

**To:** City Executive Board  
**Date:** 17 March 2016  
**Report of:** Head of Housing and Property  
**Title of Report:** Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funds in 2016/2017

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To approve the allocation of the homelessness prevention funds, with the purpose of meeting the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy.
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Executive Board Member:</b>	Councillor Mike Rowley, Housing
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Meeting Housing Needs
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Homelessness Strategy
<b>Recommendation(s): That the City Executive Board resolves to:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Approve</b> the allocation of the Preventing Homelessness funds to commission homelessness services as outlined in paragraph 14 below;</li> <li>2. <b>Delegate to</b> the Head of Housing and Property Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, the discretion to administer any necessary changes to these allocations and allocate the balance of the Preventing Homelessness funds.</li> </ol>	

<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	Allocation 2015-2016
Appendix 2	Risk Register

## **Introduction and background**

1. In December 2015, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) confirmed Oxford City Council's Preventing Homelessness funds for 2016/2017 at £941k. The budget is identified in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and included in the Council's 2016/17 budget.
2. The resources are not ring fenced; however the Council remains committed to ending rough sleeping within the City by supporting homeless people and those threatened with homelessness into sustainable accommodation.
3. A further commissioning budget is also available from the Council's own grant budget of £440k.
4. The strategic framework within which both these funds are allocated is the same and therefore funds will be considered as if they are from one budget.
5. In order to deliver its work, the Council will continue to explore relevant opportunities to work with, and where appropriate jointly commission with partners at Oxfordshire County Council and the Oxfordshire 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 this budget. The group comprises of representatives from Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council Joint Commissioning Team, Public Health (Drug and Alcohol Team) and the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

## **Context and Key Developments in 2015/2016**

7. Rough sleeping has increased nationally over the last year and the Council's official street count in November 2015 was 39, a 50% increase on the previous year.
8. The City also carries out an estimate count which is monitored by the Health and Well-Being Board (HWB). Oxford's estimate was 56, compared to Cherwell 21, South Oxfordshire 5, Vale of White Horse 5 and West Oxfordshire 3. The HWB target of not exceeding the baseline rough sleeping County-wide estimate of 68 (set in 2014-2015) was missed, with the actual figure being 90.

## **Re-commissioning of the Homeless Pathway**

9. Oxfordshire County Council concluded a procurement exercise in October 2015 for 285 units of accommodation based support across the County, with 252 of those units based in the City. New contracts started on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016. These contracts should have initially been 3-year contracts but providers have been informed recently that only the first 14 months will be funded at full contract value (1 February 2016 – 31 March 2017).
10. This is due to Oxfordshire County Council's recommendation to cut £1.5m, (100%) the total Housing Related Support Grant related to the accommodation based homeless pathway, from 1 April 2017. This poses a significant risk to the delivery of homelessness services from April 2017.
11. The main change to the current pathway is the de-commissioning of support services at Lucy Faithful House which means that the 61 current residents will move out to dispersed properties, procured as part of the tender process.
12. During 2015-2016, Oxford City Council commissioned a Project Manager for the Making Every Adult Matter project, Acacia Complex Needs Housing and continued

its support of the Mayday Trust proof of concept and the development of an ethical landlord model. For a full list of allocations in 2015-2016 please see Appendix 1.

### **Strategic Framework for Commissioning and Funding 2016-2017**

13. Significant consideration is given to the national rough sleeping strategy titled “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 tackling rough sleeping and single homelessness are set out in its Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 as follows:-

- Prevent and respond to rough sleeping
- Deliver and review the impact of No Second Night Out (NSNO)
- Develop services to tackle the issues 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

### **Allocation of the Homelessness Budget 2016-2017**

14. It is proposed that the following specialist services and posts be funded in 2016-2017:-

<b>Organisation and Purpose of the Grant</b>	<b>Allocation for 2016-2017</b>
<b>Assertive Outreach, Reconnection and Move-on</b>	
<b>Street Population Outreach Service (Oxford SPOT), St Mungo’s</b> Funding for a team of 9 full-time equivalents (FTE) delivering assertive outreach, reconnection, personalisation and advice services for rough sleepers to reduce the numbers spending a second night on the streets, numbers living on the streets and returning to the streets. This is the second year of a three year contract.	£350,893
<b>Specialist Homelessness Liaison Service (Thames Valley Police (TVP))</b> Funding for a service delivered by TVP City Centre Unit to provide targeted support to reduce rough sleeping through outreach, enforcement, begging and anti-social behaviour, delivered by TVP City Centre Unit. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council has the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2016.	£40,000
<b>Sit-Up Service at O’Hanlon House (OxHOP)</b> Funding to provide 10 additional sit-up spaces to	£54,903

manage the current high street population. The allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council has the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2016.	
<b>Severe Weather Provision (OxHOP, Simon House)</b> Funding to provide additional emergency beds in periods of severe weather to all rough sleepers. This grant has been increased this year given the higher street population.	£20,000
<b>Housing First – Julian Housing (OxHOP)</b> Funding for 1 FTE and a peer support worker for this specialist housing project for some of the most complex and entrenched rough sleepers with the aim of sustaining the tenancy and moving on successfully. This is the second year of a two year contract.	£47,850
<b>Private Rented Move-On Scheme (Oxford City Council)</b> Funding to provide deposits for clients connected to Oxford City and moving out of the homelessness pathway.	£15,000
<b>City Centre Ambassadors (Oxford City Council)</b> 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.	£10,000
<b>Complex Needs</b>	
<b>Mental Health Practitioner (Luther Street Medical Centre)</b> Funding for 1xFTE continues to be a success, providing the Outreach team with specialist mental health support and intervention. It is funded in partnership with Oxford Health and Oxford Homeless Medical Fund. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council has the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2016.	£25,000
<b>Preventing Homelessness</b>	
<b>Tenancy Sustainment Officer - Elmore Community Services</b> Funding for 1XFTE supporting residents in OCC accommodation to maintain their tenancies. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council has the	£35,630

right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2016.	
<b>Pre-Tenancy Training Course (Connection Floating Support)</b> Funding to provide courses to help 50 people develop a range of skills that will enable them to become tenancy ready	£14,667
<b>Welfare Reform Team (Oxford City Council)</b> Funding contributes towards the work of the team focussing on the impact of welfare reform across the City.	£77,461
<b>Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) (Oxford City Council)</b> Funding contributes towards the mitigation of welfare reform impact.	£150,000
<b>Target Hardening/Sanctuary Scheme (Oxford City Council)</b> Funding provided for a post in the Anti-Social Behaviour Team to support victims of domestic abuse and enable them to stay in their own homes.	£30,000
<b>Tackling Worklessness and Improving Positive Activities</b>	
<b>Aspire Oxfordshire</b> Funding for 2 FTE Education, Training and Employment workers to develop further Aspire's social enterprises, work placements and employment opportunities for clients living in the homeless pathway with the aim of enabling service users to gain paid work. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council has the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2015. Aspire's core grant (an additional grant to the 2 FTEs) is in the last year of a 4-year tapering arrangement which sees the core grant reduce to zero in 2016-2017.	£77,623
<b>Emmaus Community Oxford</b> Core funding for Emmaus to provide accommodation in their community and work opportunities in their second-hand furniture social enterprise. Emmaus' new second hand superstore should open in Temple Cowley in March/April 2016. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council has the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2016. A clause in the contract will enable the Council to begin tapering the core grant as the	£20,000

business establishes itself.	
<p><b>Steppin Stones Day Centre</b></p> <p>Core funding for Steppin Stones daycentre to support both rough sleepers and those who are vulnerably housed through a range of activities, training and education and where appropriate sign post clients to more appropriate services. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council has the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2016</p>	£55,000
<p><b>Service Broker Big Issue Foundation</b></p> <p>Funding for 1 FTE to support Big Issues sellers into accommodation and into more sustainable work opportunities. This contract will continue to be within a payment by results framework. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council will review it in light of current performance with potential changes made to the grant conditions and payments.</p>	£25,000
<p><b>Gatehouse Café</b></p> <p>Core funding for the Gatehouse café, to support and engage hard to reach client that traditionally do not use mainstream services towards accommodation and specialist support This allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council has the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2016.</p>	£5,580
<b>Young People</b>	
<p><b>Young People's Pathway (Oxfordshire County Council)</b></p> <p>This grant is part of Oxford City Council's contribution to joint commissioning of the Young Person's Pathway.</p>	£42,992
<p><b>Emergency Bed for Oxford City (Oxfordshire County Council)</b></p> <p>Funding provides one emergency bed within the Young Person's pathway for use by Oxford City.</p>	£6,134
<b>Other</b>	
<p><b>Single Homelessness Team</b></p> <p>Funding contribution towards the Council's Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Team.</p>	£100,000
<p><b>CHAIN database</b></p> <p>Core funding to maintain the City's web-based database management system that collates all data and provides monitoring reports on rough sleeping. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the Council has</p>	£4,396

the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2016.	
<b>Business Rates at the Old Fire Station</b> This is the fifth and final year of the Council's commitment to paying a percentage of the Old Fire Station's business rates.	£6,200
<b>Total</b>	£1,214,329

15. The Council is taking a prudent approach to this year's budget in light of the significant changes to the adult homeless pathway commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council. Further allocations will be made when the team is better aware of how the changes and cuts impact the sector.
16. It is therefore recommended that the Head of Housing and Property has the delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio holder, to administer any necessary changes to these allocations as well as the authority to administer the unallocated amount of £167k.

### **Financial implications**

17. The expenditure identified within this report can be met from the allocated budgets and there is scope for further allocations when new priorities emerge.

### **Performance monitoring**

18. 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. An executive summary of all data and performance is produced on a quarterly basis by the Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Team for the steering group and wider corporate comment.
19. There will be quarterly performance monitoring meetings with Oxford City Council's Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Team to ensure that outcomes and targets are achieved and issues are addressed.

### **Level of risk**

20. The Risk Register is attached in Appendix 2.

### **Equalities impact**

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

### **Staffing Implications**

22. All external staff are employed by external organisations for whom the Council has no liability
23. The budget is managed by the existing Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager in Housing and Property.

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**Background Papers:** None