

To: City Executive Board
Date: 9 March 2017
Report of: Head of Housing and Property
Title of Report: Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funds for 2017/18

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To approve the allocation of homelessness prevention funds, with the purpose of meeting the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy.
Key decision:	Yes
Executive Board Member:	Cllr Mike Rowley, Housing
Corporate Priority:	Meeting housing needs
Policy Framework:	Homelessness strategy
Recommendations: That the City Executive Board resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the allocation of Homelessness Prevention funds to commission homelessness services as outlined in paragraph 28. 2. Agree that any savings from 2016/17 budget allocations for Homelessness Prevention activities are at the end of the financial year considered to be carried forward to fund necessary and additional services in 2017/18 and 2018/19 including those items as outlined in paragraphs 22-27. 3. Delegate authority to the Head of Housing and Property Services, in consultation with the Board Member for Housing and the Chief Finance Officer, the discretion to revise the intended programme of use associated with the 2017/18 Homelessness Prevention budget. 	
Appendices	
Appendix 1	Allocation 2016/17
Appendix 2	Risk Register

Introduction and background

1. The Council has continued to allow for in its recently approved Medium Term Financial Plan a base budget of £942,935 for Homeless Prevention activities.

2. This could have been revised several years ago when the funding mechanism changed but the Council remains committed to preventing homelessness and ending rough sleeping in the City and continues to earmark this sum for homelessness prevention work.
3. A further commissioning budget is also available from the Council's own 2017/18 grant budget of £442,279.
4. The strategic framework within which these funds are allocated is the same. The funds are treated as a single budget, totalling £1,385,214.
5. In light of the cross-commissioning agenda and cross-strategy advantages of homeless prevention and ending rough sleeping work, a multi-agency steering group is responsible for advising on and monitoring this budget. The group comprises representatives from Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council Joint Commissioning Team, Public Health and the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

Context and Key developments 2016/17

6. Rough sleeping continues to be an issue in the City, with high numbers of rough sleepers being contacted by the outreach services each month – 93 individuals were seen rough sleeping in October 2016, 76 in November and 89 in December.
7. The Council's official street count – counting the number of rough sleepers seen bedded down on one specific night - in November 2016 was 33, a decrease from 39 in November 2015.
8. The City also carries out an estimate which is monitored by the Health and Well-Being Board (HWB). Oxford's estimate was 47, compared to Cherwell 17, South Oxfordshire 7, Vale of White Horse 8 and West Oxfordshire 0. 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 for 2016 being 79.
9. Oxfordshire County Council currently funds all supported accommodation for single homeless people and rough sleepers across the County through Housing Related Support. A total of 286 beds of supported accommodation are available across the County, with 252 of these based in the City. These services were re-commissioned during autumn 2015. New contracts started 1st February 2016.
10. The main change to the provision of supported accommodation from 1st February 2016 following County's re-commissioning, was the closure of the 61 bed homeless hostel Lucy Faithful House. The 61 beds in the hostel were replaced by the same amount of units in dispersed housing (shared housing).
11. Oxfordshire County Council decided in February 2016 to cut Housing Related Support by 100% (currently £1.5m per annum), starting April 2017 and with no funding available from April 2019. This would see a significant reduction in supported housing for single homeless people from April 2017, with no services available from April 2019.
12. To mitigate some of the impact of these cuts, City, together with Districts, County Council and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group agreed during autumn 2016 to contribute to a pooled budget and enter into joint commissioning arrangements for a period of three years.

13. Oxford City Council's contribution to the pooled budget was agreed by CEB in September at £161,700 per year for three years.
14. The pooled budget is substantially less than the current level of Housing Related Support – £2.9m over three years - and will therefore provide a significantly reduced number of beds for homeless people and rough sleepers across the County - 141, instead of the current 286.
15. Year 1 (2017/18) of the pooled budget has been allocated significantly more funds due to the transition from current services to new arrangements that will be in place for Year 2 (2018/19) and Year 3 (2019/20).
16. The following provision will be funded by the pooled budget from April 2017:-

Current provision	Units	Year 1 2017/18	Units	Year 2/Year 3 2018/19, 2019/20	Units
O'Hanlon House	56	O'Hanlon House	56	O'Hanlon House	56
Simon House	52	Simon House	52	Simon House	0
Connection Support	31	Connection Support	31	Connection Support	31
Mayday Trust	31	Mayday Trust	31	Mayday Trust	21
Julian Housing	83	Julian Housing	0 ¹	Julian Housing	0
Vineyard (South and Vale)	13	South and Vale	13	South and Vale	13
Horsefair (West Oxon)	6	West Oxon	6	West Oxon	6
Banbury (Cherwell)	13	Cherwell	13	Cherwell	13
Total	285	Total	202	Total	140

17. It is estimated that Oxford City needs 150 beds in order to meet demand. It was noted in the September CEB report that any additional supported accommodation City may need over and above what can be funded by the pooled budget, will have to be funded from City's Homelessness Prevention Funds.
18. The pooled budget will fund 79 beds for City use in Year 2 and Year 3 - 27 in O'Hanlon House, 31 Connection Support and 21 Mayday Trust. City would therefore have to fund 71 units of supported accommodation through own commissioning in order to provide the 150 units.
19. City will be 40 beds short of the 150 beds in Year 1 – 2017/18 - due to County's de-commissioning of Julian Housing and it is proposed that funding these 40 units from Homelessness Prevention Funds is a priority.
20. City officers are also working hard to establish commissioning options for additional beds spaces from 2018/19 - when the number of units funded by the pooled budget reduces further - in order to meet City need for 150 units. Funding sufficient

¹ Julian Housing's contract with County Council for the 83 supported units ends on 31st May 2017

supported accommodation provision from 2018/19 will require significant reprioritisation of Homelessness Prevention Funds in 2018/19.

Strategic Framework for Commissioning and Funding 2017/18

21. “No One Left Out – Communities Ending Rough Sleeping” and “Vision to End Rough Sleeping: No Second Night Out Nationwide” are the national strategies 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

Use of unused 2016/17 Homelessness Prevention Fund budget

22. The Council earmarks unused budget allocations from one financial year to be carried forward to future years or moved to a specific reserve. It is recommended that CEB request that consideration at year end to earmark unused 2016/17 budget to assist countering the major changes and reductions to homelessness services in the City and beyond by the County Council’s cuts to Housing Related Support.
23. An amount of £167,000 of the 2016/17 Homelessness Prevention Fund budget was not allocated to services because of the significant uncertainty affecting the adult homeless pathway at the time that the 2016/17 budget was recommended to CEB in March 2016. CEB agreed that Head of Housing and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio holder, would have authority to administer the unallocated amount.
24. It is recommended in this report that it is agreed that Head of Housing and Property make provision for the unallocated funds in 2016/17 to make up City’s contribution to the pooled budget in 2017/18 and 2018/19.
25. In addition to the unallocated funds that went into 2016/17, it is forecast that not all the 2016/17 funds will need to be committed. This saving arises from funds not required or used under contract terms with service providers, including delayed payment due to ‘Payment by Results’, and does not impact on the current level of service provision. The exact savings will not be known until the end of the financial year. It is anticipated that the savings could be up to £70,000 as per Appendix 1.
26. It is further recommended that it is agreed that the final and confirmed savings of the Homelessness Revenue Funds for 2016/17 is considered for carry forward or movement to a specific Homelessness reserve at year-end.
27. Officers will undertake a thorough needs analysis as well as an evaluation of currently funded services throughout 2017/18 to inform funding decisions and

transitional arrangements for 2018/19. Although there is minimal impact on services' funding 2017/18, it is anticipated that there will need to be a significant reduction in funding thereafter, reflecting the cut in the County Council funding and the City Council funding being focused on the provision of supported accommodation to meet the shortfall.

Provision from Homelessness Prevention Fund budget 2016/17 for supported accommodation	
Pooled budget contribution, Oxfordshire County Council City's contribution towards pooled budget arrangements for 2017/18 and 2018/19. Agreed by CEB September 2016 that Oxford City Council commit to contribute to pooled budget for a period of 3 years, starting 2017/18. Funds will be transferred to Oxfordshire County Council on an annual basis.	£161,700 (2017/18) £161,700 (2018/19)
Total	£323,400

Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funds 2017/18

28. It is proposed that the following specialist services/post/projects be funded in 2017/18:-

Organisation and Purpose of the Grant	
Supported Accommodation	Allocation
Housing First, Julian Housing (OxHoP) Funding for 1 FTE support workers and 0.5 FTE peer support worker for this specialist housing project. Offers an alternative supported housing model - 5 units - for rough sleepers entrenched in homelessness. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.	£47,850
'Sit-Up Service', O'Hanlon House (OxHoP) Funding to provide 10 additional spaces - sit-up service - to manage the high number of rough sleepers. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.	£54,903
Dispersed supported accommodation, provider to be confirmed 40 units of supported accommodation for rough sleepers/single homeless with a connection to the City. Provision for medium to low support needs with a focus on support to enable residents to move on to and sustain independent accommodation. Council officers are currently working on cost models and	Up to £150,000

<p>service specifications for this provision, hence, the amount allocated is only indicative at this stage.</p> <p>Accommodation needs to be available from 1st June, to coincide with the County Council termination of Julian Housing's contract to provide supported accommodation.</p> <p>This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.</p>	
Tackling Rough Sleeping	
<p>Street Population Outreach Team, St Mungo's</p> <p>Funding a team of 9 FTE. Team delivers assertive outreach, reconnection, personalisation and advice services for rough sleepers/single homeless. Assist rough sleepers to access suitable accommodation and support, in Oxfordshire or elsewhere with the aim to reduce the number of individuals spending a second night on the street; living on the streets; and returning to the streets. This is the third year of a 3+2 year contract.</p>	£350,893
<p>Severe Weather Emergency Provision, various locations and various providers</p> <p>Funding to provide emergency beds in periods of severe weather to all rough sleepers.</p>	£25,000
<p>Specialist Homelessness Liaison Officer/Service, Thames Valley Police</p> <p>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. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.</p>	£40,000
<p>Day Services for rough sleepers, O'Hanlon House (OxHoP)</p> <p>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. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.</p>	£82,778
<p>City Centre Ambassadors, Oxford City Council</p> <p>The City Centre Ambassadors provide a visible presence within Oxford City Centre. They assist people with enquiries, liaise with businesses to keep</p>	£10,000

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. This allocation is made for one year.	
Preventing Homelessness	
Tenancy Sustainment Officer, Elmore Community Services Funding for 1 FTE specialist sustainment officer to support residents in Oxford City Council accommodation to maintain their tenancies. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.	£35,630
Pre-Tenancy Training Course, Connection Support Funding to provide courses to help 50 people develop a range of skills that will enable them to become tenancy ready. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.	£16,000
Welfare Reform Team, Oxford City Council Funding contributes towards the work of the team focussing on the impact of welfare reform across the City.	£80,000
Target Hardening/Sanctuary Scheme, Oxford City Council 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. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.	£30,000
Access to Health and Social Care	
Mental Health Practitioner, Luther Street Medical Centre Funding to contribute towards 1 FTE Mental Health Practitioner in order to providing the outreach team with specialist mental health support and intervention when supporting rough sleepers. Funded in partnership with Oxford Health and Oxford Homeless Medical Fund. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.	£25,000
Tackling Worklessness and Improving Positive Activities	
Education, training and employment workers,	£77,623

<p>Aspire</p> <p>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. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.</p>	
<p>Emmaus Community Oxford</p> <p>Core funding for Emmaus to provide accommodation in their community and work opportunities in their second-hand furniture social enterprise. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement. A clause in the agreement enables the Council to taper the grant as the business moves towards self-sufficiency and a £5,000 reduction to this years' funding has been implemented at start of the year.</p>	£15,000
<p>Day Centre, The Porch</p> <p>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. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.</p>	£55,000
<p>Service Broker, The Big Issue Foundation</p> <p>Funding for 1 FTE to support Big Issues sellers into accommodation and into sustainable work opportunities. This contract will continue to be within a payment by results framework. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.</p>	£25,000
<p>Gatehouse Café</p> <p>Core funding for the Gatehouse café, to support and engage hard to reach clients to access accommodation and specialist support This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.</p>	£5,580
<p>Priority services for Young People</p>	
<p>Young People's Pathway, Oxfordshire County Council</p> <p>This grant is part of Oxford City Council's contribution to joint commissioning of the Young Person's Pathway. This is the final year City will contribute funds.</p>	£42,992

Emergency Bed for Oxford City, Oxfordshire County Council Funding provides one emergency bed within the Young Person's pathway for use by Oxford City.	£6,134
Other	
Single Homelessness Team, Oxford City Council Funding contribution towards the Council's Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Team.	£120,000
Private Rented Move-on assistance Funding to enable access to private rented accommodation for individuals moving on from the adult homeless pathway. Funds will assist with deposit and accessible for individuals with a connection to the City.	£15,000
Oxford CHAIN database, Real Systems Core funding to maintain web-based database management system that collates data and provides monitoring reports on rough sleeping. This allocation is made for one year and subject to a mutually agreed Service Level Agreement.	£4,000
In-year commissioning Funding has been put aside in order for officers to respond to unmet need by commissioning services addressing emerging service gaps.	£70,831
Total	£1,385,214
Balance	£0

29. It is recommended that the Head of Housing and Property has the delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio holder and Chief Finance Officer, to administer any necessary changes to these allocations.

Financial implications

30. The expenditure identified within this report can be met from approved budgets.
31. A proposal to consider at the end of the financial year the set-aside £324,400 from the anticipated 2016/17 Homelessness Prevention Fund budget savings to meet increased demands anticipated next financial year and beyond following County Council cuts to related services, in order to be able to contribute to the pooled budget and at the same time maintain other services as much as possible.

Performance monitoring

32. In managing 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 a quarterly basis

by the Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Team for the steering group and wider corporate information

33. Quarterly performance monitoring meetings will be scheduled between all services and Oxford City Council’s Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Team to ensure that outcomes and targets are achieved and issues are addressed in a timely and professional manner.

Legal issues

34. All services funded from Homelessness Prevention Funds have Service Level Agreements.

Level of risk

35. The Risk Register is attached as Appendix 2.

Equalities impact

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

Conclusion

37. The City and District Councils are faced with unprecedented challenges going forward due to the County Council cuts to Housing Related Support and the need for the Council to step in and fund the supported accommodation services that are needed in the City and for individuals with a connection to the City.
38. It is recommended that the City prioritise funding of supported accommodation, including the pooled budget and that savings from the existing budgets are applied to support current services and the transition to when the County Council ceases funding for homeless persons.
39. Services funded will be able to provide important ‘wrap-around’ services for single homeless people and rough sleepers in order to prevent and tackle rough sleeping and support individuals to live and sustain independent lives.
40. Thorough review and evaluation of all services funded in 2017/18 will be carried out in year and inform any funding decisions for 2018/19.

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Background Papers:	
1	None