributes to meeting a range of housing needs across the City.

11. To tackle rough sleeping in the City, the Council has increased commissioning of supported accommodation from £478,198 in 2017/18 to £968,950 in 2019/20 to

ensure there is sufficient accommodation for people with a connection to the City. Additional funds have also been secured through successful bids for government funding to maintain and develop services to prevent and tackle rough sleeping. £503,000 was secured from the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) in summer 2018 for a multi-agency service hub, additional capacity for the City's outreach team and 41 units of accommodation. Continuation of RSI funding (£511,000 for 2019/20) will see these services continue until March 2020. £99,000 was secured in round 1 of the Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP) for Navigator Posts in 2019/10 to support long term rough sleepers. Another £758,700 was secured in round 2 to help fund a new Engagement and Assessment Centre at Floyds Row. The Council has continued to ensure that sufficient, additional emergency accommodation is available for all rough sleepers during severe weather.

12. The 'The City Conversation' on rough sleeping took place in November 2017, leading to the establishment of the Oxford Homeless Movement (OHM), a partnership of the many organisations working to address rough sleeping. OHM launched in October 2019, with a call to action to ensure nobody has to sleep rough on the City's street. A 'No Local Connection Review (Housing Scrutiny Panel) has also been conducted, investigating the Council's response to rough sleepers who may not be from Oxford. This review   resulted in the adoption of several recommendations to improve access to accommodation and support for those rough sleepers who may not have a local connection to the City.

13. Other significant achievements to meet the priorities set out in the Housing and Homelessness Strategy include the successful implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The new legislation was introduced in April 2018 and is the most significant change to local authority homelessness responsibilities for 20 years. The Act sees the local authority response shift emphasis from crisis management to early identification of homelessness and prevention. As a result, 654 households were assessed as owed a housing duty by the Council in 2018/19, compared to 177 in 2017/18. Government representatives visiting the Council during summer 2019 commended the Council on the positive homeless prevention ethos embedded in staff culture.

14. The Oxfordshire Trailblazer Programme, funded by government through a successful bid in late 2016, has been delivered successfully across the County with known outcomes being 78% positive for the 1,035 supported in 2018/19 The number of households in temporary accommodation has been kept under 120 at any one time, with only 84 households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2019. This is further evidence of successful homeless prevention work. To further enable use of the private rented sector for households in housing needs, the Real Lettings and Rent Guarantee Schemes have been evaluated and the Council has consequently continued these successful schemes. 133 households who were homeless or threatened with homelessness were assisted to move to a home in the private rented sector through these schemes in 2018/19.

15. The Council continues to rollout the resident ambassador programme to help deliver a tenant-led approach of council landlord services. A significant

investment programme has been carried out in Council owned homes, properties have been improved in line with Energy Efficiency targets and disability adapted extensions have been delivered.

Challenges

16. Although the Council is making good progress and have achieved a lot since the implementation of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy in early 2018, the Council faces challenges ahead to realise future ambitions.

17. Meeting the high levels of demand for housing in the city with increased supply of affordable homes remains a huge challenge, which will require a ramping up of delivery in order for the Council to meet its aspirations. The Council is committed to fulfil the Growth Deal, increase OCHL's capacity and capability to deliver more affordable housing, and for the company to be able to compete on the open market, including for development outside the city boundary. Registered providers also play a key role, and the Council will look for increased joint working and the adoption of joint innovative practices to unlock more homes. The Council and housing company will also play a key part in meeting the challenge of the climate emergency, ensuring our housing meets environmental standards, while ensuring development of homes can continue.

18. Although the Council has a comprehensive commissioning programme in place, which delivers a diverse range of good services to rough sleepers, the number of people sleeping rough on the City's streets remains unacceptably high. To end rough sleeping in the city a step-change in approach is required, with a transformation to services and improved joint working .This work is underway and includes the new engagement and assessment centre at Floyds Row, and will continue for the life of the strategy and will inform the new strategy.

Mid-point review process and considerations

19. The current Housing & Homelessness Strategy is comprehensive and the priorities set remain the right ones for the Council. Taking into account the Council's Corporate Objectives and Housing Service's Service Plan for 2019/20 it is evident that the strategy contributes to meet these objectives. The strategy also has sufficient scope to incorporate local and national changes over the lifetime of the strategy. In addition:
    - The strategy evidence base is updated annually - last updated in January 2019 (with minor additional amendments in May 2019). Updates do not highlight any significant trends that would warrant amendments to the main content of the strategy, or need for strategic objectives to change.
    - The process for developing the Council's next 3 year strategy – to come into effect January 2021 – has already started, and will include extensive consultation and data analysis.
    - There are a number of national developments that are awaiting resolution (Housing Green Paper, supported housing design and oversight measures, review of HRA etc.) within the lifetime of the strategy. Any development in these areas will be taken into account in the new strategy.

20. The mid-point review has therefore focussed on updating the Action Plan accompanying the strategy to ensure that this is in line with developments over the last year and sufficiently addresses future challenges. The review was carried out as a desk-top review.

21. In August 2018, the Government launched their Rough Sleeping Strategy that sets out the government's vision for halving rough sleeping by 2020 and ending it by 2027. The strategy outlines an obligation on all local authorities to:
    - update current homeless strategies and re-brand them as homelessness and rough sleeping strategies
    - make strategies available online
    - report progress in delivering strategy and publish an annual action plan

22. As Oxford City Council already has a comprehensive Housing & Homelessness Strategy that covers homelessness and rough sleeping extensively, the Council already complies with this obligation.

23. However, following guidance from MHCLG, and to clearly demonstrate that the Council's work in this area is aligned with the national strategy, a separate Rough Sleeping Action Plan has been developed in line with the Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 and as part of the mid-point review process.

24. Relevant objectives under Priority 2 of the Housing & Homelessness Strategy have been reviewed, updated and incorporated into the separate Rough Sleeping Action Plan.

25. The Rough Sleeping Action Plan will sit as an addendum under the Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 for the remainder of the strategy cycle. The Council's approach to rough sleeping will be reviewed as part of the development of the new Housing & Homelessness Strategy.

The development of Oxford's Rough Sleeping Action Plan

Context of rough sleeping in Oxford

26. Rough sleeping continues to be a significant issue in the City. During the period 2013 to 2018, rough sleeping in the City increased by 137% – from 19 to 45 as measured by the annual November street count. Numbers peaked in November 2017 with a total of 61 people found to be sleeping rough.[1]

27. The Council also carries out an annual intelligence based 'estimate', drawing on knowledge and intelligence from multiple agencies working with rough sleepers. Any person believed to be rough sleeping on the night of the exercise is included in the estimate, rather than only those who are actually seen bedded down. The estimate is done in order to make comparisons with the other Oxfordshire Districts, who only undertake estimates – rather than street counts – due to their large and rural nature. The estimated number of people sleeping rough in the City in November 2018 was 94. Across the other Districts in the County, a total of 25 people were estimated to be sleeping rough in 2018.

28. A significant proportion of people sleeping rough in the City are from other areas of the County and/or Country, or have no connection anywhere: 16% of the 45

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[1] Street counts are one of two methods local authorities are advised to use in order to arrive at and report rough sleeping numbers to government annually. Street counts are carried out on a night in November, where people seen bedded down are counted.

people identified at the November 2018 street count had a connection to one of the District Councils in Oxfordshire; 24% had no identifiable local connection anywhere. 13% had a connection to Oxford City. Although the increase in rough sleeping is most visible in the City, the County as a whole has also felt the impact and seen a rise in rough sleeping.

29. Oxford City Council is party to a pooled budget and joint commissioning arrangement – together with Oxfordshire County Council, the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning and the Oxfordshire District Councils – for supported accommodation services for single homeless people and rough sleepers.

30. These arrangements were put in place in 2017, due to the County's reduction of funding, initially for a period of 3 years to 2019/20. They have recently been extended by agreement of the partners for a further 2 years to 2021/22. The City and District Councils also commission additional supported accommodation outside of the pooled budget arrangement, to meet local need and allow for a transformation of service provision. Oxford City Council currently commissions a wide range of other services for rough sleepers and single homeless people, including street engagement / outreach services, day services, support to access education, training and employment.

Transformation of services

31. Ending rough sleeping in Oxford requires a transformation in approach. As part of this public sector partners have recognised that there is a need to step up collaborative working to tackle rough sleeping across the County and the commitment to the continuation of the joint commissioning arrangements is recognition of that. The creation of a Countywide post to lead work on developing a strategy for rough sleeping and single homelessness in Oxfordshire is further testament to a 'step-change' in the way The Council is working with partner authorities to tackle the issue.

32. The development of a Countywide strategy will involve a comprehensive assessment of needs and services across the County and a transformational redesign of the Adult Homeless Pathway to ensure an effective 'whole systems approach' focused on prevention, early intervention and moving people on from rough sleeping is in place in the future.

33. Oxford City Council's development of a brand new service – Engagement and Assessment hub – at Floyds Row, funded through RRP funding, is an initial and important step towards this transformational approach. It will deliver a new way of working with people at risk of rough sleeping and those already doing so, with the aim of preventing and relieving homelessness.

National Rough Sleeping Strategy

34. The national Rough Sleeping Strategy, launched in August 2018, sets out a framework to end rough sleeping by 2027 in England, focussing on prevention, intervention and recovery. The City Council has a comprehensive programme around rough sleeping, which already meets many of the national strategy's measures for the three key areas. However, some new measures need to be incorporated in the Oxford Rough Sleeping Action Plan in order to align with the national strategy, including:
   - Work in partnership with Oxfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board and others to ensure reviews of near misses and deaths of homeless people

and rough sleepers are carried out and any recommendations from such reviews help improvements;

- Capturing a wide range of data (qualitative and quantitative) in order to better understand rough sleeping and being able to commission services that work;
- Working with partners to focus on prevention of rough sleeping;
- Delivering and evaluating projects delivered using government funding

35. The government has invested significant funds into prevention and tackling rough sleeping over the last 18 months. Oxford City Council has been successful in securing approximately £1.9M in funding from the government's Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) and Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP) schemes to develop and expand services in the City. These funding streams are however short term, ending in March 2020, making it extremely difficult to plan for the future.

36. The MHCLG recently announced there will be further funding available to continue investing in this work. While this is positive, a longer term funding stream with greater certainty is needed in order for effective solutions to be developed and implemented to end rough sleeping. We continue to call for this in our interactions with central government.

Action Plan update

37. Following the desk-top review, the Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan has been updated/refreshed according to the following principles:

- Objectives relating to rough sleeping and prevention thereof, have been removed and incorporated as appropriate into the Rough Sleeping Action Plan
- Objectives and/or measures of success that have been completed in full or are no longer relevant have been removed.
- Where objectives and/or measures of success have been completed but there is substantial follow-on work, the objectives and/or measure of success have been amended
- Measures of success have been updated where necessary to take into account any change in direction since the strategy came into effect in order to achieve the objective set

38. The updated Action Plan that will be in place for the remaining period of the Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-2021 cycle and sets out new and refreshed objectives refocusing work to meet our prioritises on meeting housing demand and tackling homelessness, and builds towards the new strategy. It consists of 29 objectives, measured through 67 measures of success. The Rough Sleeping Action Plan consists of 8 objectives, measured through 34 measure of success.

39. The new Housing & Homelessness Strategy Action Plan and Rough Sleeping Action Plan (addendum) were approved by Head of Service (Housing Services) in October 2019 using delegated authority as outlined in the January 2018 Cabinet report.

40. Progress towards achieving objectives set in both the Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan and the Rough Sleeping Action Plan will continue to be monitored regularly in-house, and any areas at risk of not being

delivered flagged appropriately. The current Housing & Homelessness Strategy cycle ends in early 2021. Development of a strategy to be in place from then has already started and will include extensive research, and comprehensive engagement and consultation.

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Action Plan for the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 (reviewed July 2019)

REF	Objectives	Owner	Required input from	Timeline	Measures of Success
Priority 1: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing					
1	Work in partnership with other Oxfordshire authorities and other key stakeholders to deliver the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.	**Assistant Chief Executive**	Strategic Housing and Planning Teams	June 2019 and ongoing	• Milestones set out in Growth Deal achieved • Contribute and support the development, submission and adoption of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Joint Statutory Spatial Plan)
2	Work in partnership with Oxfordshire District Councils (DC) to ensure an apportionment of Oxford's unmet housing needs are accommodated within each District as part of the 'duty to cooperate'.	**Head of Housing Services and Head of Planning Services**	Oxfordshire District Authorities, Strategic Housing and Planning Teams	March 2018 to March 2021	• Framework or other suitable agreement in place (to include dwelling types and tenure, location and accessibility of homes, letting and nomination arrangements) with: • West Oxfordshire DC • Cherwell DC • South Oxfordshire DC • Vale of White Horse DC
3	Work in partnership across internal services and in partnership with external partners to deliver the Affordable Housing Programme to deliver more housing supply to meet the City's housing needs.	**Head of Housing Services**	Development, Regeneration, Planning and Housing Teams	March 2019 and ongoing	• Identify best use of land – sites for redevelopment identified and viable redevelopment options identified • More homes, particularly affordable homes, secured (including redevelopment of units) and/or completed • Housing Company dev't programme approved and on-site to deliver the next phase of the affordable new build programme (years 1 and 2) and future phases (years 3 to 5) delivering an average of 120 units per year • Refresh Oxford City Housing Limited business plan in line with review carried

					• out during spring 2019 • Refresh Housing Revenue account business plan in line with review carried out during spring 2019
4	Secure appropriate affordable housing mix on the regeneration sites at Oxpens and Northern Gateway	**Executive Director - Development**	Planning and Housing Teams	March 2019 and ongoing	• Affordable housing mix agreed and secured through the planning process.
5	Complete the Community-led Housing Fund commissioned research project and identify opportunities to deliver Community-Led Housing in the City	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Planning and Housing Teams, external commissioned organisations	By October 2019	• Online toolkit made available to the public
6	Evaluate the impact of the Teachers Equity Loan Scheme	**Housing Development & Enabling Manager**	Housing, Development and Finance Teams, Catalyst Housing, Schools/Teachers	By March 2020	• Evaluation completed and 'lessons learned' used to inform future initiatives.
7	Oxfordshire County Council market position statement and Older People's Strategy for Oxfordshire 2019-2024 used to inform future housing development in relation to older and vulnerable persons	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing, Development and Planning Teams, Health, County Council and Registered Provider/ Development partners	March 2018 and ongoing	• Opportunities identified for new development to meet identified needs, re-development or remodelling of accommodation designated for older persons
Priority 2: Prevent homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people					
8	In line with the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy (Aug 2018), develop and implement a 'Rough Sleeping Action Plan' as an addendum to the Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing Needs Teams and Strategy & Service Development Team	By December 2019	• Actions under the HHS 2018-20 Action Plan reviewed and incorporated into the Rough Sleeping action plan • Action plan available online • Action Plan reviewed annually

9	Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 effectively implemented.	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing Needs Teams, Welfare Reform Team, Trailblazer Project Team	By March 2020	- Regular quality audits carried out showing consistent good implementation of HRA. - Information about HRA available to customers, service providers and partner agencies - Partner agencies operating within new processes and procedures - Strong commitment to homeless prevention at corporate level
10	Evaluation of the Oxfordshire Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer Programme concluded and legacy findings are implemented to enable improved upstream homeless prevention.	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Trailblazer Project Team	By December 2019	- Evaluation report with recommendations completed at the end of the 2 yr project - Improved and agreed protocols in place to prevent homelessness, in particular pre-eviction, prison and hospital discharge. - Through evaluation, identify effective and sustainable initiatives that can become business as usual across Housing Needs and externally
11	Ensure sufficient provision of suitable Temporary Accommodation (TA) for range of client need	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing Needs Teams	March 2019 and on-going	- Review void rates in TA and surrender properties according to established action plan - Explore alternative TA solutions for emerging need - Households in TA not exceeding 100 and aim for stay of no longer than 6 months. No families in B&B accommodation for more than 6 weeks.
12	Work in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council which is carrying out a needs analysing and re-commissioning approach to the Young	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing Needs Team, Oxfordshire County Council Children's	By March 2020	Secure agreement on a joint-commissioning approach delivering new services by March 2020.

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	People's pathway.		Services,		
13	Improve access – through improved partnership working - to suitable accommodation and support where a particular need is identified (e.g. treatment based, long term care, disability adapted, offenders).	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing Needs Teams, statutory and non-statutory partners agencies, incl. Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Oxfordshire County Council	March 2019 and ongoing	• Identify gaps in supply of accommodation and services, including specialist need accommodation. • Agreement reached with relevant services in respect of capacity where possible to provide the necessary support and transition services to meet identified gaps. • Reduced evictions from supported housing, through partnership working
14	Increase public awareness – with particular focus on young persons - of housing and homelessness issues and the support and assistance that is available through the Council and other organisations.	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing Needs Teams, Corporate Policy, Partnership & Communication team, Youth Ambition Team	March 2018 and ongoing	• Homeless prevention outreach into secondary schools through appropriate medium • Regular information shared and made available, through a variety of media, including mortgage re-possession support, homelessness prevention support, Private rented Sector landlord campaigns etc.
Priority 3: Make best use of Private Rented Sector accommodation					
15	Continue works outlined in the Private Sector Housing Policy in relation to licensing of HMO's, improving property standards and energy efficiency, Tenancy Relations Officer work, and supporting the work to bring empty properties back into use.	**Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety**	Environmental Health Teams, Legal, Housing and Planning Teams	By December 2019	• Review, approve and put in place the most appropriate measures to improve and manage conditions in private rented sector accommodation
16	Reduce the number of empty properties in the City by bringing them back into residential use	**Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety**	Empty Property Officer, Housing Needs & Strategy Manager, Legal, Environmental	March 2018 and ongoing	• 5% target of empty properties brought back into use (based on monthly reports) • Data base of empty dwellings kept up to date to record accurate number and

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			Health Teams, property owners		• inform suitable actions. • Keep in regular contact with owner of properties to advise of a) help/assistance available to bring properties back to use and; b) any legal action that may be taken
17	Investigate the number of empty commercial properties in the City and the potential for development opportunities (for residential purposes)	**Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety**	Empty Property Officer, Housing Needs & Strategy Manager, Legal, Environmental Health Teams, property owners	March 2018 ongoing to 2021.	• Data base maintained of number of empty commercial sites recorded • Owners of sites identified for potential development/change to be informed of a) help/assistance available to bring properties back to use and; b) any legal action that may be taken
Priority 4: Invest to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy					
18	Deliver the planned major refurbishment and estate regeneration projects in line with the allocated budget and to improve the satisfaction of residents living in Oxford communities	**Development Manager**	Housing, Property, Development, Regeneration and Planning Teams	By March 2021	• Identified individual work streams are completed in line with agreed project timescales. (Inc. Blackbird Leys and Barton Regeneration projects) • Resident satisfaction has increased. • A review of the 'lessons learned' from the projects has been undertaken; best practice has been identified; and lessons shared to inform future initiatives.
19	Promote energy efficiency across all tenures to ensure they meet the EPC level E or above and agree the most appropriate enforcement approach	**Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety**	Tenancy Management Teams, Tenant Involvement team, Homes Multiple Occupation Enforcement, Private Sector Safety Teams	April 2018 and ongoing	• Promotion of activities completed. • Enforcement approach agreed.

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20	Prioritise energy efficiency of properties to increase tenant resilience to fuel poverty, i.e. meeting decent homes targets and energy efficiency requirements through cost effective refurbishments.	**Property Services Manager**	Property Services Teams, Landlord Services Teams, Housing Needs Teams, Oxford Direct Services, residents or identified properties	By March 2021	• Properties identified. • Planned works programmed and started • Resident satisfaction with property improved. • Assessment of impact of Zero Carbon agenda on refurbishment works carried out.
21	Continue to invest resources to mitigate risks from the impact of the Welfare Reform Act and introduction of Universal Credit, supporting people into financial inclusion and helping to address housing challenges for any households requiring benefit assistance	**Welfare Reform Manager**	Housing Needs Team Managers, Tenancy Management Teams, Revenue & Benefit teams, Oxford City based advice agencies, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP)	January 2018 and ongoing	• Work across departments to ensure customers affected by Welfare Reform/UC are identified early and receive support to move towards financial self-sufficiency (not reliant on benefits) in order to prevent risk of homelessness. • Stakeholder engagement in place and information received through these channels (effect on Welfare Reform and UC in the community) to shape the support offered by the Welfare Reform Team.
Priority 5: Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services					
22	Further develop 'Resident Ambassadors' (recruit and train tenants) in order to continue the tenant-led approach to delivering the Council's Landlord Service	**Tenant Involvement Manager**	Housing Needs Teams, Tenancy Management Teams	March 2018 and ongoing	• Tenants to be involved in identifying opportunities and improvements on specific service areas. • Tenants are involved in developing policies, plans and services.
23	Achieve TPAS re-accreditation for 2018-2021	**Tenant Involvement Manager**	Tenancy Management Team	By March 2020	• Continue and expand the work of the Tenant Involvement Team to achieve TPAS re-accreditation.
24	Build on the principles of 'tenant involvement' to ensure that opportunities to develop our tenant-led approach become more inclusive and	**Tenant Involvement Manager**	Tenancy Management Team, Council	March 2018 and ongoing	• Virtual involvement through social media, online services, text and email. Introduction of an online training option.

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	flexible.		Tenants		
25	Continue to offer and promote the 'Removal Expenses and Mobility Scheme (REMS)' for Council Tenants who are under-occupying their current home and who wish to move (subject to available resources).	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing Needs Teams	March 2018 ongoing	• Number of under-occupying households moving to more suitable accommodation and the number of properties available to let to families in housing need is increased as a result of this scheme.
26	Review implementation of Tenancy Strategy 2018-2023	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Landlord Services Teams, Housing Needs Teams Team, Legal, Registered Providers and stakeholders.	September 2019 and ongoing	• Strategy implementation is monitored and reviewed annually.
27	Deliver the housing and capital investment programme for residential accommodation in line with Council's Asset Management Plan 2016-2020	**Property Services Manager**	Property Services Teams, Oxford Direct Services, Planning Teams, Finance Regeneration and Tenancy Management Teams.	By March 2021	• Complete work identified in the plan • Review and update Asset Management Plan with new plan in place from 2020
28	Deliver an enhanced housing investment programme for the Council's own stock in relation to: • Planned tower block refurbishments. • Great Estates Programme	**Property Services Manager**	Property Services Teams, Oxford Direct Services, Planning Teams, Finance Regeneration and Tenancy Management Teams.	By March 2021	• Key milestones identified within the Project Management Plan are on track and being achieved for: • Tower block refurbishments • Great Estates Programme
29	Procure and implement a new/improved ICT housing system.	**Head of Housing Services**	ICT Support, Housing, Finance, Procurement and	March 2018 and ongoing	• System procured and active contributions made by H&P staff to the development and testing of the product.

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| | | | Legal Teams. | | Implementation in 2019. |
| | | | | | • Review of service undertaken and further improvements to deliver a custom-centred approach are identified. |

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Rough Sleeping Action Plan – addendum to Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

REF	Objectives	Owner	Required input from	Timeline	Measures of Success
	Priority 2: Prevent homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people				

RA1 35	Continue working within a multi-agency approach to reduce rough sleeping and homelessness:
	
	• Ensure provision of a proactive and collaborative outreach service to provide improved prevention, diversion and reconnection work (No First Night Out), with a rapid assessment focus (No Second Night Out) and personalised services (No Living on the Streets).
	• Explore options to accommodate and/or support rough sleepers in the City who have no local connection and no recourse to public funds
		Housing Strategy & Needs Manager	Housing Needs Team, statutory and non-statutory partner agencies, voluntary and community sector organisations, District Councils,	By March 2021	• Number of people sleeping rough in the City reduced from 2016/17 levels to support the Government's aim of halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending rough sleeping by 2027.
					• Improved and agreed protocols in place to prevent homelessness, in particular pre-eviction, prison and hospital discharge.
					• As part of the development of services at Floyds Row, re-shape and develop existing services to provide:
					  ➢ Targeted outreach function focussed on engaging chronic and entrenched rough sleepers
					  ➢ 24/7 Somewhere Safe to Stay engagement and assessment service
					  ➢ Staging Post accommodation to enable individual to progress their agreed Housing Plan
					  ➢ Winter-round shelter
					• In partnership with stakeholders, implement agreed recommendations following the No Local Connection Review in order to:
					  ➢ Provide accommodation and support services to rough sleepers in the city who have

					no local connection to the City or anywhere else ➢ Explore options for housing those with no recourse to public funds.
RA2	Through commissioning arrangements, the City Council will continue to fund: • A range of supported accommodation for rough sleepers and single homeless people in the City to meet need; • And to commission non-accommodation based support services	**Housing Strategy & Needs Manager**	Housing Needs Team, City Council Property and Legal Teams, County and District Councils, support providers	September 2019 and ongoing	• Annual Homeless Prevention Grant allocated to procure supported accommodation and support services needed. • Decommissioning and decanting of Simon House and re-provision at Matilda House open. • Subject to funding, continue to progress the increase in the number for Acacia units in operation from 7 to the target 10 by April 2020. • Continue to have sufficient, additional emergency accommodation in place during severe weather. • Re-shape front end initial engagement and assessment services to provide 24/7 access to Somewhere Safe to Stay for rough sleepers and people at imminent risk of doing so, including emergency short term accommodation, a common assessment/'tell us once' approach and support to co-produce personalised housing plans • Continue to provide a range of supported accommodation services, including Acacia, Housing First, to cater to the diverse and individual

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					• needs of the client cohort
					• Seek additional funding to enable the continuation of the RSI-funded women's and pre-recovery pilot projects or delivery of similar services.
					• Develop a 'housing-led' approach to improve move-on from the pathway, starting with the implementation of the Supported Lettings Scheme.
RA3	Contribute to and support the development of countywide approaches and strategies to prevent and tackle rough sleeping	**Housing Strategy & Needs Manager**	Housing Needs Team, Strategy & Service Development Team, County and District Councils, Health	August 2019 and ongoing	• Work with partners to resource a county-wide post to lead the county wide transformation review of the whole homelessness pathway arrangements including a revised commissioning strategy and pooled budget arrangements. • Develop a county-wide homelessness strategy, signed up to by all Districts and the County. • Following the development of Floyd's Row, carry out a needs analysis of current provision, understand current and future challenges of moving towards a housing-led solution, commit on a county-wide basis to new financial arrangements, agree a commissioning strategy and procure new services to be in place by April 2022.
RA4	Deliver and evaluate services/projects funded through the government's Rough Sleeping Initiative and Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding.	**Housing Strategy & Needs Manager**	Housing Needs Team, statutory and non-statutory partner agencies, voluntary and	By August 2020	• Evaluation of RSI and RRP funded schemes is carried out. Use learning and best practise to inform future commissioning

			community sector organisations, District Councils		• Identify legacy opportunities should further funding not be available.
RA5	Develop a comprehensive understanding of causes and solutions to rough sleeping, using qualitative and quantitative evidence to ensure that interventions and services are commissioned, shaped and delivered based on what works.	**Housing Strategy & Needs Manager**	Housing Needs Team, County and District Councils, partner organisations	September 2019 and ongoing	• Improve the quality of data available internally and externally and work collaboratively to use this data to inform service commissioning and effective service delivery
RA6	Work in partnership with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) and others to ensure reviews of near misses and deaths of homeless people and rough sleepers are carried out and recommendations from such reviews help improvements	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing Needs Team, statutory and non-statutory partner agencies, commissioned services and organisations	September 2019 and ongoing	• Proactively inform and participate in the current and any future reviews carried out by OSAB • Ensure all learning is captured and applied to contracts and service delivery
RA7	Make a safer city for everyone through partnership working arrangements that are focussed on effective solutions and sustainable moves for individuals away from the streets.	**Housing Needs & Strategy Manager**	Housing Needs Team, Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Response Teams, Police, Adult Homeless Pathway providers, Oxford Street Population Outreach team (OxSPOT)	March 2019 and ongoing	• Partnership arrangements in place to ensure that: ➢ Effective solutions identified including for sharing intelligence and solutions to protect individuals and safe access to services, and related work streams mapped out to implement solutions. ➢ Individuals are protected and have safe access to services, including the approaches to buildings from which services are delivered; ➢ All agencies are focussed on maximising client engagement, to prevent behavioural problems and

					anti-social behaviour happening in the first place
RA8	Creating a better environment for stakeholder involvement and improve working relations with various stakeholders around rough sleeping/ homelessness prevention, including: university, colleges, churches, students. Work with these stakeholders and people with lived experience of homelessness, to adapt a city wide response to homelessness and rough sleeping, and develop new partnership approaches to prevent and tackle rough sleeping.	**Housing Strategy & Needs Manager**	Statutory and non-statutory partner agencies, universities, churches, voluntary and community sector organisations, District Councils, Oxford City Council Housing Needs Team	September 2019 and ongoing	• Continue to be part of and support the Oxford Homeless Movement to deliver activities that add value to existing services and initiatives to reduce rough sleeping, in line with the Oxford Rough Sleeping Charter • Co-designed work streams/projects to be put in place to deliver improved collective approach to rough sleeping, including 'alternative giving' scheme/s. • Ensure that systems are in place and the Council supports initiatives to capture the views and experiences of people with lived experience of homelessness and rough sleeping to inform service delivery and development • In order to ensure and maintain best practice, co-ordinate and support a 'network' of providers/voluntary organisations. This will include the Council organising training for the network, e.g. psychologically informed environments.

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To:	**Housing Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)**
Date:	**7 November 2019**
Report of:	**Head of Housing Services**
Title of Report:	**Outcome of the Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To update the Board on the outcome of the Trailblazer Programme
Key decision:	No
Lead Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Leisure and Housing
Corporate Priority:	Meeting housing need.
Policy Framework:	Housing and Homelessness Strategy
Recommendation(s):That the Panel resolves to:	
1. **Note the outcome of the review and the priorities for the year ahead**	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Trailblazer System Data
Appendix 2	Case Studies

INTRODUCTION

1. The Oxfordshire Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer was a multi-agency programme aiming to tackle systemic issues in the public sector which can increase the risk of homelessness to individuals throughout the county. The two year programme ran from September 2017 to August 2019. It received £790,000 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and a further £100,000 from the Oxfordshire local housing authorities, providing a total of

£890,000. Commencement of the programme was reported to CEB on 20 December 2017 and a progress update was provided on 22 January 2019. The county-wide Trailblazer programme has been managed by a small team based at Oxford City Council.

2. The broad objectives of the programme were to explore options for intervening as early as possible to prevent people at risk of homelessness reaching a crisis point. The first six months was spent researching homelessness in Oxfordshire and planning the programme. This included analysis of homelessness data, a qualitative stakeholder consultation exercise and piloting system interventions. A full evaluation of the programme will be published in November 2019.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

3. Key findings from the data analysis informed the design of the Trailblazer services to be provided. This included the finding that the presence of a housing issue could lead to a significant delay in discharge from hospital once a patient is medically fit. Additionally, within the Oxfordshire prison system it was found that 88% of people entering prison with no fixed address ends up leaving prison with the same status.

4. The stakeholder consultation included workshops involving front-line housing staff, people with experience of homelessness and professionals from health, criminal justice and children's social care. People with lived experience expressed a sense of hopelessness about their situation and difficulties in accessing services, but reflected positive experiences of being supported by other people with lived experience. Professionals within the systems felt there was a significant need to improve connections and relationships across statutory and non-statutory services. Awareness of the housing options available to individuals and the local housing authorities' role in this process was low. As a result, early indicators of homelessness were not being acted upon.

5. Following the research three strands of work were developed. These were the embedding of housing workers within the health, criminal justice and children's social care settings (provided by Connections), a community navigator service to connect people at risk of homelessness to the services they needed (provided by Aspire), and a homelessness champions network to raise the profile of housing in stakeholder organisations.

DELIVERY OF TRAILBLAZER

6. The embedded housing workers role was to support the upskilling of professionals in the systems they were embedded in. This was to enable them to identify people at risk of homelessness, and take steps to mitigate this risk.

7. During the programme delivery phase, from April 2018 to August 2019 the two interventions supported 1,413 households and prevented homelessness in 713

cases (See Table 1 below).

System	Referrals	Homelessness Prevented	Outcome Unknown	Homelessness Not Prevented	Person remained homeless	Case remained open
Health	422	217	137	44	24	0
Criminal Justice	324	99	159	39	27	0
Children's Social Care	228	157	63	2	6	0
Community Navigators	439	240	157	15	2	25
Total	1413	713	516	100	59	25

8. The high number of unknown outcomes has two causes. The first is that the embedded housing workers were working to support the professionals in the systems they were based in, often on a no names basis, and it was difficult to track the outcomes for these cases. The second is that clients of the community navigator service would sometime disengage with the service.

9. Outcomes were also tracked using data from the systems Trailblazer was working in. In the prison system, there has been a 31% reduction in people with a local connection to Oxfordshire being released with no fixed address. In the hospitals there has been a 50% reduction in the delays to people leaving hospital as a result of a Housing issue. This equates to 944 "bed days". This reduction has enabled Oxford Health to stop placing people who are sectioned out of area. Appendix One provides a more in-depth analysis of this data.

10. Within Children's Social Care there is no formal recording of housing data. However a number of case studies have shown the benefit of identifying housing issues at an early stage and acting on them. In Appendix Two, the third case study shows how such intervention can avoid the significant costs incurred when children have to be taken into care; over £50,000 in this example.

11. The third element of the Trailblazer is the homelessness champions' network. The aim of this strand of the programme was to create a network of housing expertise across other statutory services and local support agencies. The network is facilitated by the Trailblazer programme team who have delivered training and network events on a bi-monthly basis. The network has been used to help design a single countywide process for the new "duty to refer" obligation brought in by the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017). This duty obliges a range of statutory agencies to refer people who appear at risk of homelessness to a local housing authority. All agencies with this obligation are represented in the champions' network. A survey of network participants saw 14 out of 15 responses making positive comments about the benefit of the network. These responses cited increased knowledge, better connections and improved partnership working as the main benefits of the network.

PROGRAMME LEARNING

12. The Trailblazer programme had learning at its heart. The programme's learning was externally facilitated by an organisation called Ratio. Practitioners within the services are brought together on a monthly basis to talk about their work, both what has worked, and what has not. The focus is on the practice of the

embedded housing workers and community navigators, and the system barriers that they encountered. This process has highlighted the benefits of taking the time to form positive relationships with people at risk of homelessness to help give them agency over their situation. It has also shown how intervening early provides the best chance of preventing homelessness, and the need for statutory services to both work together and understand each other to deliver better outcomes. Ratio are publishing two reports on the learning from the programme in November 2019.

13. The programme also identified many system barriers that increase the risk of homelessness for some individuals, particularly those who are more vulnerable. 55% of the community navigator's referrals were prompted by debt or financial problems. Two thirds of these cases were in rent arrears. The experience of the navigators was that there was often little support offered in the collection of rent and Council Tax arrears. Sometimes the community navigators found themselves in the role of interpreter, to translate the demands of the local authority or housing association to their client. Some of the navigators had experienced homelessness or issues relating to the causes of homelessness, and this often made it easier for them to build good relationships with the people they were supporting. Appendix Two provides two case studies which demonstrate these issues. There is a challenge for councils and social landlords to think about how they can provide services which would negate the need for a community navigator in these circumstances.

LEGACY

14. There are a number of areas of work from Trailblazer that are continuing. The network will be maintained for another 12 months funded by the underspend on the programme budget, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust have funded the continuation of the embedded workers in Health until March 2020, and Aspire have raised funding to continue to provide the community navigator service.

15. There are also some practical changes which have been made which will support homelessness prevention. Discharge protocols in the health and criminal justice systems have been jointly designed, Children's Social Care have established a housing champions network and now recognize the importance of identifying housing issues at an early stage. There is a Housing eLearning module targeted at non-Housing professionals, available free of charge on the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board website. Some teams have already incorporated it into their induction process.

16. Trailblazer exposed some of the systemic challenges of homelessness, and experimented with some ways to tackle these, some of which were successful. The public organisations who participated in Trailblazer need to continue to work together to meet these challenges, to ensure their services are accessible to all, to value the people who need their services, and to work in genuine partnership with each other to deliver better outcomes. The Trailblazer programme has shown that it is possible to do this across Oxfordshire. It broke new ground with the connections it enhanced between sector-wide partners in order to reduce the risk of local homelessness.

17. Within Oxford City Council a review of the Housing Needs service is being conducted to ensure that the learning from Trailblazer is implemented. This will prioritise a culture of learning, early prevention, a focus on the needs of people accessing services and working more effectively with partners and stakeholders.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. At the time of writing, the Trailblazer programme was projected to have an underspend of £17,830.98. At the last meeting of the programme's steering group, it was agreed that £10,000 of this underspend would be provided to Aspire to continue the Community Navigator service, £2,700 would be made available to Connections to use as a prevention fund for their continuing work in health, and the balance would be retained by Oxford City Council to continue the Homelessness Prevention Network.

LEGAL ISSUES

19. The Trailblazer programme operates with regard to the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017). Trailblazer aimed to engage with individuals prior to the timescale which triggers the Act's duties. The Act requires local housing authorities to work to prevent homelessness if an individual appears to be at risk of homelessness within 56 days. Where the programme has engaged with individuals who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under this act, the relevant authority has been made aware of the individual's circumstances.

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Appendix One – Trailblazer System Data

This paper covers the analysis of data produced by the systems in which Trailblazer has been operating. It is a revised version of the paper that was produced for the July 2019 steering group and is intended to demonstrate the level of impact the programme has had since the introduction of the Embedded Housing Worker model.

<u>Bullingdon Prison</u>

The following table is based on information received from the Resettlement team at Bullingdon Prison. It highlights the numbers of people with an Oxfordshire connection that have been released either 'NFA'(No fixed address) or 'Unknown' over the past couple of years.

The 17/18 year relates to the 10 months prior to any permanent Trailblazer involvement. From April 2018 onwards there has been an Embedded Housing Worker presence across both arms of the criminal justice system (National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company).

	Total number discharged from Bullingdon Prison with an Oxon connection			Total number discharged NFA or Unknown			NFA Percentage		
	CRC	NPS	TOTAL	CRC	NPS	TOTAL	CRC	NPS	TOTAL
2017/18*	164	95	259	79	33	112	48.2%	34.7%	43.2%
* These figures only account for 10 months of release data - the Resettlement team in Bullingdon only started recording data in this way in June 2017.									
2018/19	180	81	261	58	19	77	32.2%	23.5%	29.5%
2019/20*	65	30	95	23	10	33	35.4%	30.0%	34.7%
TOTAL	**245**	**111**	**356**	**81**	**29**	**110**	**33.1%**	**26.1%**	**30.9%**
* These figures only account for 4 months of data (April 2019 – July 2019)									

The numbers clearly show that across the board there have been significant reductions both in terms of the actual numbers of people being released NFA and the percentage of individuals being released.

A further way of looking at this is to consider the average number of Oxfordshire individuals being released each month. Prior to Trailblazer's involvement there were 11.2 people being released from Bullingdon NFA each month. This figure now stands at 6.9 people per month. As such we approximate that 51 less people with an Oxfordshire connection will leave Bullingdon as homeless in a year.

We also know that more support is now being offered to those individuals that enter Bullingdon as homeless. Before the introduction of the embedded workers, almost 9 out of 10 prisoners that entered Bullingdon NFA would leave prison with the same accommodation status. The data we receive from the resettlement team clearly indicates that more is being done on entry to highlight those individuals that are NFA and who therefore require tailored support to resolve their homelessness. Consequently the number has been reduced to 6 out of 10 individuals still leaving NFA post the introduction the embedded workers.

Delayed Transfer of Care (DTOC)

The DTOC data has been obtained from the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and highlights the amount of DTOC that has taken place over the past 2 years as a result of a known housing and homelessness issue.

That data has been split between the two NHS trusts in Oxfordshire to highlight the varying degrees of impact. Overall we have seen 26 fewer DTOC cases where 'housing' has been given as a reason for delay when compared to the year before Trailblazer. This accounts for 944 fewer days of DTOC since the introduction of the EHWs.

There has also been a significant reduction in the use of hub beds for DTOC patients with housing issues. There has been a big drive across both trusts to reduce the use of hub beds, particularly in instances where there was no plan for move on (not a Trailblazer initiative). In 2017/18 the average hub bed stay for an individual where housing has been given as a DTOC reason was 62 days. In 2018/19 this was reduced to 29 days.

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust

2017/18	Number of Cases	Total DTOC Days	Hub Bed Days	Average Delay
Housing only	18	432	0	24.00
Housing (inc Hub)	10	95	607	70.20
Multiple Reasons	14	485	0	34.64
Multiple (inc Hub)	3	139	207	115.33
TOTAL	**45**	**1151**	**814**	
2018/19	Number of Cases	Total DTOC Days	Hub Bed Days	Average Delay
Housing only	16	388	0	24.25
Housing (inc Hub)	8	85	249	41.75
Multiple Reasons	4	193	0	48.25
Multiple (inc Hub)	3	51	69	40.00
TOTAL	**31**	**717**	**318**	
Reduction on previous year	**14**	**434 (38%)**	**496 (61%)**	
2019/20 (April to July)	Number of Cases	Total DTOC Days	Hub Bed Days	Average Delay
Housing only	1	1	0	1.00
Housing (inc Hub)	0	0	0	0.00
Multiple Reasons	2	191	0	95.50
Multiple (inc Hub)	0	0	0	0.00
TOTAL	**3**	**192**	**0**	

Across OUH we saw a 38% in the number of DTOC days (434 less) as a result of a known housing issue when the data for 2018/19 was compared to the previous year. However, there remains a relatively high number of cases where housing is provided as a reason for delay. Because of the broad definition of this category it is likely that a number of these cases actually relate to individuals that are single homeless with no fixed address.

The data connected to 2019/20 indicates that there appears to be a continued reduction in the number of DTOC cases being seen across the trust (3 cases in 4 months). However, the cases that still result in a delay appear to complex cases owing to the length of DTOC.

Oxford Health NHS Trust

2017/18	Number of Cases	Total DTOC Days	Hub Bed Days	Average Delay
Housing only	12	454	0	37.83
Housing (inc Hub)	1	88	55	143.00
Multiple Reasons	4	227	0	56.75
Multiple (inc Hub)	0	0	0	0.00
TOTAL	**17**	**769**	**55**	
2018/19	Number of Cases	Total DTOC Days	Hub Bed Days	Average Delay
Housing only	2	33	0	16.50
Housing (inc Hub)	0	0	0	0.00
Multiple Reasons	3	226	0	75.33
Multiple (inc Hub)	0	0	0	0.00
TOTAL (11 months of data)	**5**	**259**	**0**	
Reduction	**12**	**510 (66%)**	**55 (100%)**	
2019/20 (April to July)	Number of Cases	Total DTOC Days	Hub Bed Days	Average Delay
Housing only	2	29	49	39.00
Housing (inc Hub)	0	0	0	0.00
Multiple Reasons	0	0	0	0.00
Multiple (inc Hub)	1	20	0	20.00
TOTAL	**3**	**49**	**49**	

The numbers above suggest that housing DTOC cases have been almost eliminated across the Oxford Health NHS trust, save for a few complex, intractable cases that have resulted in lengthy delays. The 510 less days of DTOC in 2018/19 represents a 66% reduction on the previous year.

Appendix Two - Case Studies

Case Study – Bereaved single young male

One of the Community Navigators worked closely with a young male to secure new housing following the death of his mother. By building a strong and trusting relationship the community navigator was able to support the individual to find a new home and improve his job prospects.

The young man had lived all his life in a three-bed social housing property in South Oxfordshire with his mother. One morning he woke to find that his mother had died unexpectedly, causing much grief and stress. During this period of grieving the housing association served the individual a notice to quit as he was unable to succeed the tenancy. Prior to any Trailblazer involvement the individual was invited to a meeting at the housing association to discuss his options but felt that the tone was less than courteous and left feeling unsupported and completely devoid of options.

Following a self-referral to Aspire the Community Navigator worked closely with the individual to assess all the options. In the first instance the navigator advised the individual not to vacate the property and arranged a multi-agency meeting to plan the way forward. The local authority then agreed to give the individual priority banding and told him to bid on one-bed properties.

The individual was offered a suitable one-bed in Didcot relatively quickly but needed the support of the navigator to view the property and determine how they could afford the deposit. Through negotiation the housing association agreed that the individual could save up for the month's rent in advance while the current tenant vacated and remedial works were undertaken.

In addition to all of the above the individual realised that he probably needed to improve his job prospects in order to ensure that the tenancy could be sustained long-term. With the encouragement of the navigator he enrolled on a number of training courses including a fork-lift driving assessment.

Case Study – Single mother suffering from poor mental health

This positive case study focuses on the increased resilience and confidence of a single mother after being supported by a Community Navigator in Oxford. The mother and her daughter were able to stay in their existing home despite struggles with depression and anxiety.

At the point of referral the individual had a social tenancy with rent arrears of approximately £2,500. She was in receipt of a valid eviction notice and a possession order with a looming court hearing. The rent arrears had accrued following a period of poor mental health and the threat of losing her home had only exacerbated the problem. The mother was currently working 20 hours on minimum wage whilst caring for her young daughter, but had recently completed a degree at Oxford Brookes University. She did not know how to manage this situation and sustain her tenancy.

Working collaboratively with the community navigator they drew up a plan that would build on her assets and attempt to resolve the threat of eviction. Perhaps most importantly the mother

was supported to take ownership of her finances to have a much better understanding of income and expenditure. The community navigator put the individual in touch with Turpin & Miller to ensure that she had representation in court and also completed a DHP application with Oxford City Council. The plan also encouraged the individual to seek full-time job opportunities using her degree and based on the fact that her daughter had moved in to full-time education.

The individual was successful in applying for a role at the University of Oxford and based on her estimated earnings she was able to negotiate a repayment plan with the housing association. This in turn meant that the court order for possession was suspended. The mother and daughter were able to stay in their home and subsequently she has continued to pay her rent and keep up with the repayments. Her feedback at the end of the process was that she has grown more confident as a result of her interaction with the community navigator, and that being able to work full-time and take control of her finances has had a positive impact on her general well-being.

Children's Social Services Case Study

This case study involves a grandmother caring for three of her grandchildren after they were removed from the care of their parents due to neglect. The grandmother had permanent custody of the eldest child, but the other two children were placed on a temporary arrangement, awaiting the court to award permanent custody. They were living in a one bedroom social tenancy flat.

The placement was at risk of breaking down due to inadequate accommodation and overcrowding; potentially leading to the children being taken into the care of social services. This was a difficult situation as the court would not award permanent custody of the remaining two children until they were adequately accommodated; and housing not recognise the overcrowding as the two children were not in the permanent custody of the grandmother.

The embedded worker supported an application to the exceptional circumstances panel at the Local Housing Authority so that they could be moved up the social housing waiting list. The panel awarded a two bed need and the family were allocated a home quickly as a temporary arrangement. They were subsequently awarded a three bed need but are waiting for appropriate housing to become available.

The placement has therefore been made permanent and the three siblings have been kept together without the need for placing any of the children in care. Using the New Economy Manchester model Unit Cost Database it is estimated the total saving to the public purse exceeded £50,000 (mostly to the benefit of children's social services) when considering that two of the children may have needed to be placed in care. Based on our estimates of net spend and net saving, the cost benefit ratio of this case suggests that for every £1 spent, somewhere in the region of £13 - £14 was saved. An added benefit is that this case improved the partnership working between the LHA and children's social services based on the positive and swift outcome.