

**To:** City Executive Board  
**Date:** 10 April 2019  
**Report of:** Housing Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)  
**Title of Report:** Scrutiny Committee recommendations concerning Floyds Row

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To present Housing Panel recommendations on agenda item 9 for City Executive Board consideration
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Scrutiny Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Nadine Bely-Summers, Chair of Housing Panel
<b>Executive Board Member:</b>	Councillor Linda Smith, Deputy Leader (Leisure and Housing)
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Meeting Housing Needs An Efficient and Effective Council
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21
<b>Recommendation: That the City Executive Board states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.</b>	

### **Introduction and overview**

1. The Housing Panel on 8 April 2019 considered the report to the City Executive Board on the proposed development of a homeless shelter and assessment hub at Floyds Row. The Panel would like to thank the following people for attending the meeting to introduce the report, provide a presentation and answer questions:
  - Dave Scholes – Affordable Housing Lead
  - Polly McKinlay – Senior Commissioner
  - Lucy Warin – Transition by Design
  - Harry Tuke – Jessop and Cook
  - Dan Wadsworth – Jessop and Cook

### **Summary and recommendations**

2. The Panel warmly welcomed the report and commended a number of aspects of the proposals, particularly the work undertaken to engage with homeless service users and involve them in the design of the facilities, and the fact that the continuous winter provision would be open to people with no local connection and those with no resource to public funds.

3. In discussion the Panel heard that the intention is to provide an adaptable space that can be adjusted over time to meet the changing profile and needs of service users. A lack of flexibility had been identified as being an issue at some other homelessness facilities. The provision of private rooms and separate spaces for women and vulnerable groups are written into the brief, as are provision for dogs, accessibility and the secure storage of belongings. Safety will be at the forefront and a range of safety measures will be in place such as secure entry, CCTV, panic alarms and a high staff to client ratio.
4. The Panel noted that there are lots of challenges associated with delivering this important project to a good standard in a very compressed timeframe, particularly as full funding is yet to be secured, as reflected in the length of the risk register. Planning consent will be required for external works including an extension of the lobby area and the installation of ramps, signage and lighting.
5. The Panel questioned whether the funding envelope is realistic and noted that revenue would need to be allocated to run the services in addition to the capital funding. The Affordable Housing Lead provided assurance that suitable contingencies have been factored in and the Council is seeking to mitigate risks, while cautioning that this remains an evolving process. Failure to secure Government funding to make up the capital shortfall would significantly affect the sustainability of the scheme over the medium term and would result in difficult decisions being taken in regards to the use of the homelessness reserve (which is already due to be substantially drawn down over the coming 4 years). The Panel also heard that there may be opportunities within the scheme to draw on other external funding sources such as energy grants and local charitable funding.

***Recommendation 1: That the Council continues to encourage the Government to provide funding to plug the capital shortfall while also exploring opportunities to draw on other local and national funding streams for specific purposes.***

6. The Panel considered how the Council can build on the positive engagement activities that have recently taken place involving service users at the Gatehouse and other homelessness projects in the city. This had included undertaking insight interviews, seeking views on drawings and photos of comparable spaces and reviewing outline layouts in an interactive way. It was considered possible and desirable to build an ongoing culture of participation at Floyds Row, notwithstanding the temporary nature of the services and the need for throughput and suitable move on options. This can be achieved by establishing the right contract with the service provider, including the use of volunteers. The Panel suggest that the Council should look for opportunities to replicate the approach to service user participation and co-production in future projects.

***Recommendation 2: That the Council builds on the successful service user engagement activities that have taken place by:***

- a) ***Ensuring (through the contract with the service provider) that a culture of service user participation will be maintained at Floyd's Row.***
  - b) ***Taking a similar approach to service user participation and co-production in future projects.***
7. The Panel agreed to formally endorse the recommendations in the report of the Head of Housing Services.

<b>Report author</b>	Andrew Brown
Job title	Committee and Member Services Manager
Service area or department	Law and Governance
Telephone	01865 252230
e-mail	<u><a href="mailto:Abrown2@oxford.gov.uk">Abrown2@oxford.gov.uk</a></u>

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