

To: City Executive Board

Date: 10th April 2013

Report of: Head of Housing Services

**Title of Report: ALLOCATION OF PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS
GRANT AND OXFORD CITY GRANT FOR
HOMELESSNESS SERVICES**

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: Oxford City Council has been awarded £957,040 Preventing Homelessness Grant from the Department of Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Homelessness Directorate for inclusion in its budget allocation for 2013-2014. This is in addition to the Council's own homelessness grant budget of £442,279. This report outlines the allocation of both the Preventing Homelessness Grant funding and the Council's homelessness grant budget to a variety of voluntary sector agencies, with the purpose of meeting the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy.

Key decision: Yes

Executive lead member: Councillor Scott Seamons

Policy Framework: Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018

Recommendation(s):

1. Recommend the allocation of the Preventing Homelessness Grant for 2013 – 2014 as follows:
 - a) Oxford City Outreach (Broadway Homelessness and Support) - £235,000
 - b) Reconnection and Referral Co-ordinator Under 25s (CRI) - £37,411
 - c) Reconnection and NSNO Rent (O'Hanlon House) - £1,024
 - d) NSNO Pathway Leader (Broadway) - £38,000
 - e) NSNO Assessment Worker (O'Hanlon House) - £34,223
 - f) Homeless Liaison Police Officer (TVP) - £40,000
 - g) 6 Prevention Beds for Under 25s (Simon House) - £4,243
 - h) 6 Prevention Beds for Under 25s (Lucy Faithful House) - £4,179
 - i) Emergency bed (One Foot Forward) – £6,134
 - j) Multiple Needs Hostel Worker (Elmore Community Services) - £40,757
 - k) Complex Trauma Training (Thames Valley Initiative) - £13,000
 - l) Mental Health Practitioner (Luther Street Medical Centre) – £25,000
 - m) Anti-Social Behaviour Service (Elmore) - £11,000
 - n) Service Broker (Big Issue Foundation) - £25,000

- o) 2 Education, Training and Employment Workers (Aspire) - £60,519
- p) Arts Training Scheme (Arts at the Old Fire Station) - £18,198
- q) Oxfordshire County Council – Homelessness Services - £112,000
- r) Severe Weather Beds - £10,000
- s) Continuation of Enhanced Options (Oxford City Council) - £50,000
- t) Discretionary Housing Payments (Oxford City Council) - £100,000
- u) Target Hardening Scheme (Oxford City Council) - £30,000
- v) Business Mentoring and Coaching (Oxford City Council) - £50,000
- w) Unallocated £11,352

2. Recommend the allocation of Oxford City Council's homelessness grant budget for 2013-2014 as follows:

- a) O'Hanlon House Day Centre –jointly commissioned with Oxfordshire County Council - £133,432
- b) One Foot Forward – jointly commissioned with Oxfordshire County Council - £42,992
- c) Elmore Community Services – Complex Needs Floating Support Service for clients in Oxford City Council temporary and permanent stock - £40,757
- d) Elmore Community Services, Anti Social Behaviour Service – £11,310
- e) The Gatehouse – café for the homeless - £9,502
- f) Steppin' Stone – day centre providing emergency provision and meaningful activity - £55,000
- g) Simon House Hostel – provision of respite beds at an abstinence based hostel - £11,596
- h) Emmaus Oxford– recycling store attached to the Emmaus Community £25,000
- i) Aspire Oxfordshire – social enterprise providing work opportunities for homeless and ex-homeless people - £112,690
- k) Unallocated – nil

3. Recommend delegated authority to the Head of Housing Services in consultation with the board member to allocate the balance of the Preventing Homelessness Grant (£11,352) and any amendments to the homelessness grants budget.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Risk Register

Background

1. In September 2012, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) confirmed that Oxford City Council's Preventing Homelessness Grant for the next two financial years, starting from 1st April 2013, will be £957,040. It is worth noting that this grant funding will be rolled into the Business Rate Retention Scheme (BRRS). This is a change to the funding mechanism and not the grant.
2. Although this may increase the risk of all the grant not being available for homelessness in the future, this will not impact in 2013-2014, with

the full grant sum identified for homelessness in the Council's 2013-2014 budget.

3. It is part of an on-going commitment from DCLG to enable work in the field of rough sleeping and homelessness prevention to continue and will allow Oxford City Council to continue its work in the same field in line with its new Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018.
4. A further commissioning budget of £442,279 is also available from the City Council's own grant funds.
5. In order to deliver its work, the City Council will explore the strategically relevant opportunities to jointly commission with our partners at Oxfordshire's Joint Commissioning Team, Oxford Health and the Clinical Commissioning Group.
6. In light of the cross-commissioning agenda and cross-strategy advantages, a multi-agency steering group is responsible for advising on and monitoring these budgets. The group comprises of representatives from Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council's Joint Commissioning Team and Joint Housing Team and Oxford Health.

Key Developments over the past 12 months. No Second Night Out (NSNO)

7. NSNO is a national initiative and commitment by the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness to 'end second nights on the street'; details of which are set out in the strategy 'Vision to End Rough Sleeping: No Second Night Out Nationwide'.
8. This initiative is being rolled out across the country and support is provided to Local Authorities on its implementation and operation locally by both DCLG and Homeless Link which has published good guidance notes and advice.
9. Oxford City launched NSNO in July 2012. It was developed in line with national guidance and the Council worked in close partnership with London based Broadway Homelessness and Support and Oxford Homeless Pathways to implement the project in Oxford.
10. The focus of NSNO is to provide a rapid response for people who find themselves sleeping rough for the first time. However, NSNO in Oxford also works with entrenched rough sleepers. All clients need to be verified as rough sleeping before being able to access the NSNO Hub and pathway.
11. The NSNO Hub consists of 7 assessment beds which are based at O'Hanlon House and the Hub is managed by a Pathway Leader.

12. The first 6-months of the NSNO initiative in Oxford is currently under review by Oxford City Council and its partners to improve the monitoring and tracking of the support given to rough sleepers.

CHAIN Database

13. OCC commissioned a bespoke internet based database called CHAIN for rough sleepers, which will be accessible by the whole of the homelessness network.

Entrenched Action Plan

14. The aim of this action plan, in conjunction with No Second Night Out is to reduce rough sleeping in Oxford City to zero.
15. Entrenched rough sleeping is very damaging for individual rough sleepers' physical and mental health. There are also longer-term cost implications for the costs of accommodation and support if rough sleepers continue to live on the streets as needs will increase and conditions worsen.
16. Work with entrenched rough sleepers in Oxford will be based on the following approaches:
 - Assertive Outreach - Providing intensive support to people whilst they are on the streets via assertive outreach and a highly personalised accommodation/support offer
 - Tasking and targeting – Individual casework management and action planning. Improved and increased casework management between agencies in relation to entrenched rough sleepers, including the development of individual action plans. The discussion of these action plans will take place in monthly Tasking and Targeting meetings
 - Personalisation - Personalised budgets have been piloted with rough sleepers in a number of local authority areas and have been demonstrated to facilitate engagement with services, access to and sustainment of accommodation.
 - Meaningful activity – creative responses to working with entrenched rough sleepers. Meaningful activity can be crucial to engaging rough sleepers initially – activities such as art and music groups, allotments, fishing, cooking, residential and day trips as well as sport can all inspire individuals to make changes to their lives.
 - Alternative accommodation for entrenched rough sleepers - Improving access to accommodation by expanding the range of accommodation used and providing a more flexible service offer within hostels/supported accommodation which meets the needs of entrenched rough sleepers.

Review of Homelessness and Substance Misuse Services by Oxfordshire County Council Joint Commissioning Team (ex-Supporting People)

17. Oxfordshire County Council spends about £2.3m per annum on housing related support services for homeless people and substance misusers. The provision is accommodation based and provides support and housing to 259 homeless people and 20 substance misusers across seven services, the majority of services are based in Oxford City.
18. The project takes a collaborative approach, is led by the County's Commissioning Manager with significant input from the City's Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager.
19. These services are currently under review and the project will seek to produce the following:-
 - A Commissioning Strategy including a full needs analysis and options appraisal for these services
 - Establishment of a Pathway of services with clear entry and exit routes, eligibility criteria and links with other pathways such as mental health and young people.
 - Service specifications for use during a procurement process
 - Transition plans to ensure any changes to services are managed in a planned way.
 - New contracts.

Strategic Framework for Commissioning and Funding in 2013-2014

20. Significant consideration is given to the national rough sleeping strategy entitled "No One Left Out – Communities Ending Rough Sleeping" and "Vision to end rough sleeping: No Second Night Out Nationwide" which signalled a new energy and renewed focus to end rough sleeping. The Council's priorities in terms of rough sleeping and single homelessness are set out in its Homelessness Strategy 2013 – 2018 as follows:-
21. Prevent and Respond to Rough Sleeping
 - Deliver and review the impact of No Second Night Out
 - Develop services to tackle the issue of entrenched rough sleepers
 - Improve pathways through supported specialist accommodation for former rough sleepers
 - Ensure sufficient specialist accommodation and support to meet the needs of single homeless clients in the City
 - Review anti-begging campaigns and message and support organisations who work to get people off the streets

Allocation of the Homelessness Prevention Grant 2013-2014

22. It is proposed that the following specialist services and posts be funded from the 1st April 2013 until 31st March 2014:

Organisation and Purpose of Grant	Allocation for 13/14
Assertive Outreach, Reconnection, Move-on	
<p>Oxford City Outreach (Broadway Homelessness and Support) - One FTE Manager, 4 FTE Outreach Workers and 1 FTE Reconnection Worker (seconded to the NSNO Team)</p> <p>On 1st April 2012 a 3-year contract was awarded to Broadway Homelessness and Support. This contract ends on 31st March 2015 but has the option for an additional two years for 2015/16 - 2016/17.</p> <p>There is a break clause within the contract to say that if OCC fails to secure the Preventing Homelessness Grant then the Council has the right to terminate the contract.</p>	£235,000
<p>One FTE Referral and Reconnection Worker for Under 25s (Crime Reduction Initiative via Oxfordshire County Council)</p> <p>This service is now based at One Foot Forward and co-ordinates all referrals into the Young People's pathway across the City. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.</p>	£37,411
<p>NSNO and Reconnection Rent (O'Hanlon House)</p> <p>To cover the rent of Broadway's Reconnection Worker and Pathway Leader based at O'Hanlon House.</p>	£1,024
<p>NSNO Pathway Leader (Broadway Homelessness and Support)</p> <p>This role manages all referrals in and out of the NSNO hub and across the homeless pathway. It is crucial to the success of NSNO. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.</p>	£38,000
<p>NSNO Assessment Worker (O'Hanlon House)</p> <p>This role is part of the NSNO team and carries out assessments of clients accessing the NSNO hub and the Single Service Offer on from the</p>	£34,223

hub. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.	
<p>Specialist Homelessness Liaison Police Officer (Thames Valley Police)</p> <p>This post is crucial to reducing street numbers, liaising closely with Oxford City Outreach and other partners within the single homelessness and rough sleepers' network to identify and tackle problematic rough sleeper hot spots, to prevent rough sleeping and anti-social behaviour. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.</p>	£40,000
<p>6 Prevention of Eviction Young People Beds (Simon House)</p> <p>To cover the shortfall in service charge for 6 young people who are under 25 years old at Simon House. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.</p>	£4,243
<p>6 Prevention of Eviction Young People Beds (Lucy Faithful House)</p> <p>To cover the shortfall in service charge for 6 young people who are under 25 years old at Lucy Faithful House. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.</p>	£4,179
<p>Emergency Bed (One Foot Forward)</p> <p>This funding provides one emergency bed at One Foot Forward for use by Oxford City.</p>	£6,134
<p>Improving Mental Health/Complex Trauma</p>	
<p>One FTE Multiple Needs Worker Hostel Worker (Elmore Community Services) This post focuses on in-reach work with clients placed in the City's hostels to help keep them in accommodation and prevent them from returning to rough sleeping. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.</p>	£40,757
<p>Mental Health Practitioner (Luther Street Medical Centre)</p> <p>This post has continued to be a success and it is recommended that funding in partnership with Oxford Health is continued for this post. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council</p>	£25,000

have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.	
Complex Trauma Training (Thames Valley Initiative) TVi are commissioned by Oxford City Council to provide training for two of the City's hostels – O'Hanlon House and Simon House in the field of "enabling environments" (or psychologically informed environments) where staff are trained to a high level in how to manage individuals with complex needs in hostel environments.	£13,000
Anti-Social Behaviour Project (Elmore Team) This in conjunction with an allocation from the Oxford City grant funds half a post to work with clients who are causing anti-social behaviour. It aims to reduce the anti-social behaviour and enable the client to remain in their home.	£11,000
Improving Positive Activities	
One FTE Service Broker (Big Issue Foundation) This post tackles the lack of engagement of Big Issue sellers with accommodation offers and to improve the partnership working with this organisation. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.	£25,000
Two FTE Education, Training and Employment Workers (Aspire) Oxford City Council continues to fund these two posts to further develop Aspire's social enterprises, work placements, employment opportunities to Oxford's homeless network in order to develop progression pathways into sustainable independent living. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2014.	£60,519
Arts Training Scheme (Arts at the Old Fire Station) This is a collaboration between Crisis and Arts at the Old Fire Station and aims to create training and work opportunities for Crisis Skylight members through the arts with a particular focus on transferable skills of customer service and retail.	£18,198
Homelessness Prevention	
Oxfordshire County Council – Homelessness Projects (ex-Supporting People) Oxford City Council is providing this match	£112,000

funding in partnership with the County Council to enable an extension of homelessness and substance misuse contracts until January 2014 to enable a full needs analysis, options appraisal and service redesign to be carried out.	
Severe Weather Provision This funding is to cover the cost of running additional services for rough sleepers during periods of severe weather.	£10,000
Development of Enhanced Options - This post will focus on the impact of welfare reform on the City Council and its tenants.	£50,000
Discretionary Housing Payments This money has been allocated to ensure that we can mitigate the impact of welfare reform.	£100,000
Target Hardening (CANACT) Provided to CANACT, this is a service for victims of domestic abuse to enable them to stay in their own homes.	£30,000
Development of Mentoring/Coaching Scheme This is to redevelop the proposal of a business mentoring scheme providing 1:2:1 coaching and support for people returning to work.	£50,000
Total	£945,688

Oxford City Council's Homelessness Grant

23. A grant allocation of £442,279 has been allocated for the commissioning of homelessness services in 2013-2014.

24. In line with the City Council's prospectus and strategic objective "safer communities/homelessness", OCC are committed to the provision of accommodation, day centre support, a full range of day centre activities and meaningful occupation as well as tenancy sustainment from this grant.

25. It is recommended that the grant allocation be made as follows for 2013 - 2014:-

Organisation and Purpose of Grant	Allocation for 13/14
Outreach, Reconnection and Move-on	
Young Peoples' Project – One Foot Forward (Bournemouth Churches Housing Association) This grant jointly commissions the service with the County Council. The hostel works with young people aged between 16 – 25 years old who are homeless or about to become homeless.	£42,992
O'Hanlon House (Oxford Homeless Pathways)	£133,432

<p>This grant jointly commissions the service with the County Council. The money specifically commissions the day service that works with vulnerable adults who present with needs such as substance misuse, mental health and alcohol needs. The day service aims to provide a bridge between the services users and other meaningful services such as the GP, Social services, DAAT teams and mental health teams.</p>	
<p>Improving Mental Health/Complex Needs</p>	
<p>Elmore Community Services This funds one post within the Elmore team; the post is called a Tenancy Sustainment officer. The officer works with residents of OCC who are finding it difficult to manage their tenancies.</p>	£40,757
<p>Elmore Anti-Social Behaviour Services This amount is in addition to the £8,690 from the Preventing Homelessness Grant. The joint amount provides half a post to work with offenders and sex workers in the community. It aims to reduce the offending level by directing them towards meaningful activities.</p>	£11,310
<p>Improving Positive Activities</p>	
<p>Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store This money supports Emmaus to provide accommodation for homeless people but also gives them an opportunity to work in their social enterprise which is a second-hand furniture store.</p>	£25,000
<p>Aspire Oxfordshire Aspire provide social enterprises, work placements, employment opportunities and benefits' advice to Oxford's homeless network in order to develop progression pathways into sustainable independent living.</p>	£112,690
<p>The Gatehouse Café This provides some core funding to the Gatehouse daycentre to open up six evening out of seven to engage with the hard to reach clients that traditionally do not use mainstream services.</p>	£9,502
<p>Steppin Stone Day Centre This provides core funding to the Steppin Stones daycentre to work with vulnerable adults who are aiming to get back into training, education and employment. Steppin Stones also provide individuals with an opportunity to train in their social enterprises; their allotment,</p>	£55,000

the daycentre kitchen or Porch Pickle enterprises. The daycentre is based away from the city centre, which allows for individuals to move away from the street activities such as begging, drinking and other anti-social behaviour.	
Homelessness Prevention	
Simon House (Respite Beds) This money funds Simon House to provide two respite beds for clients who have tenancies in the community but are struggling to manage usually due to alcohol issues. Respite is for 28 days and the client is then able to return to their tenancy with additional support if necessary.	£11,596
Total	£442,279

Level of Risk

26. Please see attached matrix (Appendix 1)

Climate Change/environmental impact

27. There are no significant climate change or environmental impact issues related to this report.

Equalities Impact

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

Financial Implications

29. In addition to the 2013-2014 DCLG grant, a sum of circa £221,000 is predicted to be held in reserves at the end of March 2013. These funds will be called upon as required to meet specific spending needs as and when they arise with any unspent allocation held over into reserves for the following year.

30. The reason that such large amounts are held in reserve is the on-going risk linked to previously Supporting People funded budgets, pressures from rising homelessness and welfare reform, the potential need for capital investment to generate future revenue (cross-subsidy models) and the fact that a number of schemes will come to the end of their 2-year funding agreements during 2013-2014 and should OCC want to renew them all we will need this additional money in reserves.

Legal Implications

31. In distributing these grants the Council should ensure that organisations are clear as to the outcomes that the Council expects to them to achieve and these specifications and targets are monitored through service agreements.

Staffing Implications

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

33. There will be quarterly performance monitoring meetings with Oxford City Council's Preventing Homelessness Grant Steering Group to review and ensure the delivery of services, and that outcomes and targets are achieved

34. The Preventing Homelessness Grant funding programme and OCC's homelessness grant will be managed by the existing Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager in Housing Services.

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List of background papers: None

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