

Agenda

Housing and Homelessness Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Thursday 4 March 2021**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **Zoom - Remote meeting**

For further information please contact:

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Committee Membership

Councillors: Membership 6: Quorum 3: substitutes are permitted.

Councillor Nadine Bely-Summers
(Chair)

Councillor Shaista Aziz (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Michael Gotch

Councillor Sian Taylor

Councillor Elizabeth Wade

Councillor Dick Wolff

Tony Buchanan

Apologies and notification of substitutes received before the publication are shown under *Apologies for absence* in the agenda. Those sent after publication will be reported at the meeting. Substitutes for the Chair and Vice-chair do not take on these roles.

Agenda

	Pages
1 Apologies Substitutes are not allowed.	
2 Declarations of interest	
3 Housing Panel Work Plan This is the final meeting of the civic year. An interim work plan to cover the first quarter of the next year will be developed to give time for Scrutiny to agree its work plan for the remainder of the year.	
4 Notes of previous meeting For the Panel to approve the record of the meeting held on 05 November 2020. The Panel is asked to review the draft minutes, identify required amendments and agree the approved minutes.	7 - 10
5 Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funding At Cabinet on 10 March the attached report on the Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funding will be considered. The Panel is asked to consider the report and agree any recommendations to Cabinet it deems appropriate. Councillor Mike Rowley, Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing, Nerys Parry, Housing Strategy and Needs Manager, and Paul Wilding, Rough Sleeping and Single Homeless Manager have been invited to present this item.	11 - 32
6 Date of next meeting The current meeting is the last scheduled for this civic year. Meetings will recommence after the elections.	

Information for those attending

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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; licenses 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.

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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". 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 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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Remote meeting

Minutes of a meeting of the Housing and Homelessness Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee) on Thursday 5 November 2020

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Committee members present:

Councillor Bely-Summers (Chair)

Councillor Taylor

Councillor Aziz

Councillor Wolff

Councillor Wade

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Tom Hudson, Scrutiny Officer

Paul Wilding, System Change Manager - Homelessness Prevention

Also present:

Councillor Mike Rowley, Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing

Tony Buchanan, Housing Panel (tenant co-optee)

27. Apologies

Councillor Mike Gotch tendered apologies.

28. Declarations of interest

None

29. Housing Panel Work Plan

The Panel considered the proposed workplan for the remainder of the civic year, which was **NOTED**.

30. Notes of previous meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 08 October 2020 were **AGREED** as an accurate record.

31. Rough Sleeping Update (including Hidden Homelessness)

Rough Sleeping Update

Paul Wilding, Rough Sleeping and Single Homeless Manager, presented the Rough Sleeping Update. Due to the fast-pace of developments in this area, a number of items in the report provided had significant updates. These included the announcement of a new national lockdown. The government had provided no new duties on Councils regarding rough sleeping, but following the efforts to provide interim accommodation during the first lockdown, numbers were low. Confirmation had been received from MHCLG that the planned November street count could proceed. An announcement had been made by MHCLG of almost £1m in funding from the Long Term Accommodation Fund to the Council which, alongside other provision, would mean 20 new units and 45 bed spaces would be available for long term rough sleepers for move-on accommodation. This comprised all the funding that the Council had applied for from the fund. Finally, the Council's Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) had been updated and a briefing would be provided to Councillors on it.

In its response to the report and presentation, the Panel raised a number of issues and questions. Firstly, the support available to those who had turned down interim accommodation during the pandemic. It was explained that St Mungo's as the commissioned outreach service would offer support to rough sleepers. If they were to refuse accommodation that would be respected, but St Mungo's would still continue to provide the same support afterwards.

The source of the additional units available for rough sleepers paid for through the Long Term Accommodation Fund grant was questioned. Five were to be purchased from the market, ten Council properties to be repurposed, and to five acquired from housing associations. The process for identifying which properties to repurpose would be largely based on which Council properties of one-bedroom became available. Further funding would be required, but it was the ambition to reach 50 such units in total owing to the success of such units in helping rough sleepers to find and maintain permanent accommodation. Whilst repurposing did diminish the availability of properties for other types of council tenants, avoiding the need to provide expensive and extensive ancillary services for rough sleepers represented a saving. Furthermore, the Council in providing 4.5% of social housing for temporary accommodation and move-on for rough sleepers was providing relatively little in comparison to some other Councils, with Hull providing 21% and Milton Keynes dedicating 16% to that purpose. The Council was 163rd out of 323 in the level of provision nationwide on that metric.

Clarity was sought regarding the status of provision of temporary accommodation for those with no recourse to public funds during the lockdown. It was confirmed that currently approximately 20 individuals without recourse to public funds were being provided temporary accommodation, though there was unclear advice from MHCLG on this. At some point, the Council's ability to provide such support would cease, making it all the more important to work to find solutions as quickly as possible. In the longer term, Paul Leo, Interim Director of Housing, explained the Council was working through Oxfordshire Homeless Movement to develop links with faith groups, foundations and individual benefactors to provide support to such individuals from the point at which the Council would be legally barred from doing so. It was suggested that it was important in ensuring uptake of the Council's offers of support to those without no recourse to public

funds that such individuals be assured doing so would not involve sharing of their immigration status.

At 48, the number of people giving up their temporary accommodation or being evicted was queried. The number at present was fairly low, but had originally been high when individuals had been placed in hotels and where there were difficulties with hotel staff, particularly around smoking in bedrooms. It was agreed that a gender breakdown would be provided outside the meeting. The fall in the number of EU citizens sleeping rough was put down to a combination of factors – the higher proportion of people being housed, and the success of the work of a government-funded worker for St Mungo's with a specialism in working with immigrants.

In response to questions about the relationships with the neighbouring districts the Interim Director of Housing provided an update. A number of important milestones were being reached by the county-wide steering group on rough sleeping. Two reports, by Crisis and the local Adult Safeguarding Board, were to be published on the efficacy of a rapid-rehousing approach, and the number of deaths of rough sleepers over the past two years. The steering group was setting up a group to respond to the issues raised. Amidst the high degree of joint working it was expected that a consultation would be launched on a county-wide strategy on rough sleeping which sought to jointly-commission services between agencies, and make use of each particular partner's strengths. For example, some of the other districts were felt to have more housing availability, whereas Oxford could offer a greater concentration of services to rough sleepers.

The challenges of providing SWEP provision in a socially-distanced manner were explored. In the absence of being able to use communal spaces, specific properties had been identified at Becket St for SWEP provision, extra space at the YHA and O'Hanlon House, making 22 places in total. This exceeded the number of rough sleepers in the City. Were numbers to increase, hotels had been contacted to identify suitable extra places.

It was **AGREED** that the following recommendation be made to Cabinet:

That the Council makes, as a matter of urgency, a public statement to clarify its position that it will provide emergency accommodation to all rough sleepers, including those without recourse to public funds, and that individuals receiving such support will not have their details passed to any immigration agency.

Hidden Homelessness

Paul Wilding, Rough Sleeping and Single Homeless Manager, presented the update. By its nature, hidden homelessness is difficult to track with certainty. Since the publication of the most recent major study on hidden homelessness, the government had passed the Homelessness Reduction Act, which placed a duty on local authorities towards single homeless individuals. This single change was a solution for many of the causes of hidden homelessness.

Taking as a proxy for the number of people sofa-surfing the quantity of people approaching the Council Housing Options service for help under the Homelessness Reduction Act, numbers had increased by approximately 20% in comparison to the previous year. It was not possible to extrapolate from this the number of hidden

homeless in Oxford, but it did indicate that services did exist to support individuals whose insecure tenancies had broken down, the typical hidden homeless profile.

In response to the report presented, the Panel focused its discussion on exploring the situations faced by those whose housing situations do not meet the threshold of homelessness, but are nevertheless sub-optimal. For example, young families living with their respective parents, or older workers having to move back to their childhood bedrooms. The desire and differing capacity of the Council to help such people was recognised, but without having greater information about who and where such people were the exact needs and means of effectively publicising that support were difficult to understand. It was suggested that, given its impact on family life and children, this was an area of sufficient importance that the Council should be devoting resource to developing an understanding of the situation within the City.

It was **AGREED** that the following recommendations be made to Cabinet:

1. **That the Council invests sufficient resources to gain an understanding of hidden-homelessness and sub-optimal housing, possibly through the use of external consultants undertaking research, and begins to monitor it.**
2. **That the Council, when it has sufficient understanding, undertakes a communications exercise to increase the engagement by sub-optimally housed individuals with the Council.**

32. Reports for approval

The Panel considered a draft of the report to Cabinet written in response to the Housing Performance Q1 report. The draft report was **AGREED**.

33. Date of next meeting

The Panel **NOTED** the invitation to attend the Housing element of the Budget Review Group on 11 January 2021, and the date of the next Housing and Homelessness Panel meeting on 01 February 2021.

The meeting started at 6:00pm and ended at 7:20pm

Chair

Date: Thursday 4 March 2021

To: Cabinet
Date: 10 March 2021
Report of: Executive Director of Housing
Title of Report: Allocation of Preventing Homelessness Grant 2021/22

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To approve the grant allocations for 21/22
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Mike Rowley, Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing and Housing the Homeless
Corporate Priority:	Deliver more affordable housing.
Policy Framework:	Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 (extended)
Recommendations: That Cabinet resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the allocation of Homelessness Prevention funds to commission homelessness services in 2021/22 as outlined in paragraphs 23 to 30 and in Appendix 2 of the report; 2. Delegate to the Interim Director of Housing in consultation with the portfolio holder for Housing the discretion to revise the intended programme within the overall budget if required; and 3. Approve the request for £15,000 of new expenditure from the 2020/21 allocation, outlined in paragraph 24. 	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Review of allocated homelessness funds 2020/21
Appendix 2	Proposed allocation of homelessness funds 2021/22
Appendix 3	Risk Register

Introduction and background

1. This report presents an overview of how the funding allocated in 2020/21 has been spent and makes recommendations for the allocation of funding in 2021/22 to provide services for rough sleepers and single homeless people in Oxford. Allocations for 2021/22 represent a continuation of existing arrangements. Significant change is expected for 2022/23 due to an expansion of the countywide recommissioning of homelessness services which will be the subject of a future cabinet report.
2. The report also provides an update on developments this year which have been dominated by the response to Covid19. Organisations which we fund, as well as those we do not fund, have worked tirelessly and in partnership to meet the changing demands of the pandemic. This report places on record the Council's thanks to all of them in this most challenging of years.

Context and key developments 2020/21

3. At the start of the lockdown, the government's "Everyone In" initiative required local authorities to ensure that no-one was sleeping on the streets, in order to help prevent the spread of Covid19. In addition the council was advised that facilities with communal sleeping arrangements could no longer be used. This affected the 20 spaces of "sit-up" provision in O'Hanlon House, and meant that Floyds Row had to be closed (which had 56 bed spaces). At the time the Oxford Winter Night Shelter was also running, with up to 20 spaces available, and this too had to be closed.
4. To meet this requirement, the Council used a mixture of hotels, university accommodation and Oxford YHA to accommodate people who were formerly homeless. When the lockdown began to ease in June, these hotels indicated that they would need to go back to their normal business. As such, new accommodation was required at short notice, which presented a significant challenge. A student block, Canterbury House, owned by A2 Dominion and utilised by Oxford Brookes was identified and all parties worked very quickly to secure this additional accommodation by the end of July.
5. In 2019 the Council entered into an agreement with St Mungo's to provide a range of services supporting rough sleepers from the new Engagement and Assessment Centre at Floyds Row. This agreement has been refocussed to deliver equivalent services in the different settings that have been used this year. St Mungo's now manage both Oxford YHA and Canterbury House, as well as continuing to provide the Outreach service to engage with new and existing rough sleepers. Floyds Row is used to undertake triage assessments of new rough sleepers and place them in Canterbury House or the YHA.
6. The council has secured the use of Oxford YHA until March 2021, and Canterbury House until July 2021, a total of 118 units. By the end of January the "Everyone In" initiative has seen more than 300 individuals accommodated, of whom 141 have moved on to settled accommodation.
7. The provision of additional interim accommodation for people who may otherwise be rough sleeping has had an impact on the numbers of people seen rough sleeping in Oxford. Throughout the spring and summer, numbers at any one time were consistently in the mid 20's, with half of this cohort at any time

being on the streets for a very short period as they waited to be accommodated. Numbers increased during the November lockdown, and were 35 in the last week before Christmas. By the end of January this had reduced to 13.

8. This increase is reflected in the monthly figures at the end of last year with a total of 34 people seen rough sleeping during October, increasing to 71 during November. Circumstances are very different this year which makes comparisons with previous years somewhat redundant. However in 2019, there were 75 people seen rough sleeping in October and 59 in November. In 2018, it was 105 in October and 115 in November.
9. The Council's official street count was conducted in November 2020 which found 19 people rough sleeping (14 men and 5 women). This was a significant reduction from 43 recorded in November 2019, although the circumstances were very different.

Continuation of joint commissioning arrangements

10. The City Council, together with the Oxfordshire District Councils, Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, have a pooled budget for the commissioning of supported accommodation for single homeless people. The arrangement was initially established for a period of three years (2017/18 to 2019/20) to mitigate the impact of reductions in Oxfordshire County Council's budget and to maintain the supply of supported accommodation for single homeless people in the county. This collaboration has served to maintain a supply of jointly commissioned bed spaces as part of the Adult Homeless Pathway, which is complemented by the City and District Councils' commissioning of their own supply of supported accommodation.
11. 2019/20 was to be the final year of the current pooled budget arrangements for the countywide Adult Homeless Pathway. However, the partners agreed in April 2019 to continue the arrangement for a further two years (2020/21- 2021/22) to allow time for the development of a countywide strategy on rough sleeping and single homelessness and the subsequent procurement of services. To support the closer partnership working, the city council's Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness manager is working with county colleagues on the recommissioning of pathway services from 2022/23 onwards.
12. There are currently a total of 106 jointly commissioned beds all of which are located in Oxford (79 of these are reserved for use by City-connected clients.). The City Council's annual contribution towards the continuation of these arrangements in 2021/22 will be £219,030

Development of a countywide strategy for rough sleeping

13. In 2019 the Oxfordshire local authorities collaborated on a successful bid, led by Cherwell District Council, to secure further funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Rough Sleeping Initiative Fund. This led to the establishment of a new, two-year fixed term post of County-wide Strategic Lead (Single Homelessness and Rough Sleeping) to take forward the development of a joint, countywide strategy for rough sleeping and single homeless. The work is overseen by a steering group comprising the County

Council, district councils, Clinical Commissioning Group, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (mental health) and SOHA Housing.

14. A strategy has been developed with the ambition to ensure no-one needs to sleep rough and to significantly reduce homelessness from the levels experienced in recent times. The new strategy will focus on prevention to identify opportunities for early intervention across the whole system and facilitate rapid action where the risk of homelessness is identified. This will include close working with other systems (e.g. Health, Criminal Justice), to identify people at risk of homelessness as early as possible. It is envisaged that all parts of the system will take joint responsibility for avoiding homelessness and ending rough sleeping.
15. A strengths based approach will be embedded across the system to ensure there is engagement with those who are homeless. This involves thinking about people in terms of their strengths and assets, not just their deficits and challenges. All agencies involved will share data to develop solutions for each individual. The approach will be knowledge and evidence based.

Ensuring sufficient provision to meet Oxford City's needs

16. In addition to the 79 bed spaces commissioned via the pooled budget for use by City connected clients, it is proposed that the City Council will directly commission a further 152 bed spaces in 2021/22. This brings the total number of spaces available to 231, an increase of 41 compared to 2019/20. There are 40 new spaces commissioned under the government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) to accommodate people housed on a temporary basis under the "Everyone In" initiative.
17. The number above excludes the 56 spaces in Floyds Row which cannot currently be used due to Covid restrictions. It is hoped that Floyds Row will be available as accommodation in full or part, during 21/22. This will support the exit from the 118 spaces of "Everyone In" accommodation.
18. Demand for supported accommodation remains high, particularly due to the additional demand from people accommodated in the "Everyone In" accommodation. Weekly meetings are held with accommodation providers to agree how to allocate void spaces.
19. Funding has been made available from MHCLG to ensure accommodation is available to all rough sleepers during winter. This includes eight rooms in Tower House being made available to rough sleepers who usually refuse most offers of accommodation and support. Funding is also used to accommodate people temporarily in hotels if there is a wait before being able to access accommodation in YHA and Canterbury House.

Further funding opportunities

20. In August 2018, the government published a new strategy for rough sleeping which sets out the government's vision for ending rough sleeping, called the Rough Sleeping Initiative. This was followed in December 2018 with the

publication of an action plan which confirms the government's intention to provide funding to help deliver its strategy.

21. The city council has since led several successful bids for MHCLG funding, on behalf of the City and jointly with District and County Council partners. In 2019/20 £1.6 million was secured on a countywide basis. A further bid into this fund is being constructed at the time of writing with a response expected in late March/early April.
22. In the summer £2,032,446 was bid for from the NSAP programme to provide funding over the next three years to help accommodate people at risk of rough sleeping. Funding has also been secured to provide additional support during the winter of up to £140,000. Most recently, £160,000 has been made available to ensure we are able to make accommodation available to all rough sleepers during the current lockdown.

Use of Homelessness Prevention Funds in 2020/21

23. Last year's report by the Head of Housing Services on the allocation of homelessness prevention funds indicated that a total of £1,401,842 had been allocated for the delivery of services and support for rough sleepers and single homeless people in 2020/21. There have been a number of developments over the year which have affected actual spending and these are summarised below and set out in detail in Appendix 1.

a) Acacia expansion

A total of £95,700 was allocated towards the development of the Acacia Project, a housing-led service for homeless people with multiple and complex needs including significant mental health needs for whom traditional offers of accommodation have not worked. The intention has been to increase provision from 5 to 10 units, but only one additional unit has been delivered. Dealing with the response to Covid has meant that it hasn't been possible to develop the project as anticipated this time last year. This has led to a forecast underspend against the Acacia allocations of £31,900. Expansion of Acacia will continue to be pursued in 21/22.

b) Welfare Reform Team

Funding is allocated towards the costs of two specific posts in the Welfare Reform team. This year one of these posts was undertaken on a part time basis and so the funding was reduced accordingly. This has resulted in an underspend of £10,007.

c) O'Hanlon House daycentre

Prior to the Covid pandemic, Homeless Oxfordshire had planned to stop providing day services in O'Hanlon House. This is because at times they could be disruptive to residents. In any event, the pandemic made it impossible to provide this service. Most rough sleepers have been accommodated and had access to support services during the year. Options are being considered with partners for the delivery of day services in 21/22 when Covid restrictions permit this. The absence of this service this year means there is an £82,778 underspend for this item.

d) Access to leisure services

The Covid pandemic has resulted in leisure centres being closed for the majority of the year resulting in no take-up for this service. This has resulted in an underspend of £5,000.

e) Contingency

An amount of £1,500 was set aside as contingency to allow for any in-year changes to costs.

24. The initial grant underspend is £131,185. It is requested that £15,000 of the underspend is used to extend our partnership with Crisis who are providing support in developing a countywide approach to homelessness. This results in a final underspend figure of £116,185 which will be transferred to reserves and balances at year end.

Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funds 2021/22

25. The Council's priorities in terms of tackling rough sleeping and single homelessness are set out in the Council Strategy 2020-24. Tackling and preventing rough sleeping remains a key priority and the Council's ambition is that no-one should need to sleep rough on the streets of Oxford.
26. The Council's budget for 2021/22 allocated £4.95 million towards homelessness and prevention services. Within this is a provision of £1,614,684 for spend in the area of rough sleeping and single homelessness.
27. The budget of £1,614,684 allows all external services and projects to be continued in 2021/22. Due to the high levels of uncertainty relating to the exit of "Everyone In" accommodation and the timescale for returning to the provision of accommodation services at Floyds Row, as well as the extent of services which can be provided there, an unallocated amount of £135,798 has been left as contingency to ensure that rough sleepers can continue to be offered accommodation throughout the year.

Proposed allocations 2021/22

28. The proposed allocations for 2021/22 are shown in Table 1 below, with more details on the areas of commissioning at Appendix 2. In summary, it is proposed to maintain spending across all service areas, at similar levels to the 2020/21 allocations apart from the following exceptions:
- Acacia – the overall allocation is increased by £38,753 to support the increase of provision in this project
 - Matilda House – the allocation is £41,000 higher than in 2020/21 in order to enable more flexible provision within the project. There is significantly more demand for complex beds than move-on provision. The additional costs will allow more support to be provided within the existing move-on provision
 - Pre-tenancy course and Sanctuary Scheme – these services to be funded from this grant going forward
 - O'Hanlon House day services- Funding has been reduced in this area due to the challenges of providing day services under lockdown restrictions, and reduced demand due to the accommodation of most rough sleepers. New

services will be commissioned in 21/22 but on a reduced scale to the previous service

- Welfare Reform team – Funding has been reduced in line with previously agreed savings

Table 1.

Salaries or Commissioned Service	Current Provider (Supplier / Creditor)	Cabinet Report Allocation 2020/21	Proposed Allocation 21/22
Matilda House (37 beds)	A2Dominion	£225,000.00	£266,000.00
Housing First (5 beds)	Homeless Oxfordshire	£47,850.00	£47,850.00
Acacia (5 beds)	Response	£47,850.00	£47,850.00
Acacia x 3 (additional)	Response	£47,850.00	£86,603.00
Project 41 (41 beds)	Homeless Oxfordshire	£150,000.00	£150,000.00
Mayday Trust (10 beds)	Mayday Trust	£39,272.00	£39,272.00
OCC Contribution to AHP arrangements	JMG/County	£219,030.00	£219,030.00
Severe Weather Beds	Various - HO, St Mungo's, The Porch,SH	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
Rough Sleeping & Street activity service	Thames Valley Police	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
City Centre Ambassadors	Oxford City Council	£17,500.00	£17,500.00
Tenancy Sustainment Officer	Elmore Community Services	£35,630.00	£35,630.00
Welfare Reform Outreach Team	Oxford City Council	£83,379.00	£42,379.00
O'Hanlon House Day Centre	Homeless Oxfordshire	£82,778.00	£0.00
Provision for Day services	To be commissioined	£0.00	£61,164.00
Gatehouse Café	Gatehouse	£5,580.00	£5,580.00
The Porch Day Centre	The Porch	£55,000.00	£55,000.00
ETE Workers	Aspire Oxford	£77,623.00	£77,623.00
Single Homelessness Team	Oxford City Council	£196,000.00	£211,405.00
OxTHINK	Real Systems	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Access to Leisure Services	Fusion	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Tenant Ready Course	Connections	£16,000.00	£16,000.00
Sanctuary Scheme/Target Hardening	OCC Internal transfer	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
Contingency	To be agreed	£1,500.00	£135,798.00
		Total	£1,614,684.00

29. The proposed allocations will continue to maintain a wide range of services and support for single homeless people in Oxford. However, the following developments may mean that it will be necessary to make some revisions to this programme at the end of the current financial year or early in 2021/22:

a) MHCLG's Rough Sleeping Initiative Round 4 Fund

A joint countywide bid for further funding from MHCLG is currently being prepared with a submission date of 12 March 2021. The proposal includes requests to continue funding for a range of projects and initiatives including the following:

- Supported Lettings Pilot Project
- Women's unit
- Pre-recovery unit
- Engagement & Assessment of rough sleepers

MHCLG have already confirmed continuation funding for existing projects until June 2021. Following discussions with MHCLG officials, officers are optimistic that these elements of the bid, estimated to cost £390,000, will be successful. If

they are not, some services may need to be discontinued and / or there may be a need to re-prioritise the 2021/22 allocation.

b) Continuing impact of pandemic

Officers are optimistic that the vaccination programme will offer a way out of lockdown and permit a return to Floyds Row. Plans are already underway to exit from the YHA and Canterbury House. A taskforce has been established comprising a range of internal and external partners to identify appropriate accommodation for people. However there is a scenario where YHA and Canterbury House may have to be exited, but Floyds Row cannot be occupied. Again in this event a reprioritising of allocations may be required.

30. For the above reasons, it is requested that Cabinet delegates to the Executive Director of Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, the discretion to revise the intended programme within the overall budget.

Financial implications

31. The net budgeted spend on homelessness prevention for 2021/22 is estimated at £1,478,886 with £135,978 held as contingency to ensure the council can respond to changing circumstances in relation to Covid19. Expenditure of this contingency will be agreed as outlined in paragraph 30, above.

Performance monitoring

32. In distributing this budget, the Council will ensure that there are clear outcomes and targets in each organisation's service specification which are reported on quarterly. Officers will schedule quarterly, 6-monthly or annual performance monitoring meetings with all services to ensure that outcomes and targets are achieved and issues are addressed in a timely and professional manner.

Legal issues

33. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has made significant changes to Council's homelessness duties under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. Its main effect is to place increased duties on local authorities to assess an applicant's needs and to prevent and relieve homelessness.
34. All services funded from Homelessness Prevention Funds should have legal agreements in place setting out the service provider's obligations for services as well as consequences for not fulfilling these obligations.
35. The procurement, commissioning and award of contracts for the provision of services should be undertaken in compliance with the council's contract rules contained in part 19 of its Constitution.

Level of risk

36. The Risk Register is attached as Appendix 3.

Equalities impact

37. All services in receipt of funding are subject to monitoring which includes equality and diversity.

Report author	Paul Wilding
Job title	Rough Sleeping & Single Homelessness Manager
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Background Papers: None

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Appendix 1

Appendix 1 – Review of allocated homelessness prevention funds 2020/21

Service areas	Provider	Allocation 2020/21	Forecast to year end	Purpose
Supported accommodation		£806,852	£774,952	
Contribution Oxfordshire Pooled Budget for the Adult Homeless Pathway	Oxfordshire AHP / Oxfordshire CC commissioner	£219,030	£219,030	Provision of supported housing.
Housing First	Homeless Oxfordshire	£47,850	£47,850	Funding for 1 FTE Support Worker & 0.5 FTE Peer Support Worker for this specialist housing project. Offers an alternative supported housing model aimed at getting entrenched rough sleepers permanently off the streets.
Acacia existing x 5	Response	£47,850	£47,850	Funding was allocated for 5 units of specialist supported housing for people with complex needs. The Acacia Project builds on the Housing First model and has developed as a result of recognition by housing and mental health service commissioners that there is an increasing number of people who “fall between the gaps” of mental health services and homelessness services, and getting ineffective support from either or both due to their needs.
Acacia additional units - pending	Response, Homeless Oxfordshire	£47,850	£15,950	Funding was previously allocated from reserves to fund the expansion of the Acacia project by up to 5 additional units of specialist supported housing units for people with complex needs. Only one additional unit has been brought on this year as organisations have focused on the Covid response instead. The

				ambition is to still expand provision in 21/22.
Project 41	Homeless Oxfordshire	£150,000	£150,000	Funding for 41 units of supported accommodation for rough sleepers and single homeless people with a connection to the City of Oxford. Provision for medium to low support needs with a focus on support to enable residents to move on to and sustain independent accommodation.
Matilda House	A2Dominion	£225,000	£225,000	Funding for 22 units of supported accommodation for people with complex needs and 15 units move on accommodation.
Mayday Trust 10 units	Mayday Trust	£39,272	£39,272	Funding for 10 units of supported accommodation for people with complex needs, in dispersed locations.
Severe Weather Beds - various	Various including Homeless Oxfordshire, St Mungo's, Aspire, A2Dominion	£30,000	£30,000	Funding to provide additional emergency bed spaces in periods of severe weather for all rough sleepers who need them. Spending is forecast to be higher than the original allocation as a result of changes to how SWEP this provision operates as a result of restrictions due to Covid19. Additional funding of £36,000 for severe weather beds has been provided by the government, which means there will be no additional cost to the council.
Street Engagement		£47,500	£47,500	
Rough Sleeping & Street activity service - TVP	Thames Valley Police	£30,000	£30,000	Funding for TVP City Centre Unit to provide targeted support to reduce rough sleeping through outreach, enforcement, tackling begging and anti-social behaviour. TVP City Centre Unit has a dedicated police constable for the purpose of this work.

City Centre Ambassadors	Oxford City Council	£17,500	£17,500	The City Centre Ambassadors provide a visible presence within Oxford City Centre. They assist people with enquiries, liaise with businesses to keep the city centre clean and litter free, and work closely with the police to spot and deter anti-social behaviour. They engage with homeless people, referring them into the appropriate support services.
Preventing homelessness		£119,009	£109,002	
Tenancy Sustainment Officer - Elmore	Elmore Community Services	£35,630	£35,630	Funding for 1 FTE specialist sustainment officer to support residents in Oxford City Council accommodation to maintain their tenancies.
Welfare Reform Outreach Team	Oxford City Council	£83,379	£73,372	Funding contribution towards the work of a team focussing on the impact of welfare reform across the City.
Positive activities & help to get into work		£220,981	£138,203	
O'Hanlon House Day Centre	Homeless Oxfordshire	£82,778	£0	Funding for provision of day services – showers and laundry facilities as well as breakfast and lunch and any other activities taking place – for individuals rough sleeping in the City and working with outreach services to access suitable accommodation. Covid has meant that these services have not been provided this year. However most rough sleepers have been accommodated for the majority of the year with access to support services.
Gatehouse Café	Gatehouse	£5,580	£5,580	Core funding for the Gatehouse café, to support and engage people sleeping rough to access accommodation and specialist support.

The Porch Day Centre	The Porch	£55,000	£55,000	Core funding for The Porch (formerly known as Steppin' Stone) daycentre to support rough sleepers and those vulnerably housed through a range of activities, training and education and where appropriate sign post clients to more appropriate services.
Aspire	Aspire Oxford	£77,623	£77,623	Funding for 2 FTE Education, Training and Employment workers to provide training and employment opportunities for homeless and/or vulnerably housed individuals in the City. Aspire is a social enterprise working towards becoming self-sufficient.
Other		£207,500	£201,000	
Single Homelessness Team (current arrangements)	Oxford City Council	£196,000	£196,000	Funding contribution towards the Council's Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Team.
OxTHINK (formerly Oxford CHAIN)	Real Systems	£5,000	£5,000	Core funding to maintain web-based database management system that collates data and provides monitoring reports on rough sleeping.
Access to leisure services	Fusion	£5,000	£0	To support former rough sleepers to access the Council's leisure facilities free of charge. As leisure centres have been unavailable for the majority of the year, there has been no take up of this provision.
Contingency	To be confirmed	£1,500	£0	Funding put aside for in-year changes to committed allocations.
Total allocated/committed		1,401,842	£1,270,657	

Appendix 2

Appendix 2 – Proposed allocation of homelessness prevention funds 2021/22

Service areas	Provider	Proposed Allocation 2021/22	Purpose
Supported accommodation		£886,605	
Contribution Oxfordshire Pooled Budget for the Adult Homeless Pathway(AHP)	Oxfordshire AHP / Oxfordshire CC commissioner	£219,030	Provision of supported housing.
Housing First	Homeless Oxfordshire	£47,850	Funding for 1 FTE Support Worker & 0.5 FTE Peer Support Worker for this specialist housing project. Offers an alternative supported housing model aimed at getting entrenched rough sleepers permanently off the streets.
Acacia existing x 5	Response	£134,453	Funding for specialist supported housing for people with complex needs. The Acacia Project builds on the Housing First model and has developed as a result of recognition by housing and mental health service commissioners that there is an increasing number of people who “fall between the gaps” of mental health services and homelessness services, and getting ineffective support from either or both due to their needs. An additional £38,753 has been allocated to this year’s budget from previous underspend on this project to increase the number of units from six to twelve.

Project 41	Homeless Oxfordshire	£150,000	Funding for 41 units of supported accommodation for rough sleepers and single homeless people with a connection to the City of Oxford. Provision for medium to low support needs with a focus on support to enable residents to move on to and sustain independent accommodation.
Matilda House	A2Dominion	£266,000	Funding for 22 units of supported accommodation for people with complex needs and 15 units move on accommodation. An additional £41,000 has been awarded this year to support more complex clients in the move on units, as there is more demand for this provision.
Mayday Trust 10 units	Mayday Trust	£39,272	This project was due to end as Mayday are exiting the provision of accommodation. £20,000 of this cost was due to be a saving however since the budget was drafted a potential alternative provider has come forward, so this saving has been taken from elsewhere in this budget.
Severe Weather Beds - various	Various including Homeless Oxfordshire, St Mungo's, Aspire, A2Dominion	£30,000	Funding to provide additional emergency bed spaces in periods of severe weather for all rough sleepers who need them. Spending is forecast to be higher than the original allocation as a result of changes to how SWEP this provision operates as a result of restrictions due to Covid19. Additional funding of £36,000 for severe weather beds has been provided by the government, which means there will be no additional cost to the council.
Street Engagement		£47,500	
Rough Sleeping & Street activity service - TVP	Thames Valley Police	£30,000	Funding for TVP City Centre Unit to provide targeted support to reduce rough sleeping through outreach, enforcement, tackling begging and anti-social behaviour. TVP City Centre Unit has a dedicated police constable for the purpose of this work.

City Centre Ambassadors	Oxford City Council	£17,500	The City Centre Ambassadors provide a visible presence within Oxford City Centre. They assist people with enquiries, liaise with businesses to keep the city centre clean and litter free, and work closely with the police to spot and deter anti-social behaviour. They engage with homeless people, referring them into the appropriate support services.
Preventing homelessness		£94,009	
Tenancy Sustainment Officer - Elmore	Elmore Community Services	£35,630	Funding for 1 FTE specialist sustainment officer to support residents in Oxford City Council accommodation to maintain their tenancies.
Welfare Reform Outreach Team	Oxford City Council	£42,379	Funding contribution towards the work of a team focussing on the impact of welfare reform across the City. This has been reduced by £41,000 as outlined in the budget report for 21/22.
Tenant Ready Course	Connections	£16,000	Funding to provide courses to help people develop a range of skills that will enable them to become tenancy ready. Connections are able to deliver this course digitally as well as face to face, enabling it to be delivered during periods of lockdown. Last year this was funded from the Flexible Homeless Grant.
Positive activities & help to get into work		£199,367	

Day Services	To be confirmed	£61,164	Funding for provision of day services – showers and laundry facilities as well as breakfast and lunch and any other activities taking place – for individuals rough sleeping in the City and working with outreach services to access suitable accommodation. Covid has meant that these services have not been provided in 20/21, and Homeless Oxfordshire will no longer be providing them in O’Hanlon House so an alternative provision will be developed in 21/22. The £20,000 saving originally allocated to Mayday accommodation has been taken here instead (see above)
Gatehouse Café	Gatehouse	£5,580	Core funding for the Gatehouse café, to support and engage people sleeping rough to access accommodation and specialist support.
The Porch Day Centre	The Porch	£55,000	Core funding for The Porch (formerly known as Steppin’ Stone) daycentre to support rough sleepers and those vulnerably housed through a range of activities, training and education and where appropriate sign post clients to more appropriate services.
Aspire	Aspire Oxford	£77,623	Funding for 2 FTE Education, Training and Employment workers to provide training and employment opportunities for homeless and/or vulnerably housed individuals in the City. Aspire is a social enterprise working towards becoming self-sufficient.
Other		£387,203	
Single Homelessness Team (current arrangements)	Oxford City Council	£211,405	Funding contribution towards the Council’s Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Team.
Target Hardening/Sanctuary	Oxford City Council	£30,000	Funding provided for a post in the Anti-Social Behaviour Team to support victims of domestic abuse and enable them to stay in their

Scheme			own homes. Last year this was funded from the Flexible Homeless Grant.
OxTHINK (formerly Oxford CHAIN)	Real Systems	£5,000	Core funding to maintain web-based database management system that collates data and provides monitoring reports on rough sleeping.
Access to Leisure Services	Fusion	£5,000	To support former rough sleepers to access the Council's leisure facilities free of charge.
Contingency	To be agreed	£135,798	Reserved to address changing circumstances in relation to the Covid19 pandemic, including the exit of "Everyone In" accommodation.
Total allocated/committed		£1,614,684	

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Appendix 3

Appendix 3: Risk Register

					Date Raised	Owner	Gross		Current		Residual		Comments	Controls				
Title	Risk description	Opp/ threat	Cause	Consequence			I	P	I	P	I	P		Control description	Due date	Status	Progress %	Action Owner
Delivery of Service	Commissioned services don't deliver expected outcomes	Opp	Inadequate monitoring or inappropriate service measures applied	Potential increase in rough sleeping	5/2/21	Paul Wilding	3	2	3	1	3	1		Service measures agreed in partnership with providers. Robust monitoring regime put in place and regularly reviewed	1/4/21	In Progress	50	Amie Rickatson
31	New demands during the year require different services to be delivered.	threat	Always a risk, but particularly so with Covid restricting the way many services can be delivered.	Increase in rough sleeping, Increase in covid cases in homeless population	5/2/21	Paul Wilding	4	3	4	3	3	2		Power delegated to vary services. Working in partnership with service providers encourages flexibility on their part.	1/4/21	In Progress	10	Amie Rickatson
Increase in rough sleeping	An increase in rough sleeping puts pressure on services funded by this grant	threat	The end of an embargo on evictions, and the furlough scheme is likely to lead to an increase in rough sleeping.	Services unable to meet demand	5/2/21	Paul Wilding	3	3	3	3	2	2		Ensure prevention work is funded, not just support for rough sleepers. Adopting a system wide approach to managing homelessness.	1/4/21	In Progress	50	Amie Rickatson

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