

Decision type: Decision Specifically Delegated to Officers
Decision date: 8th April 2026
Decision maker: Nerys Parry – Director of Housing
Decision title: Decision to award the **Housing First Support Service** contract

Summary

Decision being taken:	Decision to award the Housing First Support Service contract to a supplier following a competitive and compliant tender process.
Key decision:	Yes. If its yes, the decision must have been on the forward plan a minimum of 28 days before the decision is to be taken. https://oxfordcity.moderngov.co.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=42718&Opt=0
Source of delegation:	The decision was delegated to the Director of Housing and by Cabinet on 17 th September 2025. 1. Item 12: https://oxfordcity.moderngov.co.uk/documents/q8652/Decisions%20Wednesday%2017-Sep-2025%2018.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=2
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith - Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities
Corporate Priority:	Good affordable homes
Policy Framework:	Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28

The Director of Housing decides as follows:

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| 1. | Award the Housing First Support Service to Homeless Oxfordshire following a competitive and compliant tender process. The value of the contract for the initial 12-month period is £386,064.00. |
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Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Equalities Impact Assessment	No
Appendix 2	Risk Register	No
Appendix 3	Private Appendix for Members and Officers	Yes – Sensitive financial information and names have been redacted from the public document. The information has been provided to the Officers and Members signing off on the decision.

Introduction and background

1. In September 2025 Cabinet approved the commencement of a re-procurement exercise for a Housing First support service. in Oxford. Under two existing contracts, 40 individuals, all with long histories of homelessness, were being supported to sustain tenancies. The re-procurement exercise was to ensure that this support would continue beyond the contract end dates of 31st March 2026.
2. The Council is fully committed to the Housing First programme, as it is a key element of the Council's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 223-28, and the ambition to continue and increase the Housing First offer.
3. Housing First is an internationally evidenced housing intervention, which has proven successful in supporting people who were formerly homeless with multiple and complex needs to maintain housing. This client group can often be homeless for long periods of time and are unable to access other forms of permanent accommodation due to their support needs. Housing First directly addresses this and provides a home with support. The main premise is that an individual should not need to prove they are ready for housing and is instead given a permanent offer of their own home, along with an intensive long-term, and flexible support package to enable them to maintain it.
4. Under the Housing First programme, the support providers have been able to assist some of the most vulnerable former rough sleepers into stable accommodation. In almost all circumstances the people being supported have experienced repeat homelessness over many years and continue to experience multiple disadvantages. Although many individuals have progressed away from life on the street, whilst developing new skills and interests, they are not yet ready to sustain and maintain their current accommodation without the support currently offered.
5. The Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Team manage the existing contracts and have worked closely with partners in the Legal and Procurement teams to develop a competitive and compliant tender process.
6. The original funding streams for the individual contracts, NSAP & RSAP, have been replaced by a new single funding stream from 1st April 2026; Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant. Consequently, there was no longer the requirement for the Council to operate two separate contracts. Therefore, a decision

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was made to tender the 40 units of support under one contract, rather than two, as this was expected to be economically advantageous to the Council.

7. In total four bids for the contract were received. Please refer to Appendix 3 for further detail.
8. The evaluation process was undertaken by a panel of three Council employees. Evaluations were undertaken independently, followed by a moderation meeting, chaired by the Commercial Procurement & Contract Business Partner Lead.
9. Following the conclusion of the moderation process it was determined that the most advantageous bid had been supplied by an organisation that had scored the highest in terms of both quality and price. All bids were of a good quality, but the panel all agreed that the submission of the preferred supplier stood out from the others, particularly in terms of how it will support this vulnerable cohort. For details of the preferred supplier please refer to Appendix 3.
10. The contract will be awarded for an initial 12-month period, or until the 31st March 2027 if the contract start dates is after 1st April 2026, with an option for the Council to extend for up to further four periods of 12 months. These extensions are reliant on sufficient funds being available to the Council. The initial value of the contract can be found in Appendix 3, and all subsequent years, if the contract is extended, will be linked to CPI.
11. The contract was due to start on 1st April 2026, but due to an unforeseen delay in the procurement process this now cannot happen. Instead, we envisage that the contract will start on 1st July 2026. This additional time will allow us to cover any potential issues encountered during the procurement standstill period and for all parties to ensure that TUPE can run smoothly. We have reached out to the incumbents, St Mungo's and A2Dominion, and both parties have agreed to continue operating the service until the new contract can be signed and sealed. In partnership with colleagues in the Legal team we have sought variations to both contracts to cover this short period.

Reasons for the decision

12. The decision is recommended on the basis that the bid is the most advantageous bid and the successful bidder provided the panel with the most confidence in their ability to deliver a Housing First service that is aligned with the principles of the model. The panel is confident that the supplier would be able to ensure the continuity of support required for the Housing First cohort and is pleased with their implementation plan (including how TUPE will work for existing staff).
13. If the decision is not taken we risk losing the support of the incumbent suppliers, A2Dominion and St Mungo's, who have agreed to continuing support the existing cohort until the new contract is sealed. In a worst case scenario, we could be left in a position where some of our most vulnerable residents are without support and may struggle to sustain their tenancy as a result.

Alternative Options Considered

14. Other options considered were as follows:

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- a) Extension of current contracts to enable continuation of the current service delivered by A2Dominion and St Mungo's. This was not an option as the current contracts do not allow for any further extensions;
- b) Discontinue the Housing First service when the contracts with A2Dominion and St Mungo's end – this option was not advised for the following reasons:
 - i) The Council is fully committed to the Housing First programme, as it is a key element of both the Council's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28, and Oxfordshire's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-26.
 - ii) A total of 33 persons are currently accommodated in Council and A2Dominion properties under the support contracts held by St Mungo's and A2Dominion. These individuals are in need of the Housing First support service in order to maintain their accommodation. There would be a high risk of homelessness and rough sleeping if this support was not in place. At present there is no alternative support service that could replace the Housing First support service. A further 7 individuals are currently being supported to obtain housing under these contracts.

Implications of Local Government Reorganisation

15. As with all contracts the Council is entering into, there will almost certainly be an implication in terms of LGR. Post re-organisation, the geographical area covered will be much larger and therefore the cohort of individuals needing to be supported may also need to increase. To counteract this potential to flex, we have built in break clauses to the contract on a yearly basis that will enable us to end the contract and subsequently re-procure a Housing First support services based on the revised demand of any new LA.

Equalities Impact

16. Please see the attached Appendix 1.

Risks

17. Risk register attached as Appendix 2.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

18. Owing to the nature of the support contract being procured, carbon and environmental considerations were not at the forefront of the tender process. Nonetheless we included a question in the Tender documentation that asked prospective suppliers how they will create additional social value for residents of Oxford, but also explain how they will meet the Council's priorities as set in the Council Strategy 2024-28.

Implications of making the decision

Financial implications	From 1 st April 2026, the Council will be in receipt of Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant from MHCLG. This grant is a three-	Completed by: Jason Jones, Finance Business Partner
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	<p>year funding settlement. Part of this grant will be used to fund this Housing First support service contract. The contract is until 31st March 2027 (with an option for the Council to extend the contract for up to four periods of 12 months), with an annual review during the term of the contract to ensure the Council has sufficient funds to continue to fund the service. In the event that the Council needs to prioritise services funded through the HRSDAG, the Council therefore has an option to discontinue the service, as not to incur an unmanageable financial burden. The Housing First support service is however a key service provision of the Council and key commitment under the Council's strategy, and it is therefore likely that this contract will continue to be funded, and should the council need to make any adjustments in spend, any necessary reductions will be made to other services.</p>	<p>Date: 08/04/2026</p>
<p>Legal implications</p>	<p>The decision was delegated to the Director of Housing and by Cabinet on 17th September 2025.</p> <p>Due to the value of the contract exceeding £750,000, the decision to award the contract is a Key Decision.</p> <p>The Council has carried out a fully compliant procurement exercise in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 (light touch regime).</p> <p>Following the procurement exercise, the preferred supplier achieved the highest overall score against the published award criteria and is therefore recommended for contract award.</p> <p>Subject to approval of this recommendation, the Council must observe the applicable standstill period and comply with all relevant notification and transparency requirements under</p>	<p>Completed by: Justin Zizys</p> <p>Date: 26.03.2026</p>

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	the Act prior to entering into the contract. JZ/80788	
Other implications	EQIA attached as appendix	Completed by: Brendan Lewis Date: 23/03/26
Member declared interests	Cllr Simon Ottino has a declared interest in terms of Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation. He is Acting Manager of the A2 Dominion Oxford City Housing First Team. This has not impacted the decision.	Completed by: Brendan Lewis Date: 23/03/26


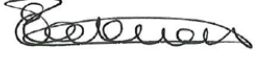
Background Documents
Cabinet Paper 17 September 2025

Report author	Ossi Mosley
Job title	Rough Sleeping & Single Homelessness Manager
Service area or department	Housing Needs
Email contact	omosley@oxford.gov.uk


Consultee checklist

Consultees	Name and job title	Date
Senior officer e.g. the relevant service manager / Director where the decision maker is the Chief Executive or a Deputy Chief Executive.	N/A	

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Group Finance Director Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	 Nigel Kennedy, Group Finance Director	30/03/26
Director of Law, Governance and Strategy Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	 Emma Jackman, Director of Law, Governance and Strategy	01/04/26
Cabinet Member(s) Where required by the conditions of the delegation	Agreed via email Cllr Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	30/03/26
Ward Members Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	n/a	

Decision Maker Approval

Name and job title	Date
Nery Parry, Director of Housing 	02.04.26

This form must be completed and sent to Committee and Member Services **on the date that the decision maker signs it. This must be only done once all consultees have given their approval. The decision shall be effective from the date of publication; therefore, it is important that you send to Committee and Member Services as soon as it is completed and dated by the decision maker. Please note that it is not effective until it is published and the call in period has passed.**

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NOTES

The law¹ requires the Council to record executive and non-executive decisions taken by officers under delegated powers and to publish them on the Council's website.

These requirements apply to decisions that would have been taken by Council or the Cabinet if delegated powers had not been given to an officer:

- under an express delegation granted at a meeting of Cabinet, Council or a Committee.
- in accordance with Part 4.4 of the Constitution as follows:
 - Awarding a contract where authority has been specifically delegated to officers by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member (regardless of value)
 - Acquiring or disposing of freeholds or leaseholds granting new leaseholds (excluding assignments and rent reviews) where authority has been specifically delegated to officers by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member (regardless of value)
 - Making a regulatory order which affects a number of people, for example a Public Space Protection Order or a Parking Place Order
 - Where the effect of a decision is to grant a licence or permission or it affects the rights of citizens
 - Discharging any other express delegation from Cabinet or a Cabinet Member a committee or Council.

These requirements **do not** apply to:

- planning and licencing matters where there are established arrangements for recording decisions: or
- decisions which are purely administrative or operational in nature

All other officer decisions should be recorded on an officer decision form but do not need to be published. They must though be stored so as to ensure that they are not lost should an officer leave the authority.

Exempt or Confidential information

Information relating to a delegated officer or single member decision does not have to be made public if it is exempt or confidential. Summary information from this decision sheet (excluding all exempt or confidential information) will be published on the Council's website.

¹ the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012/2089 (Regulation 13(4)) and The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014/2095 (Regulation 7)

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Key or Non Key Decision

A key decision is an executive decision which is likely to:

- Have a significant effect on people living or working in a least two wards or
- Involve spending, income, or saving a significant amount – whether an amount is significant depends on the Council’s total budget for the service involved. For this Council ‘significant’ in budgetary terms is:
 - Expenditure, income, or savings of £750,000 or greater in the context of the medium term financial strategy,
 - Acquiring or disposing of freeholds with a consideration over £500,000 in the context of the medium term financial strategy except for disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation
 - Acquiring or disposing of leaseholds where either the rental value is in excess of £250,000 per annum and/or the premium is £750,000 except for statutory lease renewals under Part 2 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 and disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation and disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation.
 - Acquiring or disposing of easements with a value over £750,000 and/or rental value over £250,000 each year

A key decision can only be taken and recorded here if notice of it has been published on the Forward Plan for at least 28 clear days. Key decisions taken by officers may be “called in” by any four councillors or the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee within two days of the notice of decision being published.

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