

Oxford City Council Cabinet Meeting 12 February 2020

Agenda item 3

Public question to Cabinet with reference to recommendation 2 of Agenda Item 13 (Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funds for 2020/21)

“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.”

Q. *“This is a major alteration changing how Oxford City Council discharges its obligation for Housing Services. Why is Oxford City Council **“delegating”** this **obligation** without a specific **mandate** from the **Electorate** who are **ignorant** of this measure and its future **implications?**”*

A. Council reports on financial plans commonly contain a recommendation to delegate to a Senior Manager the discretion to revise the intended programme within the overall budget if required, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Housing.

This is because financial plans can and do change, making it necessary to review the original plan and allocations, including to avoid significant over or underspending of the budget. For example, in 2019/20 a slight delay in the opening of the new facility at Rymer’s Lane led to an overspend in the forecast allocation for spending on services at Simon House and an underspend on the forecast spending on services at Matilda House, leading to a net underspend of £4,166 for these allocations. The portfolio holder for Housing, Councillor Linda Smith, was aware of this development and in agreement with the decision to adjust the allocations in year.

Changes to the original allocations are reported in detail in this annual report on proposed funding allocations for services for rough sleepers and single homeless people.

Ends

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